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Series

SWINBURNE

SECTION VI
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The Belles-Lettres Series

SECTION VI

NINETEENTH CENTURY POETS

GENERAL EDITOR
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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

From a photograph by Elliott & Fry.

SELECTED POEMS

BY

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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TO
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Introduction

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE is the one great poet left to the English race, if not to the world, at the close of the nineteenth century. When his first works appeared, in the early sixties, the great poets of the pre-Victorian age, Landor alone excepted, had long since passed away. He had for contemporaries Tennyson, Browning, and Arnold, whose fame was securely established, and Rossetti and Morris, the early fruits of whose genius were known to a few, but whose wider reputation was still to be won. Particularly associated with the latter two poets in sympathy and aim, Swinburne was the first of the trio to attract the attention of the public at large, and his poetic achievement was destined to become more considerable and important than that of either of these fellow workers. A quarter of a century ago, he was one of six living English poets of the first rank; between 1882 and 1896 his five great contemporaries died, leaving him in the position of solitary preëminence which he has ever since occupied. It is not easy to find anywhere in the history of modern letters a parallel to this extraordinary state of affairs; literature the world over appears to be fast lapsing into prose, and the torch of high and serious poetry seems in danger of becoming quenched for lack of a bearer.

Swinburne was born in London, April 5, 1837. He was the oldest child of Admiral Charles Henry Swinburne and Lady Jane Henrietta, daughter of the third Earl of Ashburnham. He is descended from a very ancient Northumbrian family which dates, says Burke, "from so remote a period that the Swinburnes of Swinburne Castle have been esteemed feudal lords." The members of the family now living are the direct descendants of Sir William de Swinburne, who lived in the time of Henry III. The present head of the family is Sir John Edward Swinburne, sixth baronet, a first cousin of the poet. The Ashburnham lineage is also long and distinguished, the family having been, according to Nisbet, "of good account before the Conquest." The poet was educated at Eton and Balliol, but left Oxford without taking a degree. His four years at the University (1856-1860) were notable for his first printed writings, being five contributions to *Undergraduate Papers*, for his academic distinction in French, Italian, and the classics, and for the beginnings of his lifelong friendship with Morris, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones. The year in which he left Oxford marked the publication of *The Queen Mother* and *Rosamond*, his first book. The following year, a few weeks spent with his parents in Italy were made for ever memorable to him by his meeting with the venerable Walter Savage Landor. Returning to England, he devoted himself to literary work, in 1865 won the applause of the judicious with his *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Chastelard*, and, the year following (1866), took the public by storm with the famous first volume of his *Poems and*

Ballads. There had been no such sensation in English poetry since the appearance of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* as was occasioned by this volume, and there has been no such sensation since. And the fame thus suddenly achieved was destined to prove no temporary matter, but has gone on broadening and deepening with the years; a new century has begun its course, and its greatest English name is that of the poet who first compelled widespread attention nearly forty years ago. During these years, Swinburne's life has been distinctly that of a man of letters, and its events have been his books. A glance at the list of the writings which bear his name will show with what faithful industry he has pursued his calling. Most of the years have been spent in or near London; since 1879 his home has been at Putney Hill, on the outskirts of the metropolis, where he lives with his dearest friend, Theodore Watts-Dunton, himself a poet of no mean accomplishment, besides being the most profound critic of English poetry now living. An ideal companionship, combined with the pleasures of the simple life, reading, walking, swimming, the love of children and the converse of friends, — such have been the circumstances of the poet for the past quarter of a century, such the conditions under which he has produced book after book of imperishably beautiful poetry.

Before attempting a detailed characterization of that poetry, it seems desirable to clear the ground by saying a few words about Swinburne's prose, which is so noteworthy that, even were there no verse to his account, he would still be one of the most important

writers of our time. His volumes of prose are almost as numerous as his volumes of verse, and, when we reckon with them the uncollected matter to be found in pamphlets, periodicals, and encyclopædias, the prose will be found to exceed the verse in quantity. With respect to quality, of course, the case is different. Swinburne, like Carlyle, has shown himself perfectly capable, at need, of writing simple and forcible English prose, but, also like Carlyle, he has deliberately preferred to cultivate a style of tortuous complexity and labyrinthine structure, a style overloaded with epithets and packed with recondite allusions, a style that is anything but a model of what prose ought to be. Yet at its best this style achieves an impressiveness and an eloquence that are very remarkable; it imparts real ideas and becomes the vehicle of a penetrative criticism and a fine moral fervor.

Swinburne's prose is, of course, so largely concerned with the criticism of literature that its opportunities are restricted, but this does not prevent it from throwing side-lights upon many subjects of other than literary interest, or from stimulating the whole intellectual life rather than that section thereof which is concerned with questions of taste and the fitness of literary forms to subserve their respective ends. Aside from a few polemical publications of ephemeral interest, Swinburne's prose work is comprised in three collections of miscellaneous essays, and in the special volumes upon William Blake, Charlotte Brontë, Hugo, Chapman, Jonson, and Shakespeare. There is also a considerable quantity of uncollected matter, of which

the most valuable part is a series of essays dealing with the more important of the Elizabethan dramatists. As a critic of literature Swinburne is entitled to a high rank. His involved manner of saying things, and the warmth of the laudation which he sometimes bestows, are but incidental defects, after all, and should not be allowed to obscure the very real and solid merit of his analysis. There are few books about Shakespeare as helpful and stimulating as Swinburne's *Study* of the greatest of poets. It will do for the student precisely what a whole library of scientific criticism will not do; it will save him from mechanical methods of judgment and all the deadening influences of pedantry; it will impart to him something of its own generous enthusiasm and genial insight. This book and its companion studies upon the Elizabethan writers have done much for the proper appreciation of the poetry of our great dramatic period, and no one, perhaps, has discussed that poetry with warmer sympathy and deeper insight. Extravagance in both praise and censure is often charged against him, and doubtless with justice. But on the former count of the indictment we may at least urge that what he calls "the noble pleasure of praising" is surely one of the most important functions of criticism, while on the latter count, despite the occasional vehemence of the attack, it may be said that he sets a salutary example against the sort of complacency that is far too commonly met with in current criticism.

Coming now to a consideration of Swinburne the poet, we find that his verse is about equally divided between the dramatic and non-dramatic forms. Of

dramatic work there are ten volumes, including eleven plays, one of which is double the ordinary length ; of non-dramatic work there are fourteen volumes. By the author's own choice, as shown in the uniform edition of his poems now in course of issue, *Atalanta* and *Erechtheus* are separated from the section of *Dramatic Works* and placed in the section of *Poetical Works*. This arrangement tips the balance to the side of the latter section, which, in the new edition, occupies six volumes out of the total eleven. It also provides a reasonable pretext for including in the present volume of selections certain choruses, which could ill be spared, taken from the two Greek dramas.

Of Swinburne's poems in dramatic form, the two just mentioned are Greek in theme, and, to an astonishing extent, are also Greek in thought, feeling, and structure. The *Samson Agonistes* of Milton is the only other work in English poetry with which they may fairly be compared, and even that masterpiece, although written in imitation of a Greek tragedy, is Hebraic in its subject. But *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Erechtheus* are Greek through and through — that is, as nearly so as modern work can possibly be, for it must be said of all such imitations that “the best in this kind are but shadows.” However deeply a poet of our time may be in sympathy with the Hellenic spirit, and whatever knowledge and enthusiasm he may bring to its reproduction, the infusion of modern feeling is inevitable. In balance and symmetry and restraint the later work is the finer of the two, being the product of a riper and more chastened genius, but the earlier work has

always been the more popular by reason of its lyrical spontaneity and the opulence of its inspiration.

Of Swinburne's other dramas, the three which deal with the fortunes of Mary Queen of Scots, constituting a single work of comprehensive plan and colossal execution, are much the most important. Nearly a score of years went to the composition of this work, which is a monument to the poet's historical scholarship as well as a masterpiece of flexible and compact blank verse. Mr. James Douglas says: "It is as if a Gardiner had turned poet in order to paint passionately vivid portraits of Mary, of Bothwell, of Darnley, of John Knox, and of the minor figures in a tragic coil of doom as awful as that of the *Oresteia*." The divisions of the trilogy are respectively entitled *Chastelard*, *Bothwell*, and *Mary Stuart*. They cover more than a quarter-century of the Queen's life between her return from France and her execution. The poet's Jacobite ancestry, combined with his romantic temperament, made this subject appeal to him strongly, and he sounds a more intimate note than is customary with him in the valedictory verses which mark the completion of his labors.

"Queen, for whose house my fathers fought
With hopes that rose and fell,
Red star of boyhood's fiery thought,
Farewell.

"Queen, once of Scots and ever of ours
Whose sires brought forth for you
Their lives to strew "our way like flowers,
Adieu."

Swinburne's remaining dramas, six in number, are of much less importance than those above described. His first published book contained *The Queen Mother* and *Rosamond*, the former dealing with the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the latter — in five short scenes only — with the piteous tale of the bower at Woodstock and the secret love of Henry II. Both show the marks of Elizabethan influence, and in them are foreshadowed many of the characteristic traits of the poet's genius. The Greek plays and the Mary Stuart trilogy filled many years following, and it was not until a quarter of a century later that the poet's attention was called to the new-old subject of that venerable Doge of Venice who sought to avenge his wrongs by the betrayal of the Republic, an interest which resulted in the production of *Marino Faliero*, far out-distancing Byron's treatment of the same theme. *Lochrine*, a novelty in rhymed metres, came next, and told once more the tragic legend of Sabrina, as found in Geoffrey of Monmouth's British history, and adorned by many English poets from Spenser to Milton. *The Sisters*, a comparatively unimportant work, is difficult to take seriously. It is a love-tragedy of modern English society and contains little that is either poetic or Swinburnian. Finally, another Rosamund, the Lombard queen whose grim tragedy may be found in Gibbon, was made the subject of a drama written nearly forty years after the English Rosamond had occupied the attention of the youthful poet. The contrast between the two dramas is very striking, and marks all the difference between unregulated impulsive art and re-

strained artistic finish. The exuberance, the color, the overwrought imagery, the verbal affluence, the Shakespearian diction of the earlier work have vanished, and in their place we have sheer simplicity of vocabulary, passion intimated rather than expressed, imagery reduced to bare metaphor, and a diction well-nigh shorn of all mannerisms.

The genius of Swinburne is essentially lyrical, and even the utterance of his dramatic characters has more of the singing than the speaking quality. We can hardly imagine any of his dramas produced upon any stage, or, if so produced, creating the illusion proper to the acted play. They are written for the closet, not for the stage, and the accessories of the playhouse could add nothing to their impressiveness, could, indeed, hardly fail to detract therefrom. Lyricism is also the predominant quality of Swinburne's excursions into the domain of epic. These are chiefly represented by his two long narrative poems, *Tristram of Lyonesse* and *The Tale of Balen*. Both are studies in Arthurian legend, and both are widely different from the work of other modern delvers in that buried mediæval treasure-house. *Tristram of Lyonesse*, in a prelude and nine cantos, amounting to more than four thousand lines, is a poem written in heroic couplets. But no other heroic couplets in English, from Chaucer to Morris, have ever been sustained at such length with the fluency, the passion, and the romantic coloring of these. For the first time in our poetry, they make of this form an instrument of expression fairly comparable with the blank verse of the masters. *The Tale of Balen* is versified from the

Morte d' Arthur in about two hundred and fifty stanzas of nine lines each. The stanzaic form, nearly that of Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalott*, invites lyrical expression more freely than the rhymed couplet, and the pathetic story of the two brothers sings itself in flowing measures from its blithe beginning to its tragic ending. The poem follows the text of Malory with singular fidelity, and its loveliness quite justifies the rewriting of its noble prose original.

Having thus briefly described Swinburne's prose writings, and his poems in dramatic and epic form, we come now to the main task of this introductory essay, which is the characterization of the mass of his lyrical poetry. We have for examination the contents of more than a dozen volumes, ranging from the famous first series of *Poems and Ballads*, published in 1866, to *A Channel Passage and Other Poems*, published in 1904. Between these two dates there are the second and third series of *Poems and Ballads*, the *Songs before Sunrise*, the *Songs of Two Nations*, the *Songs of the Springtides*, the *Studies in Song*, the miscellaneous contents of the *Tristram* volume, *A Century of Roundels*, *A Midsummer Holiday and Other Poems*, and *Astrophel and Other Poems*. There is also *The Heptalogia; or, the Seven against Sense*, a volume of parodies anonymously published. The contents of the present selection are found, with the exception of the choruses from *Atalanta* and *Erechtheus*, in the thirteen volumes thus enumerated. They are all comprised within the six volumes of the *Poetical Works* in the new uniform edition.

The first and most obvious thing to emphasize about Swinburne's poetry is its astonishing, its almost unexampled, command of the poetical resources of English speech. While it must be admitted that to Marlowe and Shakespeare and Milton, to Coleridge and Shelley and Tennyson, we owe the revelation of all the deeper secrets of the inherent possibilities of English poetry, it may well be allowed that Swinburne has shown himself their most accomplished disciple, and that many a secondary secret has been left for his discovery, many a richer employment of measures already created has been left for him to make. To say as much as this is hardly to do him justice, for it is only the bare truth to assert that no other English poet has exhibited his mastery of so great a variety of forms and rhythms, new and old. The affluence of his diction and the wealth of his melody have, indeed, operated to obscure to the view of superficial readers his qualities of intellectual power and ethical fervor. Something will be said upon these points later on; at present we are concerned with the form of his work alone. His blank verse would of itself offer a study of almost inexhaustible fruitfulness, but for that we should have to depend chiefly on the dramas. Something has already been said of his use of the heroic couplet. His imitations of classical metres are extraordinary *tours de force*, as are also the Greek and Latin verses which he wrote in his earlier years. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that he writes French verse as if to the manner born. He has worked in almost every imaginable form of English lyrical stanza, from the simple four-lined type with alternate rhymes

to the bewilderingly complex Pindaric ode. In the forms of continuous rhymed verse he has so nearly exhausted the possible combinations that his successors will be hard pressed to discover any that are at once new and legitimate. Rhymes never seem to fail him; he is as ready with half a dozen as with a pair, and double rhymes come easier to him than single ones to most poets. His more complicated metres and strophes require careful study before they disclose all their secrets, yet their great difficulty does not stiffen them or impede the free motion of the poet's thought. Mr. Saintsbury speaks of his planning "sea serpents in verse in order to show how easily and gracefully he can make them coil and uncoil their enormous length," of his building "mastodons of metre that we may admire the proportion and articulation of their mighty limbs." "The verse does not merely run," says the same critic, "it *spins*, gyrating and revolving in itself as well as proceeding on its orbit, the wave as it rushes on has eddies and backwaters of live interior movement. All the metaphors and similes of water, light, wind, fire, all the modes of motion, inspire and animate this astonishing poetry."

The streams of influence that have converged in the creation of Swinburne's poetry, not only supplying it with melodious suggestion, but also providing it with illustrations and informing it with ideals, might well be made the subject of an extended study. First of all, there is a richer heritage of national poetry than the citizen of any other European nation may boast, a heritage that no modern Englishman has better known how

to appreciate and to prize than Swinburne. Fundamentally, he is an English poet, in sympathy with all the deeper manifestations of the English spirit, and his joy in the work of Chaucer and Shakespeare, of Milton and Shelley, is alike genuine. In the second place, he drank copiously of the springs of Greek poetry in his formative years, and learned, more fully perhaps than any other great English poet, that "the crown of all songs sung" in the modern world is a new glory upon the brow of Athens, that hers was "the light that gave the whole world light of old," and that Englishmen, more than most other moderns, have drawn inspiration from the Greeks, "the fathers of their spirits." Hence we find in Swinburne's poetry, besides the avowed experiments in Greek forms, many subtle evidences of Hellenic influence, — clarifying the expression and intensifying the beauty at countless points. In the third place, he was profoundly affected by the Hebraic temper, both the spirit of the Old Testament and the very cadences of the Authorized Version finding manifold echoes in his verse. In the fourth place, he was deeply influenced by the poets of France and Italy. French poetry, indeed, has found in him the most sympathetic of modern English critics. The secrets of French prosody, for which few English readers have an ear, offer no mystery to his delicate rhythmic sense, and he has lived in familiar and loving communion with French verse, from Villon to Verlaine. What this source of inspiration has been to him may be seen in his tributes to Gautier and Baudelaire, and in his pæans sung to the glory of Victor Hugo. While the influence of Italian

poetry is less marked, and, in the case of Dante, seems to be somewhat perfunctory, his love of Italy and his espousal of her national cause give color and passion to a large section of his verse, besides providing it with a specific argument. On the other hand, Germanic influences are almost wholly missing from his work, and even Goethe seems to have made no appeal to him. This defect of sympathy sets a negative mark upon his work which calls for allowance in the characterization.

The themes of Swinburne's poetry are drawn in great variety from nature and the works of man. No poet has expressed more impressively than he the contrast between the vexed insignificance of man and the calm sublimity of nature,—

“O strong sun ! O sea !

I bid not you, divine things ! comfort me,

I stand not up to match you in your sight ;

Who hath said ye have mercy toward us, ye who have might ?”

But no poet has also more proudly matched the human spirit against all the material immensities which it contemplates, and so confidently asserted its inherent dignity and indefectible strength. Not, like Byron, seeking in nature an anodyne for grief, nor, like Coleridge and Wordsworth, disheartened by the deeds of men, turning to her for renewal of the spirit and strengthening of the faith, we find Swinburne drawing from her from the first the elements of primal strength, and glorying in her power and beauty. Of the sea, particularly, he has sung in rapturous strains that no other English poet can match. The most magnificent lines of *Tristram* are those consecrated to the “sublime sweet sepul-

chre" of the hapless lovers, and the consummation of *Erechtheus* is in the sealing, through a maiden's sacrifice, of the pact whereby the sons of the violet-crowned city are given divine assurance that their descendants shall forever

"Have help of the waves that made war on their morning,
And friendship and fame of the sea."

The glory of the sea in the triumph over the Persian is sung in *Athens* and in the defeat of Spain in *The Armada* — the two greatest of Swinburne's odes. In *Thalassius* the poet calls himself a sea-flower, and as such recounts his spiritual autobiography. In the superb group of lyrics *By the North Sea*, we have pictured every mood and aspect of the sea, while *On the Verge* touches the utmost height of sublimity as it questions the unanswering sea concerning the soul of man and the eternal mystery of human fate.

As a poet of nature, we feel that Swinburne's inspiration comes from intimate communion with sea and sun, with mountains and woods and stars, while as a poet of man his work is largely the product of bookish influence; the contact is made indirectly, through the medium of human records, philosophical systems, and works of literary art. In this sense Morris thought that Swinburne's poetry was too "literary," and there is a certain justice in the criticism. Literature is certainly one of the main themes of his work, not in prose alone, for the number of his poems that are devoted to the praise of great writers is very large. A typical illustration of this is provided by his series of twenty-

two *Sonnets on English Dramatic Poets*, which characterize, one by one, in concise and discriminating terms, the entire line of Elizabethan dramatists. His poetical tributes to Chaucer, Sidney, Marlowe, Shelley, Lamb, Browning, Baudelaire, and Gautier, are other notable examples of this section of his work. Many pieces of this character inscribed to his contemporaries are expressions of both artistic admiration and tender personal affection. The generous warmth of these personal poems show him to have a rare genius for friendship. But his most extraordinary achievements in the glorification of other poets are found in his great odes to Victor Hugo and Walter Savage Landor. Here he indulges himself in "the noble pleasure of praising" to his heart's content. The exuberance of the poetical hero-worship here displayed has brought upon him the charge of extravagance, and his array of laudatory terms is sometimes such as would be difficult to justify in the dry light of the critical reason. But enthusiasm of this type is a fine and inspiring thing, and, if he does over-emphasize the critical function of praise, shall it not be imputed to him for righteousness in an age when the tendency of criticism, and of literary scholarship in general, runs too far in the direction of historical explanation and dispassionate analysis?

Nor are the poets the only recipients of his enthusiastic laudation. Throned with Hugo and Landor in the special pantheon of his idolatry is Giuseppe Mazzini, the apostle of the regeneration of Italy. In helping us to understand and feel the supreme spiritual importance of Mazzini's devoted labors in behalf of his

country, Swinburne has done what the historians have signally failed in doing. "It is well for the world," says Frederic Myers, "that the representative, for poetry even more than for history, of the last great struggle where all chivalrous sympathies could range themselves undoubtingly on one side, should have received a crown of song such as had scarcely before been laid at the feet of any living hero." It would be difficult to find anywhere in modern poetry a worthier panegyric of a life of pure and noble endeavor than is embodied in the beautiful dedication to Mazzini of the *Songs before Sunrise*, the magnificent pæan of *A Song of Italy*, and the exquisite verses written for the Genoese monument. Memorable tributes are also paid to Louis Blanc, Richard Wagner, Aurelio Saffi, and the Countess Cairolì, who gave four sons to the cause of Italian freedom. Among the poems of more purely personal interest, none are more touching and tender than those which serve as dedications to his several volumes.

The political happenings of the last half of the nineteenth century found in Swinburne a keen observer and an eager partisan of every righteous cause; at least, of every cause in any way identified with the freedom of the body or the spirit of man. The two movements which enlisted his sympathies most passionately were those which led to the creation of United Italy and the restoration of the French Republic. To the former movement we owe, not only the personal tributes to its heroes already mentioned, but also the whole collection of *Songs before Sunrise*, that well-nigh in-

comparable outpouring of lyrical beauty. It may be doubted if within the limits of any other single volume of English poetry there may be found, in such spontaneity of flow and amplitude of stream, such rich and varied utterance, such ardor of love and scorn, and such expression of the most exalted ethical idealism. And as a pendant to this volume we have the rapturous *Song of Italy*, hymning the splendor of the sun at last arisen. This is one of the two long poems included in the *Songs of Two Nations*. The other is the stately *Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic*, which is almost entitled to rank as a third in the company of *Athens* and *The Armada*. The twenty-four sonnets called *Dirae* fill out this volume, and their name is a very literal description of their contents. They are curses hurled at the contemporary oppressors of French and Italian liberty — Ferdinand II of Naples, Pius IX, and Louis Napoleon — and carry grim irony, stinging satire, and fierce invective to the utmost permissible limits, if not beyond, out-vying the *Châtiments* of Victor Hugo in their terrific denunciation of that modern “saviour of society,” Napoleon the Little. It may be said that such vehemence of utterance defeats its own purpose, that a more restrained expression would also be more effective. But however uncomfortably we may be stirred by the intensity of the poet’s emotion, it must be observed that his lack of restraint does not extend to the artistic form of his expression, for that is as flawless as if it were concerned with the gentlest and least passionate of themes. And “if wrath” thus “embitter the

sweet mouth of song," there are nevertheless many who, considering the deep wrongs that engaged his eloquence, will find in the poet's own closing *Apologia* the sufficient justification of his most intemperate speech.

Swinburne has more than once declared himself to be a republican, yet his devotion to that abstract political idea has not dimmed his patriotism in the better sense. He is clear-sighted enough to realize that the English monarchy is a historical inheritance not lightly to be done away with, and also to realize that England has attained the highest form of constitutional freedom, while preserving her ancient framework of government. He does not hesitate, any more than did Coleridge and Wordsworth in their earlier years, to censure England for her sins of commission, or for her historical failures to rise to the opportunities thrown in her path by fate, nor does he fail to condemn alike the excesses of modern toryism and the compromises of modern liberalism; but for all that, and for all his republicanism, he glories in the national record as a whole, and holds unshaken the faith that

"Where the footfall sounds of England, where the smile of England shines,
Rings the tread and laughs the face of freedom, fair as hope
divines
Days to be, more brave than ours and lit by lordlier stars for signs.

.

"All our past acclaims our future: Shakespeare's voice and Nelson's hand,
Milton's faith and Wordsworth's trust in this our chosen and
chainless land,
Bear us witness: come the world against her, England yet shall
stand."

Swinburne's ideal of the Republic is not a belief in mob-rule or in the divine mandate of every popular impulse ; it is rather the ideal of Milton and Landor and Mazzini, the ideal of a commonwealth in which the people shall be wise enough to trust those whom they have exalted to leadership, in which a recognition of the duties of man shall be held of more importance than a clamorous insistence upon his rights. Such an ideal may be approximately realized — and has been so realized in England — under the forms of monarchy, and so, ungrudgingly, yet in no spirit of servility, the poet has sung the praises of the past, has justified the present order temporarily existing, and has joined sincerely in the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee and other recent occasions of national rejoicing.

Swinburne's attitude toward the fundamental notions of religious belief has been variously described as that of paganism, pantheism, and pananthropism. It is a pagan attitude only in so far as he has given us a vivid setting forth of the contrast between classical and Christian ideals. In the *Hymn to Proserpine* and *The Last Oracle*, still more in the two Greek tragedies, he has presented the pagan point of view with so marvellous a degree of insight and penetrative sympathy that some of his readers have taken for a confession of faith what is no more than a study in dramatic effect. A real confession of faith, no doubt, is embodied in *Hertha* and the *Hymn of Man*, and those who wish to call this faith pantheistic or pananthropomorphic are welcome to the terms. They have lost whatever terrors they once had for timid minds, and now move in the best

theological society. Whatever we may call it, Swinburne's religion is that of one who resolutely rejects all dogmas and historical creeds, and with equal earnestness clings to the divine idea that underlies the creeds and bestows upon them their vitality. He draws the same sharp contrast that is drawn by Shelley and Hugo between the eternal spirit of Christianity and its historical accretions. Hugo wrote an effective reply, *To the Bishop Who Called Me Atheist*, completely turning the tables on his clerical assailant, and Swinburne might fairly treat his own critics in similar fashion. He must be a blind reader who cannot see that even the scathing stanzas of *Before a Crucifix* constitute in reality a defence of the Founder of Christianity against his caricaturists, —

“ Because of whom we dare not love thee ;
 Though hearts reach back and memories ache,
 We cannot praise thee for their sake.”

This poet, at least, is of those who

“ Change not the gold of faith for dross
 Of Christian creeds that spit on Christ.”

It is only the barest justice to apply to him the words which Browning wrote of Shelley : “ I call him a man of religious mind, because every audacious negative cast up by him against the Divine was interpenetrated with a mood of reverence and adoration, — and because I find him everywhere taking for granted some of the capital dogmas of Christianity, while most vehemently denying their historical basement.” The two poems which most clearly show forth his larger religious out-

took are unquestionably *Hertha* and the *Hymn of Man*. In them we have the expression of that God-intoxicated conception of the universe which penetrates beneath the distinction of subject and object, the distinction even of Creator and created, and rests upon the idea of the underlying unity, the idea of God everywhere immanent in nature. *Hertha*, in particular, may be a perplexing poem to the type of mind which finds a stumbling-block in Emerson's *Brahma*, but it is clear enough in its meaning to those who know their Goethe and their Spinoza. Swinburne made sport, in an ingenious parody, of Tennyson's *The Higher Pantheism*, but his own pantheism amounts to substantially the same thing.

The bond between ethics and religion is vital in all systems of thought that have an enduring hold upon the minds and hearts of men. And all poets who arouse, as Swinburne does, the deepest of our religious emotions, must bring fitting words to bear upon the conduct of life. It is the glory of the great English poets of the nineteenth century, of Shelley and Wordsworth, of Tennyson and Browning and Arnold, that they have met this obligation, not indeed with an offensive obtrusion of didacticism, but with a none the less emphatic pronouncement in favor of whatsoever things are lovely and of good report in human endeavor. Swinburne, in all but the unripened work of his earliest years, joins himself to the company of these men, and becomes an ethical teacher in the most persuasive and eloquent sense. The essential attributes of the Christian temper receive his fullest sympathy, save only the meek and lowly attitude, upon which he pours out the

vials of his scorn. Like Kant, he is filled with awe in contemplation of the boundless universe and of the soul of man alike, and the notion of humility does not comport with his exalted conception of man's spiritual possibilities. His attitude is that of Chapman, holding it unlawful that man "should stoop to any other law" than that laid down by his own higher nature, of Omar Khayyam, offering to treat with his Creator upon equal terms, and abating no jot or tittle of his own self-respect.

" A creed is a rod,
And a crown is of might ;
But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,

To grow straight in the strength of thy spirit, and live out thy life as the light."

It is in the prelude of the *Songs before Sunrise* that we find the most magnificent expression of the claims of the indomitable human spirit, of the soul that stands erect in the presence of all adverse fortunes, and bids defiance to all malign fates.

" Since only souls that keep their place
By their own light, and watch things roll,
And stand, have light for any soul."

This proud exaltation of the full-statured soul, secure in the consciousness of its own strength, is the key to Swinburne's ethics, through its close relation to his conception of duty and his strenuous demand for complete sacrifice of self, for utter and absolute devotion to the cause of man's bodily and spiritual freedom. This categorical imperative of Swinburne's ethics finds its noblest embodiment in *The Pilgrims* and *Super Flumina Baby-*

lonis. There is no finer ethical message in all English poetry than breathes through the lines of these two lofty poems. No other poet has forced upon us with greater impressiveness what Frederic Myers calls "the resolve that even if there be no moral purpose already in the world, man shall put it there; that even if all evolution be necessarily truncated, yet moral evolution, so long as our race lasts, there shall be; that even if man's virtue be momentary, he shall act as though it were an eternal gain." No foundation for the ethical life can be firmer than this, for it rests upon the very rock of human nature, and does not need to be buttressed by systems or creeds or imagined supernatural sanctions. It was an inspiring message that the finer spirits of the French Revolution bequeathed as a legacy to the nineteenth century; is not the message equally inspiring which the one great poet left living at the close of the nineteenth century has brought with his own hands to the twentieth century as a gift?

Having now passed in rapid review the leading aspects of Swinburne's poetry, its mastery of lyrical form, the influences that have shaped it, and the essential themes that have occupied its attention, a few words may be given to certain minor features that are needed to complete the picture. At one point only does his work come close to the common interests of every-day domestic life. As a lover of children, and as a singer of the mystery and winsomeness of childhood, he appeals to what is probably his widest audience. His ethical philosophy, his political passion, and his transcendental envisagement of nature are upon a plane so

lofty as to leave many readers unresponsive, but in childhood he has a theme universally attractive, and he has treated of it with a fragrance and tenderness unsurpassed in English poetry. A certain small amount of his work is of so topical a character that its interest lapsed with the occasions that gave rise to it, and nothing but its extraordinary cleverness and vigor makes it worthy of preservation. His verse of this sort is mainly political, and political verse is apt to lose its point when men have ceased to be excited by the exigencies which evoked it. Swinburne's imitative work is so remarkable that it calls for a special word of mention besides what has already been said of his facile writing of Greek, Latin, and French verse, and his English reproduction of classical metres. It is illustrated by his translations from Aristophanes and Villon, by his copying of the old poetical forms of Chaucerian tale, miracle play, and border ballad, and by the pieces in the *Heptalogia*, which parody with diabolical ingenuity the mannerisms of his English contemporaries. There is something positively uncanny in the wizardry which these things display, and in this many-sided virtuosity he stands alone among English poets.

The foregoing pages have set forth in some detail the grounds of Swinburne's title to a place among the greater poets of the English nineteenth century. His high rank among them, and the unique present isolation of his genius, are facts now so generally recognized by competent critics that they hardly admit of discussion. But with the masses of readers the case is different, and it must be confessed that Swinburne is little more

than a name to countless thousands who are on intimate terms with Tennyson and Browning. Two of his earliest works — *Atalanta in Calydon* and the famous first collection of *Poems and Ballads* — are widely familiar; the others are almost unknown. An obvious explanation of this singular state of affairs is offered by the fact that his works have been published in many small and expensive volumes, and thus made practically inaccessible to the larger public. A complete Tennyson or Browning may be had in a single volume at a moderate price; a complete Swinburne (counting the poetry alone) has hitherto meant the purchase of more than a score of volumes at almost prohibitive cost. Even the forthcoming collected edition will occupy eleven volumes, and will not do much toward placing the whole of Swinburne in the hands of readers in general. In addition to this very practical impediment, another quite as serious is offered by the too poetical character of his work. This may seem a paradoxical saying, but it is the simple truth that comparatively few readers of poetry appreciate it for its own sake. Even critics are apt to concern themselves overmuch with the accidentals of poetry, and nine readers out of every ten who claim to find enjoyment in the poets are really interested for the most part in their personality, their teaching, and what is frequently called their "message to the age." A great deal has been said in the present Introduction about Swinburne's ideas, but only because these ideas are embodied in forms of the richest literary art. He remains primarily a poet for poets, and for those frequent lovers of poetry who have some degree

of insight into the severe conditions self-imposed upon its genuine makers, some power of appreciating poetical effects apart from their investiture of thought. Now in the very choice of his themes Swinburne has deliberately eschewed the striving for popular applause. Aside from his lovely verses about children, there is no considerable group of poems that appeals to the common instincts of domesticity. He has written nothing of the type of Tennyson's *Maud* and *Enoch Arden* and *The Princess*. Although the passion of love counts for much in his work, it is not the form of love that Browning's *Men and Women* brings into such intimate relations with our own most vivid personal experiences; it is rather the form that is coupled with high endeavor and heroic energy, with fateful old-world histories, with Tristram and Yseult, with the Queen of Scots, with the English and the Lombard Rosamunds. This choice of themes, combined with a treatment that allows almost nothing for sentiment, that is both abstract and austere, is not calculated to bring the generality of readers into intimacy with his work; it requires a certain strenuousness of temper, a certain detachment from the habitual prosaic plane of life, to catch the contagion of his spirit, to participate in his pursuit of lofty and remote ideals. Taking all these things into account, it is small wonder that he should be no more popular a poet than Milton, that the phrases of his mintage should not have passed into general currency, that the winged words of his song should not have become widely domesticated as household words.

The popular estimate of Swinburne, as far as such

a thing exists, has been made mostly at second hand. It is a composite of hearsay, of superficial acquaintance with a few of the strays of his work, and of a legend based upon the sensational journalism of more than a generation ago. Into this estimate only a small and comparatively unimportant fraction of his work enters at all; the chief bulk of his writing, including nearly all its greatest achievements, simply does not exist. If the average glib critic, ready to dispose of Swinburne in a single contemptuous phrase, be closely questioned, he will be found to have in mind *Laus Veneris*, *Dolores*, and a few other juvenile pieces. But ask him of *Erechtheus* and *Bothwell* and *Thalassius* and the *Songs before Sunrise* and the great Odes, and you shall find him ignorant of their contents, perhaps of their very titles. To expose in detail the inadequacy of the common opinion thus based, is beyond the purpose of this essay. The selections that are given in the present volume may be trusted to perform that task without argument. But a moment's attention must be given to the two greatest of the misconceptions that seem to attach to Swinburne's work. One of them is the *vox et praeterea nihil* theory, the notion that his astounding verbal mastery is a cloak for the concealment of intellectual poverty. Now if anything has been made clear in the foregoing pages it is that his range of intellectual interests is wider than that of most poets, that in dealing with many of his subjects he is if anything overloaded with information. Yet the fact that he does not fling his learning at the reader in undigested lumps, but subordinates the exhibition to the strictest law of artistic expression,

becomes a pretext for charging him with vagueness and shallowness of thought, which is surely an illustration of what is called, in his own favorite phrase, "horny-eyed" criticism. A certain diffuseness is the condition of success in the long and swinging metres which best exemplify his powers, but when working in closer and severer forms, he can be as compact as Browning or Tennyson. The other popular misconception is that which makes him a poet of passion in the vulgar acceptance of the term. That this grotesque notion should still prevail is a direct consequence of the unfortunate manner of his introduction to the general public. It is based upon a few pieces only, full of the recklessness of exuberant youth, contained in that single early collection of poems of which he himself said at the time of its publication, —

"The youngest were born of boy's pastime,
The eldest are young."

And so to many people the poet of *Thalassius* and the *Songs before Sunrise* still stands for morbid sensualism ; the poet who almost more than any of his fellow singers exalts spirit above sense, and transports his readers into an atmosphere almost too rarefied for ordinary mortals to breathe, remains the poet of unregulated passion and defiance of the most universally accepted ethical sanctions. This affords a striking illustration of the persistence of an irrational prejudice, of the difficulty of destroying a legend once fixed in the popular imagination. Passion this poet has without doubt, and in abundance, but it is the passion of the intellect rather than

of the heart. It is the passion of Shelley's *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* or of Arnold's *Empedocles on Etna*. In his verse, —

“Thin, thin the pleasant human noises grow,
And faint the city gleams ;” —

we seem lifted into a thinner and purer air than invests our daily life, and brought into communion with the peaks and the stars. Nowhere else in our poetry, except in Wordsworth's loftiest flights, do we get this sense of spaciousness, of the free motion of the spirit in some supramundane sphere.

When the comparative claims made for the greater English poets of the nineteenth century shall receive their definite adjudication at the tribunal of criticism, there can be little doubt that to Shelley, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, in this ultimate reckoning, there will be conceded a higher place than that allowed to Swinburne. Keats and Coleridge, by virtue of a few perfect poems, Browning and Arnold, by virtue of a special appeal to the intellectual rather than the strictly æsthetic element in appreciation, may also be cherished by many with a deeper affection. Some may discover in Byron's “superb energy of sincerity and strength” a more positive inspiration ; some may recognize in Landor's severe yet wistful restraint a finer example ; some may even find in the artistic passion of Rossetti or in the golden haze of Morris a surer stimulus to the deeper sensibilities — but with all these, at least, Swinburne will be found fairly comparable in the impressiveness of his achievement as a whole. The rich

diversity of that achievement, the splendid artistry of its performance, and the high and austere idealism which informs it, are qualities that may safely be trusted to save it from the oblivion in which the work of all but the greatest poets becomes engulfed soon after they have passed away from among men.



Prefatory Note

THE poems in this volume are printed complete. The only exceptions to this rule are the choruses from *Atlanta in Calydon* and *Erechtheus*, and the sonnet on Browning, which is the last of a sequence of seven written at the time of his death. The editor has adopted a classified, instead of a chronological, arrangement of the poems selected, believing this to be the better of the two plans for the purpose of exhibiting the distinctive aspects of the poet's genius. Swinburne's work does not fall into periods, nor does it display the progressive refinement of art which would make the date of a poem especially significant. Between the poems of his youth and those of his maturer years there are no marked differences of artistic finish. There are, of course, a gradual ripening of thought and chastening of manner to be observed as we progress from his first volume to his last, yet in most cases it would be difficult to determine from internal evidence the approximate dates of the poems. Nevertheless, in the appended Notes each poem is referred to the volume in which it originally appeared, and this reference, taken in connection with the Chronological List of Writings, provides the means of placing the poems exactly where they belong.



Select Poems of Swinburne

ODES

ATHENS

AN ODE

ERE from under earth again like fire the violet
 kindle, [Str. 1.
 Ere the holy buds and hoar on olive-branches
 bloom,
Ere the crescent of the last pale month of winter
 dwindle,
 Shrink, and fall as falls a dead leaf on the
 dead month's tomb,
Round the hills whose heights the first-born
 olive-blossom brightened,
 Round the city brow-bound once with violets
 like a bride,
Up from under earth again a light that long
 since lightened
 Breaks, whence all the world took comfort
 as all time takes pride.

2 **Select Poems of Swinburne**

Pride have all men in their fathers that were
free before them,

 In the warriors that begot us free-born pride
 have we :

But the fathers of their spirits, how may men
adore them,

 With what rapture may we praise, who bade
 our souls be free ?

Sons of Athens born in spirit and truth are all
born free men ;

 Most of all, we, nurtured where the north wind
 holds his reign :

Children all we sea-folk of the Salaminian sea-
men,

 Sons of them that beat back Persia they that
 beat back Spain.

Since the songs of Greece fell silent, none like
ours have risen ;

 Since the sails of Greece fell slack, no ships
 have sailed like ours ;

How should we lament not, if her spirit sit in
prison ?

 How should we rejoice not, if her wreaths
 renew their flowers ?

All the world is sweeter, if the Athenian violet
quicken :

 All the world is brighter, if the Athenian sun
 return :

All things foul on earth wax fainter, by that
sun's light stricken :

All ill growths are withered, where those
fragrant flower-lights burn.

All the wandering waves of seas with all their
warring waters

Roll the record on for ever of the sea-fight
there,

When the capes were battle's lists, and all the
straits were slaughter's,

And the myriad Medes as foam-flakes on the
scattering air.

Ours the lightning was that cleared the north
and lit the nations,

But the light that gave the whole world light
of old was she :

Ours an age or twain, but hers are endless gen-
erations :

All the world is hers at heart, and most of all
are we.

Ye that bear the name about you of her glory,
Men that wear the sign of Greeks upon you
sealed,

[*Ant.* 1.

Yours is yet the choice to write yourselves in
story

Sons of them that fought the Marathonian
field.

4 **Select Poems of Swinburne**

Slaves of no man were ye, said your warrior
poet,

 Neither subject unto man as underlings :
Yours is now the season here wherein to show it,
 If the seed ye be of them that knew not kings.
If ye be not, swords nor words alike found
 brittle

 From the dust of earth to raise you shall pre-
vail :

Subject swords and dead men's words may stead
you little,

 If their old king-hating heart within you fail.
If your spirit of old, and not your bonds, be
 broken,

 If the kingless heart be molten in your
breasts,

By what signs and wonders, by what word or
token,

 Shall ye drive the vultures from your eagles'
nests ?

All the gains of tyrants Freedom counts for
losses ;

 Nought of all the work done holds she worth
the work,

When the slaves whose faith is set on crowns
and crosses

 Drive the Cossack bear against the tiger
Turk.

Neither cross nor crown nor crescent shall ye
bow to,

Nought of Araby nor Jewry, priest nor king :
As your watchword was of old, so be it now
too :

As from lips long stilled, from yours let heal-
ing spring.

Through the fights of old, your battle-cry was
healing,

And the Saviour that ye called on was the
Sun :

Dawn by dawn behold in heaven your God, re-
vealing

Light from darkness as when Marathon was
won.

Gods were yours yet strange to Turk or Galilean,

Light and Wisdom only then as gods adored :

Pallas was your shield, your comforter was
Pæan,

From your bright world's navel spake the Sun
your Lord.

Though the names be lost, and changed the
signs of Light and Wisdom be, [*Ep.* 1.

By these only shall men conquer, by these only
be set free :

When the whole world's eye was Athens, these
were yours, and theirs were ye.

6 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

Light was given you of your wisdom, light ye
gave the world again :

As the sun whose godhead lightened on her soul
was Hellas then :

Yea, the least of all her children as the chosen
of other men.

Change your hearts not with your garments, nor
your faith with creeds that change :

Truth was yours, the truth which time and
chance transform not nor estrange :

Purer truth nor higher abides not in the reach
of time's whole range.

Gods are they in all men's memories and for all
time's periods,

They that hurled the host back seaward which
had scourged the sea with rods :

Gods for us are all your fathers, even the least
of these as gods.

In the dark of days the thought of them is with
us, strong to save,

They that had no lord, and made the Great
King lesser than a slave ;

They that rolled all Asia back on Asia, broken
like a wave.

No man's men were they, no master's and no
God's but these their own ;

Gods not loved in vain nor served amiss, nor all
yet overthrown :

Love of country, Freedom, Wisdom, Light, and
none save these alone.

King by king came up against them, sire and
son, and turned to flee :

Host on host roared westward, mightier each
than each, if more might be :

Field to field made answer, clamorous like as
wave to wave at sea.

Strife to strife responded, loud as rocks to clan-
gorous rocks respond

Where the deep rings wreck to seamen held in
tempest's thrall and bond,

Till when war's bright work was perfect peace
as radiant rose beyond :

Peace made bright with fruit of battle, stronger
made for storm gone down,

With the flower of song held heavenward for
the violet of her crown

Woven about the fragrant forehead of the fos-
tress maiden's town.

Gods arose alive on earth from under stroke of
human hands :

As the hands that wrought them, these are dead,
and mixed with time's dead sands :

But the godhead of supernal song, though these
may stand not, stands.

Pallas is not, Phœbus breathes no more in breath-
ing brass or gold :

Save that tongues of after men, the children
of her peace,
Took the tale up of her glories, transient else
and rootless,
And in ears and hearts of all men left the
praise of Greece.
Fair the war-time was when still, as beacon
answering beacon,
Sea to land flashed fight, and thundered note
of wrath or cheer ;
But the strength of noonday night hath power
to waste and weaken,
Nor may light be passed from hand to hand
of year to year
If the dying deed be saved not, ere it die for
ever
By the hands and lips of men more wise than
years are strong ;
If the soul of man take heed not that the deed
die never,
Clothed about with purple and gold of story,
crowned with song.
Still the burning heart of man and boy alike
rejoices,
Hearing words which made it seem of old for
all who sang
That their heaven of heavens waxed happier
when from free men's voices

Well-beloved Harmodius and Aristogeiton rang.
 Never fell such fragrance from the flower-
 month's rose-red kirtle

As from chaplets on the bright friends' brows
 who slew their lord :

Greener grew the leaf and balmier blew the
 flower of myrtle

When its blossom sheathed the sheer tyran-
 nical sword.

None so glorious garland crowned the feast
 Panathenæan

As this wreath too frail to fetter fast the
 Cyprian dove :

None so fiery song sprang sunwards annual as
 the pæan

Praising perfect love of friends and perfect
 country's love.

Higher than highest of all those heavens where-
 from the starry [*Ant.* 2.]

Song of Homer shone above the rolling fight,
 Gleams like spring's green bloom on boughs all
 gaunt and gnarry

Soft live splendour as of flowers of foam in
 flight,

Glowa a glory of mild-winged maidens upward
 mounting

Sheer through air made shrill with strokes of
 smooth swift wings

Round the rocks beyond foot's reach, past eye-
sight's counting,

Up the cleft where iron wind of winter rings
Round a God fast clenched in iron jaws of
fettors,

Him who culled for man the fruitful flower
of fire,

Bared the darkling scriptures writ in dazzling
letters,

Taught the truth of dreams deceiving men's
desire,

Gave their water-wandering chariot-seats of
ocean

Wings, and bade the rage of war-steeds champ
the rein,

Showed the symbols of the wild birds' wheeling
motion,

Waged for man's sake war with God and all
his train.

Earth, whose name was also Righteousness, a
mother

Many-named and single-natured, gave him
breath

Whence God's wrath could wring but this word
and none other —

He may smite me, yet he shall not do to death.

Him the tongue that sang triumphant while tor-
mented

Sang as loud the sevenfold storm that roared
 erewhile
 Round the towers of Thebes till wrath might
 rest contented :
 Sang the flight from smooth soft-sanded banks
 of Nile,
 When like mateless doves that fly from snare or
 tether
 Came the suppliants landwards trembling as
 they trod,
 And the prayer took wing from all their tongues
 together —
 King of kings, most holy of holies, blessed God.
 But what mouth may chant again, what heart
 may know it,
 All the rapture that all hearts of men put on
 When of Salamis the time-transcending poet
 Sang, whose hand had chased the Mede at
 Marathon ?

Darker dawned the song with stormier wings
 above the watch-fire spread [*Ep. 2.*
 Whence from Ida toward the hill of Hermes
 leapt the light that said
 Troy was fallen, a torch funereal for the king's
 triumphal head.
 Dire indeed the birth of Leda's womb that had
 God's self to sire

Bloomed, a flower of love that stung the soul
with fangs that gnaw like fire :
But the twin-born human-fathered sister-flower
bore fruit more dire.
Scarce the cry that called on airy heaven and all
swift winds on wing,
Wells of river-heads, and countless laugh of
waves past reckoning,
Earth which brought forth all, and the orbèd
sun that looks on everything,
Scarce that cry fills yet men's hearts more full
of heart-devouring dread
Than the murderous word said mocking, how
the child whose blood he shed
Might clasp fast and kiss her father where the
dead salute the dead.
But the latter note of anguish from the lips that
mocked her lord,
When her son's hand bared against the breast
that suckled him his sword,
How might man endure, O Æschylus, to hear
it and record ?
How might man endure, being mortal yet, O
thou most highest, to hear ?
How record, being born of woman ? Surely
not thy Furies near,
Surely this beheld, this only, blasted hearts to
death with fear.

Not the hissing hair, nor flakes of blood that
 oozed from eyes of fire,
Nor the snort of savage sleep that snuffed the
 hungering heart's desire
Where the hunted prey found hardly space and
 harbour to respire;
She whose likeness called them — "Sleep ye,
 ho? what need of you that sleep?"
(Ah, what need indeed, where she was, of all
 shapes that night may keep
Hidden dark as death and deeper than men's
 dreams of hell are deep?)
She the murderess of her husband, she the hunt-
 ress of her son,
More than ye was she, the shadow that no God
 withstands but one,
Wisdom equal-eyed and stronger and more
 splendid than the sun.
Yea, no God may stand betwixt us and the
 shadows of our deeds,
Nor the light of dreams that lighten darkness,
 nor the prayer that pleads,
But the wisdom equal-souled with heaven, the
 light alone that leads.
Light whose law bids home those childless chil-
 dren of eternal night,
Soothed and reconciled and mastered and trans-
 muted in men's sight

Who behold their own souls, clothed with dark-
ness once, now clothed with light.
King of kings and father crowned of all our
fathers crowned of yore,
Lord of all the lords of song, whose head all
heads bow down before,
Glory be to thee from all thy sons in all tongues
evermore.

Rose and vine and olive and deep ivy-bloom
entwining [Str. 3.
Close the goodliest grave that e'er they close-
liest might entwine
Keep the wind from wasting and the sun from
too strong shining
Where the sound and light of sweetest songs
still float and shine.
Here the music seems to illumine the shade, the
light to whisper
Song, the flowers to put not odours only forth,
but words
Sweeter far than fragrance: here the wandering
wreaths twine crisper
Far, and louder far exults the note of all wild
birds.
Thoughts that change us, joys that crown and
sorrows that enthrone us,
Passions that enrobe us with a clearer air
than ours,

Move and breathe as living things beheld round
white Colonus,

Audibler than melodies and visibler than
flowers.

Love, in fight unconquered, Love, with spoils
of great men laden,

Never sang so sweet from throat of woman
or of dove :

Love, whose bed by night is in the soft cheeks
of a maiden,

And his march is over seas, and low roofs
lack not Love ;

Nor may one of all that live, ephemeral or eter-
nal,

Fly nor hide from Love ; but whoso clasps
him fast goes mad.

Never since the first-born year with flowers first-
born grew vernal

Such a song made listening hearts of lovers
glad or sad.

Never sounded note so radiant at the rayless
portal

Opening wide on the all-concealing lowland
of the dead

As the music mingling, when her doomsday
marked her mortal,

From her own and old men's voices round the
bride's way shed,

Round the grave her bride-house, hewn for endless habitation,

Where, shut out from sunshine, with no bridegroom by, she slept ;

But beloved of all her dark and fateful generation,

But with all time's tears and praise besprinkled and bewept :

Well-beloved of outcast father and self-slaughtered mother,

Born, yet unpolluted, of their blind incestuous bed ;

Best-beloved of him for whose dead sake she died, her brother,

Hallowing by her own life's gift her own born brother's head ;

Not with wine or oil nor any less libation

Hallowed, nor made sweet with humbler perfume's breath ;

[*Ant.* 3.

Not with only these redeemed from desecration,

But with blood and spirit of life poured forth to death ;

Blood unspotted, spirit unsullied, life devoted,

Sister too supreme to make the bride's hope good,

Daughter too divine as woman to be noted,

Spouse of only death in mateless maidenhood.

Yea, in her was all the prayer fulfilled, the
saying

All accomplished — *Would that fate would let
me wear*

*Hallowed innocence of words and all deeds, weigh-
ing*

*Well the laws thereof, begot on holier air,
Far on high sublimely stablished, whereof only
Heaven is father; nor did birth of mortal
mould*

*Bring them forth, nor shall oblivion lull to lonely
Slumber. Great in these is God, and grows not
old.*

Therefore even that inner darkness where she
perished

Surely seems as holy and lovely, seen aright,
As desirable and as dearly to be cherished,

As the haunt closed in with laurels from the
light,

Deep inwound with olive and wild vine inwoven,
Where a godhead known and unknown makes
men pale,

But the darkness of the twilight noon is cloven
Still with shrill sweet moan of many a night-
ingale.

Closer clustering there they make sweet noise
together,

Where the fearful gods look gentler than our
fear,

And the grove thronged through with birds of
holiest feather

Grows nor pale nor dumb with sense of dark
things near.

There her father, called upon with signs of wonder,
Passed with tenderest words away by ways
unknown,

Not by sea-storm stricken down, nor touched of
thunder,

To the dark benign deep underworld, alone.

Third of three that ruled in Athens, kings with
sceptral song for staff, [Ep. 3

Gladdest heart that God gave ever milk and wine
of thought to quaff,

Clearest eye that lightened ever to the broad
lip's lordliest laugh,

Praise be thine as theirs whose tragic brows the
loftier leaf engirds

For the live and lyric lightning of thy honey-
hearted words,

Soft like sunny dewy wings of clouds and bright
as crying of birds ;

Full of all sweet rays and notes that make of
earth and air and sea

One great light and sound of laughter from one
great God's heart, to be

Sign and semblance of the gladness of man's life
where men breathe free.

With no Loxian sound obscure God uttered
once, and all time heard,

All the soul of Athens, all the soul of England,
in that word :

Rome arose the second child of freedom : north-
ward rose the third.

Ere her Boreal dawn came kindling seas afoam
and fields of snow,

Yet again, while Europe groaned and grovelled,
shone like suns aglow

Doria splendid over Genoa, Venice bright with
Dandolo.

Dead was Hellas, but Ausonia by the light of
dead men's deeds

Rose and walked awhile alive, though mocked
as whom the fen-fire leads

By the creed-wrought faith of faithless souls that
mock their doubts with creeds.

Dead are these, and man is risen again : and
haply now the three

Yet coequal and triune may stand in story,
marked as free

By the token of the washing of the waters of
the sea.

Athens first of all earth's kindred many-tongued
and many-kinned

Had the sea to friend and comfort, and for kins-
man had the wind :

She that bare Columbus next : then she that
made her spoil of Ind.
She that hears not what man's rage but only
what the sea-wind saith :
She that turned Spain's ships to cloud-wrack at
the blasting of her breath,
By her strengths of strong-souled children and of
strong winds done to death.
North and south the Great King's galleons went
in Persian wise : and here
She, with Æschylean music on her lips that
laughed back fear,
In the face of Time's grey godhead shook the
splendour of her spear.
Fair as Athens then with foot upon her foe-
man's front, and strong
Even as Athens for redemption of the world
from sovereign wrong,
Like as Athens crowned she stood before the
sun with crowning song.
All the world is theirs with whom is freedom :
first of all the free,
Blest are they whom song has crowned and
clothed with blessing : these as we,
These alone have part in spirit with the sun that
crowns the sea.

THE ARMADA

1588: 1888

I

I

ENGLAND, mother born of seamen, daughter
fostered of the sea,
Mother more beloved than all who bear not all
their children free,
Reared and nursed and crowned and cherished
by the sea-wind and the sun,
Sweetest land and strongest, face most fair
and mightiest heart in one,
Stands not higher than when the centuries
known of earth were less by three,
When the strength that struck the whole
world pale fell back from hers undone.

. II

At her feet were the heads of her foes bowed
down, and the strengths of the storm of
them stayed,
And the hearts that were touched not with
mercy with terror were touched and
amazed and affrayed:
Yea, hearts that had never been molten with
pity were molten with fear as with flame,

And the priests of the Godhead whose temple is
hell, and his heart is of iron and fire,
And the swordsmen that served and the seamen
that sped them, whom peril could tame
not or tire,
Were as foam on the winds of the waters of
England which tempest can tire not or
tame.

III

They were girded about with thunder, and light-
ning came forth of the rage of their
strength,
And the measure that measures the wings of
the storm was the breadth of their force
and the length :
And the name of their might was Invincible,
covered and clothed with the terror of
God ;
With his wrath were they winged, with his love
were they fired, with the speed of his
winds were they shod ;
With his soul were they filled, in his trust were
they comforted : grace was upon them
as night,
And faith as the blackness of darkness : the
fume of their balefires was fair in his
sight,

The reek of them sweet as a savour of myrrh
 in his nostrils : the world that he made,
Theirs was it by gift of his servants : the wind,
 if they spake in his name, was afraid,
And the sun was a shadow before it, the stars
 were astonished with fear of it : fire
Went up to them, fed with men living, and lit
 of men's hands for a shrine or a pyre ;
And the east and the west wind scattered their
 ashes abroad, that his name should be
 blest
Of the tribes of the chosen whose blessings are
 curses from uttermost east unto west.

II

I

Hell for Spain, and heaven for England, — God
 to God, and man to man, —
Met confronted, light with darkness, life with
 death : since time began,
 Never earth nor sea beheld so great a stake
 before them set,
 Save when Athens hurled back Asia from the
 lists wherein they met ;
Never since the sands of ages through the glass
 of history ran
 Saw the sun in heaven a lordlier day than
 this that lights us yet.

II

For the light that abides upon England, the
glory that rests on her godlike name,
The pride that is love and the love that is faith,
a perfume dissolved in flame,
Took fire from the dawn of the fierce July
when fleets were scattered as foam
And squadrons as flakes of spray ; when galleon
and galliass that shadowed the sea
Were swept from her waves like shadows that
pass with the clouds they fell from, and
she
Laughed loud to the wind as it gave to her
keeping the glories of Spain and Rome.

III

Three hundred summers have fallen as leaves
by the storms in their season thinned,
Since northward the war-ships of Spain came
sheer up the way of the south-west
wind :
Where the citadel cliffs of England are flanked
with bastions of serpentine,
Far off to the windward loomed their hulls, an
hundred and twenty-nine,
All filled full of the war, full-fraught with battle
and charged with bale ;
Then store-ships weighted with cannon ; and
all were an hundred and fifty sail.

The measureless menace of darkness anhungered
 with hope to prevail upon light,
 The shadow of death made substance, the present
 and visible spirit of night,
 Came, shaped as a waxing or waning moon that
 rose with the fall of day,
 To the channel where couches the Lion in guard
 of the gate of the lustrous bay.
 Fair England, sweet as the sea that shields her,
 and pure as the sea from stain,
 Smiled, hearing hardly for scorn that stirred her
 the menace of saintly Spain.

III

I

“They that ride over ocean wide with hempen
 bridle and horse of tree,”
 How shall they in the darkening day of wrath
 and anguish and fear go free?
 How shall these that have curbed the seas not
 feel his bridle who made the sea?

God shall bow them and break them now: for
 what is man in the Lord God's sight?
 Fear shall shake them, and shame shall break,
 and all the noon of their pride be night:
 These that sinned shall the ravening wind of
 doom bring under, and judgment smite.

England broke from her neck the yoke, and
rent the fetter, and mocked the rod :
Shrines of old that she decked with gold she
turned to dust, to the dust she trod :
What is she, that the wind and sea should fight
beside her, and war with God ?

Lo, the cloud of his ships that crowd her chan-
nel's inlet with storm sublime,
Darker far than the tempests are that sweep the
skies of her northmost clime ;
Huge and dense as the walls that fence the se-
cret darkness of unknown time.

Mast on mast as a tower goes past, and sail by
sail as a cloud's wing spread ;
Fleet by fleet, as the throngs whose feet keep
time with death in his dance of dread ;
Galleons dark as the helmsman's bark of old
that ferried to hell the dead.

Squadrons proud as their lords, and loud with
tramp of soldiers and chant of priests ;
Slaves there told by the thousandfold, made fast
in bondage as herded beasts ;
Lords and slaves that the sweet free waves shall
feed on, satiate with funeral feasts.

28 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

Nay, not so shall it be, they know ; their priests
 have said it ; can priesthood lie ?
God shall keep them, their God shall sleep not :
 peril and evil shall pass them by :
Nay, for these are his children ; seas and winds
 shall bid not his children die.

II

So they boast them, the monstrous host whose
 menace mocks at the dawn : and here
They that wait at the wild sea's gate, and watch
 the darkness of doom draw near,
How shall they in their evil day sustain the
 strength of their hearts for fear ?

Full July in the fervent sky sets forth her twen-
 tieth of changing morns :
Winds fall mild that of late waxed wild : no pre-
 sage whispers or wails or warns :
Far to west on the bland sea's breast a sailing
 crescent uprears her horns.

Seven wide miles the serene sea smiles between
 them stretching from rim to rim :
Soft they shine, but a darker sign should bid not
 hope or belief wax dim :
God's are these men, and not the sea's : their
 trust is set not on her but him.

God's ? but who is the God whereto the prayers
and incense of these men rise ?

What is he, that the wind and sea should fear
him, quelled by his sunbright eyes ?

What, that men should return again, and hail
him Lord of the servile skies ?

Hell's own flame at his heavenly name leaps
higher and laughs, and its gulfs rejoice :

Plague and death from his baneful breath take
life and lighten, and praise his choice :

Chosen are they to devour for prey the tribes
that hear not and fear his voice.

Ay, but we that the wind and sea gird round
with shelter of storms and waves

Know not him that ye worship, grim as dreams
that quicken from dead men's graves :

God is one with the sea, the sun, the land that
nursed us, the love that saves.

Love whose heart is in ours, and part of all
things noble and all things fair ;

Sweet and free as the circling sea, sublime and
kind as the fostering air ;

Pure of shame as is England's name, whose
crowns to come are as crowns that were

IV

I

But the Lord of darkness, the God whose love
 is a flaming fire,
The master whose mercy fulfils wide hell till its
 torturers tire,
He shall surely have heed of his servants who
 serve him for love, not hire.

They shall fetter the wing of the wind whose
 pinions are plumed with foam :
For now shall thy horn be exalted, and now
 shall thy bolt strike home ;
Yea, now shall thy kingdom come, Lord God
 of the priests of Rome.

They shall cast thy curb on the waters, and
 bridle the waves of the sea :
Then shall say to her, Peace, be still : and still-
 ness and peace shall be :
And the winds and the storms shall hear them,
 and tremble, and worship thee.

Thy breath shall darken the morning, and wither
 the mounting sun ;
And the daysprings, frozen and fettered, shall
 know thee, and cease to run ;

The heart of the world shall feel thee, and die,
and thy will be done.

The spirit of man that would sound thee, and
search out causes of things,
Shall shrink and subside and praise thee: and
wisdom, with plume-plucked wings,
Shall cower at thy feet and confess thee, that
none may fathom thy springs.

The fountains of song that await but the wind
of an April to be
To burst the bonds of the winter, and speak
with the sound of a sea,
The blast of thy mouth shall quench them: and
song shall be only of thee.

The days that are dead shall quicken, the sea-
sons that were shall return;
And the streets and the pastures of England, the
woods that burgeon and yearn,
Shall be whitened with ashes of women and
children and men that burn.

For the mother shall burn with the babe sprung
forth of her womb in fire,
And bride with bridegroom, and brother with
sister, and son with sire;

And the noise of the flames shall be sweet in
thine ears as the sound of a lyre.

Yea, so shall thy kingdom be stablished, and so
shall the signs of it be :

And the world shall know, and the wind shall
speak, and the sun shall see,

That these are the works of thy servants, whose
works bear witness to thee.

II

But the dusk of the day falls fruitless, whose
lights should have lit them on :

Sails flash through the gloom to shoreward,
eclipsed as the sun that shone :

And the west wind wakes with dawn, and the
hope that was here is gone.

Around they wheel and around, two knots to the
Spaniard's one,

The wind-swift warriors of England, who shoot
as with shafts of the sun,

With fourfold shots for the Spaniard's, that spare
not till day be done.

And the wind with the sundown sharpens, and
hurtles the ships to the lee,

And Spaniard on Spaniard smites, and shatters,
and yields ; and we,

Ere battle begin, stand lords of the battle,
acclaimed of the sea.

And the day sweeps round to the nightward ;
and heavy and hard the waves
Roli in on the herd of the hurtling galleons ;
and masters and slaves
Reel blind in the grasp of the dark strong wind
that shall dig their graves.

For the sepulchres hollowed and shaped of the
wind in the swerve of the seas,
The graves that gape for their pasture, and
laugh, thrilled through by the breeze,
The sweet soft merciless waters, await and are
fain of these.

As the hiss of a Python heaving in menace of
doom to be
They hear through the clear night round them,
whose hours are as clouds that flee,
The whisper of tempest sleeping, the heave and
the hiss of the sea.

But faith is theirs, and with faith are they girded
and helmed and shod :
Invincible are they, almighty, elect for a sword
and a rod ;

34 **Select Poems of Swinburne**

Invincible even as their God is omnipotent,
infinite, God.

In him is their strength, who have sworn that
his glory shall wax not dim :

In his name are their war-ships hallowed as
mightiest of all that swim :

The men that shall cope with these, and conquer,
shall cast out him.

In him is the trust of their hearts ; the desire of
their eyes is he ;

The light of their ways, made lightning for men
that would fain be free :

Earth's hosts are with them, and with them is
heaven : but with us is the sea.

V

I

And a day and a night pass over ;

And the heart of their chief swells high ;

For England, the warrior, the rover,

Whose banners on all winds fly,

Soul-stricken, he saith, by the shadow of death,
holds off him, and draws not nigh.

And the wind and the dawn together

Make in from the gleaming east :

And fain of the wild glad weather
As famine is fain of feast,
And fain of the fight, forth sweeps in its
might the host of the Lord's high priest.

And lightly before the breeze
The ships of his foes take wing :
Are they scattered, the lords of the seas ?
Are they broken, the foes of the king ?
And ever now higher as a mounting fire the
hopes of the Spaniard spring.

And a windless night comes down :
And a breezeless morning, bright
With promise of praise to crown
The close of the crowning fight,
Leaps up as the foe's heart leaps, and glows
with lustrous rapture of light.

And stunted of gear for battle
The ships of the sea's folk lie,
Unwarlike, herded as cattle,
Six miles from the foeman's eye
That fastens as flame on the sight of them tame
and offenceless, and ranged as to die.

Surely the souls in them quail,
They are stricken and withered at heart,

36 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

When in on them, sail by sail,
 Fierce marvels of monstrous art,
Tower darkening on tower till the sea-winds
 cower crowds down as to hurl them
 apart.

And the windless weather is kindly,
 And comforts the host in these;
And their hearts are uplift in them blindly,
 And blindly they boast at ease
That the next day's fight shall exalt them, and
 smite with destruction the lords of the
 seas.

II

And lightly the proud hearts prattle,
 And lightly the dawn draws nigh,
The dawn of the doom of the battle
 When these shall falter and fly;
No day more great in the roll of fate filled ever
 with fire the sky.

To fightward they go as to feastward,
 And the tempest of ships that drive
Sets eastward ever and eastward,
 Till closer they strain and strive;
And the shots that rain on the hulls of Spain
 are as thunders afire and alive.

And about them the blithe sea smiles
And flashes to windward and lee
Round capes and headlands and isles
That heed not if war there be ;
Round Sark, round Wight, green jewels of light
in the ring of the golden sea.

But the men that within them abide
Are stout of spirit and stark
As rocks that repel the tide,
As day that repels the dark ;
And the light bequeathed from their swords
unsheathed shines lineal on Wight and
on Sark.

And eastward the storm sets ever,
The storm of the sails that strain
And follow and close and sever
And lose and return and gain ;
And English thunder divides in sunder the holds
of the ships of Spain.

Southward to Calais, appalled
And astonished, the vast fleet veers ;
And the skies are shrouded and palled,
But the moonless midnight hears
And sees how swift on them drive and drift
strange flames that the darkness fears.

They fly through the night from shoreward,
 Heart-stricken till morning break,
 And ever to scourge them forward
 Drives down on them England's Drake,
 And hurls them in as they hurtle and spin and
 stagger, with storm to wake.

VI

I

And now is their time come on them. For
 eastward they drift and reel,
 With the shallows of Flanders ahead, with
 destruction and havoc at heel,
 With God for their comfort only, the God
 whom they serve ; and here
 Their Lord, of his great loving-kindness, may
 revel and make good cheer ;
 Though ever his lips wax thirstier with drink-
 ing, and hotter the lusts in him swell ;
 For he feeds the thirst that consumes him with
 blood, and his winepress fumes with the
 reek of hell.

II

Fierce noon beats hard on ' the battle ; the
 galleons that loom to the lee
 Bow down, heel over, uplifting their shelter-
 less hulls from the sea :

From scuppers aspart with blood, from guns
dismounted and dumb,

The signs of the doom they looked for, the
loud mute witnesses come.

They press with sunset to seaward for com-
fort: and shall not they find it there?

O servants of God most high, shall his winds not
pass you by, and his waves not spare?

III

The wings of the south-west wind are widened;
the breath of his fervent lips,

More keen than a sword's edge, fiercer than
fire, falls full on the plunging ships.

The pilot is he of their northward flight, their
stay and their steersman he;

A helmsman clothed with the tempest, and
girdled with strength to constrain the sea.

And the host of them trembles and quails,
caught fast in his hand as a bird in the
toils;

For the wrath and the joy that fulfil him are
mightier than man's, whom he slays and
spoils.

And vainly, with heart divided in sunder, and
labour of wavering will,

The lord of their host takes counsel with hope
if haply their star shine still,

If haply some light be left them of chance to
renew and redeem the fray ;
But the will of the black south-wester is lord
of the councils of war to-day.
One only spirit it quells not, a splendour un-
darkened of chance or time ;
Be the praise of his foes with Oquendo for ever,
a name as a star sublime.
But here what aid in a hero's heart, what help
in his hand may be ?
For ever the dark wind whitens and blackens
the hollows and heights of the sea,
And galley by galley, divided and desolate,
founders ; and none takes heed,
Nor foe nor friend, if they perish ; forlorn, cast
off in their uttermost need,
They sink in the whelm of the waters, as
pebbles by children from shoreward
hurled,
In the North Sea's waters that end not, nor
know they a bourn but the bourn of the
world.
Past many a secure unavailable harbour, and
many a loud stream's mouth,
Past Humber and Tees and Tyne and Tweed,
they fly, scourged on from the south,
And torn by the scourge of the storm-wind that
smites as a harper smites on a lyre,

And consumed of the storm as the sacrifice
loved of their God is consumed with
fire,

And devoured of the darkness as men that are
slain in the fires of his love are de-
voured,

And deflowered of their lives by the storms, as
by priests is the spirit of life deflowered.

For the wind, of its godlike mercy, relents not,
and hounds them ahead to the north,

With English hunters at heel, till now is the
herd of them past the Forth,

All huddled and hurtled seaward; and now need
none wage war upon these,

Nor huntsmen follow the quarry whose fall is
the pastime sought of the seas.

Day upon day upon day confounds them, with
measureless mists that swell,

With drift of rains everlasting and dense as the
fumes of ascending hell.

The visions of priest and of prophet beholding
his enemies bruised of his rod

Beheld but the likeness of this that is fallen on
the faithful, the friends of God.

Northward, and northward, and northward they
stagger and shudder and swerve and flit,

Dismantled of masts and of yards, with sails by
the fangs of the storm-wind split.

But north of the headland whose name is Wrath,
by the wrath or the ruth of the sea,
They are swept or sustained to the westward,
and drive through the rollers aloof to
the lee.

Some strive yet northward for Iceland, and
perish: but some through the storm-
hewn straits

That sunder the Shetlands and Orkneys are
borne of the breath which is God's or
fate's:

And some, by the dawn of September, at last
give thanks as for stars that smile,

For the winds have swept them to shelter and
sight of the cliffs of a Catholic isle.

Though many the fierce rocks feed on, and
many the merciless heretic slays,

Yet some that have laboured to land with their
treasure are trustful, and give God praise.

And the kernes of murderous Ireland, athirst
with a greed everlasting of blood,

Unslakable ever with slaughter and spoil, rage
down as a ravening flood,

To slay and to flay of their shining apparel their
brethren whom shipwreck spares;

Such faith and such mercy, such love and such
manhood, such hands and such hearts
are theirs.

Short shrift to her foes gives England, but
shorter doth Ireland to friends ; and
worse

Fare they that came with a blessing on treason
than they that come with a curse.

Hacked, harried, and mangled of axes and skenes,
three thousand naked and dead

Bear witness of Catholic Ireland, what sons of
what sires at her breasts are bred.

Winds are pitiful, waves are merciful, tempest
and storm are kind :

The waters that smite may spare, and the thunder
is deaf, and the lightning is blind :

Of these perchance at his need may a man,
though they know it not, yet find grace ;

But grace, if another be hardened against him,
he gets not at this man's face.

For his ear that hears and his eye that sees the
wreck and the wail of men,

And his heart that relents not within him, but
hungers, are like as the wolf's in his
den.

Worthy are these to worship their master, the
murderous Lord of lies,

Who hath given to the pontiff his servant the
keys of the pit and the keys of the skies.

Wild famine and red-shod rapine are cruel, and
bitter with blood are their feasts ;

But fiercer than famine and redder than rapine
the hands and the hearts of priests.
God, God bade these to the battle; and here,
on a land by his servants trod,
They perish, a lordly blood-offering, subdued by
the hands of the servants of God.
These also were fed of his priests with faith,
with the milk of his word and the
wine;
These too are fulfilled with the spirit of dark-
ness that guided their quest divine.
And here, cast up from the ravening sea on the
mild land's merciful breast,
This comfort they find of their fellows in wor-
ship; this guerdon is theirs of their
quest.
Death was captain, and doom was pilot, and
darkness the chart of their way;
Night and hell had in charge and in keeping the
host of the foes of day.
Invincible, vanquished, impregnable, shattered,
a sign to her foes of fear,
A sign to the world and the stars of laughter,
the fleet of the Lord lies here.
Nay, for none may declare the place of the ruin
wherein she lies;
Nay, for none hath beholden the grave whence
never a ghost shall rise.

The fleet of the foemen of England hath found
not one but a thousand graves ;
And he that shall number and name them shall
number by name and by tale the waves.

VII

I

Sixtus, Pope of the Church whose hope takes
flight for heaven to dethrone the sun,
Philip, king that wouldst turn our spring to
winter, blasted, appalled, undone,
Prince and priest, let a mourner's feast give
thanks to God for your conquest won.

England's heel is upon you : kneel, O priest,
O prince, in the dust, and cry,
“ Lord, why thus ? art thou wroth with us whose
faith was great in thee, God most high ?
Whence is this, that the serpent's hiss derides
us ? Lord, can thy pledged word lie ?

“ God of hell, are its flames that swell quenched
now for ever, extinct and dead ?
Who shall fear thee ? or who shall hear the
word thy servants who feared thee said ?
Lord, art thou as the dead gods now, whose
arm is shortened, whose rede is read ?

“ Yet we thought it was not for nought thy word
 was given us, to guard and guide :
Yet we deemed that they had not dreamed who
 put their trust in thee. Hast thou lied ?
God our Lord, was the sacred sword we drew
 not drawn on thy Church’s side ?

“ England hates thee as hell’s own gates ; and
 England triumphs, and Rome bows
 down :
England mocks at thee ; England’s rocks cast
 off thy servants to drive and drown :
England loathes thee ; and fame betroths and
 plights with England her faith for crown.

“ Spain clings fast to thee ; Spain, aghast with
 anguish, cries to thee ; where art thou ?
Spain puts trust in thee ; lo, the dust that soils
 and darkens her prostrate brow !
Spain is true to thy service ; who shall raise up
 Spain for thy service now ?

“ Who shall praise thee, if none may raise thy
 servants up, nor affright thy foes ?
Winter wanes, and the woods and plains forget
 the likeness of storms and snows :
So shall fear of thee fade even here : and what
 shall follow thee no man knows.”

Lords of night, who would breathe your blight
on April's morning and August's noon,
God your Lord, the condemned, the abhorred,
sinks hellward, smitten with deathlike
swoon :

Death's own dart in his hateful heart now thrills,
and night shall receive him soon.

God the Devil, thy reign of revel is here for
ever eclipsed and fled :

God the Liar, everlasting fire lays hold at last
on thee, hand and head :

God the Accurst, the consuming thirst that
burns thee never shall here be fed.

II

England, queen of the waves whose green in-
violable girdle enrings thee round,

Mother fair as the morning, where is now the
place of thy foemen found ?

Still the sea that salutes us free proclaims them
stricken, acclaims thee crowned.

Times may change, and the skies grow strange
with signs of treason and fraud and fear :

Foes in union of strange communion may rise
against thee from far and near :

Sloth and greed on thy strength may feed as
cankers waxing from year to year.

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

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

Truth is in thee, and none may win thee to lie,
 forsaking the face of truth :
Freedom lives by the grace she gives thee, born
 again from thy deathless youth :
Faith should fail, and the world turn pale, wert
 thou the prey of the serpent's tooth.

Greed and fraud, unabashed, unawed, may strive
 to sting thee at heel in vain :
Craft and fear and mistrust may leer and mourn
 and murmur and plead and plain :
Thou art thou : and thy sunbright brow is hers
 that blasted the strength of Spain.

Mother, mother beloved, none other could claim
in place of thee England's place :
Earth bears none that beholds the sun so pure
of record, so clothed with grace :
Dear our mother, nor son nor brother is thine,
as strong or as fair of face.

How shalt thou be abased ? or how shall fear
take hold of thy heart ? of thine,
England, maiden immortal, laden with charge of
life and with hopes divine ?
Earth shall wither, when eyes turned hither be-
hold not light in her darkness shine.

England, none that is born thy son, and lives,
by grace of thy glory, free,
Lives and yearns not at heart and burns with
hope to serve as he worships thee ;
None may sing thee : the sea-wind's wing beats
down our songs as it hails the sea.

ODE ON THE PROCLAMATION OF
THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

αἴλιον αἴλιον εἶπὲ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω

STROPHE I

WITH songs and crying and sounds of acclama-
tions,

Lo, the flame risen, the fire that falls in
showers!

Hark; for the word is out among the nations:

Look; for the light is up upon the hours:

O fears, O shames, O many tribulations,

Yours were all yesterdays, but this day ours.
Strong were your bonds linked fast with lamen-
tations,

With groans and tears built into walls and
towers;

Strong were your works and wonders of high
stations,

Your forts blood-based, and rampires of your
powers:

Lo now the last of divers desolations,

The hand of time, that gathers hosts like
flowers;

Time, that fills up and pours out generations;

Time, at whose breath confounded empire
cowers.

STR. 2

What are these moving in the dawn's red
gloom ?

What is she waited on by dread and doom,
Ill ministers of morning, bondmen born of
night ?

If that head veiled and bowed be morning's
head,

If she come walking between doom and dread,
Who shall rise up with song and dance before
her sight ?

Are not the night's dead heaped about her
feet ?

Is not death swollen, and slaughter full of
meat ?

What, is their feast a bride-feast, where men
sing and dance ?

A bitter, a bitter bride-song and a shrill

Should the house raise that such bride-
followers fill,

Wherein defeat weds ruin, and takes for bride-
bed France.

For nineteen years deep shame and sore desire
Fed from men's hearts with hungering fangs
of fire,

And hope fell sick with famine for the food of
change.

Now is change come, but bringing funeral urns ;
Now is day nigh, but the dawn blinds and
burns ;

Now time long dumb hath language, but the
tongue is strange.

We that have seen her not our whole lives
long,

We to whose ears her dirge was cradle-song,
The dirge men sang who laid in earth her living
head,

Is it by such light that we live to see
Rise, with rent hair and raiment, Liberty ?
Does her grave open only to restore her dead ?

Ah, was it this we looked for, looked and
prayed,

This hour that treads upon the prayers we
made,
This ravening hour that breaks down good and
ill alike ?

Ah, was it thus we thought to see her and
hear,

The one love indivisible and dear ?
Is it her head that hands which strike down
wrong must strike ?

STR. 3

Where is hope, and promise where, in all these things,
Shocks of strength with strength, and jar of hurtling kings?

Who of all men, who will show us any good?
Shall these lightnings of blind battles give men light?

Where is freedom? who will bring us in her sight,
That have hardly seen her footprint where she stood?

STR. 4

Who is this that rises red with wounds and splendid,

All her breast and brow made beautiful with scars,

Burning bare as naked daylight, undefended,
In her hands for spoils her splintered prison-bars,

In her eyes the light and fire of long pain ended,
In her lips a song as of the morning stars?

STR. 5

O torn out of thy trance,
O deathless, O my France,

O many-wounded mother, O redeemed to reign !
 O rarely sweet and bitter
 The bright brief tears that glitter
 On thine unclosing eyelids, proud of their own
 pain ;
 The beautiful brief tears
 That wash the stains of years
 White as the names immortal of thy chosen and
 slain.
 O loved so much so long,
 O smitten with such wrong,
 O purged at last and perfect without spot or
 stain,
 Light of the light of man,
 Reborn republican,
 At last, O first Republic, hailed in heaven again !
 Out of the obscene eclipse
 Rerisen, with burning lips
 To witness for us if we looked for thee in vain.

STR. 6

Thou wast the light whereby men saw
 Light, thou the trumpet of the law
 Proclaiming manhood to mankind ;
 And what if all these years were blind
 And shameful ? Hath the sun a flaw
 Because one hour hath power to draw
 Mist round him wreathed as links to bind ?

And what if now keen anguish drains
The very wellspring of thy veins
And very spirit of thy breath?
The life outlives them and disdains;
The sense which makes the soul remains,
And blood of thought which travaileth
To bring forth hope with procreant pains.
O thou that satest bound in chains
Between thine hills and pleasant plains
As whom his own soul vanquisheth,
Held in the bonds of his own thought,
Whence very death can take off nought,
Nor sleep, with bitterer dreams than death,
What though thy thousands at thy knees
Lie thick as grave-worms feed on these,
Though thy green fields and joyous places
Are populous with blood-blackening faces
And wan limbs eaten by the sun?
Better an end of all men's races,
Better the world's whole work were done,
And life wiped out of all our traces,
And there were left to time not one,
Than such as these that fill thy graves
Should sow in slaves the seed of slaves.

ANTISTROPHE I

Not of thy sons, O mother many-wounded,
Not of thy sons are slaves ingrafted and grown.

Was it not thine, the fire whence light re-
bounded

From kingdom on rekindling kingdom thrown,
From hearts confirmed on tyrannies confounded,
From earth on heaven, fire mightier than his
own ?

Not thine the breath wherewith time's clarion
sounded,

And all the terror in the trumpet blown ?

The voice whereat the thunders stood astounded
As at a new sound of a God unknown ?

And all the seas and shores within them bounded
Shook at the strange speech of thy lips
alone,

And all the hills of heaven, the storm-sur-
rounded,

Trembled, and all the night sent forth a
groan.

ANT. 2

What hast thou done that such an hour should
be

More than another clothed with blood to
thee ?

Thou hast seen many a bloodred hour before
this one.

What art thou that thy lovers should mis-
doubt ?

What is this hour that it should cast hope
out?

If hope turn back and fall from thee, what hast
thou done?

Thou hast done ill against thine own soul;
yea,

Thine own soul hast thou slain and burnt
away,

Dissolving it with poison into foul thin fume.

Thine own life and creation of thy fate

Thou hast set thy hand to unmake and dis-
create;

And now thy slain soul rises between dread and
doom.

Yea, this is she that comes between them
led;

That veiled head is thine own soul's buried
head,

The head that was as morning's in the whole
world's sight.

These wounds are deadly on thee, but dead-
lier

Those wounds the ravenous poison left on
her;

How shall her weak hands hold thy weak hands
up to fight?

Ah, but her fiery eyes, her eyes are these
 That, gazing, make thee shiver to the knees
 And the blood leap within thee, and the strong
 joy rise.

What, doth her sight yet make thine heart to
 dance ?

O France, O freedom, O the soul of France,
 Are ye then quickened, gazing in each other's
 eyes ?

Ah, and her words, the words wherewith she
 sought thee
 Sorrowing, and bare in hand the robe she
 wrought thee
 To wear when soul and body were again made
 one,
 And fairest among women, and a bride.
 Sweet-voiced to sing the bridegroom to her side,
 The spirit of man, the bridegroom brighter than
 the sun !

ANT. 3

Who shall help me ? who shall take me by the
 hand ?
 Who shall teach mine eyes to see, my feet to
 stand,
 Now my foes have stripped and wounded me
 by night ?

Who shall heal me? who shall come to take
my part?

Who shall set me as a seal upon his heart,
As a seal upon his arm made bare for fight?

ANT. 4

If thou know not, O thou fairest among women,
If thou see not where the signs of him abide,
Lift thine eyes up to the light that stars grow
dim in,

To the morning whence he comes to take
thy side.

None but he can bear the light that love wraps
him in,

When he comes on earth to take himself
a bride.

ANT. 5

Light of light, name of names,
Whose shadows are live flames,

The soul that moves the wings of worlds upon
their way:

Life, spirit, blood and breath
In time and change and death

Substant through strength and weakness, ardour
and decay;

Lord of the lives of lands,
Spirit of man, whose hands

Weave the web through wherein man's centu-
 ries fall as prey ;
 That art within our will
 Power to make, save, and kill,
 Knowledge and choice, to take extremities and
 weigh ;
 In the soul's hand to smite
 Strength, in the soul's eye sight ;
 That to the soul art even as is the soul to
 clay ;
 Now to this people be
 Love ; come, to set them free,
 With feet that tread the night, with eyes that
 sound the day.

ANT. 6

Thou that wast on their fathers dead
 As effluent God effused and shed,
 Heaven to be handled, hope made flesh,
 Break for them now time's iron mesh ;
 Give them thyself for hand and head,
 Thy breath for life, thy love for bread,
 Thy thought for spirit to refresh,
 Thy bitterness to pierce and sting,
 Thy sweetness for a healing spring,
 Be to them knowledge, strength, life, light,
 Thou to whose feet the centuries cling
 And in the wide warmth of thy wing

Seek room and rest as birds by night,
O thou the kingless people's king,
To whom the lips of silence sing,
Called by thy name of thanksgiving
Freedom, and by thy name of might
Justice, and by thy secret name
Love; the same need is on the same
Men, be the same God in their sight!
From this their hour of bloody tears
Their praise goes up into thine ears,
Their bruised lips clothe thy name with praises,
The song of thee their crushed voice raises,
Their grief seeks joy for psalms to borrow,
With tired feet seeks her through time's mazes
Where each day's blood leaves pale the mor-
row
And from their eyes in thine there gazes
A spirit other far than sorrow —
A soul triumphal, white and whole
And single, that salutes thy soul.

EPODE

All the lights of the sweet heaven that sing
together,
All the years of the green earth that bare
man free;
Rays and lightings of the fierce or tender
weather,

Heights and lowlands, wastes and headlands
 of the sea,
Dawns and sunset, hours that hold the world in
 tether,
 Be our witnesses and seals of things to be.
Lo the mother, the Republic universal,
 Hands that hold time fast, hands feeding men
 with might,
Lips that sing the song of the earth, that make
 rehearsal
 Of all seasons, and the sway of day with
 night,
Eyes that see as from a mountain the dis-
 persal,
 The huge ruin of things evil, and the flight ;
Large exulting limbs, and bosom godlike
 moulded
 Where the man-child hangs, and womb
 wherein he lay ;
Very life that could it die would leave the soul
 dead,
 Face whereat all fears and forces flee away,
Breath that moves the world as winds a flower-
 bell folded,
 Feet that trampling the gross darkness beat
 out day.
 In the hour of pain and pity,
 Sore spent, a wounded city,

Her foster-child seeks to her, stately where she
stands ;

In the utter hour of woes,
Wind-shaken, blind with blows,

Paris lays hold upon her, grasps her with child's
hands ;

Face kindles face with fire,
Hearts take and give desire,

Strange joy breaks red as tempest on tormented
lands.

Day to day, man to man,
Plights love republican,

And faith and memory burn with passion to-
ward each other ;

Hope, with fresh heavens to track,
Looks for a breath's space back,

Where the divine past years reach hands to this
their brother ;

And souls of men whose death
Was light to her and breath

Send word of love yet living to the living
mother.

They call her, and she hears ;

O France, thy marvellous years,

The years of the strong travail, the triumphant
time,

Days terrible with love,
Red-shod with flames thereof,

Call to this hour that breaks in pieces crown
and crime ;

The hour with feet to spurn,
Hands to crush, fires to burn

The state whereto no latter foot of man shall
climb.

Yea, come what grief now may
By ruinous night or day,

One grief there cannot, one the first and last
grief, shame.

Come force to break thee and bow
Down, shame can come not now,

Nor, though hands wound thee, tongues make
mockery of thy name :

Come swords and scar thy brow,
No brand there burns it now,

No spot but of thy blood marks thy white-
fronted fame.

Now though the mad blind morrow
With shafts of iron sorrow

Should split thine heart, and whelm thine head
with sanguine waves ;

Though all that draw thy breath
Bled from all veins to death,

And thy dead body were the grave of all their
graves,

And thine unchilded womb
For all their tombs a tomb,

At least within thee as on thee room were none
for slaves.

This power thou hast, to be,
Come death or come not, free ;

That in all tongues of time's this praise be
chanted of thee,

That in thy wild worst hour

This power put in thee power,

And moved as hope around and hung as heaven
above thee,

And while earth sat in sadness

In only thee put gladness,

Put strength and love, to make all hearts of ages
love thee.

That in death's face thy chant

Arose up jubilant,

And thy great heart with thy great peril grew
more great :

And sweet for bitter tears

Put out the fires of fears,

And love made lovely for thee loveless hell and
hate ;

And they that house with error,

Cold shame and burning terror,

Fled from truth risen and thee made mightier
than thy fate.

This shall all years remember ;

For this thing shall September

Have only name of honour, only sign of white.
 And this year's fearful name,
 France, in thine house of fame
Above all names of all thy triumphs shalt thou
 write,
 When, seeing thy freedom stand
 Even at despair's right hand,
The cry thou gavest at heart was only of delight.

POEMS OF PAGANISM AND PANTHEISM

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

HERE, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And every thing but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
And far from eye or ear

Wan waves and wet winds labour,
Weak ships and spirits steer ;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither ;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born ;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell ;

Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes ;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands ;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born ;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn ;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings ;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things ;

Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
 And joy was never sure ;
To-day will die to-morrow ;
 Time stoops to no man's lure ;
And love, grown faint and fretful
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
 Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
 From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
 Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever ;
That dead men rise up never ;
That even the weariest river
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
 Nor any change of light :
Nor sound of waters shaken,
 Nor any sound or sight :

Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal ;
Only the sleep eternal
 In an eternal night.

HYMN TO PROSERPINE

(AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF THE
CHRISTIAN FAITH)

Vicisti, Galilæe.

I HAVE lived long enough, having seen one
 thing, that love hath an end ;
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me
 now and befriend.
Thou art more than the day or the morrow, the
 seasons that laugh or that weep ;
For these give joy and sorrow ; but thou, Pros-
 erpina, sleep.
Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet the
 feet of the dove ;
But a goodlier gift is thine than foam of the
 grapes or love.
Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and harp-
 string of gold,
A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God to be-
 hold ?

I am sick of singing: the bays burn deep and
chafe: I am fain
To rest a little from praise and grievous pleas-
ure and pain.
For the Gods we know not of, who give us our
daily breath,
We know they are cruel as love or life, and
lovely as death.
O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast forth,
wiped out in a day!
From your wrath is the world released, re-
deemed from your chains, men say.
New Gods are crowned in the city; their flow-
ers have broken your rods;
They are merciful, clothed with pity, the young
compassionate Gods.
But for me their new device is barren, the days
are bare;
Things long past over suffice, and men forgot-
ten that were.
Time and the Gods are at strife; ye dwell in
the midst thereof,
Draining a little life from the barren breasts of
love.
I say to you, cease, take rest; yea, I say to you
all, be at peace,
Till the bitter milk of her breast and the barren
bosom shall cease.

Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean ? but these thou
shalt not take,
The laurel, the palms and the pæan, the breasts
of the nymphs in the brake ;
Breasts more soft than a dove's, that tremble
with tenderer breath ;
And all the wings of the Loves, and all the joy
before death ;
All the feet of the hours that sound as a single
lyre,
Dropped and deep in the flowers, with strings
that flicker like fire.
More than these wilt thou give, things fairer
than all these things ?
Nay, for a little we live, and life hath mutable
wings.
A little while and we die ; shall life not thrive
as it may ?
For no man under the sky lives twice, outliving
his day.
And grief is a grievous thing, and a man hath
enough of his tears :
Why should he labour, and bring fresh grief to
blacken his years ?
Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean ; the
world has grown grey from thy breath ;
We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed
on the fulness of death.

74 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet
for a day ;

But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel
outlives not May.

Sleep, shall we sleep after all ? for the world is
not sweet in the end ;

For the old faiths loosen and fall, the new years
ruin and rend.

Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul is a
rock that abides ;

But her ears are vexed with the roar and her
face with the foam of the tides.

O lips that the live blood faints in, the leavings
of racks and rods !

O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of gib-
beted gods !

Though all men abase them before you in spirit,
and all knees bend,

I kneel not neither adore you, but standing, look
to the end.

All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits and
sorrows are cast

Far out with the foam of the present that
sweeps to the surf of the past :

Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and be-
tween the remote sea-gates,

Waste water washes, and tall ships founder, and
deep death waits :

Where, mighty with deepening sides, clad about
with the seas as with wings,
And impelled of invisible tides, and fulfilled of
unspeakable things,
White-eyed and poisonous-finned, shark-toothed
and serpentine-curved,
Rolls, under the whitening wind of the future,
the wave of the world.
The depths stand naked in sunder behind it,
the storms flee away ;
In the hollow before it the thunder is taken
and snared as a prey ;
In its sides is the north-wind bound ; and its salt
is of all men's tears ;
With light of ruin, and sound of changes, and
pulse of years :
With travail of day after day, and with trouble
of hour upon hour ;
And bitter as blood is the spray ; and the crests
are as fangs that devour :
And its vapour and storm of its steam as the
sighing of spirits to be ;
And its noise as the noise in a dream ; and its
depth as the roots of the sea :
And the height of its heads as the height of the
utmost stars of the air :
And the ends of the earth at the might thereof
tremble, and time is made bare.

Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins, will ye
chasten the high sea with rods ?

Will ye take her to chain her with chains, who
is older than all ye Gods ?

All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire shall ye pass
and be past ;

Ye are Gods, and behold, ye shall die, and the
waves be upon you at last.

In the darkness of time, in the deeps of the
years, in the changes of things,

Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and the
world shall forget you for kings.

Though the feet of thine high priests tread
where thy lords and our forefathers trod,

Though these that were Gods are dead, and
thou being dead art a God,

Though before thee the throned Cytherean be
fallen, and hidden her head,

Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy dead
shall go down to thee dead.

Of the maiden thy mother men sing as a god-
dess with grace clad around ;

Thou art throned where another was king ; where
another was queen she is crowned.

Yea, once we had sight of another : but now she
is queen, say these.

Not as thine, not as thine was our mother, a
blossom of flowering seas,

Clothed round with the world's desire as with
raiment and fair as the foam,
And fleeter than kindled fire, and a goddess and
mother of Rome.
For thine came pale and a maiden, and sister to
sorrow ; but ours,
Her deep hair heavily laden with odour and
colour of flowers,
White rose of the rose-white water, a silver
splendour, a flame,
Bent down unto us that besought her, and earth
grew sweet with her name.
For thine came weeping, a slave among slaves,
and rejected ; but she
Came flushed from the full-flushed wave, and
imperial, her foot on the sea.
And the wonderful waters knew her, the winds
and the viewless ways,
And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the sea-blue
stream of the bays.
Ye are fallen, our lords, by what token ? we wist
that ye should not fall.
Ye were all so fair that are broken ; and one
more fair than ye all.
But I turn to her still, having seen she shall
surely abide in the end ;
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me now
and befriend.

78 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

O daughter of earth, of my mother, her crown
and blossom of birth,

I am also, I also, thy brother ; I go as I came
unto earth.

In the night where thine eyes are as moons are
in heaven, the night where thou art,

Where the silence is more than all tunes, where
sleep overflows from the heart,

Where the poppies are sweet as the rose in our
world, and the red rose is white,

And the wind falls faint as it blows with the
fume of the flowers of the night,

And the murmur of spirits that sleep in the
shadow of Gods from afar

Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the deep
dim soul of a star,

In the sweet low light of thy face, under heavens
untrod by the sun,

Let my soul with their souls find place, and
forget what is done and undone.

Thou art more than the Gods who number the
days of our temporal breath ;

For these give labour and slumber ; but thou,
Proserpina, death.

Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a season
in silence. I know

I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep as they
sleep ; even so.

For the glass of the years is brittle wherein we
 gaze for a span ;
 A little soul for a little bears up this corpse
 which is man.¹
 So long I endure, no longer ; and laugh not
 again, neither weep.
 For there is no God found stronger than death ;
 and death is a sleep.

THE LAST ORACLE

(A. D. 361)

*εἶπατε τῷ βασιλῆϊ, χαμαὶ πέσε δαίδαλος αὐλά·
 οὐκέτι Φοῖβος ἔχει καλύβαν, οὐ μάντιδα δάφνην,
 οὐ παγὰν λαλέουσιν· ἀπέσβετο καὶ λάλον ὕδωρ.*

YEARS have risen and fallen in darkness or in
 twilight,
 Ages waxed and waned that knew not thee
 nor thine,
 While the world sought light by night and
 sought not thy light,
 Since the sad last pilgrim left thy dark mid
 shrine.
 Dark the shrine and dumb the fount of song
 thence welling,
 Save for words more sad than tears of blood,
 that said :

¹ *ψυχάριον εἰ βαστάζον νεκρόν.* ΕΡΙCTETUS.

Tell the king, on earth has fallen the glorious dwelling,

And the watersprings that spake are quenched and dead.

Not a cell is left the God, no roof, no cover ;

In his hand the prophet laurel flowers no more.

And the great king's high sad heart, thy true last lover,

Felt thine answer pierce and cleave it to the core.

And he bowed down his hopeless head

In the drift of the wild world's tide,

And dying, *Thou hast conquered*, he said,

Galilean ; he said it, and died.

And the world that was thine and was ours

When the Graces took hands with the

Hours

Grew cold as a winter wave

In the wind from a wide-mouthed grave,

As a gulf wide open to swallow

The light that the world held dear.

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,

Destroyer and healer, hear !

Age on age thy mouth was mute, thy face was hidden,

And the lips and eyes that loved thee blind and dumb ;

Song forsook their tongues that held thy name
forbidden,

Light their eyes that saw the strange God's
kingdom come.

Fire for light and hell for heaven and psalms for
pæans

Filled the clearest eyes and lips most sweet
of song,

When for chant of Greeks the wail of Galileans
Made the whole world moan with hymns of
wrath and wrong.

Yea, not yet we see thee, father, as they saw thee,
They that worshipped when the world was
theirs and thine,

They whose words had power by thine own
power to draw thee

Down from heaven till earth seemed more
than heaven divine.

For the shades are about us that hover

When darkness is half withdrawn

And the skirts of the dead night cover

The face of the live new dawn.

For the past is not utterly past

Though the word on its lips be the last,

And the time be gone by with its creed

When men were as beasts that bleed,

As sheep or as swine that wallow,

In the shambles of faith and of fear.

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,
Destroyer and healer, hear !

Yet it may be, lord and father, could we know it,
We that love thee for our darkness shall have
light

More than ever prophet hailed of old or poet
Standing crowned and robed and sovereign in
thy sight.

To the likeness of one God their dreams en-
thralled thee,

Who wast greater than all Gods that waned
and grew ;

Son of God the shining son of Time they called
thee,

Who wast older, O our father, than they
knew.

For no thought of man made Gods to love or
honour

Ere the song within the silent soul began,
Nor might earth in dream or deed take heaven
upon her

Till the word was clothed with speech by lips
of man.

And the word and the life wast thou,

The spirit of man and the breath ;

And before thee the Gods that bow

Take life at thine hands and death.

For these are as ghosts that wane,
That are gone in an age or twain;
Harsh, merciful, passionate, pure,
They perish, but thou shalt endure;
Be their flight with the swan or the swallow,
They pass as the flight of a year.
O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,
Destroyer and healer, hear!

Thou the word, the light, the life, the breath, the
glory,
Strong to help and heal, to lighten and to slay,
Thine is all the song of man, the world's whole
story;
Not of morning and of evening is thy day.
Old and younger Gods are buried or begotten
From uprising to downsetting of thy sun,
Risen from eastward, fallen to westward and
forgotten,
And their springs are many, but their end is
one.
Divers births of godheads find one death ap-
pointed,
As the soul whence each was born makes
room for each;
God by God goes out, discrowned and dis-
anointed,

But the soul stands fast that gave them shape
and speech.

Is the sun yet cast out of heaven ?

Is the song yet cast out of man ?

Life that had song for its leaven

To quicken the blood that ran

Through the veins of the songless years

More bitter and cold than tears,

Heaven that had thee for its one

Light, life, word, witness, O sun,

Are they soundless and sightless and hol-
low,

Without eye, without speech, without
ear ?

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,

Destroyer and healer, hear !

Time arose and smote thee silent at his warn-
ing,

Change and darkness fell on men that fell
from thee ;

Dark thou satest, veiled with light, behind the
morning,

Till the soul of man should lift up eyes and see.

Till the blind mute soul get speech again and
eyesight,

Man may worship not the light of life within ;

In his sight the stars whose fires grow dark in
thy sight

Shine as sunbeams on the night of death and
sin.

Time again is risen with mightier word of
warning,

Change hath blown again a blast of louder
breath ;

Clothed with clouds and stars and dreams that
melt in morning,

Lo, the Gods that ruled by grace of sin and
death !

They are conquered, they break, they are
stricken,

Whose might made the whole world pale ;

They are dust that shall rise not or quicken

Though the world for their death's sake
wail.

As a hound on a wild beast's trace,

So time has their godhead in chase ;

As wolves when the hunt makes head,

They are scattered, they fly, they are fled ;

They are fled beyond hail, beyond hollo,

And the cry of the chase, and the cheer.

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,

Destroyer and healer, hear !

Day by day thy shadow shines in heaven be-
holden,

Even the sun, the shining shadow of thy face :

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King, the ways of heaven before thy feet grow
golden ;

 God, the soul of earth is kindled with thy
 grace.

In thy lips the speech of man whence Gods
were fashioned,

 In thy soul the thought that makes them and
 unmakes ;

By thy light and heat incarnate and impassioned,
Soul to soul of man gives light for light and
takes.

As they knew thy name of old time could we
know it,

 Healer called of sickness, slayer invoked of
 wrong,

Light of eyes that saw thy light, God, king,
priest, poet,

 Song should bring thee back to heal us with
 thy song.

 For thy kingdom is past not away,

 Nor thy power from the place thereof
 hurled ;

 Out of heaven they shall cast not the day,

 They shall cast not out song from the
 world.

 By the song and the light they give

 We know thy works that they live ;

 With the gift thou hast given us of speech

We praise, we adore, we beseech,
 We arise at thy bidding and follow,
 We cry to thee, answer, appear,
 O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,
 Destroyer and healer, hear !

HERTHA

I AM that which began ;
 Out of me the years roll ;
 Out of me God and man ;
 I am equal and Whole ;
 God changes, and man, and the form of them
 bodily ; I am the soul.

Before ever land was,
 Before ever the sea,
 Or soft hair of the grass,
 Or fair limbs of the tree,
 Or the flesh-coloured fruit of my branches, I was,
 and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources
 First drifted and swam ;
 Out of me are the forces
 That save it or damn ;
 Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast and
 bird ; before God was, I am.

Beside or above me
Nought is there to go ;
Love or unlove me,
Unknow me or know,
I am that which unloves me and loves ; I am
stricken, and I am the blow.

I the mark that is missed
And the arrows that miss,
I the mouth that is kissed
And the breath in the kiss,
The search, and the sought, and the seeker, the
soul and the body that is.

I am that thing which blesses
My spirit elate ;
That which caresses
With hands uncreate
My limbs unbegotten that measure the length
of the measure of fate.

But what thing dost thou now,
Looking Godward, to cry
“ I am I, thou art thou,
I am low, thou art high ? ”
I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him ; find
thou but thyself, thou art I.

I the grain and the furrow,
The plough-cloven clod
And the ploughshare drawn thorough,
The germ and the sod,
The deed and the doer, the seed and the sower,
the dust which is God.

Hast thou known how I fashioned thee,
Child, underground?
Fire that impassioned thee,
Iron that bound,
Dim changes of water, what thing of all these
hast thou known of or found?

Canst thou say in thine heart
Thou has seen with thine eyes
With what cunning of art
Thou wast wrought in what wise,
By what force of what stuff thou wast shapen,
and shown on my breast to the skies?

Who hath given, who hath sold it thee,
Knowledge of me?
Hath the wilderness told it thee?
Hast thou learnt of the sea?
Hast thou communed in spirit with night? have
the winds taken counsel with thee?

Have I set such a star
 To show light on thy brow
That thou sawest from afar
 What I show to thee now ?
Have ye spoken as brethren together, the sun
 and the mountains and thou ?

What is here, dost thou know it ?
 What was, hast thou known ?
Prophet nor poet
 Nor tripod nor throne
Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer, but only
 thy mother alone.

Mother, not maker,
 Born, and not made ;
Though her children forsake her,
 Allured or afraid,
Praying prayers to the God of their fashion, she
 stirs not for all that have prayed.

A creed is a rod,
 And a crown is of night ;
But this thing is God,
 To be man with thy might,
To grow straight in the strength of thy spirit,
 and live out thy life as the light.

I am in thee to save thee,
As my soul in thee saith,
Give thou as I gave thee,
Thy life-blood and breath,
Green leaves of thy labour, white flowers of thy
thought, and red fruit of thy death.

Be the ways of thy giving
As mine were to thee ;
The free life of thy living,
Be the gift of it free ;
Not as servant to lord, nor as master to slave,
shalt thou give thee to me.

O children of banishment,
Souls overcast,
Were the lights ye see vanish meant
Always to last,
Ye would know not the sun overshadowing the
shadows and stars overpast.

I that saw where ye trod
The dim paths of the night
Set the shadow called God
In your skies to give light ;
But the morning of manhood is risen, and the
shadowless soul is in sight.

The tree many-rooted
That swells to the sky
With frondage red-fruited,
The life-tree am I ;
In the buds of your lives is the sap of my leaves :
ye shall live and not die.

But the Gods of your fashion
That take and that give,
In their pity and passion
That scourge and forgive,
They are worms that are bred in the bark that
falls off : they shall die and not live.

My own blood is what stanches
The wounds in my bark ;
Stars caught in my branches
Make day of the dark,
And are worshipped as suns till the sunrise shall
tread out their fires as a spark.

Where dead ages hide under
The live roots of the tree,
In my darkness the thunder
Makes utterance of me ;
In the clash of my boughs with each other ye
hear the waves sound of the sea.

That noise is of Time,
As his feathers are spread
And his feet set to climb
Through the boughs overhead,
And my foliage rings round him and rustles, and
branches are bent with his tread.

The storm-winds of ages
Blow through me and cease,
The war-wind that rages,
The spring-wind of peace,
Ere the breath of them roughen my tresses, ere
one of my blossoms increase.

All sounds of all changes,
All shadows and lights
On the world's mountain-ranges
And stream-riven heights,
Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and lan-
guage of storm-clouds on earth-shaking
nights ;

All forms of all faces,
All works of all hands
In unsearchable places
Of time-stricken lands,
All death and all life, and all reigns and all ruins,
drop through me as sands.

Though sore be my burden
 And more than ye know,
And my growth have no guerdon
 But only to grow,
Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings above
 me or deathworms below.

 These too have their part in me,
 As I too in these ;
Such fire is at heart in me,
 Such sap is this tree's,
Which hath in it all sounds and all secrets of
 infinite lands and of seas.

 In the spring-coloured hours
 When my mind was as May's,
There brake forth of me flowers
 By centuries of days,
Strong blossoms with perfume of manhood, shot
 out from my spirit as rays.

 And the sound of them springing
 And smell of their shoots
Were as warmth and sweet singing
 And strength to my roots ;
And the lives of my children made perfect with
 freedom of soul were my fruits.

I bid you but be ;
I have need not of prayer ;
I have need of you free
As your mouths of mine air ;
That my heart may be greater within me, be-
holding the fruits of me fair.

More fair than strange fruit is
Of faiths ye espouse ;
In me only the root is
That blooms in your boughs ;
Behold now your God that ye made you, to feed
him with faith of your vows.

In the darkening and whitening
Abysses adored,
With dayspring and lightning
For lamp and for sword,
God thunders in heaven, and his angels are red
with the wrath of the Lord.

O my sons, O too dutiful
Toward Gods not of me,
Was not I enough beautiful ?
Was it hard to be free ?
For behold, I am with you, am in you and of
you ; look forth now and see.

Lo, winged with world's wonders,
With miracles shod,
With the fires of his thunders
For raiment and rod,
God trembles in heaven, and his angels are
white with the terror of God.

For his twilight is come on him,
His anguish is here ;
And his spirits gaze dumb on him,
Grown grey from his fear ;
And his hour taketh hold on him stricken, the
last of his infinite year.

Thought made him and breaks him,
Truth slays and forgives ;
But to you, as time takes him,
This new thing it gives,
Even love, the beloved Republic, that feeds
upon freedom and lives.

For truth only is living,
Truth only is whole,
And the love of his giving
Man's polestar and pole ;
Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of my body,
and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom ;
One beam of mine eye ;
One topmost blossom
That scales the sky ;

Man, equal and one with me, man that is made
of me, man that is I.

HYMN OF MAN

(DURING THE SESSION IN ROME OF THE
ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL)

IN the grey beginning of years, in the twilight
of things that began,
The word of the earth in the ears of the world,
was it God? was it man?
The word of the earth to the spheres her sisters,
the note of her song,
The sound of her speech in the ears of the starry
and sisterly throng,
Was it praise or passion or prayer, was it love
or devotion or dread,
When the veils of the shining air first wrapt her
jubilant head?
When her eyes new-born of the night saw yet
no star out of reach;
When her maiden mouth was alight with the
flame of musical speech;

When her virgin feet were set on the terrible
 heavenly way,
And her virginal lids were wet with the dew of
 the birth of the day :
Eyes that had looked not on time, and ears that
 had heard not of death ;
Lips that had learnt not the rhyme of change
 and passionate breath,
The rhythmic anguish of growth, and the motion
 of mutable things,
Of love that longs and is loth, and plume-plucked
 hope without wings,
Passions and pains without number, and life that
 runs and is lame,
From slumber again to slumber, the same race
 set for the same,
Where the runners outwear each other, but run-
 ning with lampless hands
No man takes light from his brother till blind at
 the goal he stands :
Ah, did they know, did they dream of it, count-
 ing the cost and the worth ?
The ways of her days, did they seem then good
 to the new-souled earth ?
Did her heart rejoice, and the might of her spirit
 exult in her then,
Child yet no child of the night, and motherless
 mother of men ?

Was it Love brake forth flower-fashion, a bird
with gold on his wings,

Lovely, her firstborn passion, and impulse of
firstborn things?

Was Love that nestling indeed that under the
plumes of the night

Was hatched and hidden as seed in the furrow,
and brought forth bright?

Was it Love lay shut in the shell world-shaped,
having over him there

Black world-wide wings that impel the might
of the night through air?

And bursting his shell as a bird, night shook
through her sail-stretched vans,

And her heart as a water was stirred, and its
heat was the firstborn man's.

For the waste of the dead void air took form of
a world at birth,

And the waters and firmaments were, and light,
and the life-giving earth.

The beautiful bird unbegotten that night brought
forth without pain

In the fathomless years forgotten whereover the
dead gods reign,

Was it love, life, godhead, or fate? we say the
spirit is one

That moved on the dark to create out of dark-
ness the stars and the sun.

Before the growth was the grower, and the seed
ere the plant was sown ;
But what was seed of the sower ? and the grain
of him, whence was it grown ?
Foot after foot ye go back and travail and make
yourselves mad ;
Blind feet that feel for the track where highway
is none to be had.
Therefore the God that ye make you is grievous,
and gives not aid,
Because it is but for your sake that the God of
your making is made.
Thou and I and he are not gods made men for
a span,
But God, if a God there be, is the substance of
men which is man.
Our lives are as pulses or pores of his manifold
body and breath ;
As waves of his sea on the shores where birth is
the beacon of death.
We men, the multiform features of man, what-
soever we be,
Recreate him of whom we are creatures, and all
we only are he.
For each man of all men is God, but God is the
fruit of the whole ;
Indivisible spirit and blood, indiscernible body
from soul.

Not men's but man's is the glory of godhead,
the kingdom of time,
The mountainous ages made hoary with snows
for the spirit to climb.
A God with the world inwound whose clay to
his footsole clings ;
A manifold God fast-bound as with iron of ad-
verse things.
A soul that labours and lives, an emotion, a
strenuous breath,
From the flame that its own mouth gives re-
illumed, and refreshed with death.
In the sea whereof centuries are waves the live
God plunges and swims ;
His bed is in all men's graves, but the worm
hath not hold on his limbs.
Night puts out not his eyes, nor time sheds
change on his head ;
With such fire as the stars of the skies are the
roots of his heart are fed.
Men are the thoughts passing through it, the
veins that fulfil it with blood,
With spirit of sense to renew it as springs ful-
filling a flood.
Men are the heartbeats of man, the plumes that
feather his wings,
Storm-worn, since being began, with the wind
and thunder of things.

Things are cruel and blind ; their strength detains
and deforms :

And the wearying wings of the mind still beat
up the stream of their storms.

Still, as one swimming up stream, they strike out
blind in the blast,

In thunders of vision and dream, and lightnings
of future and past.

We are baffled and caught in the current and
bruised upon edges of shoals ;

As weeds or as reeds in the torrent of things
are the wind-shaken souls.

Spirit by spirit goes under, a foam-bell's bubble
of breath,

That blows and opens in sunder and blurs not
the mirror of death.

For a worm or a thorn in his path is a man's
soul quenched as a flame ;

For his lust of an hour or his wrath shall the
worm and the man be the same.

O God sore stricken of things ! they have
wrought him a raiment of pain ;

Can a God shut eyelids and wings at a touch on
the nerves of the brain ?

O shamed and sorrowful God, whose force goes
out at a blow !

What world shall shake at his nod ? at his com-
ing what wilderness glow ?

What help in the work of his hands? what
light in the track of his feet?

His days are snowflakes or sands, with cold to
consume him and heat.

He is servant with Change for lord, and for
wages he hath to his hire

Folly and force, and a sword that devours, and
a ravening fire.

From the bed of his birth to his grave he is driven
as a wind at their will;

Lest Change bow down as his slave, and the
storm and the sword be still;

Lest earth spread open her wings to the sun-
ward, and sing with the spheres;

Lest man be master of things, to prevail on their
forces and fears.

By the spirit are things overcome; they are stark,
and the spirit hath breath;

It hath speech, and their forces are dumb; it is
living, and things are of death.

But they know not the spirit for master, they
feel not force from above,

While man makes love to disaster, and woos
desolation with love.

Yea, himself too hath made himself chains, and
his own hands plucked out his eyes;

For his own soul only constrains him, his own
mouth only denies.

The herds of kings and their hosts and the flocks
of the high priests bow
To a master whose face is a ghost's; O thou
that wast God, is it thou?
Thou madest man in the garden; thou tempt-
edst man, and he fell;
Thou gavest him poison and pardon for blood
and burnt-offering to sell.
Thou hast sealed thine elect to salvation, fast
locked with faith for the key;
Make now for thyself expiation, and be thine
atonement for thee.
Ah, thou that darkenest heaven — ah, thou that
bringest a sword —
By the crimes of thine hands unforgiven they
beseech thee to hear them, O Lord.
By the balefires of ages that burn for thine in-
cense, by creed and by rood,
By the famine and passion that yearn and that
hunger to find of thee food,
By the children that asked at thy throne of the
priests that were fat with thine hire
For bread, and thou gavest a stone; for light,
and thou madest them fire;
By the kiss of thy peace like a snake's kiss, that
leaves the soul rotten at root;
By the savours of gibbets and stakes thou hast
planted to bear to thee fruit;

By torture and terror and treason, that make to
thee weapons and wings ;
By thy power upon men for a season, made out
of the malice of things ;
O thou that hast built thee a shrine of the mad-
ness of man and his shame,
And hast hung in the midst for a sign of his
worship the lamp of thy name ;
That hast shown him for heaven in a vision
a void world's shadow and shell,
And hast fed thy delight and derision with fire
of belief as of hell ;
That hast fleshed on the souls that believe thee
the fang of the death-worm fear,
With anguish of dreams to deceive them whose
faith cries out in thine ear ;
By the face of the spirit confounded before thee
and humbled in dust,
By the dread wherewith life was astounded and
shamed out of sense of its trust,
By the scourges of doubt and repentance that
fell on the soul at thy nod,
Thou art judged, O judge, and the sentence is
gone forth against thee, O God.
Thy slave that slept is awake ; thy slave but
slept for a span ;
Yea, man thy slave shall unmake thee, who made
thee lord over man.

For his face is set to the east, his feet on the
past and its dead ;
The sun rearsen is his priest, and the heat
thereof hallows his head.
His eyes take part in the morning ; his spirit
outsounding the sea
Asks no more witness or warning from temple
or tripod or tree.
He hath set the centuries at union ; the night is
afraid at his name ;
Equal with life, in communion with death, he
hath found them the same.
Past the wall unsurmounted that bars out our
vision with iron and fire
He hath sent forth his soul for the stars to com-
ply with and suns to conspire.
His thought takes flight for the centre where-
through it hath part in the whole ;
The abysses forbid it not enter : the stars make
room for the soul.
Space is the soul's to inherit ; the night is hers
as the day ;
Lo, saith man, this is my spirit ; how shall not
the worlds make way ?
Space is thought's, and the wonders thereof, and
the secret of space ;
Is thought not more than the thunders and
lightnings ? shall thought give place ?

Is the body not more than the vesture, the life
not more than the meat ?

The will than the word or the gesture, the heart
than the hands or the feet ?

Is the tongue not more than the speech is ? the
head not more than the crown ?

And if higher than is heaven be the reach of the
soul, shall not heaven bow down ?

Time, father of life, and more great than the
life it begat and began,

Earth's keeper and heaven's and their fate, lives,
thinks, and hath substance in man.

Time's motion that throbs in his blood is the
thought that gives heart to the skies,

And the springs of the fire that is food to the
sunbeams are light to his eyes.

The minutes that beat with his heart are the
words to which worlds keep chime,

And the thought in his pulses is part of the
blood and the spirit of time.

He saith to the ages, Give ; and his soul fore-
goes not her share ;

Who are ye that forbid him to live, and would
feed him with heavenlier air ?

Will ye feed him with poisonous dust, and re-
store him with hemlock for drink,

Till he yield you his soul up in trust, and have
heart not to know or to think ?

He hath stirred him, and found out the flaw in
his fetters, and cast them behind ;
His soul to his soul is a law, and his mind is
a light to his mind.
The seal of his knowledge is sure, the truth and
his spirit are wed ;
Men perish, but man shall endure ; lives die,
but the life is not dead.
He hath sight of the secrets of season, the roots
of the years and the fruits ;
His soul is at one with the reason of things that
is sap to the roots.
He can hear in their changes a sound as the
conscience of consonant spheres ;
He can see through the years flowing round
him the law lying under the years.
Who are ye that would bind him with curses
and blind him with vapour of prayer ?
Your might is as night that disperses when light
is alive in the air.
The bow of your godhead is broken, the arm
of your conquest is stayed ;
Though ye call down God to bear token, for
fear of you none is afraid.
Will ye turn back times, and the courses of
stars, and the season of souls ?
Shall God's breath dry up the sources that feed
time full as it rolls ?

Nay, cry on him then till he show you a sign,
till he lift up a rod ;
Hath he made not the nations to know him of
old if indeed he be God ?
Is no heat of him left in the ashes of thousands
burnt up for his sake ?
Can prayer not rekindle the flashes that shone
in his face from the stake ?
Cry aloud ; for your God is a God and a Saviour ;
cry, make yourselves lean ;
Is he drunk or asleep, that the rod of his wrath
is unfelt and unseen ?
Is the fire of his old loving-kindness gone out,
that his pyres are acold ?
Hath he gazed on himself unto blindness, who
made men blind to behold ?
Cry out, for his kingdom is shaken ; cry out, for
the people blaspheme ;
Cry aloud till his godhead awaken ; what doth
he to sleep and to dream ?
Cry, cut yourselves, gash you with knives and
with scourges, heap on to you dust ;
Is his life but as other gods' lives ? is not this
the Lord God of your trust ?
Is not this the great God of your sires, that with
souls and with bodies was fed,
And the world was on flame with his fires ? O
fools, he was God, and is dead.

He will hear not again the strong crying of earth
 in his ears as before,
And the fume of his multitudes dying shall flatter
 his nostrils no more.
By the spirit he ruled as his slave is he slain
 who was mighty to slay,
And the stone that is sealed on his grave he
 shall rise not and roll not away.
Yea, weep to him, lift up your hands; be your
 eyes as a fountain of tears;
Where he stood there is nothing that stands; if
 he call, there is no man that hears.
He hath doffed his king's raiment of lies now
 the wane of his kingdom is come;
Ears hath he, and hears not; and eyes, and he
 sees not; and mouth, and is dumb.
His red king's raiment is ripped from him naked,
 his staff broken down;
And the signs of his empire are stripped from
 him shuddering; and where is his crown?
And in vain by the wellsprings refrozen ye cry
 for the warmth of his sun —
O God, the Lord God of thy chosen, thy will
 in thy kingdom be done.
Kingdom and will hath he none in him left him,
 nor warmth in his breath;
Till his corpse be cast out of the sun will ye
 know not the truth of his death?

Surely, ye say, he is strong, though the times be
against him and men ;
Yet a little, ye say, and how long, till he come
to show judgment again ?
Shall God then die as the beasts die ? who is it
hath broken his rod ?
O God, Lord God of thy priests, rise up now
and show thyself God.
They cry out, thine elect, thine aspirants to
heavenward, whose faith is as flame ;
O thou the Lord God of our tyrants, they call
thee, their God, by thy name.
By thy name that in hell-fire was written, and
burned at the point of thy sword,
Thou art smitten, thou God, thou art smitten,
thy death is upon thee, O Lord.
And the love-song of earth as thou diest re-
sounds through the wind of her wings —
Glory to Man in the highest ! for Man is the
master of things.

SONGS BEFORE SUNRISE

PRELUDE

BETWEEN the green bud and the red
Youth sat and sang by Time, and shed
 From eyes and tresses flowers and tears,
 From heart and spirit hopes and fears,
Upon the hollow stream whose bed
 Is channelled by the foamless years ;
And with the white the gold-haired head
 Mixed running locks, and in Time's ears
Youth's dreams hung singing, and Time's truth
Was half not harsh in the ears of Youth.

Between the bud and the blown flower
Youth talked with joy and grief an hour,
 With footless joy and wingless grief
 And twin-born faith and disbelief
Who share the seasons to devour ;
 And long ere these made up their sheaf
Felt the winds round him shake and shower
 The rose-red and the blood-red leaf,
Delight whose germ grew never grain,
And passion dyed in its own pain.

Then he stood up, and trod to dust
Fear and desire, mistrust and trust,
 And dreams of bitter sleep and sweet,
 And bound for sandals on his feet
Knowledge and patience of what must
 And what things may be, in the heat
And cold of years that rot and rust
 And alter ; and his spirit's meat
Was freedom, and his staff was wrought
Of strength, and his cloak woven of thought.

For what has he whose will sees clear
To do with doubt and faith and fear,
 Swift hopes and slow despondencies ?
 His heart is equal with the sea's
And with the sea-wind's, and his ear
 Is level to the speech of these,
And his soul communes and takes cheer
 With the actual earth's equalities,
Air, light, and night, hills, winds, and streams,
And seeks not strength from strengthless dreams.

His soul is even with the sun
Whose spirit and whose eyes are one,
 Who seeks not stars by day nor light
 And heavy heat of day by night.
Him can no God cast down, whom none
 Can lift in hope beyond the height

Of fate and nature and things done
By the calm rule of might and right
That bids men be and bear and do,
And die beneath blind skies or blue.

To him the lights of even and morn
Speak no vain things of love or scorn,
Fancies and passions miscreate
By man in things dispassionate.
Nor holds he fellowship forlorn
With souls that pray and hope and hate,
And doubt they had better not been born,
And fain would lure or scare off fate
And charm their doomsman from their doom
And make fear dig its own false tomb.

He builds not half of doubts and half
Of dreams his own soul's cenotaph,
Whence hopes and fears with helpless eyes,
Wrapt loose in cast-off cerecloths, rise
And dance and wring their hands and laugh,
And weep thin tears and sigh light sighs,
And without living lips would quaff
The living spring in man that lies,
And drain his soul of faith and strength
It might have lived on a life's length.

He hath given himself and hath not sold
To God for heaven or man for gold,

Or grief for comfort that it gives,
Or joy for grief's restoratives.

He hath given himself to time, whose fold
Shuts in the mortal flock that lives
On its plain pasture's heat and cold
And the equal year's alternatives.
Earth, heaven, and time, death, life, and he,
Endure while they shall be to be.

“ Yet between death and life are hours
To flush with love and hide in flowers ;
What profit save in these ? ” men cry :
“ Ah, see, between soft earth and sky,
What only good things here are ours ! ”
They say, “ What better wouldst thou try,
What sweeter sing of ? or what powers
Serve, that will give thee ere thou die
More joy to sing and be less sad,
More heart to play and grow more glad ? ”

Play then and sing ; we too have played,
We likewise, in that subtle shade.

We too have twisted through our hair
Such tendrils as the wild Loves wear,
And heard what mirth the Mænads made,
Till the wind blew our garlands bare
And left their roses disarrayed,
And smote the summer with strange air,

And disengirdled and discrowned
The limbs and locks tha' vine-wreaths bound.

We too have tracked by star-proof trees
The tempest of the Thyiades
 Scare the loud night on hills that hid
 The blood-feasts of the Bassarid,
Heard their song's iron cadences
 Fright the wolf hungering from the kid,
Outroar the lion-throated seas,
 Outchide the north-wind if it chid,
And hush the torrent-tongued ravines
With thunders of their tambourines.

But the fierce flute whose notes acclaim
Dim goddesses of fiery fame,
 Cymbal and clamorous kettledrum,
 Timbrels and tabrets, all are dumb
That turned the high chill air to flame;
 The singing tongues of fire are numb
That called on Cotys by her name
 Edonian, till they felt her come
And maddened, and her mystic face
Lightened along the streams of Thrace.

For Pleasure slumberless and pale,
And Passion with rejected veil,
 Pass, and the tempest-footed throng
 Of hours that follow them with song

Till their feet flag and voices fail,
And lips that were so loud so long
Learn silence, or a wearier wail ;
So keen is change, and time so strong,
To weave the robes of life and rend
And weave again till life have end.

But weak is change, but strengthless time,
To take the light from heaven, or climb
The hills of heaven with wasting feet.
Songs they can stop that earth found meet,
But the stars keep their ageless rhyme ;
Flowers they can slay that spring thought
sweet,
But the stars keep their spring sublime ;
Passions and pleasures can defeat,
Actions and agonies control,
And life and death, but not the soul.

Because man's soul is man's God still,
What wind soever waft his will
Across the waves of day and night
To port or shipwreck, left or right,
By shores and shoals of good and ill ;
And still its flame at mainmast height
Through the rent air that foam-flakes fill
Sustains the indomitable light
Whence only man hath strength to steer
Or helm to handle without fear.

Save his own soul's light overhead,
None leads him, and none ever led,
 Across birth's hidden harbour bar,
 Past youth where shoreward shallows are,
Through age that drives on toward the red
 Vast void of sunset hailed from far,
To the equal waters of the dead ;
 Save his own soul he hath no star,
And sinks, except his own soul guide,
Helmless in middle turn of tide.

No blast of air or fire of sun
Puts out the light whereby we run
 With girdled loins our lamplit race,
 And each from each takes heart of grace
And spirit till his turn be done,
 And light of face from each man's face
In whom the light of trust is one ;
 Since only souls that keep their place
By their own light, and watch things roll,
And stand, have light for any soul.

A little time we gain from time
To set our seasons in some chime,
 For harsh or sweet or loud or low,
 With seasons played out long ago
And souls that in their time and prime
 Took part with summer or with snow,

Lived abject lives out or sublime,
And had their chance of seed to sow
For service or disservice done
To those days dead and this their son.

A little time that we may fill
Or with such good works or such ill
As loose the bonds or make them strong
Wherein all manhood suffers wrong.
By rose-hung river and light-foot rill
There are who rest not ; who think long
Till they discern as from a hill
At the sun's hour of morning song,
Known of souls only, and those souls free,
The sacred spaces of the sea.

SIENA

INSIDE this northern summer's fold
The fields are full of naked gold,
Broadcast from heaven on lands it loves ;
The green veiled air is full of doves ;
Soft leaves that sift the sunbeams let
Light on the small warm grasses wet
Fall in short broken kisses sweet,
And break again like waves that beat
Round the sun's feet.

But I, for all this English mirth
 Of golden-shod and dancing days,
And the old green-girt sweet-hearted earth
 Desire what here no spells can raise.
Far hence, with holier heavens above,
The lovely city of my love
Bathes deep in the sun-satiate air
That flows round no fair thing more fair
Her beauty bare.

There the utter sky is holier, there
More pure the intense white height of air,
More clear men's eyes that mine would meet,
And the sweet springs of things more sweet.
There for this one warm note of doves
A clamour of a thousand loves
Storms the night's ear, the day's assails,
From the tempestuous nightingales,
And fills, and fails.

O gracious city well-beloved,
 Italian, and a maiden crowned,
Siena, my feet are no more moved
 Toward thy strange-shapen mountain-bound :
But my heart in me turns and moves,
O lady loveliest of my loves,
Toward thee, to lie before thy feet
And gaze from thy fair fountain-seat
Up the sheer street ;

And the house midway hanging see
That saw Saint Catherine bodily,
Felt on its floors her sweet feet move,
And the live light of fiery love
Burn from her beautiful strange face,
As in the sanguine sacred place
Where in pure hands she took the head
Severed, and with pure lips still red
Kissed the lips dead.

For years through, sweetest of the saints,
In quiet without cease she wrought,
Till cries of men and fierce complaints
From outward moved her maiden thought ;
And prayers she heard and sighs toward France,
“ God, send us back deliverance,
Send back thy servant, lest we die ! ”
With an exceeding bitter cry
They smote the sky.

Then in her sacred saving hands
She took the sorrows of the lands,
With maiden palms she lifted up
The sick time's blood-embittered cup,
And in her virgin garment furled
The faint limbs of a wounded world.
Clothed with calm love and clear desire,
She went forth in her soul's attire,
A missive fire.

Across the might of men that strove

 It shone, and over heads of kings ;
And molten in red flames of love

 Were swords and many monstrous things ;
And shields were lowered, and snapt were spears,
And sweeter-tuned the clamorous years ;
And faith came back, and peace, that were
Fled ; for she bade, saying, “ Thou, God’s heir,
Hast thou no care ?

“ Lo, men lay waste thine heritage
Still, and much heathen people rage
Against thee, and devise vain things.
What comfort in the face of kings,
What counsel is there ? Turn thine eyes
And thine heart from them in like wise ;
Turn thee unto thine holy place
To help us that of God for grace
Require thy face.

“ For who shall hear us if not thou
 In a strange land ? what doest thou there ?
Thy sheep are spoiled, and the ploughers plough
 Upon us ; why hast thou no care
For all this, and beyond strange hills
Liest unregardful what snow chills
Thy foldless flock, or what rains beat ?
Lo, in thine ears, before thy feet,
Thy lost sheep bleat.

“ And strange men feed on faultless lives,
And there is blood, and men put knives,
Shepherd, unto the young lamb’s throat ;
And one hath eaten, and one smote,
And one had hunger and is fed
Full of the flesh of these, and red
With blood of these as who drinks wine.
And God knoweth, who hath sent thee a sign,
If these were thine.”

But the Pope’s heart within him burned,
So that he rose up, seeing the sign,
And came among them ; but she turned
Back to her daily way divine,
And fed her faith with silent things,
And lived her life with curbed white wings,
And mixed herself with heaven and died :
And now on the sheer city-side
Smiles like a bride.

You see her in the fresh clear gloom,
Where walls shut out the flame and bloom
Of full-breathed summer, and the roof
Keeps the keen ardent air aloof
And sweet weight of the violent sky :
There bodily beheld on high,
She seems as one hearing in tune
Heaven within heaven, at heaven’s full noon,
In sacred swoon :

A solemn swoon of sense that aches
 With imminent blind heat of heaven,
While all the wide-eyed spirit wakes,
 Vigilant of the supreme Seven,
Whose choral flames in God's sight move,
Made unendurable with love,
That without wind or blast or breath
Compels all things through life and death
Whither God saith.

There on the dim side-chapel wall
Thy mighty touch memorial,
Bazzi, raised up, for ages dead,
And fixed for us her heavenly head :
And, rent with plaited thorn and rod,
Bared the live likeness of her God
To men's eyes turning from strange lands,
Where, pale from thine immortal hands,
Christ wounded stands ;

And the blood blots his holy hair
 And white brows over hungering eyes
That plead against us, and the fair
 Mute lips forlorn of words or sighs
In the great torment that bends down
His bruised head with the bloomless crown,
White as the unfruitful thorn-flower,
A God beheld in dreams that were
Beheld of her.

In vain on all these sins and years
Falls the sad blood, fall the slow tears ;
In vain poured forth as watersprings,
Priests, on your altars, and ye, kings,
About your seats of sanguine gold ;
Still your God, spat upon and sold,
Bleeds at your hands ; but now is gone
All his flock from him saving one ;
Judas alone.

Surely your race it was that he,
O men signed backward with his name,
Beholding in Gethsemane
Bled the red bitter sweat of shame,
Knowing how the word of Christian should
Mean to men evil and not good,
Seem to men shameful for your sake,
Whose lips, for all the prayers they make,
Man's blood must slake.

But blood nor tears ye love not, you
That my love leads my longing to,
Fair as the world's old faith of flowers,
O golden goddesses of ours !
From what Idalian rose-pleasance
Hath Aphrodite bidden glance
The lovelier lightnings of your feet ?
From what sweet Paphian sward or seat
Led you more sweet ?

O white three sisters, three as one,
 With flowerlike arms for flowery bands
Your linked limbs glitter like the sun,
 And time lies beaten at your hands.
Time and wild years and wars and men
Pass, and ye care not whence or when;
With calm lips over sweet for scorn,
Ye watch night pass, O children born
Of the old world morn.

Ah, in this strange and shrineless place,
What doth a goddess, what a Grace,
Where no Greek worships her shrined limbs
With wreaths and Cytherean hymns?
Where no lute makes luxurious
The adoring airs in Amathus,
Till the maid, knowing her mother near,
Sobs with love, aching with sweet fear?
What do ye hear?

For the outer land is sad, and wears
 A raiment of a flaming fire;
And the fierce fruitless mountain stairs
 Climb, yet seem wroth and loth to aspire,
Climb, and break, and are broken down,
And through their clefts and crests the town
Looks west and sees the dead sun lie,
In sanguine death that stains the sky
With angry dye.

And from the war-worn wastes without
In twilight, in the time of doubt,
One sound comes of one whisper, where
Moved with low motions of slow air
The great trees nigh the castle swing
In the sad coloured evening;

“ *Ricorditi di me, che son*

La Pia ” — that small sweet word alone
Is not yet gone.

“ *Ricorditi di me* ” — the sound

Sole out of deep dumb days remote
Across the fiery and fatal ground

Comes tender as a hurt bird's note
To where a ghost with empty hands,
A woe-worn ghost, her palace stands
In the mid city, where the strong
Bells turn the sunset air to song,
And the towers throng.

With other face, with speech the same,

A mightier maiden's likeness came
Late among mourning men that slept,

A sacred ghost that went and wept,
White as the passion-wounded Lamb,

Saying, “ Ah, remember me, that am
Italia.” (From deep sea to sea

Earth heard, earth knew her, that this was she.)

“ *Ricorditi.* ”

“ Love made me of all things fairest thing,
 And Hate unmade me ; this knows he
Who with God’s sacerdotal ring
 Enrined mine hand, espousing me.”
Yea, in thy myriad-mooded woe,
Yea, Mother, hast thou not said so ?
Have not our hearts within us stirred,
O thou most holiest, at thy word ?
Have we not heard ?

As this dead tragic land that she
Found deadly, such was time to thee ;
Years passed thee withering in the red
Maremma, years that deemed thee dead,
Ages that sorrowed or that scorned ;
And all this while though all they mourned
Thou sawest the end of things unclean,
And the unborn that should see thee a queen.
Have we not seen ?

The weary poet, thy sad son,
 Upon thy soil, under thy skies,
Saw all Italian things save one —
 Italia ; this thing missed his eyes ;
The old mother-might, the breast, the face
That reared, that lit the Roman race ;
This not Leopardi saw ; but we,
What is it, Mother, that we see,
What if not thee ?

Look thou from Siena southward home,
Where the priest's pall hangs rent on Rome,
And through the red rent swaddling-bands
Toward thine she strains her labouring hands.
Look thou and listen, and let be
All the dead quick, all the bond free ;
In the blind eyes let there be sight
In the eighteen centuries of the night
Let there be light.

Bow down the beauty of thine head,
Sweet, and with lips of living breath
Kiss thy sons sleeping, and thy dead,
That there be no more sleep or death.
Give us thy light, thy might, thy love,
Whom thy face seen afar above
Drew to thy feet ; and when, being free,
Thou hast blest thy children born to thee,
Bless also me.

Me that when others played or slept
Sat still under thy cross and wept ;
Me who so early and unaware
Felt fall on bent bared brows and hair
(Thin drops of the overflowing flood !)
The bitter blessing of thy blood ;
The sacred shadow of thy pain,
Thine, the true maiden-mother, slain
And raised again.

Me consecrated, if I might,
 To praise thee, or to love at least,
O mother of all men's dear delight
 Thou madest a choral-souled boy-priest,
Before my lips had leave to sing,
Or my hands hardly strength to cling
About the intolerable tree
Whereto they had nailed my heart and thee
And said, "Let be."

For to thee too the high Fates gave
Grace to be sacrificed and save,
That being arisen, in the equal sun,
God and the People should be one ;
By those red roads thy footprints trod,
Man more divine, more human God,
Saviour ; that where no light was known
But darkness, and a daytime flown,
Light should be shown.

Let there be light, O Italy !
 For our feet falter in the night,
O lamp of living years to be,
 O light of God, let there be light !
Fill with a love keener than flame
Men sealed in spirit with thy name,
The cities and the Roman skies,
Where men with other than man's eyes
Saw thy sun rise.

For theirs thou wast and thine were they
Whose names outshine thy very day ;
For they are thine and theirs thou art
Whose blood beats living in man's heart,
Remembering ages fled and dead
Wherein for thy sake these men bled ;
They that saw Trebia, they that see
Mentana, they in years to be
That shall see thee.

For thine are all of us, and ours
Thou ; till the seasons bring to birth
A perfect people, and all the powers
Be with them that bear fruit on earth ;
Till the inner heart of man be one
With freedom, and the sovereign sun ;
And Time, in likeness of a guide,
Lead the Republic as a bride
Up to God's side.

PERINDE AC CADAVER

IN a vision Liberty stood
By the childless charm-stricken bed
Where, barren of glory and good,
Knowing nought if she would not or would,
England slept with her dead.

Her face that the foam had whitened,
Her hands that were strong to strive,
Her eyes whence battle had lightened,
Over all was a drawn shroud tightened
To bind her asleep and alive.

She turned and laughed in her dream
With grey lips arid and cold ;
She saw not the face as a beam
Burn on her, but only a gleam
Through her sleep as of new-stamped gold.

But the goddess, with terrible tears
In the light of her down-drawn eyes,
Spake fire in the dull sealed ears ;
“Thou, sick with slumbers and fears,
Wilt thou sleep now indeed or arise ?

“With dreams and with words and with light
Memories and empty desires
Thou hast wrapped thyself round all night ;
Thou hast shut up thine heart from the right,
And warmed thee at burnt-out fires.

“Yet once if I smote at thy gate,
Thy sons would sleep not, but heard ;
O thou that wast found so great,
Art thou smitten with folly or fate
That thy sons have forgotten my word ?

- “ O Cromwell’s mother, O breast
That suckled Milton ! thy name
That was beautiful then, that was blest,
Is it wholly discrowned and deprest,
Trodden under by sloth into shame ?
- “ Why wilt thou hate me and die ?
For none can hate me and live.
What ill have I done to thee ? why
Wilt thou turn from me fighting, and fly,
Who would follow thy feet and forgive ?
- “ Thou hast seen me stricken, and said,
What is it to me ? I am strong :
Thou hast seen me bowed down on my dead
And laughed and lifted thine head,
And washed thine hands of my wrong.
- “ Thou hast put out the soul of thy sight ;
Thou hast sought to my foemen as friend,
To my traitors that kiss me and smite,
To the kingdoms and empires of night
That begin with the darkness, and end.
- “ Turn thee, awaken, arise,
With the light that is risen on the lands,
With the change of the fresh-coloured skies ;
Set thine eyes on mine eyes,
Lay thy hands in my hands.”

She moved and mourned as she heard,
Sighed and shifted her place,
As the wells of her slumber were stirred
By the music and wind of the word,
Then turned and covered her face.

“Ah,” she said in her sleep,
“Is my work not done with and done?
Is there corn for my sickle to reap?
And strange is the pathway, and steep,
And sharp overhead is the sun.

“I have done thee service enough,
Loved thee enough in my day;
Now nor hatred nor love
Nor hardly remembrance thereof
Lives in me to lighten my way.

“And is it not well with us here?
Is change as good as is rest?
What hope should move me, or fear,
That eye should open or ear,
Who have long since won what is best?”

“Where among us are such things
As turn men’s hearts into hell?
Have we not queens without stings,
Scotched princes, and fangless kings?
Yea,” she said, “we are well.

“ We have filed the teeth of the snake
 Monarchy, how should it bite ?
 Should the slippery slow thing wake,
 It will not sting for my sake ;
 Yea,” she said, “ I do right.”

So spake she, drunken with dreams,
 Mad ; but again in her ears
 A voice as of storm-swelled streams
 Spake ; “ No brave shame then redeems
 Thy lusts of sloth and thy fears ?

“ Thy poor lie slain of thine hands,
 Their starved limbs rot in thy sight ;
 As a shadow the ghost of thee stands
 Among men living and lands,
 And stirs not leftward or right.

“ Freeman he is not, but slave,
 Who stands not out on my side ;
 His own hand hollows his grave,
 Nor strength is in me to save
 Where strength is none to abide.

“ Time shall tread on his name
 That was written for honour of old,
 Who hath taken in change for fame
 Dust, and silver, and shame,
 Ashes, and iron, and gold.”

THE PILGRIMS

Who is your lady of love, O ye that pass
Singing? and is it for sorrow of that which was
That ye sing sadly, or dream of what shall
be?

For gladly at once and sadly it seems ye
sing.

— Our lady of love by you is un beholden ;
For hands she hath none, nor eyes, nor lips, nor
golden

Treasure of hair, nor face nor form, but we
That love, we know her more fair than
anything.

— Is she a queen, having great gifts to give ?

— Yea, these ; that whoso hath seen her shall
not live

Except he serve her sorrowing, with strange
pain,

Travail and bloodshedding and bitterer
tears ;

And when she bids die he shall surely die.

And he shall leave all things under the sky

And go forth naked under sun and rain

And work and wait and watch out all his
years.

- Hath she on earth no place of habitation ?
— Age to age calling, nation answering nation,
Cries out, Where is she ? and there is none
to say ;
For if she be not in the spirit of men,
For if in the inward soul she hath no place,
In vain they cry unto her, seeking her face,
In vain their mouths make much of her ; for
they
Cry with vain tongues, till the heart lives
again.
- O ye that follow, and have ye no repentance ?
For on your brows is written a mortal sentence,
An hieroglyph of sorrow, a fiery sign,
That in your lives ye shall not pause or rest,
Nor have the sure sweet common love, nor keep
Friends and safe days, nor joy of life nor sleep.
— These have we not, who have one thing,
the divine
Face and clear eyes of faith and fruitful
breast.
- And ye shall die before your thrones be won.
— Yea, and the changed world and the liberal sun
Shall move and shine without us, and we lie
Dead ; but if she too move on earth and
live,

But if the old world with all the old irons rent
Laugh and give thanks, shall we be not content ?

Nay, we shall rather live, we shall not die,
Life being so little and death so good to
give.

— And these men shall forget you. — Yea, but
we

Shall be a part of the earth and the ancient sea,
And heaven-high air august, and awful fire,
And all things good ; and no man's heart
shall beat

But somewhat in it of our blood once shed
Shall quiver and quicken, as now in us the dead
Blood of men slain and the old same life's
desire

Plants in their fiery footprints our fresh
feet.

— But ye that might be clothed with all things
pleasant,

Ye are foolish that put off the fair soft present,
That clothe yourselves with the cold future
air ;

When mother and father and tender sister
and brother

And the old live love that was shall be as ye,
Dust, and no fruit of loving life shall be.

— She shall be yet who is more than all these
 were,
 Than sister or wife or father unto us or
 mother.

— Is this worth life, is this, to win for wages ?
 Lo, the dead mouths of the awful grey-grown
 ages,
 The venerable, in the past that is their prison,
 In the outer darkness, in the unopening
 grave,
 Laugh, knowing how many as ye now say have
 said,
 How many, and all are fallen, are fallen and
 dead :
 Shall ye dead rise, and these dead have not
 risen ?

— Not we but she, who is tender and swift
 to save.

— Are ye not weary and faint not by the way,
 Seeing night by night devoured of day by day,
 Seeing hour by hour consumed in sleepless
 fire ?

Sleepless : and ye too, when shall ye too
 sleep ?

— We are weary in heart and head, in hands
 and feet,

And surely more than all things sleep were sweet,
 Than all things save the inexorable desire
 Which whoso knoweth shall neither faint
 nor weep.

— Is this so sweet that one were fain to follow ?
 Is this so sure where all men's hopes are hollow,
 Even this your dream, that by much tribulation

 Ye shall make whole flawed hearts, and
 bowed necks straight ?

— Nay though our life were blind, our death
 were fruitless,

Not therefore were the whole world's high hope
 rootless ;

 But man to man, nation would turn to nation,
 And the old life live, and the old great
 word be great.

— Pass on then and pass by us and let us be,
 For what light think ye after life to see ?

 And if the world fare better will ye know ?

 And if man triumph who shall seek you
 and say ?

— Enough of light is this for one life's span,
 That all men born are mortal, but not man :

 And we men bring death lives by night to sow,
 That man may reap and eat and live by day.

SUPER FLUMINA BABYLONIS

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and
wept,
Remembering thee,
That for ages of agony hast endured, and slept,
And wouldst not see.

By the waters of Babylon we stood up and
sang,
Considering thee,
That a blast of deliverance in the darkness rang,
To set thee free.

And with trumpets and thunderings and with
morning song
Came up the light ;
And thy spirit uplifted thee to forget thy
wrong
As day doth night.

And thy sons were dejected not any more, as
then
When thou wast shamed ;
When thy lovers went heavily without heart, as
men
Whose life was maimed.

In the desolate distances, with a great desire,
 For thy love's sake,
With our hearts going back to thee, they were
 filled with fire,
Were nigh to break.

It was said to us : " Verily ye are great of heart,
 But ye shall bend ;
Ye are bondmen and bondwomen, to be scourged
 and smart,
To toil and tend."

And with harrows men harrowed us, and sub-
 dued with spears,
 And crushed with shame ;
And the summer and winter was, and the length
 of years,
And no change came.

By the rivers of Italy, by the sacred streams,
 By town, by tower,
There was feasting with revelling, there was
 sleep with dreams,
Until thine hour.

And they slept and they rioted on their rose-
 hung beds,
With mouths on flame,

And with love-locks vine-chapleted, and with
rose-crowned heads
And robes of shame.

And they knew not their forefathers, nor the
hills and streams
And words of power,
Nor the gods that were good to them, but with
songs and dreams
Filled up their hour.

By the rivers of Italy, by the dry streams'
beds,
When thy time came,
There was casting of crowns from them,
from their young men's heads,
The crowns of shame.

By the horn of Eridanus, by the Tiber mouth,
As thy day rose,
They arose up and girded them to the north
and south,
By seas, by snows.

As a water in January the frost confines,
Thy kings bound thee ;
As a water in April is, in the new-blown vines,
Thy sons made free.

And thy lovers that looked for thee, and that
 mourned from far,
 For thy sake dead,
We rejoiced in the light of thee, in the signal star
 Above thine head.

In thy grief had we followed thee, in thy pas-
 sion loved,
 Loved in thy loss ;
In thy shame we stood fast to thee, with thy
 pangs were moved,
 Clung to thy cross.

By the hillside of Calvary we beheld thy blood,
 Thy bloodred tears,
As a mother's in bitterness, an unebbing flood,
 Years upon years.

And the north was Gethsemane, without leaf
 or bloom,
 A garden sealed ;
And the south was Aceldama, for a sanguine
 fume
 Hid all the field.

By the stone of the sepulchre we returned to
 weep,
 From far, from prison ;

And the guards by it keeping it we beheld
asleep,
But thou wast risen.

And an angel's similitude by the unsealed grave,
And by the stone :
And the voice was angelical, to whose words
God gave
Strength like his own.

“ Lo, the graveclothes of Italy that are folded
up
In the grave's gloom!
And the guards as men wrought upon with a
charmèd cup,
By the open tomb.

“ And her body most beautiful, and her shining
head,
These are not here ;
For your mother, for Italy, is not surely dead :
Have ye no fear.

“ As of old time she spake to you, and you
hardly heard,
Hardly took heed,
So now also she saith to you, yet another word,
Who is risen indeed.

“ By my saying she saith to you, in your ears she
 saith,
 Who hear these things,
Put no trust in men’s royalties, nor in great
 men’s breath,
 Nor words of kings.

“ For the life of them vanishes and is no more
 seen,
 Nor no more known ;
Nor shall any remember him if a crown hath
 been,
 Or where a throne.

“ Unto each man his handiwork, unto each his
 crown,
 The just Fate gives ;
Whoso takes the world’s life on him and his
 own lays down,
 He, dying so, lives.

“ Whoso bears the whole heaviness of the
 wronged world’s weight
 And puts it by,
It is well with him suffering, though he face
 man’s fate ;
 How should he die ?

“ Seeing death has no part in him any more; no
power
Upon his head;
He has bought his eternity with a little hour,
And is not dead.

“ For an hour, if ye look for him, he is no more
found,
For one hour’s space;
Then ye lift up your eyes to him and behold
him crowned,
A deathless face.

“ On the mountains of memory, by the world’s
well-springs,
In all men’s eyes,
Where the light of the life of him is on all past
things,
Death only dies.

“ Not the light that was quenched for us, nor
the deeds that were,
Nor the ancient days,
Nor the sorrows not sorrowful, nor the face
most fair
Of perfect praise.”

So the angel of Italy’s resurrection said,
So yet he saith;

So the son of her suffering, that from breasts
 nigh dead
 Drew life, not death.

That the pavement of Golgotha should be white
 as snow,
 Not red, but white ;
That the waters of Babylon should no longer
 flow,
 And men see light.

MATER DOLOROSA

Citoyen, lui dit Enjolras, ma mère, c'est la République. — Les Misérables.

WHO is this that sits by the way, by the wild
 wayside,
In a rent stained raiment, the robe of a cast-off
 bride,
In the dust, in the rainfall sitting, with soiled
 feet bare,
With the night for a garment upon her, with
 torn wet hair ?
She is fairer of face than the daughters of men,
 and her eyes,
Worn through with her tears, are deep as the
 depth of skies.

This is she for whose sake being fallen, for
 whose abject sake,

Earth groans in the blackness of darkness, and
 men's hearts break.

This is she for whose love, having seen her, the
 men that were

Poured life out as water, and shed their souls
 upon air.

This is she for whose glory their years were
 counted as foam ;

Whose face was a light upon Greece, was a
 fire upon Rome.

Is it now not surely a vain thing, a foolish and
 vain,

To sit down by her, mourn to her, serve her,
 partake in the pain ?

She is grey with the dust of time on his mani-
 fold ways,

Where her faint feet stumble and falter through
 year-long days.

Shall she help us at all, O fools, give fruit or
 give fame,

Who herself is a name despised, a rejected name ?

We have not served her for guerdon. If any do so,
 That his mouth may be sweet with such honey,
 we care not to know.

We have drunk from a wine-unsweetened, a
 perilous cup,
A draught very bitter. The kings of the earth
 stood up,
And the rulers took counsel together to smite
 her and slay ;
And the blood of her wounds is given us to
 drink to-day.

Can these bones live ? or the leaves that are
 dead leaves bud ?
Or the dead blood drawn from her veins be in
 your veins blood ?
Will ye gather up water again that was drawn
 and shed ?
In the blood is the life of the veins, and her
 veins are dead.
For the lives that are over are over, and past
 things past ;
She had her day, and it is not ; was first, and is
 last.

Is it nothing unto you then, all ye that pass
 by,
If her breath be left in her lips, if she live now
 or die ?
Behold now, O people, and say if she be not
 fair,

Whom your fathers followed to find her, with
 praise and prayer,
 And rejoiced, having found her, though roof
 they had none nor bread ;
 But ye care not ; what is it to you if her day
 be dead ?

It was well with our fathers ; their sound was
 in all men's lands,
 There was fire in their hearts, and the hunger
 of fight in their hands.
 Naked and strong they went forth in her
 strength like flame,
 For her love's and her name's sake of old, her
 republican name.
 But their children, by kings made quiet, by
 priests made wise,
 Love better the heat of their hearths than the
 light of her eyes.

Are they children of these thy children indeed,
 who have sold,
 O golden goddess, the light of thy face for
 gold ?
 Are they sons indeed of the sons of thy day-
 spring of hope,
 Whose lives are in fief of an emperor, whose
 souls of a Pope ?

Hide then thine head, O belovèd; thy time is done;
Thy kingdom is broken in heaven, and blind thy
 sun.

What sleep is upon you, to dream she indeed
 shall rise,
When the hopes are dead in her heart as the
 tears in her eyes?
If ye sing of her dead will she stir? if ye weep
 for her, weep?
Come away now, leave her; what hath she to
 do but sleep?
But ye that mourn are alive, and have years to
 be;
And life is good, and the world is wiser than
 we.

Yea, wise is the world and mighty, with years
 to give,
And years to promise; but how long now shall
 it live?
And foolish and poor is faith, and her ways are
 bare,
Till she find the way of the sun, and the morn-
 ing air.
In that hour shall this dead face shine as the
 face of the sun,
And the soul of man and her soul and the
 world's be one.

MATER TRIUMPHALIS

MOTHER of man's time-travelling generations,
Breath of his nostrils, heartblood of his heart,
God above all Gods worshipped of all nations,
Light above light, law beyond law, thou art.

Thy face is as a sword smiting in sunder
Shadows and chains and dreams and iron
things;
The sea is dumb before thy face, the thunder
Silent, the skies are narrower than thy wings.

Angels and Gods, spirit and sense, thou takest
In thy right hand as drops of dust or dew;
The temples and the towers of time thou
breakest,
His thoughts and words and works, to make
them new.

All we have wandered from thy ways, have
hidden
Eyes from thy glory and ears from calls they
heard;
Called of thy trumpets vainly, called and chidden,
Scourged of thy speech and wounded of thy
word.

We have known thee and have not known thee ;
 stood beside thee,
 Felt thy lips breathe, set foot where thy feet
 trod,
Loved and renounced and worshipped and de-
 nied thee,
 As though thou wert but as another God.

“ One hour for sleep,” we said, “ and yet one
 other ;
 All day we served her, and who shall serve
 by night ? ”
Not knowing of thee, thy face not knowing, O
 mother,
 O light wherethrough the darkness is as light.

Men that forsook thee hast thou not forsaken,
 Races of men that knew not hast thou known ;
Nations that slept thou hast doubted not to waken,
 Worshippers of strange Gods to make thine
 own.

All old grey histories hiding thy clear features,
 O secret spirit and sovereign, all men's tales,
Creeds woven of men thy children and thy
 creatures,
 They have woven for vestures of thee and
 for veils.

Thine hands, without election or exemption,
Feed all men fainting from false peace or
strife,

O thou, the resurrection and redemption,
The godhead and the manhood and the life.

Thy wings shadow the waters; thine eyes
lighten

The horror of the hollows of the night;
The depths of the earth and the dark places
brighten

Under thy feet, whiter than fire is white.

Death is subdued to thee, and hell's bands
broken;

Where thou art only is heaven; who hears
not thee,

Time shall not hear him; when men's names are
spoken,

A nameless sign of death shall his name be.

Deathless shall be the death, the name be name-
less;

Sterile of stars his twilight time of breath;
With fire of hell shall shame consume him
shameless,

And dying, all the night darken his death.

156 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

The years are as thy garments, the world's ages
 As sandals bound and loosed from thy swift
 feet ;

Time serves before thee, as one that hath for
 wages
 Praise or shame only, bitter words or sweet.

Thou sayest " Well done," and all a century
 kindles ;

 Again thou sayest " Depart from sight of me,"
And all the light of face of all men dwindles,
 And the age is as the broken glass of thee.

The night is as a seal set on men's faces,
 On faces fallen of men that take no light,
Nor give light in the deeps of the dark places,
 Blind things, incorporate with the body of
 night.

Their souls are serpents winterbound and
 frozen,

 Their shame is as a tame beast, at their feet
Couched ; their cold lips deride thee and thy
 chosen,

 Their lying lips made grey with dust for meat.

Then when their time is full and days run over,
 The splendour of thy sudden brow made bare

Darkens the morning ; thy bared hands uncover
The veils of light and night and the awful
air.

And the world naked as a new-born maiden
Stands virginal and splendid as at birth,
With all thine heaven of all its light unladen,
Of all its love unburdened all thine earth.

For the utter earth and the utter air of heaven
And the extreme depth is thine and the ex-
treme height ;
Shadows of things and veils of ages riven
Are as men's kings unkingdomed in thy sight.

Through the iron years, the centuries brazen-
gated,
By the ages' barred impenetrable doors,
From the evening to the morning have we
waited,
Should thy foot haply sound on the awful
floors.

The floors untrodden of the sun's feet glimmer,
The star-unstricken pavements of the night ;
Do the lights burn inside ? the lights wax dim-
mer
On festal faces withering out of sight.

158 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

The crowned heads lose the light on them ; it
 may be

Dawn is at hand to smite the loud feast dumb ;
To blind the torch-lit centuries till the day be,
 The feasting kingdoms till thy kingdom come.

Shall it not come ? deny they or dissemble,
 Is it not even as lightning from on high
Now ? and though many a soul close eyes and
 tremble,
 How should they tremble at all who love thee
 as I ?

I am thine harp between thine hands, O mother !
 All my strong chords are strained with love
 of thee.

We grapple in love and wrestle, as each with other
 Wrestle the wind and the unreluctant sea.

I am no courtier of thee sober-suited,
 Who loves a little for a little pay.
Me not thy winds and storms nor thrones dis-
 rooted
 Nor molten crowns nor thine own sins dismay.

Sinned hast thou sometime, therefore art thou
 sinless ;
 Stained hast thou been, who art therefore with-
 out stain ;

Even as man's soul is kin to thee, but kinless
 Thou, in whose womb Time sows the all-
 various grain.

I do not bid thee spare me, O dreadful mother !
 I pray thee that thou spare not, of thy grace.
 How were it with me then, if ever another
 Should come to stand before thee in this my
 place ?

I am the trumpet at thy lips, thy clarion
 Full of thy cry, sonorous with thy breath ;
 The grave of souls born worms and creeds grown
 carrion
 Thy blast of judgment fills with fires of death.

Thou art the player whose organ-keys are thun-
 ders,
 And I beneath thy foot the pedal prest ;
 Thou art the ray whereat the rent night sunders,
 And I the cloudlet borne upon thy breast.

I shall burn up before thee, pass and perish,
 As haze in sunrise on the red sea-line ;
 But thou from dawn to sunseting shalt cher-
 ish
 The thoughts that led and souls that lighted
 mine.

160 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

Reared between night and noon and truth and
error,
Each twilight-travelling bird that trills and
screams
Sickens at midday, nor can face for terror
The imperious heaven's inevitable extremes.

I have no spirit of skill with equal fingers
At sign to sharpen or to slacken strings;
I keep no time of song with gold-perched sing-
ers
And chirp of linnets on the wrists of kings.

I am thy storm-thrush of the days that darken,
Thy petrel in the foam that bears thy bark
To port through night and tempest; if thou
hearken,
My voice is in thy heaven before the lark.

My song is in the mist that hides thy morning,
My cry is up before the day for thee;
I have heard thee and beheld thee and give
warning,
Before thy wheels divide the sky and sea.

Birds shall wake with thee voiced and feathered
fairer,
To see in summer what I see in spring;

I have eyes and heart to endure thee, O thunder-
 bearer,
 And they shall be who shall have tongues to
 sing.

I have love at least, and have not fear, and part
 not
 From thine unnavigable and wingless way ;
 Thou tarriest, and I have not said thou art not,
 Nor all thy night long have denied thy day.

Darkness to daylight shall lift up thy pæan,
 Hill to hill thunder, vale cry back to vale,
 With wind-notes as of eagles Æschylean,
 And Sappho singing in the nightingale.

Sung to by mighty sons of dawn and daughters,
 Of this night's songs thine ear shall keep but
 one ;
 That supreme song which shook the channelled
 waters,
 And called thee skyward as God calls the sun.

Come, though all heaven again be fire above thee ;
 Though death before thee come to clear thy
 sky ;
 Let us but see in his thy face who love thee ;
 Yea, though thou slay us, arise and let us die.

LYRICS OF NATURE AND LIFE

BY THE NORTH SEA

“ We are what suns and winds and waters make us.” — LANDOR.

SEA, *wind, and sun, with light and sound and
breath*

*The spirit of man fulfilling — these create
That joy wherewith man's life grown passion-
ate*

*Gains heart to hear and sense to read and faith
To know the secret word our Mother saith
In silence, and to see, though doubt wax great,
Death as the shadow cast by life on fate,
Passing, whose shade we call the shadow of death.*

*Brother, to whom our Mother as to me
Is dearer than all dreams of days undone,
This song I give you of the sovereign three
That are as life and sleep and death are, one :
A song the sea-wind gave me from the sea
Where naught of man's endures before the sun.*

BY THE NORTH SEA

I

I

A LAND that is lonelier than ruin ;
A sea that is stranger than death :
Far fields that a rose never blew in,
Wan waste where the winds lack breath ;
Waste endless and boundless and flowerless
But of marsh-blossoms fruitless as free :
Where earth lies exhausted, as powerless
To strive with the sea.

II

Far flickers the flight of the swallows,
Far flutters the weft of the grass
Spun dense over desolate hollows
More pale than the clouds as they pass :
Thick woven as the weft of a witch is
Round the heart of a thrall that hath sinned,
Whose youth and the wrecks of its riches
Are waifs on the wind.

III

The pastures are herdless and sheepless
No pasture or shelter for herds :

The wind is relentless and sleepless
 And restless and songless the birds ;
Their cries from afar fall breathless,
 Their wings are as lightnings that flee ;
For the land has two lords that are deathless :
 Death's self, and the sea.

IV

These twain, as a king with his fellow,
 Hold converse of desolate speech :
And her waters are haggard and yellow
 And crass with the scurf of the beach :
And his garments are grey as the hoary
 Wan sky where the day lies dim :
And his power is to her, and his glory,
 As hers unto him.

V

In the pride of his power she rejoices,
 In her glory he glows and is glad :
In her darkness the sound of his voice is,
 With his breath she dilates and is mad :
“ If thou slay me, O death, and outlive me,
 Yet thy love hath fulfilled me of thee.”
“ Shall I give thee not back if thou give me,
 O sister, O sea ? ”

VI

And year upon year dawns living,
And age upon age drops dead :
And his hand is not weary of giving,
And the thirst of her heart is not fed :
And the hunger that moans in her passion,
And the rage in her hunger that roars,
As a wolf's that the winter lays lash on,
Still calls and implores.

VII

Her walls have no granite for girder,
No fortalice fronting her stands :
But reefs the bloodguiltiest of murder
Are less than the banks of her sands :
These number their slain by the thousand ;
For the ship hath no surety to be,
When the bank is abreast of her bows and
Aflush with the sea.

VIII

No surety to stand, and no shelter
To dawn out of darkness but one,
Out of waters that hurtle and welter
No succour to dawn with the sun,
But a rest from the wind as it passes,
Where, hardly redeemed from the waves,
Lie thick as the blades of the grasses
The dead in their graves.

IX

A multitude noteless of numbers,
As wild weeds cast on an heap :
And sounder than sleep are their slumbers,
And softer than song is their sleep ;
And sweeter than all things and stranger
The sense, if perchance it may be,
That the wind is divested of danger
And scatheless the sea.

X

That the roar of the banks they breasted
Is hurtless as bellowing of herds,
And the strength of his wings that invested
The wind, as the strength of a bird's ;
As the sea-mew's might or the swallow's
That cry to him back if he cries,
As over the graves and their hollows
Days darken and rise.

XI

As the souls of the dead men disburdened
And clean of the sins that they sinned,
With a lovelier than man's life guerdoned
And delight as a wave's in the wind,
And delight as the wind's in the billow,
Birds pass, and deride with their glee
The flesh that has dust for its pillow
As wrecks have the sea.

XII

When the days of the sun wax dimmer,
Wings flash through the dusk like beams ;
As the clouds in the lit sky glimmer,
The bird in the graveyard gleams ;
As the cloud at its wing's edge whitens
When the clarions of sunrise are heard,
The graves that the bird's note brightens
Grow bright for the bird.

XIII

As the waves of the numberless waters
That the wind cannot number who guides
Are the sons of the shore and the daughters
Here lulled by the chime of the tides :
And here in the press of them standing
We know not if these or if we
Live truest, or anchored to landing
Or drifted to sea.

XIV

In the valley he named of decision
No denser were multitudes met
When the soul of the seer in her vision
Saw nations for doom of them set ;
Saw darkness in dawn, and the splendour
Of judgment, the sword and the rod ;
But the doom here of death is more tender
And gentler the god.

XV

And gentler the wind from the dreary
 Sea-banks by the waves overlapped,
Being weary, speaks peace to the weary
 From slopes that the tide-stream hath
 sapped ;
And sweeter than all that we call so
 The seal of their slumber shall be
Till the graves that embosom them also
 Be sapped of the sea.

II

I

For the heart of the waters is cruel,
 And the kisses are dire of their lips,
And their waves are as fire is to fuel
 To the strength of the sea-faring ships,
Though the sea's eye gleam as a jewel
 To the sun's eye back as he dips.

II

Though the sun's eye flash to the sea's
 Live light of delight and of laughter,
And her lips breathe back to the breeze
 The kiss that the wind's lips waft her
From the sun that subsides, and sees
 No gleam of the storm's dawn after.

III

And the wastes of the wild sea-marches
Where the borderers are matched in their
 might —
Bleak fens that the sun's weight parches,
Dense waves that reject his light —
Change under the change-coloured arches
Of changeless morning and night.

IV

The waves are as ranks enrolled
Too close for the storm to sever :
The fens lie naked and cold,
But their heart fails utterly never :
The lists are set from of old,
And the warfare endureth for ever.

III

I

Miles, and miles, and miles of desolation !
Leagues on leagues on leagues without a change !
Sign or token of some eldest nation
Here would make the strange land not so
 strange.
Time-forgotten, yea since time's creation,
Seem these borders where the sea-birds range.

II

Slowly, gladly, full of peace and wonder
 Grows his heart who journeys here alone.
Earth and all its thoughts of earth sink under
 Deep as deep in water sinks a stone.
Hardly knows it if the rollers thunder,
 Hardly whence the lonely wind is blown.

III

Tall the plumage of the rush-flower tosses,
 Sharp and soft in many a curve and line
Gleam and glow the sea-coloured marsh-mosses,
 Salt and splendid from the circling brine,
Streak on streak of glimmering seashine crosses
 All the land sea-saturate as with wine.

IV

Far, and far between, in divers orders,
 Clear grey steeples cleave the low grey sky,
Fast and firm as time-unshaken warders,
 Hearts made sure by faith, by hope made
 high.
These alone in all the wild sea-borders
 Fear no blast of days and nights that die.

V

All the land is like as one man's face is,
 Pale and troubled still with change of cares.

Doubt and death pervade her clouded spaces :
Strength and length of life and peace are
theirs ;
Theirs alone amid these weary places,
Seeing not how the wild world frets and fares.

VI

Firm and fast where all is cloud that changes
Cloud-clogged sunlight, cloud by sunlight
thinned,
Stern and sweet, above the sand-hill ranges
Watch the towers and tombs of men that
sinned
Once, now calm as earth whose only change is
Wind, and light, and wind, and cloud, and
wind.

VII

Out and in and out the sharp straits wander,
In and out and in the wild way strives,
Starred and paved and lined with flowers that
squander
Gold as golden as the gold of hives,
Salt and moist and multiform : but yonder,
See, what sign of life or death survives ?

VIII

Seen then only when the songs of olden
Harps were young whose echoes yet endure,

Hymned of Homer when his years were golden,
 Known of only when the world was pure,
 Here is Hades, manifest, beholden,
 Surely, surely here, if aught be sure !

IX

Where the border-line was crossed, that, sun-
 dering
 Death from life, keeps weariness from rest,
 None can tell, who fares here forward wonder-
 ing ;
 None may doubt but here might end his quest.
 Here life's lightning joys and woes once thun-
 dering
 Sea-like round him cease like storm sup-
 pressed.

X

Here the wise wave-wandering steadfast-hearted
 Guest of many a lord of many a land
 Saw the shape or shade of years departed,
 Saw the semblance risen and hard at hand,
 Saw the mother long from love's reach parted,
 Anticleia, like a statue stand.

XI

Statue ? nay, nor tissued image woven
 Fair on hangings in his father's hall ;

Nay, too fast her faith of heart was proven,
Far too firm her loveliest love of all ;
Love wherethrough the loving heart was cloven,
Love that hears not when the loud Fates call.

XII

Love that lives and stands up re-created
Then when life has ebbed and anguish fled ;
Love more strong than death or all things fated,
Child's and mother's, lit by love and led ;
Love that found what life so long awaited
Here, when life came down among the dead.

XIII

Here, where never came alive another,
Came her son across the Sundering tide
Crossed before by many a warrior brother
Once that warred on Ilion at his side ;
Here spread forth vain hands to clasp the mother
Dead, that sorrowing for his love's sake died.

XIV

Parted, though by narrowest of divisions,
Clasp he might not, only might implore,
Sundered yet by bitterest of derisions,
Son, and mother from the son she bore —
Here ? But all dispeopled here of visions
Lies, forlorn of shadows even, the shore.

XV

All too sweet such men's Hellenic speech is,
All too fain they lived of light to see,
Once to see the darkness of these beaches,
Once to sing this Hades found of me
Ghostless, all its gulfs and creeks and reaches,
Sky, and shore, and cloud, and waste, and sea.

IV

I

But aloft and afront of me faring
Far forward as folk in a dream
That strive, between doubting and daring,
Right on till the goal for them gleam,
Full forth till their goal on them lighten,
The harbour where fain they would be,
What headlands there darken and brighten?
What change in the sea?

II

What houses and woodlands that nestle
Safe inland to lee of the hill
As it slopes from the headlands that wrestle
And succumb to the strong sea's will?
Truce is not, nor respite, nor pity,
For the battle is waged not of hands

Where over the grave of a city
The ghost of it stands.

III

Where the wings of the sea-wind slacken,
Green lawns to the landward thrive,
Fields brighten and pine-woods blacken,
And the heat in their heart is alive ;
They blossom and warble and murmur,
For the sense of their spirit is free :
But harder to shoreward and firmer
The grasp of the sea.

IV

Like ashes the low cliffs crumble,
The banks drop down into dust,
The heights of the hills are made humble,
As a reed's is the strength of their trust :
As a city's that armies environ,
The strength of their stay is of sand :
But the grasp of the sea is as iron,
Laid hard on the land.

V

A land that is thirstier than ruin :
A sea that is hungrier than death ;
Heaped hills that a tree never grew in ;
Wide sands where the wave draws breath ;

All solace is here for the spirit
That ever for ever may be
For the soul of thy son to inherit
My mother, my sea.

VI

O delight of the headlands and beaches !
O desire of the wind on the wold,
More glad than a man's when it reaches
That end which it sought from of old :
And the palm of possession is dreary
To the sense that in search of it sinned ;
But nor satisfied ever nor weary
Is ever the wind.

VII

The delight that he takes but in living
Is more than of all things that live :
For the world that has all things for giving
Has nothing so goodly to give :
But more than delight his desire is,
For the goal where his pinions would be
Is immortal as air or as fire is,
Immense as the sea.

VIII

Though hence come the moan that he borrows
From darkness and depth of the night,

Though hence be the spring of his sorrows,
Hence too is the joy of his might ;
The delight that his doom is for ever
To seek and desire and rejoice,
And the sense that eternity never
Shall silence his voice.

IX

That satiety never may stifle
Nor weariness ever estrange
Nor time be so strong as to rife
Nor change be so great as to change
His gift that renews in the giving,
The joy that exalts him to be
Alone of all elements living
The lord of the sea.

X

What is fire, that its flame should consume her?
More fierce than all fires are her waves :
What is earth, that its gulfs should entomb her ?
More deep are her own than their graves.
Life shrinks from his pinions that cover
The darkness by thunders bedinned :
But she knows him, her lord and her lover
The godhead of wind.

XI

For a season his wings are about her,
His breath on her lips for a space ;
Such rapture he wins not without her
In the width of his worldwide race.
Though the forests bow down, and the moun-
tains
Wax dark, and the tribes of them flee,
His delight is more deep in the fountains
And springs of the sea.

XII

There are those too of mortals that love him
There are souls that desire and require,
Be the glories of midnight above him
Or beneath him the daysprings of fire :
And their hearts are as harps that approve him
And praise him as chords of a lyre
That were fain with their music to move him
To meet their desire

XIII

To descend through the darkness to grace them,
Till darkness were lovelier than light :
To encompass and grasp and embrace them,
Till their weakness were one with his might :
With the strength of his wings to caress them,
With the blast of his breath to set free ;

With the mouths of his thunders to bless them
For sons of the sea.

XIV

For these have the toil and the guerdon
That the wind has eternally : these
Have part in the boon and the burden
Of the sleepless unsatisfied breeze,
That finds not, but seeking rejoices
That possession can work him no wrong :
And the voice at the heart of their voice is
The sense of his song.

XV

For the wind's is their doom and their blessing ;
To desire, and have always above
A possession beyond their possessing,
A love beyond reach of their love.
Green earth has her sons and her daughters,
And these have their guerdons ; but we
Are the wind's and the sun's and the water's,
Elect of the sea.

V

I

For the sea too seeks and rejoices,
Gains and loses and gains,

And the joy of her heart's own choice is
 As ours, and as ours are her pains :
As the thoughts of our hearts are her voices,
 And as hers is the pulse of our veins.

II

Her fields that know not of dearth
 Nor lie for their fruit's sake fallow
Laugh large in the depth of their mirth :
 But inshore here in the shallow,
Embroided with encumbrance of earth,
 Their skirts are turbid and yellow.

III

The grime of her greed is upon her,
 The sign of her deed is her soil ;
As the earth's is her own dishonour,
 And corruption the crown of her toil :
She hath spoiled and devoured, and her honour
 Is this, to be shamed by her spoil.

IV

But afar where pollution is none,
 Nor ensign of strife nor endeavour,
Where her heart and the sun's are one,
 And the soil of her sin comes never,
She is pure as the wind and the sun,
 And her sweetness endureth for ever.

VI

I

Death, and change, and darkness everlasting,
Deaf, that hears not what the daystar saith,
Blind, past all remembrance and forecasting,
Dead, past memory that it once drew breath;
These, above the washing tides and wasting,
Reign, and rule this land of utter death.

II

Change of change, darkness of darkness, hidden,
Very death of very death, begun
When none knows — the knowledge is forbid-
den —
Self-begotten, self-proceeding, one,
Born, not made — abhorred, unchained, unchid-
den,
Night stands here defiant of the sun.

III

Change of change, and death of death begotten,
Darkness born of darkness, one and three,
Ghostly godhead of a world forgotten,
Crowned with heaven, enthroned on land and
sea,
Here, where earth with dead men's bones is rotten,
God of Time, thy likeness worships thee.

IV

Lo, thy likeness of thy desolation,
 Shape and figure of thy might, O Lord,
 Formless form, incarnate miscreation,
 Served of all things living and abhorred ;
 Earth herself is here thine incarnation,
 Time, of all things born on earth adored.

V

All that worship thee are fearful of thee ;
 No man may not worship thee for fear :
 Prayers nor curses prove not nor disprove thee,
 Move nor change thee with our change of
 cheer :
 All at last, though all abhorred thee, love thee,
 God, the sceptre of whose throne is here.

VI

Here thy throne and sceptre of thy station,
 Here the palace paven for thy feet ;
 Here thy sign from nation unto nation
 Passed as watchword for thy guards to greet,
 Guards that go before thine exaltation,
 Ages, clothed with bitter years and sweet.

VII

Here, where sharp the sea-bird shrills his ditty,
 Flickering flame-wise through the clear live
 calm,

Rose triumphal, crowning all a city,
Roofs exalted once with prayer and psalm,
Built of holy hands for holy pity,
Frank and fruitful as a sheltering palm.

VIII

Church and hospice wrought in faultless fashion,
Hall and chancel bounteous and sublime,
Wide and sweet and glorious as compassion,
Filled and thrilled with force of choral chime,
Filled with spirit of prayer and thrilled with
passion,
Hailed a God more merciful than Time.

IX

Ah, less mighty, less than Time prevailing,
Shrunk, expelled, made nothing at his nod,
Less than clouds across the sea-line sailing,
Lies he, stricken by his master's rod.
"Where is man?" the cloister murmurs wailing;
Back the mute shrine thunders — "Where is
God?"

X

Here is all the end of all his glory —
Dust, and grass, and barren silent stones.

Dead, like him, one hollow tower and hoary
Naked in the sea-wind stands and moans,
Filled and thrilled with its perpetual story :
Here, where earth is dense with dead men's
bones.

XI

Low and loud and long, a voice for ever,
Sounds the wind's clear story like a song.
Tomb from tomb the waves devouring sever,
Dust from dust as years relapse along ;
Graves where men made sure to rest, and never
Lie dismantled by the season's wrong.

XII

Now displaced, devoured and desecrated,
Now by Time's hands darkly disinterred,
These poor dead that sleeping here awaited
Long the archangel's re-creating word,
Closed about with roofs and walls high-gated
Till the blast of judgment should be heard,

XIII

Naked, shamed, cast out of consecration,
Corpse and coffin, yea the very graves,
Scoffed at, scattered, shaken from their station,
Spurned and scourged of wind and sea like
slaves,

Desolate beyond man's desolation,
Shrink and sink into the waste of waves.

XIV

Tombs, with bare white piteous bones protruded,
Shroudless, down the loose collapsing banks,
Crumble, from their constant place detruded,
That the sea devours and gives not thanks.
Graves where hope and prayer and sorrow
brooded
Gape and slide and perish, ranks on ranks.

XV

Rows on rows and line by line they crumble,
They that thought for all time through to be.
Scarce a stone whereon a child might stumble
Breaks the grim field paced alone of me.
Earth, and man, and all their gods wax humble
Here, where Time brings pasture to the sea.

VII

I

But afar on the headland exalted,
But beyond in the curl of the bay,
From the depth of his dome deep-vaulted
Our father is lord of the day.

Our father and lord that we follow,
For deathless and ageless is he ;
And his robe is the whole sky's hollow,
His sandal the sea.

II

Where the horn of the headland is sharper,
And her green floor glitters with fire,
The sea has the sun for a harper,
The sun has the sea for a lyre.
The waves are a pavement of amber,
By the feet of the sea-winds trod
To receive in a god's presence-chamber
Our father, the God

III

Time, haggard and changeful and hoary,
Is master and God of the land :
But the air is fulfilled of the glory
That is shed from our lord's right hand.
O father of all of us ever,
All glory be only to thee
From heaven, that is void of thee never,
And earth, and the sea.

IV

O Sun, whereof all is beholden,
Behold now the shadow of this death,

This place of the sepulchres, olden
And emptied and vain as a breath.
The bloom of the bountiful heather
Laughs broadly beyond in thy light
As dawn, with her glories to gather,
At darkness and night.

V

Though the Gods of the night lie rotten
And their honour be taken away
And the noise of their names forgotten,
Thou, Lord, art God of the day.
Thou art father and saviour and spirit,
O Sun, of the soul that is free
And hath grace of thy grace to inherit
Thine earth and thy sea.

VI

The hills and the sands and the beaches,
The waters adrift and afar,
The banks and the creeks and the reaches,
How glad of thee all these are !
The flowers, overflowing, overcrowded,
Are drunk with the mad wind's mirth :
The delight of thy coming unclouded
Makes music of earth.

VII

I, last least voice of her voices,
 Give thanks that were mute in me long
 To the soul in my soul that rejoices
 For the song that is over my song.
 Time gives what he gains for the giving
 Or takes for his tribute of me ;
 My dreams to the wind everliving,
 My song to the sea.

IN GUERNSEY

I

THE heavenly bay, ringed round with cliffs and
 moors,
 Storm-stained ravines, and crags that lawns inlay,
 Soothes as with love the rocks whose guard se-
 cures
 The heavenly bay.

O friend, shall time take ever this away,
 This blessing given of beauty that endures,
 This glory shown us, not to pass but stay ?

Though sight be changed for memory, love
 ensures
 What memory, changed by love to sight, would
 say —

The word that seals for ever mine and yours
The heavenly bay.

II

My mother sea, my fostress, what new strand,
What new delight of waters, may this be,
The fairest found since time's first breezes
fanned
My mother sea?

Once more I give me body and soul to thee,
Who hast my soul for ever: cliff and sand
Recede, and heart to heart once more are we.

My heart springs first and plunges, ere my hand
Strike out from shore: more close it brings to
me,
More near and dear than seems my fatherland,
My mother sea.

III

Across and along, as the bay's breadth opens, and
o'er us
Wild autumn exults in the wind, swift rapture
and strong
Impels us, and broader the wide waves brighten
before us
Across and along.

The whole world's heart is uplifted, and knows
 not wrong ;
The whole world's life is a chant to the sea-tide's
 chorus ;
Are we not as waves of the water, as notes of
 the song ?

Like children unworn of the passions and toils
 that wore us,
We breast for a season the breadth of the seas
 that throng,
Rejoicing as they, to be borne as of old they
 bore us
 Across and along.

IV

On Dante's track by some funereal spell
Drawn down through desperate ways that lead
 not back
We seem to move, bound forth past flood and
 fell
 On Dante's track.

The grey path ends : the gaunt rocks gape : the
 black
Deep hollow tortuous night, a soundless shell,
Glares darkness : are the fires of old grown
 slack ?

Nay, then, what flames are these that leap and
swell
As 't were to show, where earth's foundations
crack,
The secrets of the sepulchres of hell
On Dante's track?

V

By mere men's hands the flame was lit, we
know,
From heaps of dry waste whin and casual
brands:
Yet, knowing, we scarce believe it kindled so
By mere men's hands.

Above, around, high-vaulted hell expands,
Steep, dense, a labyrinth walled and roofed with
woe,
Whose mysteries even itself not understands.

The scorn in Farinata's eyes aglow
Seems visible in this flame: there Geryon stands:
No stage of earth's is here, set forth to show
By mere men's hands.

VI

Night, in utmost noon forlorn and strong, with
heart athirst and fasting,

Hungers here, barred up for ever, whence as one
whom dreams affright
Day recoils before the low-browed lintel threat-
ening doom and casting Night.

All the reefs and islands, all the lawns and
highlands, clothed with light,
Laugh for love's sake in their sleep outside : but
here the night speaks, blasting
Day with silent speech and scorn of all things
known from depth to height.

Lower than dive the thoughts of spirit-stricken
fear in souls forecasting
Hell, the deep void seems to yawn beyond fear's
reach, and higher than sight
Rise the walls and roofs that compass it about
with everlasting Night.

VII

The house accurst, with cursing sealed and signed,
Heeds not what storms about it burn and burst :
No fear more fearful than its own may find
The house accurst.

Barren as crime, anhungered and athirst,
Blank miles of moor sweep inland, sere and blind,
Where summer's best rebukes not winter's worst.

The low bleak tower with nought save wastes
 behind
Stares down the abyss whereon chance reared
 and nursed
This type and likeness of the accurst man's
 mind,
 The house accurst.

VIII

Beloved and blest, lit warm with love and fame,
The house that had the light of the earth for
 guest
Hears for his name's sake all men hail its name
 Beloved and blest.

This eyrie was the homeless eagle's nest
When storm laid waste his eyrie: hence he
 came
Again when storm smote sore his mother's
 breast.

Bow down men bade us, or be clothed with
 blame
And mocked for madness: worst, they sware,
 was best:
But grief shone here, while joy was one with
 shame,
 Beloved and blest.

MARCH : AN ODE

I

ERE frost-flower and snow-blossom faded and
 fell, and the splendour of winter had
 passed out of sight,
The ways of the woodlands were fairer and
 stranger than dreams that fulfil us in
 sleep with delight ;
The breath of the mouths of the winds had
 hardened on tree-tops and branches that
 glittered and swayed
Such wonders and glories of blossomlike snow
 or of frost that outlightens all flowers till
 it fade
That the sea was not lovelier than here was the
 land, nor the night than the day, nor the
 day than the night,
Nor the winter sublimer with storm than the
 spring : such mirth had the madness and
 might in thee made,
March, master of winds, bright minstrel and
 marshal of storms that enkindle the
 season they smite.

II

And now that the rage of thy rapture is satiate
 with revel and ravin and spoil of the snow,

And the branches it brightened are broken, and
shattered the tree-tops that only thy
wrath could lay low,
How should not thy lovers rejoice in thee,
leader and lord of the year that exults to
be born
So strong in thy strength and so glad of thy
gladness whose laughter puts winter and
sorrow to scorn?
Thou hast shaken the snows from thy wings, and
the frost on thy forehead is molten: thy
lips are aglow
As a lover's that kindle with kissing, and earth,
with her raiment and tresses yet wasted
and torn,
Takes breath as she smiles in the grasp of thy
passion to feel through her spirit the
sense of thee flow.

III

Fain, fain would we see but again for an hour
what the wind and the sun have dispelled
and consumed,
Those full deep swan-soft feathers of snow with
whose luminous burden the branches
implumed
Hung heavily, curved as a half-bent bow, and
fledged not as birds are, but petalled as
flowers,

Each tree-top and branchlet a pinnacle jewelled
 and carved, or a fountain that shines as
 it showers,
But fixed as a fountain is fixed not, and wrought
 not to last till by time or by tempest
 entombed,
As a pinnacle carven and gilded of men : for
 the date of its doom is no more than an
 hour's,
One hour of the sun's when the warm wind
 wakes him to wither the snow-flowers
 that froze as they bloomed.

IV

As the sunshine quenches the snowshine ; as
 April subdues thee, and yields up his
 kingdom to May ;
So time overcomes the regret that is born of
 delight as it passes in passion away,
And leaves but a dream for desire to rejoice in
 or mourn for with tears or thanksgiv-
 ings ; but thou,
Bright god that art gone from us, maddest and
 gladdest of months, to what goal hast
 thou gone from us now ?
For somewhere surely the storm of thy laughter
 that lightens, the beat of thy wings that
 play,

Must flame as a fire through the world, and the
heavens that we know not rejoice in
thee: surely thy brow
Hath lost not its radiance of empire, thy spirit
the joy that impelled it on quest as for
prey.

V

Are thy feet on the ways of the limitless waters,
thy wings on the winds of the waste
north sea?
Are the fires of the false north dawn over hea-
vens wheresummer is stormful and strong
like thee
Now bright in the sight of thine eyes? are the
bastions of icebergs assailed by the blast
of thy breath?
Is it March with the wild north world when
April is waning? the word that the
changed year saith,
Is it echoed to northward with rapture of passion
reiterate from spirits triumphant as we
Whose hearts were uplift at the blast of thy
clarions as men's rearisen from a sleep
that was death
And kindled to life that was one with the world's
and with thine? hast thou set not the
whole world free?

VI

For the breath of thy lips is freedom, and free-
dom's the sense of thy spirit, the sound
of thy song,
Glad god of the north-east wind, whose heart is
as high as the hands of thy kingdom are
strong,
Thy kingdom whose empire is terror and joy,
twin-featured and fruitful of births di-
vine,
Days lit with the flame of the lamps of the
flowers, and nights that are drunken with
dew for wine,
And sleep not for joy of the stars that deepen
and quicken, a denser and fierier throng,
And the world that thy breath bade whiten
and tremble rejoices at heart as they
strengthen and shine,
And earth gives thanks for the glory bequeathed
her, and knows of thy reign that it
wrought not wrong.

VII

Thy spirit is quenched not, albeit we behold not
thy face in the crown of the steep sky's
arch,
And the bold first buds of the whin wax golden,
and witness arise of the thorn and the
larch :

Wild April, enkindled to laughter and storm by
the kiss of the wildest of winds that
blow,
Calls loud on his brother for witness ; his hands
that were laden with blossom are
sprinkled with snow,
And his lips breathe winter, and laugh, and re-
lent ; and the live woods feel not the
frost's flame parch ;
For the flame of the spring that consumes not
but quickens is felt at the heart of the
forest aglow,
And the sparks that enkindled and fed it were
strewn from the hands of the gods of
the winds of March.

A FORSAKEN GARDEN

IN a coign of the cliff between lowland and
highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward
and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep square slope of the blossomless
bed

Where the weeds that grew green from the
 graves of its roses
 Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
 To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
 Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's
 hand?

So long have the grey bare walks lain guestless,
 Through branches and briers if a man make
 way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
 Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled
 That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
 Of all but the thorns that are touched not of
 time.

The thorns he spares when the rose is taken ;
 The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
 These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that falls
 not ;
 As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots
 are dry ;

From the thicket of thorns whence the nightin-
gale calls not,
 Could she call, there were never a rose to
 reply.

Over the meadows that blossom and wither
 Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song ;
Only the sun and the rain come hither
 All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
 One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
 In a round where life seems barren as
 death.

Here there was laughing of old, there was weep-
ing,
 Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
 Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look
thither,"
 Did he whisper? "Look forth from the
 flowers to the sea ;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-
blossoms wither,
 And men that love lightly may die — but
 we? "

And the same wind sang and the same waves
whitened,

And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that
had lightened,
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went
whither ?

And were one to the end — but what end
who knows ?

Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love
them ?

What love was ever as deep as a grave ?
They are loveless now as the grass above them
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
Not known of the cliffs and the fields and
the sea.

Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons
hereafter
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now
or weep,

When as they that are free now of weeping and
laughter
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again for ever ;
Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise
up never,
Who have left nought living to ravage and
rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground
growing,
While the sun and the rain live, these shall
be ;
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blow-
ing
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides
humble
The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand
spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
Death lies dead.

ON THE VERGE

HERE begins the sea that ends not till the world's
end. Where we stand,

Could we know the next high sea-mark set be-
yond these waves that gleam,

We should know what never man hath known,
nor eye of man hath scanned.

Nought beyond these coiling clouds that melt
like fume of shrines that steam

Breaks or stays the strength of waters till they
pass our bounds of dream.

Where the waste Land's End leans westward,
all the seas it watches roll

Find their border fixed beyond them, and a
worldwide shore's control :

These whereby we stand no shore beyond us
limits : these are free.

Gazing hence, we see the water that grows iron
round the Pole,

From the shore that hath no shore beyond it set
in all the sea.

Sail on sail along the sea-line fades and flashes ;
here on land

Flash and fade the wheeling wings on wings of
mews that plunge and scream.

Hour on hour along the line of life and time's
evasive strand

Shines and darkens, wanes and waxes, slays and
dies: and scarce they seem

More than motes that thronged and trembled in
the brief noon's breath and beam.

Some with crying and wailing, some with notes
like sound of bells that toll,

Some with sighing and laughing, some with
words that blessed and made us whole,

Passed, and left us, and we know not what they
were, nor what were we.

Would we know, being mortal? Never breath
of answering whisper stole

From the shore that hath no shore beyond it set
in all the sea.

Shadows, would we question darkness? Ere our
eyes and brows be fanned

Round with airs of twilight, washed with dews
from sleep's eternal stream,

Would we know sleep's guarded secret? Ere
the fire consume the brand,

Would it know if yet its ashes may requicken?
yet we deem

Surely man may know, or ever night unyoke her
starry team,

What the dawn shall be, or if the dawn shall be
not: yea, the scroll

Would we read of sleep's dark scripture, pledge
of peace or doom of dole.
Ah, but here man's heart leaps, yearning toward
the gloom with venturous glee,
Though his pilot eye behold nor bay nor harbour,
rock nor shoal,
From the shore that hath no shore beyond it set
in all the sea.

Friend, who knows if death indeed have life or
life have death for goal?
Day nor night can tell us, nor may seas declare
nor skies unroll
What has been from everlasting, or if aught
shall always be.
Silence answering only strikes response rever-
berate on the soul
From the shore that hath no shore beyond it set
in all the sea.

RECOLLECTIONS

I

YEARS upon years, as a course of clouds that
thicken,
Thronging the ways of the wind that shifts and
veers,

Pass, and the flames of remembered fires requicken
Years upon years.

Surely the thought in a man's heart hopes or fears
Now that forgetfulness needs must here have
stricken
Anguish, and sweetened the sealed-up springs
of tears.

Ah, but the strength of regrets that strain and
sicken,
Yearning for love that the veil of death endears,
Slackens not wing for the wings of years that
quicken —
Years upon years.

II

Years upon years, and the flame of love's high
altar
Trembles and sinks, and the sense of listening ears
Heeds not the sound that it heard of love's blithe
psalter
Years upon years.

Only the sense of a heart that hearkens hears,
Louder than dreams that assail and doubts that
palter,
Sorrow that slept and that wakes ere sundawn
peers.

Wakes, that the heart may behold, and yet not
 falter,
 Faces of children as stars unknown of, spheres
 Seen but of love, that endures though all things
 alter,
 Years upon years.

III

Years upon years, as a watch by night that
 passes,
 Pass, and the light of their eyes is fire that
 sears
 Slowly the hopes of the fruit that life amasses
 Years upon years.

Pale as the glimmer of stars on moorland
 meres
 Lighten the shadows reverberate from the
 glasses
 Held in their hands as they pass among their
 peers.

Lights that are shadows, as ghosts on graveyard
 grasses,
 Moving on paths that the moon of memory
 cheers,
 Show but as mists over cloudy mountain passes
 Years upon years.

FROM ATALANTA IN CALYDON

CHORUS

WHEN the hounds of spring are on winter's
traces,

The mother of months in meadow or
plain

Fills the shadows and windy places

With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain ;

And the brown bright nightingale amorous

Is half assuaged for Itylus,

For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,

The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of
quivers,

Maiden most perfect, lady of light,

With a noise of winds and many rivers,

With a clamour of waters, and with
might ;

Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,

Over the splendour and speed of thy feet ;

For the faint east quickens, the wan west
shivers,

Round the feet of the day and the feet of
the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to
her,

 Fold our hands round her knees, and cling ?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring
to her,

 Fire, or the strength of the streams that
spring !

For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player ;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
 And the southwest-wind and the west-wind
sing.

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

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
 Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes
 From leaf to flower and flower to fruit ;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,

And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
The Mænad and the Bassarid ;
And soft as lips that laugh and hide
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes ;
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
Her bright breast shortening into sighs ;
The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

CHORUS

Before the beginning of years,
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears ;
Grief, with a glass that ran ;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven ;
Summer, with flowers that fell ;

Remembrance fallen from heaven,
 And madness risen from hell ;
Strength without hands to smite ;
 Love that endures for a breath ;
Night, the shadow of light,
 And life, the shadow of death.

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

From the winds of the north and the south
 They gathered as unto strife ;
They breathed upon his mouth,
 They filled his body with life ;

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

FROM ERECHTHEUS

CHORUS

OUT of the north wind grief came forth, [*Str.* 1.
And the shining of a sword out of the sea.
Yea, of old the first-blown blast blew the pre-
lude of this last,
The blast of his trumpet upon Rhodope.
Out of the north skies full of his cloud,
With the clamour of his storms as of a crowd

At the wheels of a great king crying aloud,
 At the axle of a strong king's car
 That has girded on the girdle of war —
 With hands that lightened the skies in sunder
 And feet whose fall was followed of thunder,
 A God, a great God strange of name,
 With horse-yoke fleeter-hoofed than flame,
 To the mountain bed of a maiden came,
 Oreithyia, the bride mismated,
 Wofully wed in a snow-strewn bed
 With a bridegroom that kisses the bride's mouth
 dead ;
 Without garland, without glory, without song,
 As a fawn by night on the hills belated,
 Given over for a spoil unto the strong.
 From lips how pale so keen a wail [*Ant. 1.*
 At the grasp of a God's hand on her she gave,
 When his breath that darkens air made a havoc
 of her hair,
 It rang from the mountain even to the wave ;
 Rang with a cry, *Woe's me, woe is me !*
 From the darkness upon Hæmus to the sea :
 And with hands that clung to her new lord's
 knee,
 As a virgin overborne with shame,
 She besought him by her spouseless fame,
 By the blameless breasts of a maid unmarried
 And locks unmaidenly rent and harried,

And all her flower of body, born
To match the maidenhood of morn,
With the might of the wind's wrath wrenched
and torn.

Vain, all vain as a dead man's vision
Falling by night in his old friends' sight,
To be scattered with slumber and slain ere light ;
Such a breath of such a bridegroom in that hour
Of her prayers made mock, of her fears derision,
And a ravage of her youth as of a flower.

With a leap of his limbs as a lion's, a cry from
his lips as of thunder, [Str. 2.

In a storm of amorous godhead filled with fire,
From the height of the heaven that was rent
with the roar of his coming in sunder,
Sprang the strong God on the spoil of his
desire.

And the pines of the hills were as green reeds
shattered,

And their branches as buds of the soft spring
scattered,

And the west wind and east, and the sound
of the south,

Fell dumb at the blast of the north wind's
mouth,

At the cry of his coming out of heaven.

And the wild beasts quailed in the rifts and
hollows

Where hound nor clarion of huntsman
follows,
And the depths of the sea were aghast, and
whitened,
And the crowns of their waves were as flame
that lightened,
And the heart of the floods thereof was
riven.

But she knew not him coming for terror, she
felt not her wrong that he wrought her,
When her locks as leaves were shed before
his breath, [*Ant. 2.*

And she heard not for terror his prayer, though
the cry was a God's that besought her,
Blown from lips that strew the world-wide
seas with death.

For the heart was molten within her to hear,
And her knees beneath her were loosened for
fear,
And her blood fast bound as a frost-bound
water,
And the soft new bloom of the green earth's
daughter
Wind-wasted as blossom of a tree ;
As the wild God rapt her from earth's breast
lifted,
On the strength of the stream of his dark
breath drifted,

From the bosom of earth as a bride from the
mother,
With storm for bridesman and wreck for
brother,
As a cloud that he sheds upon the sea.

Of this hoary-headed woe [*Epode.*
Song made memory long ago ;
Now a younger grief to mourn
Needs a new song younger born.
Who shall teach our tongues to reach
What strange height of saddest speech,
For the new bride's sake that is given to
be
A stay to fetter the foot of the sea,
Lest it quite spurn down and trample the
town,
Ere the violets be dead that were plucked for
its crown,
Or its olive-leaf whiten and wither ?
Who shall say of the wind's way
That he journeyed yesterday,
Or the track of the storm that shall sound
to-morrow,
If the new be more than the grey-grown sor-
row ?
For the wind of the green first season was
keen,

And the blast shall be sharper that blew between

That the breath of the sea blows
hither.

CHORUS

From the depth of the springs of my spirit a
fountain is poured of thanksgiving,

My country, my mother, for thee,

That thy dead for their death shall have life in
thy sight and a name everliving

At heart of thy people to be.

In the darkness of change on the waters of time
they shall turn from afar

To the beam of this dawn for a beacon, the light
of these pyres for a star.

They shall see thee who love and take comfort,
who hate thee shall see and take warn-
ing,

Our mother that makest us free ;

And the sons of thine earth shall have help of
the waves that made war on their morn-
ing,

And friendship and fame of the sea.

HESPERIA

OUT of the golden remote wild west where the
sea without shore is,
Full of the sunset, and sad, if at all, with the
fulness of joy,
As a wind sets in with the autumn that blows
from the region of stories,
Blows with a perfume of songs and of mem-
ories beloved from a boy,
Blows from the capes of the past oversea to the
bays of the present,
Filled as with shadow of sound with the pulse
of invisible feet,
Far out to the shallows and straits of the future,
by rough ways or pleasant,
Is it thither the wind's wings beat? is it hither
to me, O my sweet?
For thee, in the stream of the deep tide-wind
blowing in with the water,
Thee I behold as a bird borne in with the
wind from the west,
Straight from the sunset, across white waves
whence rose as a daughter
Venus thy mother, in years when the world
was a water at rest.

Out of the distance of dreams, as a dream that
 abides after slumber,

 Strayed from the fugitive flock of the night,
 when the moon overhead

Wanes in the wan waste heights of the heaven,
 and stars without number

 Die without sound, and are spent like lamps
 that are burnt by the dead,

Comes back to me, stays by me, lulls me with
 touch of forgotten caresses,

 One warm dream clad about with a fire as of
 life that endures ;

The delight of thy face, and the sound of thy
 feet, and the wind of thy tresses,

 And all of a man that regrets, and all of a maid
 that allures.

But thy bosom is warm for my face and pro-
 found as a manifold flower,

 Thy silence as music, thy voice as an odour
 that fades in a flame ;

Not a dream, not a dream is the kiss of thy
 mouth, and the bountiful hour

 That makes me forget what was sin, and
 would make me forget were it shame.

Thine eyes that are quiet, thine hands that are
 tender, thy lips that are loving,

 Comfort and cool me as dew in the dawn of
 a moon like a dream ;

And my heart yearns baffled and blind, moved
vainly toward thee, and moving
As the refluent seaweed moves in the languid
exuberant stream,
Fair as a rose is on earth, as a rose under water
in prison,
That stretches and swings to the slow pas-
sionate pulse of the sea,
Closed up from the air and the sun, but alive, as
a ghost rearisen,
Pale as the love that revives as a ghost rearisen
in me.
From the bountiful infinite west, from the happy
memorial places
Full of the stately repose and the lordly delight
of the dead,
Where the fortunate islands are lit with the light
of ineffable faces,
And the sound of a sea without wind is about
them, and sunset is red,
Come back to redeem and release me from love
that recalls and represses,
That cleaves to my flesh as a flame, till the
serpent has eaten his fill ;
From the bitter delights of the dark, and the
feverish, the furtive caresses
That murder the youth in a man or ever his
heart have its will.

Thy lips cannot laugh and thine eyes cannot
weep ; thou art pale as a rose is,
Paler and sweeter than leaves that cover the
blush of the bud ;

And the heart of the flower is compassion, and
pity the core it encloses,

Pity, not love, that is born of the breath and
decays with the blood.

As the cross that a wild nun clasps till the edge
of it bruises her bosom,

So love wounds as we grasp it, and blackens
and burns as a flame ;

I have loved overmuch in my life ; when the
live bud bursts with the blossom,

Bitter as ashes or tears is the fruit, and the
wine thereof shame.

As a heart that its anguish divides is the green
bud cloven asunder ;

As the blood of a man self-slain is the flush
of the leaves that allure ;

And the perfume as poison and wine to the
brain, a delight and a wonder ;

And the thorns are too sharp for a boy, too
slight for a man, to endure.

Too soon did I love it, and lost love's rose ; and
I cared not for glory's ;

Only the blossoms of sleep and of pleasure
were mixed in my hair.

Was it myrtle or poppy thy garland was woven
with, O my Dolores ?

Was it pallor of slumber, or blush as of blood,
that I found in thee fair ?

For desire is a respite from love, and the flesh
not the heart is her fuel ;

She was sweet to me once, who am fled and
escaped from the rage of her reign ;

Who behold as of old time at hand as I turn,
with her mouth growing cruel,

And flushed as with wine with the blood of
her lovers, Our Lady of Pain.

Low down where the thicket is thicker with
thorns than with leaves in the summer,

In the brake is a gleaming of eyes and a hiss-
ing of tongues that I knew ;

And the lithe long throats of her snakes reach
round her, their mouths overcome her,

And her lips grow cool with their foam, made
moist as a desert with dew.

With the thirst and the hunger of lust though
her beautiful lips be so bitter,

With the cold foul foam of the snakes they
soften and redden and smile ;

And her fierce mouth sweetens, her eyes wax
wide and her eyelashes glitter,

And she laughs with a savour of blood in her
face, and a savour of guile.

She laughs, and her hands reach hither, her hair
blows hither and hisses,

As a lowlit flame in a wind, back-blown till
it shudder and leap;

Let her lips not again lay hold on my soul, nor
her poisonous kisses,

To consume it alive and divide from thy
bosom, Our Lady of Sleep.

Ah daughter of sunset and slumber, if now it
return into prison,

Who shall redeem it anew? but we, if thou
wilt, let us fly;

Let us take to us, now that the white skies
thrill with a moon unarisen,

Swift horses of fear or of love, take flight and
depart and not die.

They are swifter than dreams, they are stronger
than death; there is none that hath ridden,

None that shall ride in the dim strange ways
of his life as we ride;

By the meadows of memory, the highlands of
hope, and the shore that is hidden,

Where life breaks loud and unseen, a sonor-
ous invisible tide;

By the sands where sorrow has trodden, the salt
pools bitter and sterile,

By the thundering reef and the low sea-wall
and the channel of years,

Our wild steeds press on the night, strain hard
through pleasure and peril,
Labour and listen and pant not or pause for
the peril that nears ;
And the sound of them trampling the way
cleaves night as an arrow asunder,
And slow by the sand-hill and swift by the
down with its glimpses of grass,
Sudden and steady the music, as eight hoofs
trample and thunder,
Rings in the ear of the low blind wind of the
night as we pass ;
Shrill shrieks in our faces the blind bland air
that was mute as a maiden,
Stung into storm by the speed of our passage,
and deaf where we past ;
And our spirits too burn as we bound, thine
holy but mine heavy-laden,
As we burn with the fire of our flight ; ah
love, shall we win at the last ?

TWO PRELUDES

I

LOHENGRIN

LOVE, out of the depth of things,
As a dewfall felt from above,
From the heaven whence only springs
 Love —

Love, heard from the heights thereof,
The clouds and the watersprings,
Draws close as the clouds remove.

And the soul in it speaks and sings,
A swan sweet-souled as a dove,
An echo that only rings
 Love.

II

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE

Fate, out of the deep sea's gloom,
When a man's heart's pride grows great,
And nought seems now to foredoom
 Fate,

Fate, laden with fears in wait,
Draws close through the clouds that loom,
Till the soul see, all too late,

More dark than a dead world's tomb,
More high than the sheer dawn's gate,
More deep than the wide sea's womb,
Fate.

A WASTED VIGIL

I

COULDST thou not watch with me one hour?
Behold,
Dawn skims the sea with flying feet of gold,
With sudden feet that graze the gradual sea;
Couldst thou not watch with me?

II

What, not one hour? for star by star the night
Falls, and her thousands world by world take
flight;
They die, and day survives, and what of thee?
Couldst thou not watch with me?

III

Lo, far in heaven the web of night undone,
And on the sudden sea the gradual sun;

Wave to wave answers, tree responds to tree ;
 Couldst thou not watch with me ?

IV

Sunbeam by sunbeam creeps from line to line,
 Foam by foam quickens on the brightening
 brine ;
 Sail by sail passes, flower by flower gets free ;
 Couldst thou not watch with me ?

V

Last year, a brief while since, an age ago,
 A whole year past, with bud and bloom and snow,
 O moon that wast in heaven, what friends were
 we !
 Couldst thou not watch with me ?

VI

Old moons, and last year's flowers, and last
 year's snows !
 Who now saith to thee, moon ? or who saith
 rose ?
 O dust and ashes, once found fair to see !
 Couldst thou not watch with me ?

VII

O dust and ashes, once thought sweet to smell !
 With me it is not, is it with thee well ?

O sea-drift blown from windward back to lee!
Couldst thou not watch with me?

VIII

The old year's dead hands are full of their dead
flowers,
The old days are full of dead old loves of ours,
Born as a rose, and briefer born than she;
Couldst thou not watch with me?

IX

Could two days live again of that dead year,
One would say, seeking us and passing here,
Where is she? and one answering, *Where is he?*
Couldst thou not watch with me?

X

Nay, those two lovers are not anywhere;
If we were they, none knows us what we were,
Nor aught of all their barren grief and glee.
Couldst thou not watch with me?

XI

Half false, half fair, all feeble, be my verse
Upon thee not for blessing nor for curse;
For some must stand, and some must fall or
flee;
Couldst thou not watch with me?

XII

As a new moon above spent stars thou wast ;
But stars endure after the moon is past.
Couldst thou not watch one hour, though I
 watch three ?
 Couldst thou not watch with me ?

XIII

What of the night ? The night is full, the tide
Storms inland, the most ancient rocks divide ;
Yet some endure, and bow nor head nor knee ;
 Couldst thou not watch with me ?

XIV

Since thou art not as these are, go thy ways ;
Thou hast no part in all my nights and days.
Lie still, sleep on, be glad — as such things be ;
 Thou couldst not watch with me.

THE SUNDEW

A LITTLE marsh-plant, yellow green,
And pricked at lip with tender red.
Tread close, and either way you tread
Some faint black water jets between
Lest you should bruise the curious head.

A live thing may be; who shall know?
The summer knows and suffers it;
For the cool moss is thick and sweet
Each side, and saves the blossom so
That it lives out the long June heat.

The deep scent of the heather burns
About it; breathless though it be,
Bow down and worship; more than we
Is the least flower whose life returns,
Least weed renascent in the sea.

We are vexed and cumbered in earth's sight
With wants, with many memories;
These see their mother what she is,
Glad-growing, till August leave more bright
The apple-coloured cranberries.

Wind blows and bleaches the strong grass,
Blown all one way to shelter it
From trample of strayed kine, with feet
Felt heavier than the moorhen was,
Strayed up past patches of wild wheat.

You call it sundew: how it grows,
If with its colour it have breath,
If life taste sweet to it, if death
Pain its soft petal, no man knows:
Man has no sight or sense that saith.

My sundew, grown of gentle days,
In these green miles the spring begun
Thy growth ere April had half done
With the soft secret of her ways
Or June made ready for the sun.

O red-lipped mouth of marsh-flower,
I have a secret halved with thee.
The name that is love's name to me
Thou knowest, and the face of her
Who is my festival to see.

The hard sun, as thy petals knew,
Coloured the heavy moss-water :
Thou wert not worth green midsummer
Nor fit to live to August blue,
O sundew, not remembering her.

A MATCH

IF love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,
Blown fields or flowerful closes,
 Green pleasure or gray grief ;

If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon ;
If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath ;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy ;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day ;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein ;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

IF childhood were not in the world,
But only men and women grown ;
No baby-locks in tendrils curled,
No baby-blossoms blown ;

Though men were stronger, women fairer,
And nearer all delights in reach,

Of Such is the Kingdom of Heaven 235

And verse and music uttered rarer
Tones of more godlike speech ;

Though the utmost life of life's best hours
Found, as it cannot now find, words ;
Though desert sands were sweet as flowers
And flowers could sing like birds ;

But children never heard them, never
They felt a child's foot leap and run,
This were drearier star than ever
Yet looked upon the sun.

OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF
HEAVEN

OF such is the kingdom of heaven.
No glory that ever was shed
From the crowning star of the seven
That crown the north world's head,

No word that ever was spoken
Of human or godlike tongue,
Gave ever such godlike token
Since human harps were strung.

No sign that ever was given
To faithful or faithless eyes

Showed ever beyond clouds riven
 So clear a Paradise.

Earth's creeds may be seventy times seven
 And blood have defiled each creed :
 If of such be the kingdom of heaven,
 It must be heaven indeed.

A CHILD'S LAUGHTER

ALL the bells of heaven may ring,
 All the birds of heaven may sing,
 All the wells on earth may spring,
 All the winds on earth may bring
 All sweet sounds together ;
 Sweeter far than all things heard,
 Hand of harper, tone of bird,
 Sound of woods at sundown stirred,
 Welling water's winsome word,
 Wind in warm wan weather,

One thing yet there is, that none
 Hearing ere its chime be done
 Knows not well the sweetest one
 Heard of man beneath the sun,
 Hoped in heaven hereafter ;
 Soft and strong and loud and light,

Very sound of very light
Heard from morning's rosiest height,
When the soul of all delight
 Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome rolled
Never forth such notes, nor told
Hours so blithe in tones so bold
As the radiant mouth of gold
 Here that rings forth heaven.
If the golden-crested wren
Were a nightingale — why, then,
Something seen and heard of men
Might be half as sweet as when
 Laughs a child of seven.

A CHILD'S FUTURE

WHAT will it please you, my darling, hereafter
to be ?

Fame upon land will you look for, or glory by
sea ?

Gallant your life will be always, and all of it
free.

Free as the wind when the heart of the twilight
is stirred

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Eastward, and sounds from the springs of the
sunrise are heard :

Free — and we know not another as infinite
word.

Darkness or twilight or sunlight may compass
us round,

Hate may arise up against us, or hope may
confound ;

Love may forsake us ; yet may not the spirit be
bound.

Free in oppression of grief as in ardour of joy
Still may the soul be, and each to her strength
as a toy :

Free in the glance of the man as the smile of
the boy.

Freedom alone is the salt and the spirit that gives
Life, and without her is nothing that verily lives :
Death cannot slay her : she laughs upon death
and forgives.

Brightest and hardiest of roses anear and afar
Glitters the blithe little face of you, round as
a star :

Liberty bless you and keep you to be as you
are.

England and liberty bless you and keep you to be
Worthy the name of their child and the sight
of their sea :

Fear not at all ; for a slave, if he fears not, is
free.

A BABY'S DEATH

I

A LITTLE soul scarce fledged for earth
Takes wing with heaven again for goal
Even while we hailed as fresh from birth
A little soul.

Our thoughts ring sad as bells that toll,
Not knowing beyond this blind world's girth
What things are writ in heaven's full scroll.

Our fruitfulness is there but dearth,
And all things held in time's control
Seem there, perchance, ill dreams, not worth
A little soul.

II

The little feet that never trod
Earth, never strayed in field or street,
What hand leads upward back to God
The little feet ?

Who knows but on their sleep may rise
Such light as never heaven let through
To lighten earth from Paradise ?

No storm, we know, may change the blue
Soft heaven that haply death descries ;
No tears, like these in ours, bedew
The little eyes.

V

Was life so strange, so sad the sky,
So strait the wide world's range,
He would not stay to wonder why
Was life so strange ?

Was earth's fair house a joyless grange
Beside that house on high
Whence Time that bore him failed to estrange ?

That here at once his soul put by
All gifts of time and change,
And left us heavier hearts to sigh
" Was life so strange ? "

VI

Angel by name love called him, seeing so fair
The sweet small frame !
Meet to be called, if ever man's child were,
Angel by name.

Rose-bright and warm from heaven's own heart
 he came,
 And might not bear
The cloud that covers earth's wan face with
 shame.

His little light of life was all too rare
 And soft a flame :
Heaven yearned for him till angels hailed him
 there
 Angel by name.

VII

The song that smiled upon his birthday here
Weeps on the grave that holds him undefiled
Whose loss makes bitterer than a soundless tear
 The song that smiled.

His name crowned once the mightiest ever
 styled
Sovereign of arts, and angel : fate and fear
Knew then their master, and were reconciled.

But we saw born beneath some tenderer sphere
Michael, an angel and a little child,
Whose loss bows down to weep upon his bier
 The song that smiled.

SONNETS

HOPE AND FEAR

BENEATH the shadow of dawn's aerial cope,
With eyes enkindled as the sun's own sphere,
Hope from the front of youth in godlike
cheer

Looks Godward, past the shades where blind
men grope

Round the dark door that prayers nor dreams
can ope,

And makes for joy the very darkness dear
That gives her wide wings play ; nor dreams
that fear

At noon may rise and pierce the soul of hope.
Then, when the soul leaves off to dream and
yearn,

May truth first purge her eyesight to discern
What once being known leaves time no
power to appal ;

Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not, learn
The kind wise word that falls from years that
fall —

“ Hope thou not much, and fear thou not at
all.”

"NON DOLET"

IT does not hurt. She looked along the knife
Smiling, and watched the thick drops mix and
run

Down the sheer blade; not that which had
been done

Could hurt the sweet sense of the Roman wife
But that which was to do yet ere the strife

Could end for each for ever, and the sun:

Nor was the palm yet nor was peace yet won
While pain had power upon her husband's life.

It does not hurt, Italia. Thou art more
Than bride to bridegroom; how shalt thou not
take

The gift love's blood has reddened for thy sake?
Was not thy lifeblood given for us before?

And if love's heartblood can avail thy need,
And thou not die, how should it hurt indeed?

PELAGIUS

I

THE sea shall praise him and the shores bear part
That reared him when the bright south world
was black

With fume of creeds more foul than hell's
own rack,
Still darkening more love's face with loveless art
Since Paul, faith's fervent Antichrist, of heart
Heroic, haled the world vehemently back
From Christ's pure path on dire Jehovah's
track,
And said to dark Elisha's Lord, "Thou art."
But one whose soul had put the raiment on
Of love that Jesus left with James and John
Withstood that Lord whose seals of love were
lies,
Seeing what we see — how, touched by Truth's
bright rod,
The fiend whom Jews and Africans called God
Feels his own hell take hold on him, and dies.

II

The world has no such flower in any land,
And no such pearl in any gulf the sea,
As any babe on any mother's knee.
But all things blessed of men by saints are
banned:
God gives them grace to read and understand
The palimpsest of evil, writ where we,
Poor fools and lovers but of love, can see
Nought save a blessing signed by Love's own
hand.

The smile that opens heaven on us for them
 Hath sin's transmitted birthmark hid therein :
 The kiss it craves calls down from heaven
 a rod.

If innocence be sin that Gods condemn,
 Praise we the men who so being born in sin
 First dared the doom and broke the bonds
 of God.

III

Man's heel is on the Almighty's neck who said,
 Let there be hell, and there was hell — on
 earth.

But not for that may men forget their worth—
 Nay, but much more remember them — who led
 The living first from dwellings of the dead,
 And rent the cerecloths that were wont to
 engirth

Souls wrapped and swathed and swaddled from
 their birth

With lies that bound them fast from heel to head.
 Among the tombs when wise men all their lives
 Dwelt, and cried out, and cut themselves with
 knives,

These men, being foolish, and of saints abhorred,
 Beheld in heaven the sun by saints reviled,
 Love, and on earth one everlasting Lord
 In every likeness of a little child.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL

I

O NIGHT and death, to whom we grudged him
then,

When in man's sight he stood not yet undone,
Your king, your priest, your saviour, and your
son,

We grudge not now, who know that not again
Shall this curse come upon the sins of men,

Nor this face look upon the living sun

That shall behold not so abhorred an one

In all the days whereof his eye takes ken.

The bond is cancelled, and the prayer is heard

That seemed so long but weak and wasted
breath ;

Take him, for he is yours, O night and death.

Hell yawns on him whose life was as a word

Uttered by death in hate of heaven and light,

A curse now dumb upon the lips of night.

II

What shapes are these and shadows without end

That fill the night full as a storm of rain

With myriads of dead men and women slain,

Old with young, child with mother, friend with
friend,

That on the deep mid wintering air impend,
 Pale yet with mortal wrath and human pain,
 Who died that this man dead now too might
 reign,
 Toward whom their hands point and their faces
 bend ?
 The ruining flood would redden earth and air
 If for each soul whose guiltless blood was shed
 There fell but one drop on this one man's head
 Whose soul to-night stands bodiless and bare,
 For whom our hearts give thanks who put up
 prayer,
 That we have lived to say, The dog is dead.

THE MODERATES

Virtutem videant intabescantque relictâ

SHE stood before her traitors bound and bare,
 Clothed with her wounds and with her naked
 shame
 As with a weed of fiery tears and flame,
 Their mother-land, their common weal and care,
 And they turned from her and denied, and sware
 They did not know this woman nor her name.
 And they took truce with tyrants and grew
 tame,

And gathered up cast crowns and creeds to wear,
And rags and shards regilded. Then she took

In her bruised hands their broken pledge, and
eyed

These men so late so loud upon her side
With one inevitable and tearless look,
That they might see her face whom they for-
sook;

And they beheld what they had left, and died.

THE BURDEN OF AUSTRIA

O DAUGHTER of pride, wasted with misery,
With all the glory that thy shame put on
Stripped off thy shame, O daughter of Babylon,
Yea, whoso be it, yea, happy shall he be
That as thou hast served us hath rewarded thee.

Blessed, who throweth against war's boundary
stone

Thy warrior brood, and breaketh bone by bone
Misrule thy son, thy daughter Tyranny.

That landmark shalt thou not remove for shame,

But sitting down there in a widow's weed
Wail; for what fruit is now of thy red fame?

Have thy sons too and daughters learnt indeed

What thing it is to weep, what thing to bleed?

Is it not thou that now art but a name?

APOLOGIA

IF wrath embitter the sweet mouth of song,
 And make the sunlight fire before those eyes
 That would drink draughts of peace from the
 unsoiled skies,
 The wrongdoing is not ours, but ours the wrong,
 Who hear too loud on earth and see too long
 The grief that dies not with the groan that dies,
 Till the strong bitterness of pity cries
 Within us, that our anger should be strong.
 For chill is known by heat and heat by chill,
 And the desire that hope makes love to still
 By the fear flying beside it or above,
 A falcon fledged to follow a fledgeling dove,
 And by the fume and flame of hate of ill
 The exuberant light and burning bloom of love.

ON THE RUSSIAN PERSECUTION
 OF THE JEWS

O SON of man, by lying tongues adored,
 By slaughterous hands of slaves with feet red-
 shod
 In carnage deep as ever Christian trod
 Profaned with prayer and sacrifice abhorred

And incense from the trembling tyrant's horde,
 Brute worshippers or wielders of the rod,
 Most murderous even of all that call thee God,
 Most treacherous even that ever called thee
 Lord ;

Face loved of little children long ago,
 Head hated of the priests and rulers then
 If thou see this, or hear these hounds of
 thine

Run ravening as the Gadarean swine,
 Say, was not this thy Passion, to foreknow
 In death's worst hour the works of Christian
 men ?

DYSTHANATOS

*Ad generem Cereris sine cæde et vulnere pauci
 Descendant reges, aut siccâ morte tyranni*

By no dry death another king goes down
 The way of kings. Yet may no free man's
 voice,

For stern compassion and deep awe, rejoice
 That one sign more is given against the crown,
 That one more head those dark red waters drown
 Which rise round thrones whose trembling
 equipoise

Is propped on sand and bloodshed and such toys
 As human hearts that shrink at human frown.

The name writ red on Polish earth, the star
 That was to outshine our England's in the far
 East heaven of empire — Where is one that
 saith

Proud words now, prophesying of this White
 Czar?

“In bloodless pangs few kings yield up their
 breath,
 Few tyrants perish by no violent death.”

CARNOT

DEATH, winged with fire of hate from deathless
 hell

Wherein the souls of anarchs hiss and die,
 With stroke as dire has cloven a heart as high
 As twice beyond the wide sea's westward swell
 The living lust of death had power to quell
 Through ministry of murderous hands whereby
 Dark fate bade Lincoln's head and Garfield's
 lie

Low even as his who bids his France farewell.

France, now no heart that would not weep with
 thee

Loved ever faith or freedom. From thy hand
 The staff of state is broken: hope, unmanned

With anguish, doubts if freedom's self be free.
 The snake-souled anarch's fang strikes all the
 land
 Cold, and all hearts unsundered by the sea.

VOS DEOS LAUDAMUS

THE CONSERVATIVE JOURNALIST'S ANTHEM

“As a matter of fact, no man living, or who ever lived — not CÆSAR or PERICLES, not SHAKESPEARE or MICHAEL ANGELO — could confer honour more than he took on entering the House of Lords.” — *Saturday Review*, December 15, 1883.

“Clumsy and shallow snobbery — can do no hurt.” — *Ibid*

I

O LORDS our Gods, beneficent, sublime,
 In the evening, and before the morning flames,
 We praise, we bless, we magnify your names.
 The slave is he that serves not; his the crime
 And shame, who hails not as the crown of
 Time
 That House wherein the all-envious world
 acclaim
 Such glory that the reflex of it shames
 All crowns bestowed of men for prose or rhyme.
 The serf, the cur, the sycophant is he
 Who feels no cringing motion twitch his knee

When from a height too high for Shakespeare
 nods
 The wearer of a higher than Milton's crown.
 Stoop, Chaucer, stoop : Keats, Shelley, Burns,
 bow down :
 These have no part with you, O Lords our
 Gods.

II

O Lords our Gods, it is not that ye sit
 Serene above the thunder, and exempt
 From strife of tongues and casualties that
 tempt
 Men merely found by proof of manhood fit
 For service of their fellows : this is it
 Which sets you past the reach of Time's
 attempt,
 Which gives us right of justified contempt
 For commonwealths built up by mere men's wit :
 That gold unlocks not, nor may flatteries ope,
 The portals of your heaven ; that none may
 hope
 With you to watch how life beneath you
 plods,
 Save for high service given, high duty done ;
 That never was your rank ignobly won :
 For this we give you praise, O Lords our
 Gods.

III

O Lords our Gods, the times are evil : you
Redeem the time, because of evil days.
While abject souls in servitude of praise
Bow down to heads untitled, and the crew
Whose honour dwells but in the deeds they do,
From loftier hearts your nobler servants raise
More manful salutation : yours are bays
That not the dawn's plebeian pearls bedew ;
Yours, laurels plucked not of such hands as
wove

Old age its chaplet in Colonos' grove.

Our time, with heaven and with itself at odds,
Makes all lands else as seas that seethe and boil ;
But yours are yet the corn and wine and oil,
And yours our worship yet, O Lords our
Gods.

IN SAN LORENZO

Is thine hour come to wake, O slumbering
Night ?

Hath not the Dawn a message in thine ear ?

Though thou be stone and sleep, yet shalt
thou hear

When the word falls from heaven — Let there
be light.

Thou knowest we would not do thee the de-
spite

To wake thee while the old sorrow and shame
were near ;

We spake not loud for thy sake, and for
fear

Lest thou shouldst lose the rest that was thy
right,

The blessing given thee that was thine alone,
The happiness to sleep and to be stone :

Nay, we kept silence of thee for thy sake
Albeit we knew thee alive, and left with thee
The great good gift to feel not nor to see ;

But will not yet thine Angel bid thee wake ?

THE FESTIVAL OF BEATRICE

DANTE, sole standing on the heavenward height,
Beheld and heard one saying, " Behold me
well :

I am, I am Beatrice." Heaven and hell
Kept silence, and the illimitable light
Of all the stars was darkness in his sight
Whose eyes beheld her eyes again, and fell
Shame-stricken. Since her soul took flight to
dwell

In heaven, six hundred years have taken flight.

And now that heavenliest part of earth whereon
Shines yet their shadow as once their presence
shone

To her bears witness for his sake, as he
For hers bare witness when her face was gone :
No slave, no hospice now for grief — but free
From shore to mountain and from Alp to sea.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

CROWNED, girdled, garbed and shod with light
and fire,

Son first-born of the morning, sovereign star!
Soul nearest ours of all, that wert most far,
Most far off in the abysm of time, thy lyre
Hung highest above the dawn-enkindled quire
Where all ye sang together, all that are,
And all the starry songs behind thy car
Rang sequence, all our souls acclaim thee sire.

“ If all the pens that ever poets held
Had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts,”
And as with rush of hurtling chariots
The flight of all their spirits were impelled
Toward one great end, thy glory — nay, not
then,
Not yet might'st thou be praised enough of
men.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

NOT if men's tongues and angels' all in one
 Spake, might the word be said that might
 speak Thee.

Streams, winds, woods, flowers, fields, moun-
 tains, yea, the sea,

What power is in them all to praise the sun?
 His praise is this, — he can be praised of none.

Man, woman, child, praise God for him; but he
 Exults not to be worshipped, but to be.

He is : and, being, beholds his work well done.
 All joy, all glory, all sorrow, all strength, all mirth,
 Are his : without him, day were night on earth.

Time knows not his from time's own period.
 All lutes, all harps, all viols, all flutes, all lyres,
 Fall dumb before him ere one string suspires.

All stars are angels ; but the sun is God.

JOHN WEBSTER

THUNDER : the flesh quails, and the soul bows
 down.

Night : east, west, south, and northward, very
 night.

Star upon struggling star strives into sight,

Star after shuddering star the deep storms drown.
 The very throne of night, her very crown,
 A man lays hand on, and usurps her right.
 Song from the highest of heaven's imperious
 height
 Shoots, as a fire to smite some towering town.
 Rage, anguish, harrowing fear, heart-crazing
 crime,
 Make monstrous all the murderous face of
 Time
 Shown in the spheral orbit of a glass
 Revolving. Earth cries out from all her graves.
 Frail, on frail rafts, across wide-wallowing
 waves,
 Shapes here and there of child and mother
 pass.

COR CORDIUM

O HEART of hearts, the chalice of love's fire,
 Hid round with flowers and all the bounty of
 bloom ;
 O wonderful and perfect heart, for whom
 The lyrist liberty made life a lyre ;
 O heavenly heart, at whose most dear desire
 Dead love, living and singing, cleft his tomb,
 And with him risen and regent in death's room
 All day thy choral pulses rang full choir ;

O heart whose beating blood was running song,
 O sole thing sweeter than thine own songs
 were,
 Help us for thy free love's sake to be free,
 True for thy truth's sake, for thy strength's sake
 strong,
 Till very liberty make clean and fair
 The nursing earth as the sepulchral sea.

DICKENS

CHIEF in thy generation born of men
 Whom English praise acclaimed as English-
 born,
 With eyes that matched the worldwide eyes
 of morn
 For gleam of tears or laughter, tenderest then
 When thoughts of children warmed their light,
 or when
 Reverence of age with love and labour worn,
 Or godlike pity fired with godlike scorn,
 Shot through them flame that winged thy swift
 live pen :
 Where stars and suns that we behold not burn,
 Higher even than here, though highest was
 here thy place,
 Love sees thy spirit laugh and speak and shine

On the Deaths of Carlyle and Eliot 261

With Shakespeare and the soft bright soul of
Sterne

And Fielding's kindest might and Gold-
smith's grace ;

Scarce one more loved or worthier love
than thine.

ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS
CARLYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT

Two souls diverse out of our human sight
Pass, followed one with love and each with
wonder ;

The stormy sophist with his mouth of thunder,
Clothed with loud words and mantled in the
might

Of darkness and magnificence of night ;

And one whose eye could smite the night in
sunder,

Searching if light or no light were thereunder,
And found in love of loving-kindness light.

Duty divine and Thought with eyes of fire
Still following Righteousness with deep desire

Shone sole and stern before her and above,

Sure stars and sole to steer by ; but more sweet

Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly feet,

The light of little children, and their love.

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT
BROWNING

HE held no dream worth waking : so he said,
 He who stands now on death's triumphal
 steep,
 Awakened out of life wherein we sleep
And dream of what he knows and sees, being
 dead.
But never death for him was dark or dread :
 "Look forth," he bade the soul, and fear not.
 Weep,
 All ye that trust not in his truth, and keep
Vain memory's vision of a vanished head
As all that lives of all that once was he
Save that which lightens from his word : but
 we,
 Who, seeing the sunset-coloured waters roll,
Yet know the sun subdued not of the sea,
 Nor weep nor doubt that still the spirit is
 whole,
 And life and death but shadows of the soul.

PERSONAL AND MEMORIAL POEMS

THALASSIUS

UPON the flowery forefront of the year,
One wandering by the grey-green April sea
Found on a reach of shingle and shallower
sand

Inlaid with starrier glimmering jewellery
Left for the sun's love and the light wind's
cheer

Along the foam-flowered strand
Breeze-brightened, something nearer sea than
land

Though the last shoreward blossom-fringe was
near,

A babe asleep with flower-soft face that gleamed
To sun and seaward as it laughed and dreamed,
Too sure of either love for either's fear,
Albeit so birdlike slight and light, it seemed
Nor man nor mortal child of man, but fair
As even its twin-born tenderer spray-flowers
were,

That the wind scatters like an Oread's hair.

For when July strewed fire on earth and sea
The last time ere that year,
Out of the flame of morn Cymothoe
Beheld one brighter than the sunbright sphere
Move toward her from its fieriest heart, whence
 trod
The live sun's very God,
Across the foam-bright water-ways that are
As heavenlier heavens with star for answering
 star,
And on her eyes and hair and maiden mouth
Felt a kiss falling fierier than the South,
And heard above afar
A noise of songs and wind-enamoured wings
And lutes and lyres of milder and mightier
 strings,
And round the resonant radiance of his car
Where depth is one with height,
Light heard as music, music seen as light.
And with that second moondawn of the spring's
That fosters the first rose,
A sun-child whiter than the sunlit snows
Was born out of the world of sunless things
That round the round earth flows and ebbs and
 flows.

But he that found the sea-flower by the sea
And took to foster like a graft of earth

Was born of man's most highest and heavenliest
birth,

Free-born as winds and stars and waves are free ;
A warrior grey with glories more than years,
Though more of years than change the quick to
dead

Had rained their light and darkness on his head ;
A singer that in time's and memory's ears
Should leave such words to sing as all his peers
Might praise with hallowing heat of rapturous
tears

Till all the days of human flight were fled.

And at his knees his fosterling was fed

Not with man's wine and bread

Nor mortal mother-milk of hopes and fears,

But food of deep memorial days long sped ;

For bread with wisdom and with song for wine

Clear as the full calm's emerald hyaline.

And from his grave glad lips the boy would
gather

Fine honey of song-notes goldener than gold,

More sweet than bees make of the breathing
heather,

That he, as glad and bold,

Might drink as they, and keep his spirit from
cold,

And the boy loved his laurel-laden hair

As his own father's risen on the eastern air,

And that less white brow-binding bayleaf bloom
More than all flowers his father's eyes relume ;
And those high songs he heard,
More than all notes of any landward bird,
More than all sounds less free
Than the wind's quiring to the choral sea.

High things the high song taught him ; how
the breath
Too frail for life may be more strong than
death ;
And this poor flash of sense in life, that gleams
As a ghost's glory in dreams,
More stable than the world's own heart's root
seems,
By that strong faith of lordliest love which gives
To death's own sightless-seeming eyes a light
Clearer, to death's bare bones a verier might,
Than shines or strikes from any man that lives.
How he that loves life overmuch shall die
The dog's death, utterly :
And he that much less loves it than he hates
All wrongdoing that is done
Anywhere always underneath the sun
Shall live a mightier life than time's or fate's.
One fairer thing he shewed him, and in might
More strong than day and night
Whose strengths build up time's towering period :

Yea, one thing stronger and more high than God,
Which if man had not, then should God not be :
And that was Liberty.

And gladly should man die to gain, he said,
Freedom ; and gladlier, having lost, lie dead.
For man's earth was not, nor the sweet sea-
waves

His, nor his own land, nor its very graves,
Except they bred not, bore not, hid not slaves :
But all of all that is,
Were one man free in body and soul, were his.

And the song softened, even as heaven by
night

Softens, from sunnier down to starrier light,
And with its moonbright breath
Blessed life for death's sake, and for life's sake
death.

Till as the moon's own beam and breath confuse
In one clear hueless haze of glimmering hues
The sea's line and the land's line and the sky's,
And light for love of darkness almost dies,
As darkness only lives for light's dear love,
Whose hands the web of night is woven of,
So in that heaven of wondrous words were life
And death brought out of strife ;
Yea, by that strong spell of serene increase
Brought out of strife to peace.

That life and death and life are fashioned of,
From the first breath that burns
Half kindled on the flowerlike yeanling's lip,
So light and faint that life seems like to slip,
To that yet weaklier drawn
When sunset dies of night's devouring dawn.
But the man dying not wholly as all men dies
If aught be left of his in live men's eyes
Out of the dawnless dark of death to rise;
If aught of deed or word
Be seen for all time or of all time heard.
Love, that though body and soul were over-
thrown
Should live for love's sake of itself alone,
Though spirit and flesh were one thing doomed
and dead,
Not wholly annihilated.
Seeing even the hoariest ash-flake that the pyre
Drops, and forgets the thing was once afire
And gave its heart to feed the pile's full flame
Till its own heart its own heat overcame,
Outlives its own life, though by scarce a span,
As such men dying outlive themselves in man,
Outlive themselves for ever; if the heat
Outburn the heart that kindled it, the sweet
Outlast the flower whose soul it was, and flit
Forth of the body of it
Into some new shape of a strange perfume

More potent than its light live spirit of bloom,
 How shall not something of that soul relive,
 That only soul that had such gifts to give
 As lighten something even of all men's doom
 Even from the labouring womb
 Even to the seal set on the unopening tomb?
 And these the loving light of song and love
 Shall wrap and lap round and impend above,
 Imperishable; and all springs born illumine
 Their sleep with brighter thoughts than wake the
 dove

To music, when the hillside winds resume
 The marriage-song of heather-flower and broom
 And all the joy thereof.

And hate the song too taught him: hate of
 all

That brings or holds in thrall
 Of spirit or flesh, free-born ere God began,
 The holy body and sacred soul of man.
 And wheresoever a curse was or a chain,
 A throne for torment or a crown for bane
 Rose, moulded out of poor men's molten pain,
 There, said he, should man's heaviest hate be
 set

Inexorably, to faint not or forget
 Till the last warmth bled forth of the last vein
 In flesh that none should call a king's again,

Seeing wolves and dogs and birds that plague-
strike air
Leave the last bone of all the carrion bare.

And hope the high song taught him : hope
whose eyes
Can sound the seas unsoundable, the skies
Inaccessible of eyesight ; that can see
What earth beholds not, hear what wind and sea
Hear not, and speak what all these crying in one
Can speak not to the sun.
For in her sovereign eyelight all things are
Clear as the closest seen and kindlier star
That marries morn and even and winter and
spring
With one love's golden ring.
For she can see the days of man, the birth
Of good and death of evil things on earth
Inevitable and infinite, and sure
As present pain is, or herself is pure.
Yea, she can hear and see, beyond all things
That lighten from before Time's thunderous
wings
Through the awful circle of wheel-winged
periods,
The tempest of the twilight of all Gods :
And higher than all the circling course they ran
The sundawn of the spirit that was man.

And fear the song too taught him ; fear to be
Worthless the dear love of the wind and sea
That bred him fearless, like a sea-mew reared
In rocks of man's foot feared,
Where nought of wingless life may sing or shine.
Fear to wax worthless of that heaven he had
When all the life in all his limbs was glad
And all the drops in all his veins were wine
And all the pulses music ; when his heart,
Singing, bade heaven and wind and sea bear part
In one live song's reiteration, and they bore :
Fear to go crownless of the flower he wore
When the winds loved him and the waters knew,
The blithest life that clove their blithe life
 through
With living limbs exultant, or held strife
More amorous than all dalliance aye anew
With the bright breath and strength of their
 large life,
With all strong wrath of all sheer winds that
 blew,
All glories of all storms of the air that fell
Prone, ineluctable,
With roar from heaven of revel, and with hue
As of a heaven turned hell.
For when the red blast of their breath had made
All heaven aflush with light more dire than
 shade,

He felt it in his blood and eyes and hair
Burn as if all the fires of the earth and air
Had laid strong hold upon his flesh, and stung
The soul behind it as with serpent's tongue,
Forked like the loveliest lightnings: nor could
bear

But hardly, half distraught with strong delight,
The joy that like a garment wrapped him round
And lapped him over and under
With raiment of great light
And rapture of great sound
At every loud leap earthward of the thunder
From heaven's most furthest bound:
So seemed all heaven in hearing and in sight,
Alive and mad with glory and angry joy,
That something of its marvellous mirth and might
Moved even to madness, fledged as even for flight,
The blood and spirit of one but mortal boy.

So, clothed with love and fear that love makes
great,
And armed with hope and hate,
He set first foot upon the spring-flowered ways
That all feet pass and praise.
And one dim dawn between the winter and
spring,
In the sharp harsh wind harrying heaven and
earth

To put back April that had borne his birth
From sunward on her sunniest shower-struck
 wing,
With tears and laughter for the dew-dropt thing,
Slight as indeed a dew-drop, by the sea
One met him lovelier than all men may be,
God-featured, with god's eyes; and in their
 might
Somewhat that drew men's own to mar their
 sight,
Even of all eyes drawn toward him: and his
 mouth
Was as the very rose of all men's youth,
One rose of all the rose-beds in the world:
But round his brows the curls were snakes that
 curled,
And like his tongue a serpent's; and his voice
Speaks death, and bids rejoice.
Yet then he spake no word, seeming as dumb,
A dumb thing mild and hurtless; nor at first
From his bowed eyes seemed any light to come,
Nor his meek lips for blood or tears to thirst:
But as one blind and mute in mild sweet wise
Pleading for pity of piteous lips and eyes,
He strayed with faint bare lily-lovely feet
Helpless, and flowerlike sweet:
Nor might man see, not having word hereof,
That this of all gods was the great god Love.

And seeing him lovely and like a little child
That wellnigh wept for wonder that it smiled
And was so feeble and fearful, with soft speech
The youth bespake him softly ; but there fell
From the sweet lips no sweet word audible
That ear or thought might reach :
No sound to make the dim cold silence glad,
No breath to thaw the hard harsh air with heat ;
Only the saddest smile of all things sweet,
Only the sweetest smile of all things sad.

And so they went together one green way
Till April dying made free the world for May ;
And on his guide suddenly Love's face turned,
And in his blind eyes burned
Hard light and heat of laughter ; and like flame
That opens in a mountain's ravining mouth
To blear and sear the sunlight from the south,
His mute mouth opened, and his first word came ;
“ Knowest thou me now by name ? ”
And all his stature waxed immeasurable,
As of one shadowing heaven and lightening hell :
And statelier stood he than a tower that stands
And darkens with its darkness far-off sands
Whereon the sky leans red ;
And with a voice that stilled the winds he said :
“ I am he that was thy lord before thy birth,
I am he that is thy lord till thou turn earth :

I make the night more dark, and all the morrow
Dark as the night whose darkness was my breath:
O fool, my name is sorrow;
Thou fool, my name is death."

And he that heard spake not, and looked
right on
Again, and Love was gone.

Through many a night toward many a wearier
day
His spirit bore his body down its way.
Through many a day toward many a wearier
night
His soul sustained his sorrows in her sight.
And earth was bitter, and heaven, and even the
sea
Sorrowful even as he.
And the wind helped not, and the sun was dumb;
And with too long strong stress of grief to be
His heart grew sere and numb.

And one bright eve ere summer in autumn sank
At stardawn standing on a grey sea-bank
He felt the wind fitfully shift and heave
As toward a stormier eve;
And all the wan wide sea shuddered; and earth
Shook underfoot as toward some timeless birth,

Intolerable and inevitable ; and all
Heaven, darkling, trembled like a stricken thrall.
And far out of the quivering east, and far
From past the moonrise and its guiding star,
Began a noise of tempest and a light
That was not of the lightning ; and a sound
Rang with it round and round
That was not of the thunder ; and a flight
As of blown clouds by night,
That was not of them ; and with songs and cries
That sang and shrieked their soul out at the skies
A shapeless earthly storm of shapes began
From all ways round to move in on the man,
Clamorous against him silent ; and their feet
Were as the wind's are fleet,
And their shrill songs were as wild birds' are
sweet.

And as when all the world of earth was
wronged
And all the host of all men driven afoam
By the red hand of Rome,
Round some fierce amphitheatre overthronged
With fair clear faces full of bloodier lust
Than swells and stings the tiger when his mood
Is fieriest after blood
And drunk with trampling of the murderous
must

That soaks and stains the tortuous close-coiled
 wood
Made monstrous with its myriad-mustering
 brood,
Face by fair face panted and gleamed and pressed,
And breast by passionate breast
Heaved hot with ravenous rapture, as they
 quaffed
The red ripe full fume of the deep live draught,
The sharp quick reek of keen fresh bloodshed,
 blown
Through the dense deep drift up to the emperor's
 throne
From the under steaming sands
With clamour of all-applausive throats and hands,
Mingling in mirthful time
With shrill blithe mockeries of the lithe-limbed
 mime :
So from somewhence far forth of the un beholden,
Dreadfully driven from over and after and under,
Fierce, blown through fifes of brazen blast and
 golden,
With sound of chiming waves that drown the
 thunder
Or thunder that strikes dumb the sea's own
 chimes,
Began the bellowing of the bull-voiced mimes
Terrible ; firs bowed down as briars or palms

Even as the breathless blast as of a breeze
Fulfilled with clamour and clangour and storms
of psalms ;

Red hands rent up the roots of old-world trees,
Thick flames of torches tossed as tumbling seas
Made mad the moonless and infuriate air
That, ravening, revelled in the riotous hair
And raiment of the furred Bassarides.

So came all those in on him ; and his heart,
As out of sleep suddenly struck astart,
Danced, and his flesh took fire of theirs, and
grief

Was as a last year's leaf
Blown dead far down the wind's way ; and he
set

His pale mouth to the brightest mouth it met
That laughed for love against his lips, and bade
Follow ; and in following all his blood grew glad
And as again a sea-bird's ; for the wind
Took him to bathe him deep round breast and
brow

Not as it takes a dead leaf drained and thinned,
But as the brightest bay-flower blown on bough,
Set springing toward it singing : and they rode
By many a vine-leafed, many a rose-hung road,
Exalt with exultation : many a night
Set all its stars upon them as for spies

On many a moon-bewildering mountain-height
Where he rode only by the fierier light
Of his dread lady's hot sweet hungering eyes.
For the moon wandered witless of her way,
Spell-stricken by strong magic in such wise
As wizards use to set the stars astray.
And in his ears the music that makes mad
Beat always; and what way the music bade,
That always rode he; nor was any sleep
His, nor from height nor deep.
But heaven was as red iron, slumberless,
And had no heart to bless;
And earth lay sere and darkling as distraught,
And help in her was nought.

Then many a midnight, many a morn and
even,
His mother, passing forth of her fair heaven,
With goodlier gifts than all save gods can give
From earth or from the heaven where sea-things
live,
With shine of sea-flowers through the bayleaf
braid
Woven for a crown her foam-white hands had
made
To crown him with land's laurel and sea-dew,
Sought the sea-bird that was her boy: but he
Sat panther-throned beside Erigone,

Riding the red ways of the revel through
Midmost of pale-mouthed passion's crownless
crew.

Till on some winter's dawn of some dim year
He let the vine-bit on the panther's lip
Slide, and the green rein slip,
And set his eyes to seaward, nor gave ear
If sound from landward hailed him, dire or dear ;
And passing forth of all those fair fierce ranks
Back to the grey sea-banks,
Against a sea-rock lying, aslant the steep,
Fell after many sleepless dreams on sleep.

And in his sleep the dun green light was shed
Heavily round his head
That through the veil of sea falls fathom-deep,
Blurred like a lamp's that when the night drops
dead
Dies ; and his eyes gat grace of sleep to see
The deep divine dark dayshine of the sea,
Dense water-walls and clear dusk water-ways,
Broad-based, or branching as a sea-flower sprays
That side or this dividing ; and anew
The glory of all her glories that he knew.
And in sharp rapture of recovering tears
He woke on fire with yearnings of old years,
Pure as one purged of pain that passion bore,
Ill child of bitter mother ; for his own

Looked laughing toward him from her midsea
 throne,
Up toward him there ashore.

Thence in his heart the great same joy began,
Of child that made him man :
And turned again from all hearts else on quest,
He communed with his own heart, and had rest.
And like sea-winds upon loud waters ran
His days and dreams together, till the joy
Burned in him of the boy.

Till the earth's great comfort and the sweet
 sea's breath

Breathed and blew life in where was heartless
 death,

Death spirit-stricken of soul-sick days, where
 strife

Of thought and flesh made mock of death and
 life.

And grace returned upon him of his birth
Where heaven was mixed with heavenlike sea
 and earth ;

And song shot forth strong wings that took the
 sun

From inward, fledged with might of sorrow and
 mirth

And father's fire made mortal in his son.
Nor was not spirit of strength in blast and breeze

To exalt again the sun's child and the sea's;
For as wild mares in Thessaly grow great
With child of ravishing winds, that violate
Their leaping length of limb with manes like fire
And eyes outburning heaven's
With fires more violent than the lightning levin's
And breath drained out and desperate of desire,
Even so the spirit in him, when winds grew
 strong,
Grew great with child of song.
Nor less than when his veins first leapt for joy
To draw delight in such as burns a boy,
Now too the soul of all his senses felt
The passionate pride of deep sea-pulses dealt
Through nerve and jubilant vein
As from the love and largess of old time,
And with his heart again
The tidal throb of all the tides keep rhyme
And charm him from his own soul's separate
 sense
With infinite and invasive influence
That made strength sweet in him and sweetness
 strong,
Being now no more a singer, but a song.

 Till one clear day when brighter sea-wind
 blew
And louder sea-shine lightened, for the waves

Because thou hast heard with world-unwearied
ears

The music that puts light into the spheres ;
Have therefore in thine heart and in thy mouth
The sound of song that mingles north and south,
The song of all the winds that sing of me,
And in thy soul the sense of all the sea."

ADIEUX À MARIE STUART

I

QUEEN, for whose house my fathers fought,
With hopes that rose and fell,
Red star of boyhood's fiery thought,
Farewell.

They gave their lives, and I, my queen,
Have given you of my life,
Seeing your brave star burn high between
Men's strife.

The strife that lightened round their spears
Long since fell still : so long
Hardly may hope to last in years
My song.

But still through strife of time and thought
Your light on me too fell :

Queen, in whose name we sang or fought,
Farewell.

II

There beats no heart on either border
 Wherethrough the north blasts blow
But keeps your memory as a warder
 His beacon-fire aglow.

Long since it fired with love and wonder
 Mine, for whose April age
Blithe midsummer made banquet under
 The shade of Hermitage.

Soft sang the burn's blithe notes, that gather
 Strength to ring true :
And air and trees and sun and heather
 Remembered you.

Old border ghosts of fight or fairy
 Or love or teen,
These they forget, remembering Mary
 The Queen.

III

Queen once of Scots and ever of ours
 Whose sires brought forth for you
Their lives to strew your way like flowers,
 Adieu.

Dead is full many a dead man's name
Who died for you this long
Time past : shall this too fare the same,
My song ?

But surely, though it die or live,
Your face was worth
All that a man may think to give
On earth.

No darkness cast of years between
Can darken you :
Man's love will never bid my queen
Adieu.

IV

Love hangs like light about your name
As music round the shell :
No heart can take of you a tame
Farewell.

Yet, when your very face was seen,
Ill gifts were yours for giving :
Love gat strange guerdons of my queen
When living.

O diamond heart unflawed and clear,
The whole world's crowning jewel !

Was ever heart so deadly dear
 So cruel?

Yet none for you of all that bled
 Grudged once one drop that fell :
 Not one to life reluctant said
 Farewell.

v

Strange love they have given you, love dis-
 loyal,
 Who mock with praise your name,
 To leave a head so rare and royal
 Too low for praise or blame.

You could not love nor hate, they tell us,
 You had nor sense nor sting :
 In God's name, then, what plague befell us
 To fight for such a thing?

“Some faults the gods will give,” to fetter
 Man's highest intent :
 But surely you were something better
 Than innocent !

No maid that strays with steps unwary
 Through snares unseen,
 But one to live and die for ; Mary,
 The Queen.

VI

Forgive them all their praise, who blot
Your fame with praise of you :
Then love may say, and falter not,
Adieu.

Yet some you hardly would forgive
Who did you much less wrong
Once : but resentment should not live
Too long.

They never saw your lips' bright bow,
Your swordbright eyes,
The bluest of heavenly things below
The skies.

Clear eyes that love's self finds most like
A swordblade's blue,
A swordblade's ever keen to strike,
Adieu.

VII

Though all things breathe a sound of fight
That yet make up your spell,
To bid you were to bid the light
Farewell.

Farewell the song says only, being
 A star whose race is run :
Farewell the soul says never, seeing
 The sun.

Yet, wellnigh as with flash of tears,
 The song must say but so
That took your praise up twenty years
 Ago.

More bright than stars or moons that vary,
 Sun kindling heaven and hell,
Here, after all these years, Queen Mary,
 Farewell.

ON A COUNTRY ROAD

ALONG these low pleached lanes, on such a day,
So soft a day as this, through shade and sun,
With glad grave eyes that scanned the glad wild
 way,
And heart still hovering o'er a song begun,
And smile that warmed the world with benison,
Our father, lord long since of lordly rhyme,
Long since hath haply ridden, when the lime
Bloomed broad above him, flowering where he
 came.

Because thy passage once made warm this clime,
Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy name.

Each year that England clothes herself with May,
She takes thy likeness on her. Time hath spun
Fresh raiment all in vain and strange array
For earth and man's new spirit, fain to shun
Things past for dreams of better to be won,
Through many a century since thy funeral chime
Rang, and men deemed it death's most direful
crime

To have spared not thee for very love or shame;
And yet, while mists round last year's memories
climb,
Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy name.

Each turn of the old wild road whereon we
stray,
Meseems, might bring us face to face with one
Whom seeing we could not but give thanks, and
pray
For England's love our father and her son
To speak with us as once in days long done
With all men, sage and churl and monk and
mime,
Who knew not as we know the soul sublime
That sang for song's love more than lust of
fame.

Yet, though this be not, yet, in happy time,
Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy name.

Friend, even as bees about the flowering thyme,
Years crowd on years, till hoar decay begrime
Names once beloved; but, seeing the sun the
 same,

As birds of autumn fain to praise the prime,
Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy name.

IN THE BAY

I

BEYOND the hollow sunset, ere a star
Take heart in heaven from eastward, while the
 west,

Fulfilled of watery resonance and rest,
Is as a port with clouds for harbour bar
To fold the fleet in of the winds from far
That stir no plume now of the bland sea's
 breast;

II

Above the soft sweep of the breathless bay
Southwestward, far past flight of night and day,
Lower than the sunken sunset sinks, and higher
Than dawn can freak the front of heaven with
 fire,

My thought with eyes and wings made wide
 makes way
To find the place of souls that I desire.

III

If any place for any soul there be,
Disrobed and disentrammelled ; if the might,
The fire and force that filled with ardent light
The souls whose shadow is half the light we
 see,
Survive and be suppressed not of the night ;
This hour should show what all day hid from
 me.

IV

Night knows not, neither is it shown to-day,
By sunlight nor by starlight is it shown,
Nor to the full moon's eye nor footfall known,
Their world's untrodden and unkindled way.
Nor is the breath nor music of it blown
With sounds of winter or with winds of May.

V

But here, where light and darkness reconciled
Hold earth between them as a weanling child
Between the balanced hands of death and birth,
Even as they held the new-born shape of
 earth

When first life trembled in her limbs and smiled,
 Here hope might think to find what hope were
 worth.

VI

Past Hades, past Elysium, past the long
 Slow smooth strong lapse of Lethe — past the toil
 Wherein all souls are taken as a spoil,
 The Stygian web of waters — if your song
 Be quenched not, O our brethren, but be strong
 As ere ye too shook off our temporal coil ;

VII

If yet these twain survive your worldly breath,
 Joy trampling sorrow, life devouring death,
 If perfect life possess your life all through
 And like your words your souls be deathless too,
 To-night, of all whom night encompasseth,
 My soul would commune with one soul of you.

VIII

Above the sunset might I see thine eyes
 That were above the sundawn in our skies,
 Son of the songs of morning, — thine that were
 First lights to lighten that rekindling air
 Wherethrough men saw the front of England
 rise
 And heard thine loudest of the lyre-notes there —

IX

If yet thy fire have not one spark the less,
O Titan, born of her a Titaness,
Across the sunrise and the sunset's mark
Send of thy lyre one sound, thy fire one spark,
To change this face of our unworthiness,
Across this hour dividing light from dark.

X

To change this face of our chill time, that hears
No song like thine of all that crowd its ears,
Of all its lights that lighten all day long
Sees none like thy most fleet and fiery sphere's
Outlightening Sirius — in its twilight throng
No thunder and no sunrise like thy song.

XI

Hath not the sea-wind swept the sea-line bare
To pave with stainless fire through stainless air
A passage for thine heavenlier feet to tread
Ungrieved of earthly floor-work? hath it spread
No covering splendid as the sun-god's hair
To veil or to reveal thy lordlier head?

XII

Hath not the sunset strewn across the sea
A way majestic enough for thee?

Made her ways flowerier and their flowers more
sweet
With childlike passage of a god to be,
Like spray these waves cast off her foemen's
fleet.

XVI

Like foam they flung it from her, and like weed
Its wrecks were washed from scornful shoal to
shoal,
From rock to rock reverberate; and the whole
Sea laughed and lightened with a deathless deed
That sowed our enemies in her field for seed
And made her shores fit harbourage for thy soul.

XVII

Then in her green south fields, a poor man's
child,
Thou hadst thy short sweet fill of half-blown
joy,
That ripens all of us for time to cloy
With full-blown pain and passion; ere the wild
World caught thee by the fiery heart, and smiled
To make so swift end of the godlike boy.

XVIII

For thou, if ever godlike foot there trod
These fields of ours, wert surely like a god.

Whose eyes desire the light that lightened thee,
Whose ways and thine are one way and the
same.

XXII

But if the riddles that in sleep we read,
And trust them not, be flattering truth indeed,
As he that rose our mightiest called them, — he,
Much higher than thou as thou much higher
than we —

There, might we say, all flower of all our seed,
All singing souls are as one sounding sea.

XXIII

All those that here were of thy kind and kin,
Beside thee and below thee, full of love,
Full-souled for song, — and one alone above
Whose only light folds all your glories in —
With all birds' notes from nightingale to dove
Fill the world whither we too fain would win.

XXIV

The world that sees in heaven the sovereign
light
Of sunlike Shakespeare, and the fiery night
Whose stars were watched of Webster; and
beneath,
The twin-souled brethren of the single wreath,

Grown in king's gardens, plucked from pastoral
 heath,
Wrought with all flowers for all men's hearts'
 delight.

XXV

And that fixed fervour, iron-red like Mars,
In the mid moving tide of tenderer stars,
That burned on loves and deeds the darkest
 done,
Athwart the incestuous prisoner's bride-house
 bars ;
And thine, most highest of all their fires but one,
Our morning star, sole risen before the sun.

XXVI

And one light risen since theirs to run such race
Thou hast seen, O Phosphor, from thy pride
 of place.
Thou hast seen Shelley, him that was to thee
As light to fire or dawn to lightning ; me,
Me likewise, O our brother, shalt thou see,
And I behold thee, face to glorious face ?

XXVII

You twain the same swift year of manhood
 swept
Down the steep darkness, and our father wept.

And from the gleam of Apollonian tears
A holier aureole rounds your memories, kept
Most fervent-fresh of all the singing spheres,
And April-coloured through all months and
years.

XXVIII

You twain fate spared not half your fiery span ;
The longer date fulfils the lesser man.
Ye from beyond the dark dividing date
Stand smiling, crowned as gods with foot on fate.
For stronger was your blessing than his ban,
And earliest whom he struck, he struck too late.

XXIX

Yet love and loathing, faith and unfaith yet
Bind less to greater souls in unison,
And one desire that makes three spirits as one
Takes great and small as in one spiritual net
Woven out of hope toward what shall yet be
done
Ere hate or love remember or forget.

XXX

Woven out of faith and hope and love too great
To bear the bonds of life and death and fate :
Woven out of love and hope and faith too dear
To take the print of doubt and change and fear :

And interwoven with lines of wrath and hate
Blood-red with soils of many a sanguine year.

XXXI

Who cannot hate, can love not ; if he grieve,
His tears are barren as the unfruitful rain
That rears no harvest from the green sea's plain,
And as thorns crackling this man's laugh is vain.
Nor can belief touch, kindle, smite, relieve
His heart who has not heart to disbelieve.

XXXII

But you, most perfect in your hate and love,
Our great twin-spirited brethren ; you that stand
Head by head glittering, hand made fast in hand,
And underfoot the fang-drawn worm that strove
To wound you living ; from so far above,
Look love, not scorn, on ours that was your
land.

XXXIII

For love we lack, and help and heat and light
To clothe us and to comfort us with might.
What help is ours to take or give ? but ye —
O, more than sunrise to the blind cold sea,
That wailed aloud with all her waves all night,
Much more, being much more glorious, should
you be.

XXXIV

As fire to frost, as ease to toil, as dew
To flowerless fields, as sleep to slackening pain,
As hope to souls long weaned from hope again
Returning, or as blood revived anew
To dry-drawn limbs and every pulseless vein,
Even so toward us should no man be but you.

XXXV

One rose before the sunrise was, and one
Before the sunset, lovelier than the sun.
And now the heaven is dark and bright and loud
With wind and starry drift and moon and cloud,
And night's cry rings in straining sheet and shroud,
What help is ours if hope like yours be none?

XXXVI

O well-beloved, our brethren, if ye be,
Then are we not forsaken. This kind earth
Made fragrant once for all time with your birth,
And bright for all men with your love, and worth
The clasp and kiss and wedlock of the sea,
Were not your mother if not your brethren we.

XXXVII

Because the days were dark with gods and kings
And in time's hand the old hours of time as rods,

When force and fear set hope and faith at
 odds,
 Ye failed not nor abased your plume-plucked
 wings;
 And we that front not more disastrous things,
 How should we fail in face of kings and gods?

XXXVIII

For now the deep dense plumes of night are
 thinned
 Surely with winnowing of the glimmering wind
 Whose feet are fledged with morning; and the
 breath
 Begins in heaven that sings the dark to death.
 And all the night wherein men groaned and
 sinned
 Sickens at heart to hear what sundawn saith.

XXXIX

O first-born sons of hope and fairest, ye
 Whose prows first clove the thought-unsounded
 sea
 Whence all the dark dead centuries rose to
 bar
 The spirit of man lest truth should make him
 free,
 The sunrise and the sunset, seeing one star,
 Take heart as we to know you that ye are.

XL

Ye rise not and ye set not ; we that say
Ye rise and set like hopes that set and rise
Look yet but seaward from a land-locked bay ;
But where at last the sea's line is the sky's
And truth and hope one sunlight in your eyes,
No sunrise and no sunset marks their day.

IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE
LANDOR

BACK to the flower-town, side by side,
The bright months bring,
New-born, the bridegroom and the bride,
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,
Filled full of sun ;
All things come back to her, being free ;
All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot
Flowers that were dead
Live, and old suns revive ; but not
That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,
 Far north, I hear
One face shall never turn to me
 As once this year :

Shall never smile and turn and rest
 On mine as there,
Nor one most sacred hand be prest
 Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,
 Half run before ;
The youngest to the oldest singer
 That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find
 Till all grief end,
In holiest age our mightiest mind,
 Father and friend.

But thou, if any thing endure,
 If hope there be,
O spirit that man's life left pure,
 Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were
 Look earthward now ;
Let dreams revive the reverend hair,
 The imperial brow ;

Come back in sleep, for in the life
 Where thou art not
 We find none like thee. Time and strife
 And the world's lot

Move thee no more ; but love at least
 And reverent heart
 May move thee, royal and released,
 Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust
 Receive and keep,
 Keep safe his dedicated dust,
 His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far,
 Mix with thy name
 As morning-star with evening-star
 His faultless fame.

TO VICTOR HUGO

IN the fair days when God
 By man as godlike trod,
 And each alike was Greek, alike was free,
 God's lightning spared, they said,
 Alone the happier head

Whose laurels screened it; fruitless grace for
thee,

To whom the high gods gave of right
Their thunders and their laurels and their light.

Sunbeams and bays before
Our master's servants wore,
For these Apollo left in all men's lands;
But far from these ere now
And watched with jealous brow
Lay the blind lightnings shut between God's
hands,
And only loosed on slaves and kings
The terror of the tempest of their wings.

Born in those younger years
That shone with storms of spears
And shook in the wind blown from a dead
world's pyre,
When by her back-blown hair
Napoleon caught the fair
And fierce Republic with her feet of fire,
And stayed with iron words and hands
Her flight, and freedom in a thousand lands:

Thou sawest the tides of things
Close over heads of kings,
And thine hand felt the thunder, and to thee

Laurels and lightnings were
As sunbeams and soft air
Mixed each in other, or as mist with sea
Mixed, or as memory with desire,
Or the lute's pulses with the louder lyre.

For thee man's spirit stood
Disrobed of flesh and blood,
And bare the heart of the most secret hours ;
And to thine hand more tame
Than birds in winter came
High hopes and unknown flying forms of powers,
And from thy table fed, and sang
Till with the tune men's ears took fire and rang.

Even all men's eyes and ears
With fiery sound and tears
Waxed hot, and cheeks caught flame and eye-
lids light,
At those high songs of thine
That stung the sense like wine,
Or fell more soft than dew or snow by night,
Or wailed as in some flooded cave
Sobs the strong broken spirit of a wave.

But we, our master, we
Whose hearts, uplift to thee,
Ache with the pulse of thy remembered song,

We ask not nor await
From the clenched hands of fate,
As thou, remission of the world's old wrong ;
Respite we ask not, nor release ;
Freedom a man may have, he shall not peace.

Though thy most fiery hope
Storm heaven, to set wide ope
The all-sought-for gate whence God or Chance
debars
All feet of men, all eyes —
The old night resumes her skies,
Her hollow hiding-place of clouds and stars,
Where naught save these is sure in sight ;
And, paven with death, our days are roofed with
night.

One thing we can ; to be
Awhile, as men may, free ;
But not by hope or pleasure the most stern
Goddess, most awful-eyed,
Sits, but on either side
Sit sorrow and the wrath of hearts that burn,
Sad faith that cannot hope or fear,
And memory grey with many a flowerless year.

Not that in stranger's wise
I lift not loving eyes

To the fair foster-mother France, that gave
Beyond the pale fleet foam
Help to my sires and home,
Whose great sweet breast could shelter those
and save
Whom from her nursing breasts and hands
Their land cast forth of old on gentler lands.

Not without thoughts that ache
For theirs and for thy sake,
I, born of exiles, hail thy banished head;
I, whose young song took flight
Toward the great heat and light,
On me a child from thy far splendour shed,
From thine high place of soul and song,
Which, fallen on eyes yet feeble, madethem strong.

Ah, not with lessening love
For memories born hereof,
I look to that sweet mother-land, and see
The old fields and fair full streams,
And skies, but fled like dreams
The feet of freedom and the thought of thee;
And all between the skies and graves
The mirth of mockers and the shame of slaves.

She, killed with noisome air,
Even she! and still so fair,

Who said, "Let there be freedom," and there was
 Freedom; and as a lance
 The fiery eyes of France
 Touched the world's sleep and as a sleep made
 pass
 Forth of men's heavier ears and eyes
 Smitten with fire and thunder from new skies.

Are they men's friends indeed
 Who watch them weep and bleed?
 Because thou hast loved us, shall the gods love
 thee?
 Thou, first of men and friend,
 Seest thou, even thou, the end?
 Thou knowest what hath been, knowest thou
 what shall be?
 Evils may pass and hopes endure;
 But fate is dim, and all the gods obscure.

O nursed in airs apart,
 O poet highest of heart,
 Hast thou seen time, who hast seen so many
 things?
 Are not the years more wise,
 More sad than keenest eyes,
 The years with soundless feet and sounding wings?
 Passing we hear them not, but past
 The clamour of them thrills us, and their blast.

Thou art chief of us, and lord ;
Thy song is as a sword
Keen-edged and scented in the blade from flow-
ers ;
Thou art lord and king ; but we
Lift younger eyes, and see
Less of high hope, less light on wandering
hours ;
Hours that have borne men down so long,
Seen the right fail, and watched uplift the wrong.

But thine imperial soul,
As years and ruins roll
To the same end, and all things and all dreams
With the same wreck and roar
Drift on the dim same shore,
Still in the bitter foam and brackish streams
Tracks the fresh water-spring to be
And sudden sweeter fountains in the sea.

As once the high God bound
With many a rivet round
Man's saviour, and with iron nailed him through,
At the wild end of things,
Where even his own bird's wings
Flagged, whence the sea shone like a drop of dew,
From Caucasus beheld below
Past fathoms of unfathomable snow ;

So the strong God, the chance
Central of circumstance,
Still shows him exile who will not be slave ;
All thy great fame and thee
Girt by the dim strait sea
With multitudinous walls of wandering wave ;
Shows us our greatest from his throne
Fate-stricken, and rejected of his own.

Yea, he is strong, thou say'st,
A mystery many-faced,
The wild beasts know him and the wild birds
flee,
The blind night sees him, death
Shrinks beaten at his breath,
And his right hand is heavy on the sea :
We know he hath made us, and is king ;
We know not if he care for any thing.

Thus much, no more, we know ;
He bade what is be so,
Bade light be and bade night be, one by
one ;
Bade hope and fear, bade ill
And good redeem and kill,
Till all men be awearry of the sun
And his world burn in its own flame
And bear no witness longer of his name.

Yet though all this be thus,
Be those men praised of us
Who have loved and wrought and sorrowed and
not sinned
For fame or fear or gold,
Nor waxed for winter cold,
Nor changed for changes of the worldly wind ;
Praised above men of men be these,
Till this one world and work we know shall
cease.

Yea, one thing more than this,
We know that one thing is,
The splendour of a spirit without blame,
That not the labouring years
Blind-born, nor any fears,
Nor men nor any gods can tire or tame ;
But purer power with fiery breath
Fills, and exalts above the gulfs of death.

Praised above men be thou,
Whose laurel-laden brow,
Made for the morning, droops not in the night ;
Praised and beloved, that none
Of all thy great things done
Flies higher than thy most equal spirit's flight ;
Praised, that nor doubt nor hope could bend
Earth's loftiest head, found upright to the end.

AVE ATQUE VALE

IN MEMORY OF CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

Nous devrions pourtant lui porter quelques fleurs ;
 Les morts, les pauvres morts, ont de grandes douleurs,
 Et quand Octobre souffle, émondeur des vieux arbres,
 Son vent mélancolique à l'entour de leurs marbres,
 Certe, ils doivent trouver les vivants bien ingrats.

Les Fleurs du Mal.

I

SHALL I strew on thee rose or rue or laurel,
 Brother, on this that was the veil of thee ?
 Or quiet sea-flower moulded by the sea,
 Or simplest growth of meadow-sweet or sorrel,
 Such as the summer-sleepy Dryads weave,
 Waked up by snow-soft sudden rains at
 eve ?
 Or wilt thou rather, as on earth before,
 Half-faded fiery blossoms, pale with heat
 And full of bitter summer, but more sweet
 To thee than gleanings of a northern shore
 Trod by no tropic feet ?

II

For always thee the fervid languid glories
 Allured of heavier suns in mightier skies ;
 Thine ears knew all the wandering watery
 sighs.

Where the sea sobs round Lesbian promontories,
The barren kiss of piteous wave to wave
That knows not where is that Leucadian
grave

Which hides too deep the supreme head of song.
Ah, salt and sterile as her kisses were,
The wild sea winds her and the green gulfs
bear

Hither and thither, and vex and work her wrong,
Blind gods that cannot spare.

III

Thou sawest, in thine old singing season,
brother,

Secrets and sorrows unbeheld of us :
Fierce loves, and lovely leaf-buds poison-
ous,

Bare to thy subtler eye, but for none other
Blowing by night in some unbreathed-in
clime ;

The hidden harvest of luxurious time,
Sin without shape, and pleasure without speech ;
And where strange dreams in a tumultuous
sleep

Make the shut eyes of stricken spirits weep ;
And with each face thou sawest the shadow on
each,

Seeing as men sow men reap.

IV

O sleepless heart and sombre soul unsleeping,
 That were athirst for sleep and no more
 life
 And no more love, for peace and no more
 strife!

Now the dim gods of death have in their keeping
 Spirit and body and all the springs of song,
 Is it well now where love can do no wrong,
 Where stingless pleasure has no foam or fang
 Behind the unopening closure of her lips?
 Is it not well where soul from body slips
 And flesh from bone divides without a pang
 As dew from flower-bell drips?

V

It is enough; the end and the beginning
 Are one thing to thee, who art past the
 end.
 O hand unclasped of un beholden friend,
 For thee no fruits to pluck, no palms for win-
 ning,
 No triumph and no labour and no lust,
 Only dead yew-leaves and a little dust.

O quiet eyes wherein the light saith nought,
 Whereto the day is dumb, nor any night
 With obscure finger silences your sight,

For in your speech the sudden soul speaks
thought,
Sleep, and have sleep for light.

VI

Now all strange hours and all strange loves are
over,
Dreams and desires and sombre songs and
sweet,
Hast thou found place at the great knees
and feet,
Of some pale Titan-woman like a lover,
Such as thy vision here solicited,
Under the shadow of her fair vast head,
The deep division of prodigious breasts,
The solemn slope of mighty limbs asleep,
The weight of awful tresses that still
keep
The savour and shade of old-world pine-forests
Where the wet hill-winds weep?

VII

Hast thou found any likeness for thy vision?
O gardener of strange flowers, what bud,
what bloom,
Hast thou found sown, what gathered in
the gloom?
What of despair, of rapture, of derision,

What of life is there, what of ill or
good?

Are the fruits grey like dust or bright like
blood?

Does the dim ground grow any seed of ours,
The faint fields quicken any terrene root,
In low lands where the sun and moon are
mute

And all the stars keep silence? Are there flow-
ers

At all, or any fruit?

VIII

Alas, but though my flying song flies after,
O sweet strange elder singer, thy more
fleet

Singing, and footprints of thy fleeter feet,
Some dim derision of mysterious laughter
From the blind tongueless warders of the
dead,

Some gainless glimpse of Proserpine's
veiled head,

Some little sound of unregarded tears
Wept by effaced unprofitable eyes,
And from pale mouths some cadence of
dead sighs—

These only, these the hearkening spirit hears,
Sees only such things rise.

IX

Thou art far too far for wings of words to follow,
Far too far off for thought or any prayer.
What ails us with thee, who art wind and air?
What ails us gazing where all seen is hollow?
Yet with some fancy, yet with some desire,
Dreams pursue death as winds a flying fire,
Our dreams pursue our dead and do not find.
Still, and more swift than they, the thin
 flame flies,
The low light fails us in elusive skies,
Still the foiled earnest ear is deaf, and blind
Are still the eluded eyes.

X

Not thee, O never thee, in all time's changes,
Not thee, but this the sound of thy sad soul,
The shadow of thy swift spirit, this shut
 scroll
I lay my hand on, and not death estranges
My spirit from communion of thy song —
These memories and these melodies that
 throng
Veiled porches of a Muse funereal —
These I salute, these touch, these clasp and
 fold
As though a hand were in my hand to hold,

Or through mine ears a mourning musical
Of many mourners rolled.

XI

I among these, I also, in such station
As when the pyre was charred, and piled
the sods,
And offering to the dead made, and their
gods,
The old mourners had, standing to make liba-
tion,
I stand, and to the gods and to the dead
Do reverence without prayer or praise, and
shed
Offering to these unknown, the gods of gloom,
And what of honey and spice my seedlands
bear,
And what I may of fruits in this chilled air,
And lay, Orestes-like, across the tomb
A curl of severed hair.

XII

But by no hand nor any treason stricken,
Not like the low-lying head of Him, the
King,
The flame that made of Troy a ruinous thing,
Thou liest, and on this dust no tears could
quicken

There fall no tears like theirs that all men
hear
Fall tear by sweet imperishable tear
Down the opening leaves of holy poets' pages.
Thee not Orestes, not Electra mourns ;
But bending us-ward with memorial urns
The most high Muses that fulfil all ages
Weep, and our God's heart yearns.

XIII

For, sparing of his sacred strength, not often
Among us darkling here the lord of light
Makes manifest his music and his might
In hearts that open and in lips that soften
With the soft flame and heat of songs that
shine.
Thy lips indeed he touched with bitter wine,
And nourished them indeed with bitter bread ;
Yet surely from his hand thy soul's food
came,
The fire that scarred thy spirit at his flame
Was lighted, and thine hungering heart he fed
Who feeds our hearts with fame.

XIV

Therefore he too now at thy soul's sunseting,
God of all suns and songs, he too bends down
To mix his laurel with thy cypress crown,

And save thy dust from blame and from forgetting.

Therefore he too, seeing all thou wert and art,

Compassionate, with sad and sacred heart,
Mourns thee of many his children the last dead,
And hallows with strange tears and alien sighs

Thine unmelodious mouth and sunless eyes,

And over thine irrevocable head

Sheds light from the under skies.

XV

And one weeps with him in the ways Lethean,
And stains with tears her changing bosom chill ;

That obscure Venus of the hollow hill,
That thing transformed that was the Cytherean,
With lips that lost their Grecian laugh divine

Long since, and face no more called Erycine ;

A ghost, a bitter and luxurious god.

Thee also with fair flesh and singing spell
Did she, a sad and second prey, compel
Into the footless places once more trod,
And shadows hot from hell.

XVI

And now no sacred staff shall break in blossom
No choral salutation lure to light
A spirit sick with perfume and sweet night.
And love's tired eyes and hands and barren bosom.
There is no help for these things; none
to mend,
And none to mar; not all our songs, O
friend,
Will make death clear or make life durable.
Howbeit with rose and ivy and wild vine
And with wild notes about this dust of thine
At least I fill the place where white dreams dwell
And wreath an unseen shrine.

XVII

Sleep; and if life was bitter to thee, pardon,
If sweet, give thanks; thou hast no more
to live;
And to give thanks is good, and to forgive.
Out of the mystic and the mournful garden
Where all day through thine hands in barren
braid
Wove the sick flowers of secrecy and
shade,
Green buds of sorrow and sin, and remnants
grey,

Sweet-smelling, pale with poison, sanguine-
hearted,
Passions that sprang from sleep and
thoughts that started,
Shall death not bring us all as thee one day
Among the days departed ?

XVIII

For thee, O now a silent soul, my brother,
Take at my hands this garland, and farewell.
Thin is the leaf, and chill the wintry smell,
And chill the solemn earth, a fatal mother,
With sadder than the Niobeian womb,
And in the hollow of her breast a tomb.
Content thee, howsoe'er, whose days are done ;
There lies not any troublous thing before,
Nor sight nor sound to war against thee more,
For whom all winds are quiet as the sun,
All waters as the shore.

LINES ON THE MONUMENT OF
GIUSEPPE MAZZINI

ITALIA, mother of the souls of men,
Mother divine,
Of all that served thee best with sword or pen,
All sons of thine,

Thou knowest that here the likeness of the best
 Before thee stands :
The head most high, the heart found faithfulest,
 The purest hands.

Above the fume and foam of time that flits,
 The soul, we know,
Now sits on high where Alighieri sits
 With Angelo.

Not his own heavenly tongue hath heavenly speech
 Enough to say
What this man was, whose praise no thought
 may reach,
 No words can weigh.

Since man's first mother brought to mortal birth
 Her first-born son
Such grace befell not ever man on earth
 As crowns this one.

Of God nor man was ever this thing said,
 That he could give
Life back to her who gave him, that his dead
 Mother might live.

But this man found his mother dead and slain,
 With fast sealed eyes,

And bade the dead rise up and live again,
And she did rise :

And all the world was bright with her through
him :

But dark with strife,
Like heaven's own sun that storming clouds bedim,
Was all his life.

Life and the clouds are vanished : hate and fear
Have had their span
Of time to hurt, and are not : he is here,
The sunlike man.

City superb, that hadst Columbus first
For sovereign son,
Be prouder that thy breast hath later nurst
This mightier one.

Glory be his for ever, while this land
Lives and is free,
As with controlling breath and sovereign hand
He bade her be.

Earth shows to heaven the names by thousands told
That crown her fame,
But highest of all that heaven and earth behold
Mazzini's name.

THE DEATH OF RICHARD WAGNER

I

MOURNING on earth, as when dark hours descend,
Wide-winged with plagues, from heaven ; when
 hope and mirth
Wane, and no lips rebuke or reprehend
 Mourning on earth.

The soul wherein her songs of death and birth,
Darkness and light, were wont to sound and blend,
Now silent, leaves the whole world less in worth.

Winds that make moan and triumph, skies that
 bend,
Thunders, and sound of tides in gulf and firth,
Spake through his spirit of speech, whose death
 should send
 Mourning on earth.

II

The world's great heart, whence all things
 strange and rare
Take form and sound, that each inseparate part
May bear its burden in all tuned thoughts that
 share
 The world's great heart —

The fountain forces, whence like steeds that
start

Leap forth the powers of earth and fire and air,
Seas that revolve and rivers that depart —

Spake, and were turned to song: yea, all they
were,

With all their works, found in his mastering art
Speech as of powers whose uttered word laid bare
The world's great heart.

III

From the depths of the sea, from the wellsprings
of earth, from the wastes of the midmost
night,

From the fountains of darkness and tempest and
thunder, from heights where the soul
would be,

The spell of the mage of music evoked their
sense, as an unknown light
From the depths of the sea.

As a vision of heaven from the hollows of ocean,
that none but a god might see,

Rose out of the silence of things unknown of a
presence, a form, a might,

And we heard as a prophet that hears God's
message against him, and may not flee.

Eye might not endure it, but ear and heart with
a rapture of dark delight,
With a terror and wonder whose care was joy,
and a passion of thought set free,
Felt inly the rising of doom divine as a sundawn
risen to sight
From the depths of the sea.

DEDICATION

THE sea gives her shells to the shingle,
The earth gives her streams to the sea ;
They are many, but my gift is single,
My verses, the firstfruits of me.
Let the wind take the green and the grey leaf,
Cast forth without fruit upon air ;
Take rose-leaf and vine-leaf and bay-leaf
Blown loose from the hair.

The night shakes them round me in legions,
Dawn drives them before her like dreams ;
Time sheds them like snows on strange regions,
Swept shoreward on infinite streams ;
Leaves pallid and sombre and ruddy,
Dead fruits of the fugitive years ;
Some stained as with wine and made bloody,
And some as with tears.

Some scattered in seven years' traces,
As they fell from the boy that was then ;
Long left among idle green places,
Or gathered but now among men ;
On seas full of wonder and peril,
Blown white round the capes of the north ;
Or in islands where myrtles are sterile
And loves bring not forth.

O daughters of dreams and of stories
That life is not wearied of yet,
Faustine, Fragoletta, Dolores,
Félise and Yolande and Juliette,
Shall I find you not still, shall I miss you,
When sleep, that is true or that seems,
Comes back to me hopeless to kiss you,
O daughters of dreams ?

They are past as a slumber that passes,
As the dew of a dawn of old time ;
More frail than the shadows on glasses,
More fleet than a wave or a rhyme.
As the waves after ebb drawing seaward,
When their hollows are full of the night,
So the birds that flew singing to me-ward
Recede out of sight.

The songs of dead seasons, that wander
On wings of articulate words ;

Lost leaves that the shore-wind may squander,
Light flocks of untamable birds ;
Some sang to me dreaming in class-time
And truant in hand as in tongue ;
For the youngest were born of boy's pastime,
The eldest are young.

Is there shelter while life in them lingers,
Is there hearing for songs that recede,
Tunes touched from a harp with man's fingers
Or blown with boy's mouth in a reed ?
Is there place in the land of your labour,
Is there room in your world of delight,
Where change has not sorrow for neighbour
And day has not night ?

In their wings though the sea-wind yet quivers,
Will you spare not a space for them there,
Made green with the running of rivers
And gracious with temperate air ;
In the fields and the turreted cities,
That cover from sunshine and rain
Fair passions and bountiful pities
And loves without stain ?

In a land of clear colours and stories,
In a region of shadowless hours,
Where earth has a garment of glories
And a murmur of musical flowers ;

In woods where the spring half uncovers
 The flush of her amorous face,
By the waters that listen for lovers,
 For these is there place ?

For the song-birds of sorrow, that muffle
 Their music as clouds do their fire :
For the storm-birds of passion, that ruffle
 Wild wings in a wind of desire ;
In the stream of the storm as it settles
 Blown seaward, borne far from the sun,
Shaken loose on the darkness like petals
 Dropt one after one ?

Though the world of your hands be more
 gracious,
 And lovelier in lordship of things,
Clothed round by sweet art with the spacious
 Warm heaven of her imminent wings,
Let them enter, unfledged and nigh fainting,
 For the love of old loves and lost times ;
And receive in your palace of painting
 This revel of rhymes.

Though the seasons of man full of losses
 Make empty the years full of youth,
If but one thing be constant in crosses,
 Change lays not her hand upon truth ;

Hopes die, and their tombs are for token
That the grief as the joy of them ends
Ere time that breaks all men has broken
The faith between friends.

Though the many lights dwindle to one light,
There is help if the heaven has one ;
Though the skies be discrowned of the sun-
light
And the earth dispossessed of the sun,
They have moonlight and sleep for repayment,
When, refreshed as a bride and set free,
With stars and sea-winds in her raiment,
Night sinks on the sea.

DEDICATION

SOME nine years gone, as we dwelt together
In the sweet hushed heat of the south French
weather

Ere autumn fell on the vine-tressed hills
Or the season had shed one rose-red feather,

Friend, whose fame is a flame that fills
All eyes it lightens and hearts it thrills
With joy to be born of the blood which bred
From a land that the grey sea girds and chills

The heart and spirit and hand and head
Whose might is as light on a dark day shed,
 On a day now dark as a land's decline
Where all the peers of your praise are dead,

In a land and season of corn and vine
I pledged you a health from a beaker of mine
 But halfway filled to the lip's edge yet
With hope for honey and song for wine.

Nine years have risen and eight years set
Since there by the wellspring our hands on it met :
 And the pledge of my songs that were then
 to be,
I could wonder not, friend, though a friend
 should forget.

For life's helm rocks to the windward and lee,
And time is as wind, and as waves as we ;
 And song is as foam that the sea-winds fret,
Though the thought at its heart should be deep
 as the sea.

METRICAL EXPERIMENTS, IMITATIONS, AND PARODIES

HENDECASYLLABICS

IN the month of the long decline of roses
I, beholding the summer dead before me,
Set my face to the sea and journeyed silent,
Gazing eagerly where above the sea-mark
Flame as fierce as the fervid eyes of lions
Half divided the eyelids of the sunset ;
Till I heard as it were a noise of waters
Moving tremulous under feet of angels
Multitudinous, out of all the heavens ;
Knew the fluttering wind, the fluttered foliage,
Shaken fitfully, full of sound and shadow ;
And saw, trodden upon by noiseless angels,
Long mysterious reaches fed with moonlight,
Sweet sad straits in a soft subsiding channel,
Blown about by the lips of winds I knew not,
Winds not born in the north nor any quarter,
Winds not warm with the south nor any sunshine,
Heard between them a voice of exultation,
“ Lo, the summer is dead, the sun is faded,

Even like as a leaf the year is withered,
 All the fruits of the day from all her branches
 Gathered, neither is any left to gather.
 All the flowers are dead, the tender blossoms,
 All are taken away ; the season wasted,
 Like an ember among the fallen ashes.
 Now with light of the winter days, with moonlight,
 Light of snow, and the bitter light of hoar-frost,
 We bring flowers that fade not after autumn,
 Pale white chaplets and crowns of latter seasons,
 Fair false leaves (but the summer leaves were
 falsèr),
 Woven under the eyes of stars and planets
 When low light was upon the windy reaches
 Where the flower of foam was blown, a lily
 Dropt among the sonorous fruitless furrows
 And green fields of the sea that make no pasture :
 Since the winter begins, the weeping winter,
 All whose flowers are tears, and round his temples
 Iron blossom of frost is bound for ever."

SAPPHICS

ALL the night sleep came not upon my eyelids,
 Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a feather,
 Yet with lips shut close and with eyes of iron
 Stood and beheld me.

Then to me so lying awake a vision
Came without sleep over the seas and touched me,
Softly touched mine eyelids and lips ; and I too,
Full of the vision,

Saw the white implacable Aphrodite,
Saw the hair unbound and the feet unsandaled
Shine as fire of sunset on western waters ;
Saw the reluctant

Feet, the straining plumes of the doves that
drew her,
Looking always, looking with necks reverted,
Back to Lesbos, back to the hills whereunder
Shone Mitylene ;

Heard the flying feet of the Loves behind her
Make a sudden thunder upon the waters,
As the thunder flung from the strong unclosing
Wings of a great wind.

So the goddess fled from her place, with awful
Sound of feet and thunder of wings around her ;
While behind a clamour of singing women
Severed the twilight.

Ah the singing, ah the delight, the passion !
All the Loves wept, listening ; sick with anguish,

Stood the crowned nine Muses about Apollo ;
Fear was upon them,

While the tenth sang wonderful things they
knew not.

Ah the tenth, the Lesbian ! the nine were silent,
None endured the sound of her song for weep-
ing ;
Laurel by laurel,

Faded all their crowns ; but about her forehead,
Round her woven tresses and ashen temples
White as dead snow, paler than grass in sum-
mer,
Ravaged with kisses,

Shone a light of fire as a crown for ever.
Yea, almost the implacable Aphrodite
Paused, and almost wept ; such a song was that
song.
Yea, by her name too

Called her, saying, " Turn to me, O my
Sappho ;"
Yet she turned her face from the Loves, she
saw not
Tears for laughter darken immortal eyelids,
Heard not about her

Fearful fitful wings of the doves departing,
Saw not how the bosom of Aphrodite
Shook with weeping, saw not her shaken rai-
ment,
Saw not her hands wrung ;

Saw the Lesbians kissing across their smitten
Lutes with lips more sweet than the sound of
lute-strings,
Mouth to mouth and hand upon hand, her
chosen,
Fairer than all men ;

Only saw the beautiful lips and fingers,
Full of songs and kisses and little whispers,
Full of music ; only beheld among them
Soar, as a bird soars

Newly fledged, her visible song, a marvel,
Made of perfect sound and exceeding passion,
Sweetly shapen, terrible, full of thunders,
Clothed with the wind's wings.

Then rejoiced she, laughing with love, and
scattered
Roses, awful roses of holy blossom ;
Then the Loves thronged sadly with hidden faces
Round Aphrodite,

What strange faces of dreams, voices that called,
 hands that were raised to wave,
Lured or led thee, alas, out of the sun, down to
 the sunless grave ?

Ah, thy luminous eyes ! once was their light fed
 with the fire of day ;
Now their shadowy lids cover them close, hush
 them and hide away.

Ah, thy snow-coloured hands ! once were they
 chains, mighty to bind me fast ;
Now no blood in them burns, mindless of love,
 senseless of passion past.

Ah, thy beautiful hair ! so was it once braided
 for me, for me ;
Now for death is it crowned, only for death,
 lover and lord of thee.

Sweet, the kisses of death set on thy lips, colder
 are they than mine ;
Colder surely than past kisses that love poured
 for thy lips as wine.

Lov'st thou death ? is his face fairer than love's,
 brighter to look upon ?
Seest thou light in his eyes, light by which love's
 pales and is overshadowed ?

344 *Select Poems of Swinburne*

Lo, the roses of death, grey as the dust, chiller
of leaf than snow !

Why let fall from thy hand loves that were
thine, roses that loved thee so ?

Large red lilies of love, sceptral and tall, lovely
for eyes to see ;

Thornless blossom of love, full of the sun, fruits
that were reared for thee.

Now death's poppies alone circle thy hair, girdle
thy breasts as white ;

Bloodless blossoms of death, leaves that have
sprung never against the light.

Nay then, sleep if thou wilt ; love is content ;
what should he do to weep ?

Sweet was love to thee once ; now in thine eyes
sweeter than love is sleep.

GRAND CHORUS OF BIRDS FROM
ARISTOPHANES

Attempted in English verse after the original metre

THE BIRDS

(685-723)

COME on then, ye dwellers by nature in darkness,
and like to the leaves' generations,
That are little of might, that are moulded of mire,
unenduring and shadowlike nations,
Poor plumeless ephemerals, comfortless mortals,
as visions of creatures fast fleeing,
Lift up your mind unto us that are deathless,
and dateless the date of our being:
Us, children of heaven, us, ageless for aye, us,
all of whose thoughts are eternal;
That ye may from henceforth, having heard of
us all things aright as to matters supernal,
Of the being of birds and beginning of gods, and
of streams, and the dark beyond reaching,
Truthfully knowing aright, in my name bid
Prodicus pack with his preaching.

It was Chaos and Night at the first, and the
blackness of darkness, and hell's broad
border,

Earth was not, nor air, neither heaven ; when in
 depths of the womb of the dark without
 order

First thing first-born of the black-plumed Night
 was a wind-egg hatched in her bosom,

Whence timely with seasons revolving again
 sweet Love burst out as a blossom,

Gold wings glittering forth of his back, like
 whirlwinds gustily turning,

He, after his wedlock with Chaos, whose wings
 are of darkness, in hell broad-burning,

For his nestlings begat him the race of us first,
 and upraised us to light new-lighted.

And before this was not the race of the gods,
 until all things by Love were united ;

And of kind united with kind in communion of
 nature the sky and the sea are

Brought forth, and the earth, and the race of the
 gods everlasting and blest. So that we are

Far away the most ancient of all things blest.
 And that we are of Love's generation

There are manifest manifold signs. We have
 wings, and with us have the Loves hab-
 itation ;

And manifold fair young folk that forswore love
 once, ere the bloom of them ended,

Have the men that pursued and desired them
 subdued, by the help of us only be-
 friended,

With such baits as a quail, a flamingo, a goose,
or a cock's comb staring and splendid.

All best good things that befall men come from
us birds, as is plain to all reason :

For first we proclaim and make known to them
spring, and the winter and autumn in
season ;

Bid sow, when the crane starts clanging for Afric,
in shrill-voiced emigrant number,

And calls to the pilot to hang up his rudder again
for the season, and slumber ;

And then weave a cloak for Orestes the thief,
lest he strip men of theirs if it freezes.

And again thereafter the kite reappearing an-
nounces a change in the breezes,

And that here is the season for shearing your
sheep of their spring wool. Then does
the swallow

Give you notice to sell your greatcoat, and pro-
vide something light for the heat that's
to follow.

Thus are we as Ammon or Delphi unto you,
Dodona, nay, Phœbus Apollo.

For, as first ye come all to get auguries of birds,
even such is in all things your carriage,

Be the matter a matter of trade, or of earning
your bread, or of any one's marriage.

And all things ye lay to the charge of a bird that
 belong to discerning prediction :

Winged fame is a bird, as you reckon : you
 sneeze, and the sign's as a bird for con-
 viction :

All tokens are "birds" with you — sounds too,
 and lackeys, and donkeys. Then must
 it not follow

That we ARE to you all as the manifest godhead
 that speaks in prophetic Apollo ?

A JACOBITE'S FAREWELL

1716

THERE's nae mair lands to tyne, my dear,
 And nae mair lives to gie :
 Though a man think sair to live nae mair,
 There's but one day to die.

For a' things come and a' days gane,
 What needs ye rend your hair ?
 But kiss me till the morn's morrow,
 Then I'll kiss ye nae mair.

O lands are lost and life's losing,
 And what were they to gie ?
 Fu' mony a man gives all he can,
 But nae man else gives ye.

Our king wons ower the sea's water,
And I in prison sair :
But I'll win out the morn's morrow,
And ye'll see me nae mair.

A JACOBITE'S EXILE

1746

THE weary day rins down and dies,
The weary night wears through :
And never an hour is fair wi' flower,
And never a flower wi' dew.

I would the day were night for me,
I would the night were day :
For then would I stand in my ain fair land,
As now in dreams I may.

O lordly flow the Loire and Seine,
And loud the dark Durance :
But bonnier shine the braes of Tyne
Than a' the fields of France :
And the waves of Till that speak sae still
Gleam goodlier where they glance.

O weel were they that fell fighting
On dark Drumossie's day :
They keep their hame ayont the faem,
And we die far away.

O sound they sleep, and saft, and deep,
 But night and day wake we ;
And ever between the sea-banks green
 Sounds loud the sundering sea.

And ill we sleep, sae sair we weep,
 But sweet and fast sleep they ;
And the mool that haps them roun' and laps
 them
 Is e'en their country's clay ;
But the land we tread that are not dead
 Is strange as night by day.

Strange as night in a strange man's sight,
 Though fair as dawn it be :
For what is here that a stranger's cheer
 Should yet wax blithe to see ?

The hills stand steep, the dells lie deep,
 The fields are green and gold :
The hill-streams sing, and the hill-sides ring,
 As ours at home of old.

But hills and flowers are nane of ours,
 And ours are oversea :
And the kind strange land whereon we stand,
 It wotsna what were we
Or ever we came, wi' scathe and shame,
 To try what end might be.

Scathe, and shame, and a waefu' name,
And a weary time and strange,
Have they that seeing a weird for dreeing
Can die, and cannot change.

Shame and scorn may we thole that mourn,
Though sair be they to dree :
But ill may we bide the thoughts we hide,
Mair keen than wind and sea.

Ill may we thole the night's watches,
And ill the weary day :
And the dreams that keep the gates of sleep,
A waefu' gift gie they ;
For the sangs they sing us, the sights they bring us,
The morn blaws all away.

On Aikenshaw the sun blinks braw,
The burn rins blithe and fain :
There's nought wi' me I wadna gie
To look thereon again.

On Keilder-side the wind blaws wide :
There sounds nae hunting-horn
That rings sae sweet as the winds that beat
Round banks where Tyne is born.

The Wansbeck sings with all her springs,
The bents and braes give ear ;

But the wood that rings wi' the sang she sings
I may not see nor hear ;
For far and far thae blithe burns are,
And strange is a' thing near.

The light there lightens, the day there bright-
ens,
The loud wind there lives free :
Nae light comes nigh me or wind blaws by
me
That I wad hear or see.

But O gin I were there again,
Afar ayont the faem,
Cauld and dead in the sweet saft bed
That haps my sires at hame !

We'll see nae mair the sea-banks fair,
And the sweet grey gleaming sky,
And the lordly strand of Northumberland,
And the goodly towers thereby :
And none shall know but the winds that
blow
The graves wherein we lie.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM IN A
NUTSHELL

ONE, who is not, we see: but one, whom we
see not, is:

Surely this is not that: but that is assuredly
this.

What, and wherefore, and whence? for under
is over and under:

If thunder could be without lightning, lightning
could be without thunder.

Doubt is faith in the main: but faith, on the
whole, is doubt:

We cannot believe by proof: but could we be-
lieve without?

Why, and whither, and how? for barley and rye
are not clover:

Neither are straight lines curves: yet over is
under and over.

Two and two may be four, but four and four
are not eight:

Fate and God may be twain: but God is the
same thing as fate.

Ask a man what he thinks, and get from a man
what he feels :

God, once caught in the fact, shows you a fair
pair of heels.

Body and spirit are twins : God only knows
which is which :

The soul squats down in the flesh, like a tinker
drunk in a ditch.

More is the whole than a part : but half is more
than the whole :

Clearly, the soul is the body : but is not the body
the soul ?

One and two are not one : but one and nothing
is two :

Truth can hardly be false, if falsehood cannot
be true.

Once the mastodon was : pterodactyls were
common as cocks :

Then the mammoth was God : now is He a
prize ox.

Parallels all things are : yet many of these are
asked :

You are certainly I : but certainly I am not
you.

Springs the rock from the plain, shoots the stream
from the rock :

Cocks exist for the hen, but hens exist for the
cock.

God, whom we see not, is : and God, who is
not, we see :

Fiddle, we know, is diddle : and diddle, we take
it, is dee.

SONNET FOR A PICTURE

THAT nose is out of drawing. With a gasp,
She pants upon the passionate lips that ache
With the red drain of her own mouth, and
make

A monochord of colour. Like an asp,
One lithe lock wriggles in his rutilant grasp.
Her bosom is an oven of myrrh, to bake
Love's warm white shewbread to a browner
cake.

The lock his fingers clench has burst its hasp.

The legs are absolutely abominable.

Ah ! what keen overgust of wild-eyed woes
Flags in that bosom, flushes in that nose ?

Nay ! Death sets riddles for desire to spell,
Responsive. What red hem earth's passion
sews,

But may be ravenously unripped in hell ?

NEPHELIDIA

FROM the depth of the dreamy decline of the
dawn through a notable nimbus of nebu-
lous noonshine,

Pallid and pink as the palm of the flag-flower
that flickers with fear of the flies as they
float,

Are they looks of our lovers that lustrously lean
from a marvel of mystic miraculous
moonshine,

These that we feel in the blood of our blushes
that thicken and threaten with throbs
through the throat ?

Thicken and thrill as a theatre thronged at appeal
of an actor's appalled agitation,

Fainter with fear of the fires of the future than
pale with the promise of pride in the past ;
Flushed with the famishing fulness of fever that
reddens with radiance of rathe recreation,

Gaunt as the ghastliest of glimpses that gleam
through the gloom of the gloaming when
ghosts go aghast ?

Nay, for the nick of the tick of the time is a
tremulous touch on the temples of terror,
Strained as the sinews yet strenuous with strife
of the dead who is dumb as the dust-heaps
of death :

Surely no soul is it, sweet as the spasm of erotic
emotional exquisite error,

Bathed in the balms of beatified bliss, beatific
itself by beatitudes' breath.

Surely no spirit or sense of a soul that was soft
to the spirit and soul of our senses

Sweetens the stress of suspiring suspicion that
sobs in the semblance and sound of a
sigh ;

Only this oracle opens Olympian, in mystical
moods and triangular tenses —

“ Life is the lust of a lamp for the light that is
dark till the dawn of the day when we die.”

Mild is the mirk and monotonous music of
memory, melodiously mute as it may be,

While the hope in the heart of a hero is bruised
by the breach of men's rapiers, resigned
to the rod ;

Made meek as a mother whose bosom-beats
bound with the bliss-bringing bulk of a
balm-breathing baby,

As they grope through the grave-yard of creeds,
under skies growing green at a groan for
the grimness of God.

Blank is the book of his bounty beholden of old,
and its binding is blacker than bluer :

Out of blue into black is the scheme of the
skies, and their dews are the wine of the
bloodshed of things ;

Till the darkling desire of delight shall be free
as a fawn that is freed from the fangs that
pursue her,

Till the heart-beats of hell shall be hushed by
a hymn from the hunt that has harried
the kennel of kings.

Chronological List of Writings

1860. The Queen Mother, and Rosamond.
1865. Atalanta in Calydon.
1865. Chastelard : A Tragedy.
1866. Poems and Ballads.
1866. Note on Poems and Reviews.
1867. A Song of Italy.
1868. Siena.
1868. William Blake : A Critical Essay.
1870. Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic ; September 4th, 1870.
1871. Songs before Sunrise.
1872. Under the Microscope.
1874. Bothwell : A Tragedy.
1875. George Chapman.
1875. Essays and Studies.
1875. Songs of Two Nations (A Song of Italy, Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic, and Diræ).
1876. Erechtheus : A Tragedy.
1876. Note of an English Republican on the Muscovite Crusade.
1877. A Note on Charlotte Brontë.
1878. Poems and Ballads. Second Series.
1880. A Study of Shakespeare.
1880. Songs of the Springtides.
1880. Studies in Song.
1880. Specimens of Modern Poets. The Heptalogia ; or, the Seven against Sense. A Cap with Seven Bells.
1881. Mary Stuart : A Tragedy.
1882. Tristram of Lyonesse, and Other Poems.
1883. A Century of Roundels.
1884. A Midsummer Holiday, and Other Poems.
1885. Marino Faliero : A Tragedy.

360 Chronological List of Writings

- 1886. A Study of Victor Hugo.
- 1886. Miscellanies.
- 1887. A Word for the Navy.
- 1887. Loctrine : A Tragedy.
- 1889. A Study of Ben Jonson.
- 1889. Poems and Ballads. Third Series.
- 1892. The Sisters : A Tragedy.
- 1894. Astrophel, and Other Poems.
- 1894. Studies in Prose and Poetry.
- 1896. The Tale of Balen.
- 1899. Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards.
- 1904. A Channel Passage, and Other Poems.
- 1905. Love's Cross Currents.

This list includes all of Swinburne's works that have appeared as individual publications with title-pages of their own. To them should be added *Dead Love* (in *Once-a-Week*, 1862), and *A Year's Letters*, by Mrs. Horace Manners (in *The Tatler*, 1877).

Bibliographical Note

There is a *Bibliography* of Swinburne's writings by Richard Herne Shepherd, covering the period 1857-1887. The English editions of Swinburne are published by Chatto and Windus. They include all the volumes mentioned in the Chronological List, several of them being out of print. There is also a volume of *Select Poems* (the author's selection, 1887) containing examples from fourteen volumes of poems and plays. The same publishers issue the complete *Poetical Works*, in six volumes (including *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Erechtheus*). They are also to issue the *Dramatic Works*, in five volumes. There are early American editions of *The Queen Mother and Rosamond* (Ticknor & Fields), *Chastelard* (Holt), *Atalanta in Calydon* (Holt), and *Poems and Ballads I.* (Carleton). The last-named volume is entitled *Laus Veneris* and alters the arrangement of the contents. A dozen or more volumes of verse and prose were reprinted by the Worthington Co., who supplied the American market for a term of years. *The Tale of Balen* bears the imprint of Charles Scribner's Sons, who also have upon their list the entire series of the original English editions, excepting those out of print. *The Sisters* was published by the United States Book Co., and *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards*, by Dodd, Mead & Co. A so-called "complete edition" of the *Poetical Works* (J. D. Williams, 1884) includes in a single volume six of the plays, and the contents, wholly or in part, of six volumes of the poems. It is shockingly misprinted. A volume of *Selections* (Crowell, 1884), with introduction by R. H. Stoddard, reprints the two Greek dramas, the Mary Stuart trilogy complete, and a large number of the poems. The tasteful Mosher reprints include *Atalanta in Calydon*, *Songs before Sunrise*, the three series of *Poems and Ballads*, *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*, *The Heptalogia*, *Under the Microscope*, *A Year's Letters*, and *Dead Love*. Harper & Brothers are the American publishers of the new

standard edition of the *Poetical Works*, in six volumes, and the *Dramatic Works*, in five volumes.

Poole's *Index* provides hundreds of references to contemporary reviews of Swinburne. The most important document for the study of his poetry is the dedicatory epistle to Theodore Watts-Dunton, prefixed by the author to the new uniform edition of his *Poetical Works*. This offers a retrospect of his whole literary career. He has not yet been made the subject of much critical examination of the more serious sort. H. B. Forman's chapter in *Our Living Poets*, Lowell's essay, and Stoddard's introduction (above-mentioned) are examples of singularly superficial and ungenerous criticism. On the other hand, E. C. Stedman's chapter in the *Victorian Poets* has high critical value, and is probably the most important treatment of Swinburne that has thus far been made. *Modern Poets and Cosmic Law*, by Frederic Myers (in *Science and a Future Life*), is both appreciative and suggestive. There are two interesting chapters in George Saintsbury's *Corrected Impressions*. James Douglas, in the new edition of Chambers's *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, gives a just and sympathetic estimate. Other studies include the following: Francis Adams, *Essays in Modernity*; Alfred Austin, *Poetry of the Period*; W. L. Courtney, *Studies New and Old*; J. V. Cheney, *The Golden Guess*; Vida D. Scudder, *The Life of the Spirit in the Modern English Poets*, and W. M. Payne, in *Warner's Library of the World's Best Literature*. Among continental estimates may be mentioned: Wollaeger, *Studien über Swinburne's Poetischen Stil*; G. Sarrazin, *Poètes Modernes de l'Angleterre*, and Paul de Reul, *Swinburne et la France*. The only book upon Swinburne thus far published is the study by Theodore Wratishaw, an uncritically eulogistic production of slight value.

Notes

If any excuse were needed for the classified arrangement chosen for this volume of selected poems, it might be found in Swinburne's own words: "It might be thought pedantic or pretentious in a modern poet to divide his poems after the old Roman fashion into sections and classes. I must confess that I should like to see this method applied, were it but by way of experiment in a single edition, to the work of the leading poets of our own country and century: to see, for instance, their lyrical and elegiac works ranged and registered apart, each kind in a class of its own, such as is usually reserved, I know not why, for sonnets only. The apparent formality of such an arrangement as would give us, for instance, the odes of Coleridge and Shelley collected into a distinct reservation or division might possibly be more than compensated to the more capable among students by the gain in ethical or spiritual symmetry and æsthetic or intellectual harmony."

I. ATHENS: AN ODE. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*. Dated April, 1881. This is Swinburne's most perfect example of the Pindaric ode, with the regular sequence of strophe, antistrophe, and epode. "The Greek form . . . not to be imitated because it is Greek, but to be adopted because it is best." His earliest work in this form was the *Ode on the Insurrection in Candia* (1867), of which he says: "I doubt whether it quite succeeded in evading the criminal risk and the capital offence of formality. . . . But in my later ode on Athens, absolutely faithful as it is to the strictest type and the most stringent law of Pindaric hymnology, I venture to believe that there is no more sign of this infirmity than in the less classically regulated poem on the Armada. . . . By the test of these two poems I am content that my claims should be decided and my station determined as a lyric poet in the higher sense of the term."

1, 5. **The first-born olive-blossom.** The olive was the gift of Athene to her chosen city at the time of the victory over Poseidon and the hosts of the sea.

5, 5. **Your battle-cry was healing.** Pæan, or Paian (the healer); in Homer, the physician of the Olympian gods, afterwards an epithet of Apollo, used in a more general sense as an invocation to the gods, especially a prayer for victory.

8, 3. **The great chryselephantine God.** The colossal statue of Zeus at Olympia, made of ivory and gold by Phidias.

10, 1. **Well-beloved Harmodius and Aristogeiton.** A line from the scholion which celebrates these patriotic assassins.

10, 6. **The Feast Panathenæan.** The ancient festival in honor of Athene.

10, 7. **The Cyprian dove.** Cyprus was famous for its doves, which were sacred to Aphrodite.

10, 14. **Mild-winged maidens.** The chorus of Oceanides in the *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus.

11, 14. **He may smite me, etc.** See Æschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 1053.

12, 1. **The sevenfold storm, etc.** Æschylus, *The Seven against Thebes*.

12, 3. **Sang the flight, etc.** Æschylus, *The Suppliants*.

12, 7. **King of kings, etc.** See Æschylus, *The Suppliants*, 524 (Teubner).

12, 10. **When of Salamis, etc.** Æschylus, *The Persians*.

12, 14. **The birth of Leda's womb.** Helen.

13, 2. **The twin-born human-fathered sister-flower.** Clytæmnestra, daughter of Leda and Tyndareos.

13, 3. **Scarce the cry, etc.** See Æschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 88-91.

13, 7. **The murderous word, etc.** See Æschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1555-59 (Teubner).

13, 9. **The latter note of anguish, etc.** See Æschylus, *Choëphoræ*, 896-98 (Teubner).

14, 4. **Sleep ye, etc.** See Æschylus, *Eumenides*, 94 (Teubner).

14, 8. **More than ye was she, etc.** More than the

Furies was the shade of Clytæmnestra, whom no god save Athene (Wisdom) might withstand.

14, 10. **Yea, no God may stand**, etc. In the *Eumenides*, Athene gives the casting vote for the acquittal of Orestes, and placates the Furies, reconciling them to her decision.

14, 12. **Light whose law**, etc. See close of *Eumenides*. **Childless Children**, etc. *Eumenides*, 1034 (Teubner).

15, 5. **Rose and vine and olive**, etc. A suggestion of the epitaph upon Sophocles by Simmias of Thebes, thus translated by Plumptre :

“ Creep gently, ivy, ever gently creep,
Where Sophocles sleeps on in calm repose ;
Thy pale green tresses o'er the marble sweep,
While all around shall bloom the purpling rose.
There let the vine with rich full clusters hang,
Its fair young tendrils fling around the stone ;
Due meed for that sweet wisdom which he sang,
By Muses and by Graces called their own.”

16, 3-8. These lines are a free translation of Sophocles, *Antigone*, 781-90.

16, 13. **As the music mingling**, etc. The chorus which accompanies Antigone to her tomb.

18, 2. **Would that fate**, etc. See Sophocles, *Ædipus Tyrannus*, 863 sqq.

18, 12. **The haunt closed in**, etc. See Sophocles, *Ædipus at Colonus*, 668 sqq. and 126-30.

19, 3. **There her father**, etc. See closing scene of *Ædipus at Colonus*.

19, 7. **Third of three**. Aristophanes.

20, 1. **Loxian**, An epithet of Apollo, meaning the Obscure.

20, 6. **Doria**. Andrea Doria (1468-1560). A great Genoese admiral who in 1529, refusing a crown, established popular government in Genoa.

20, 6. **Dandolo**. The first Venetian Doge of that name. Born 1110-15, died 1205. He greatly extended the power of the Venetian republic.

20, 7. **Ausonia**. Italy.

22. THE ARMADA. *Poems and Ballads*, III. For Swinburne's estimate of this ode see note to *Athens*.

26, 7. *They that ride*, etc. An ancient English rhymed prophecy of unknown authorship.

33, 8. *Python*. The serpent of the caves of Parnassus, slain by Apollo with his first arrows.

34, 9. *Their chief*. Alonzo de Guzman, Duke of Medina-Sidonia.

40, 4. *Oquendo*. Miguel de Oquendo, commander of one of the squadrons of the Armada, who won great distinction during the battle, and brought a fragment of the fleet safely home to San Sebastian.

50. ODE ON THE PROCLAMATION OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC. *Songs of Two Nations*. Dedicated to Victor Hugo. Dated Sept. 4, 1870. The Greek motto is from Æschylus, *Agamemnon*, 121. Swinburne translates it, "Cry wellaway, but well befall the right," in his poem, *A Year's Burden* (*Songs before Sunrise*).

67. THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE. *Poems and Ballads*, I. "Of all Swinburne's poems, perhaps the most wonderful, with melody farthest beyond the reach of any other still living man, is that *Garden of Proserpine*, whose close represents in well-known words the deep life-weariness of men who have had enough of love." Frederic Myers. There is a curious resemblance between this poem and Christina Rossetti's *Dream-land*, published in 1862.

71. HYMN TO PROSERPINE. *Poems and Ballads*, I. The Latin motto, "Thou hast conquered, Galleian," consists of the apocryphal words attributed to the dying Julian by Christian writers. The story is first told by Theodoretus, a Greek Christian father of the fifth century.

79. Author's foot-note.

Thou art a little soul bearing up a corpse. — Epictetus.

79. THE LAST ORACLE. *Poems and Ballads*, II. The Greek motto runs literally as follows: Tell the king that the dædal dwelling has fallen to the ground; Phæbus no longer has a cell, nor a prophetic laurel, nor a water-spring that speaks: even the speaking water is quenched. This was the oracle delivered at Delphi to the Emperor Julian in 361 A. D. "That voice seems rather to have been, in Plutarch's phrase, 'a cry floating of itself over soli-

tary places,' than the deliverance of any recognised priestess, or from any abiding shrine. For no shrine was standing more. The words which answered the Emperor Julian's search were but the whisper of desolation, the last and loveliest expression of a sanctity that had passed away." Frederic Myers.

80, 17. **Paian.** See note 5, 5.

82, 9. **Son of God the shining son of time.** Apollo, son of Zeus, the son of Cronus. Here Cronus is confused with Chronos (Time), an error into which the classical writers frequently fell.

87. **HERTHA.** *Songs before Sunrise.* Hertha was a goddess worshipped by the ancient Germans, according to Tacitus, the earth-goddess, with an island-shrine, possibly Rügen.

97. **HYMN OF MAN.** *Songs before Sunrise.* The twenty-first Œcumenical Council met in Rome December 8, 1869, and remained in session until the following summer. It voted for the dogma of papal infallibility July 18, 1870. Swinburne brackets the *Hymn to Proserpine* and the *Hymn of Man* as "the deathsong of spiritual decadence and the birthsong of spiritual renascence."

99, 1. **Was it Love brake forth,** etc. Aristophanes, *The Birds*, 696.

109, 11. **Cry, cut yourselves,** etc. As the priests of Baal mocked by Elijah. *1 Kings* 18, 28.

112, **PRELUDE.** *Songs before Sunrise.*

115, 23. **Mænads.** Female Bacchantes, who worshipped Dionysus with frenzied rites.

116, 4. **Thyiades.** The Attic woman who joined in the Dionysiac orgies on Mount Parnassus. Thyia, a daughter of Castalius or Cephisseus, is said to have been the first to have sacrificed to Dionysus.

116, 6. **Bassarid.** The Bacchanals of Lydia and Thrace, clad in garments of fur.

116, 19. **Cotys.** Cotys, or Cotytto, a Thracian goddess worshipped with orgiastic rites. See Æschylus, *The Edonians* (Fragment). *Σεμνὰ Κότυς ἐν τοῖς Ἡδωνοῖ.* August Cotys among the Edonians.

119. **SIENA.** *Songs before Sunrise.*

121, 2. **That saw Saint Catherine bodily.** "Her pil-

grimage to Avignon to recall the Pope into Italy as its redeemer from the distractions of the time is of course the central act of St. Catherine's life, the great abiding sign of the greatness of spirit and genius of heroism which distinguished this daughter of the people, and should yet keep her name fresh above the holy horde of saints, in other records than the calendar. . . . The high and fixed passion of her heroic temperament gives her a right to remembrance and honour of which the miracle-mongers have done their best to deprive her. . . . By the light of those solid and actual qualities which ensure to her no ignoble place on the noble roll of Italian women who have deserved well of Italy, the record of her visions and ecstasies may be read without contemptuous intolerance of hysterical disease. The rapturous visionary and passionate ascetic was in plain matters of the earth as pure and practical a heroine as Joan of Arc." Swinburne. Catherine (1347-1380) was the daughter of a dyer of Siena. Her pilgrimage to Avignon was undertaken in 1377, and resulted in the return of the Pope (Gregory XI.) to Rome.

121, 7. **Where in pure hands she took the head,** etc. "The story which tells how she succeeded in humanizing a criminal under sentence of death, and given over by the priests as a soul doomed and desperate; how the man thus raised and melted out of his fierce and brutal despair besought her to sustain him to the last by her presence; how, having accompanied him with comfort and support to the very scaffold, and seen his head fall, she took it up, and turning to the spectators who stood doubtful whether the poor wretch could be 'saved,' kissed it in sign of her faith that his sins were forgiven him." Swinburne.

124, 4. **The supreme Seven.** Apparently a reference to Dante, *Paradiso*, xxxii. The spirits of the blessed women in the Celestial Rose are thus ranked: Mary, Eve, Rachel (with Beatrice), Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, and Ruth.

124, 10. **There on the dim side-chapel wall.** In the church of San Domenico, where are the frescos by Bazzi (Sodoma) depicting scenes in the life of St. Catherine.

125, 19. **But blood and tears ye love not.** "In the Siense Academy the two things notable to me were the detached wall-painting by Sodoma of the tortures of Christ bound to the pillar, and the divine though mutilated groups of the Graces in

the centre of the main hall. The glory and beauty of ancient sculpture refresh and satisfy beyond expression a sense wholly wearied and wellnigh nauseated with contemplation of endless sanctities and agonies attempted by mediæval art, while yet as handless as accident or barbarism has left the sculptured goddesses." Swinburne.

126, 15. **Amathus.** A place in Cyprus with a celebrated temple of Aphrodite.

127, 7. **Ricorditi di me, che son la Pia.** "Remember me, who am la Pia." Dante. *Purgatorio*, v, 133. "When Buonconte da Montefeltro has finished speaking, another spirit (that of Pia) addresses Dante and begs him when he returns to the upper world to bear her in mind; she then names herself, and states that she was born in Siena and died in the Maremma, the manner of her death being known to him who was her second husband." Toynbee. The formerly accepted identification of this lady with the wife of Baldo de' Tolomei has recently been disproved by Banchi and her personality is in doubt.

128, 1. **Love made me**, etc. A paraphrase of *Purg.* 133-6, substituting "Love" for "Siena" and "Hate" for "Maremma."

128, 19. **The weary poet.** Leopardi.

The reference is to the poem *All' Italia*.

O patria mia, vedo le mura e gli archi,
E le colonne e i simulacri e l'erme
Torri degli avi nostri;
Ma la gloria non vedo,
Non vedo il lauro ed il ferro ond'eran carchi
I nostri padri antichi.

(O my country, I behold the walls and the arches, and the columns and the statues and the solitary towers of our ancestors; but I behold not the glory, I behold not the laurel and the iron that were borne by our fathers of old.)

131, 7. **Trebia.** A tributary of the Po, the scene of Hannibal's victory (B. C. 218) and of Macdonald's defeat by Suwarrow (1799).

131, 8. **Mentana.** The defeat of Garibaldi's volunteers by the combined Papal and French forces, Nov. 3, 1867.

131. PERINDE AC CADAVER. *Songs before Sunrise*. The title is the Jesuitical formula of absolute submission to authority. Even as a corpse.

136. THE PILGRIMS. *Songs before Sunrise*.

141. SUPER FLUMINA BABYLONIS. *Songs before Sunrise*. See *Psalms*, 137.

143, 11. The horn of Eridanus. The delta of the river Po.

144, 15. Aceldama. The field of blood. *Acts*, 1, 19.

148. MATER DOLOROSA. *Songs before Sunrise*. Motto from Hugo: "Citizen, said Enjolras to him, my mother is the Republic."

153. MATER TRIUMPHALIS. *Songs before Sunrise*.

161, 13. That supreme song, etc. Presumably a reference to the poetry of Hugo.

162. BY THE NORTH SEA. *Studies in Song*. Dedicated to Walter Theodore Watts, the "brother" of the introductory sonnet. "The dreary beauty, inhuman if not unearthly in its desolation, of the innumerable creeks and inlets, lined and paven with sea-flowers, which make of the salt marshes a fit and funereal setting, a fatal and appropriate foreground, for the supreme desolation of the relics of Dunwich; the beautiful and awful solitude of a wilderness on which the sea has forbidden man to build or live, overtopped and bounded by the tragic and ghastly solitude of a headland on which the sea has forbidden the works of human charity and piety to survive." Swinburne.

167, 17. In the valley he named of decision. *Joel*, 3, 14.

169. In Swinburne's *Select Poems*, Sections III. and IV. are grouped by the author under the title *In the Salt Marshes*.

172, 11. The wise wave-wandering steadfast-hearted guest of many a lord of many a land. Odysseus. The descent of the hero into Hades, and the interview with the ghost of Anticleia, his mother, are described in book XI. of the *Odyssey*.

181. In the *Select Poems*, Sections VI. and VII. are grouped under the title *Dunwich*.

188. IN GUERNSEY. *A Century of Roundels*. Dedicated to Theodore Watts.

191, 12. **Farinata.** See Dante, *Inferno*, 10, 32. A Ghibelline leader who died in 1264, and is placed by Dante among the heretics in the City of Dis, in the sixth Circle of Hell.

191, 13. **Geryon.** See Dante, *Inferno*, 16, 31 *sqq.* Geryon was a winged giant with three bodies. He was slain by Hercules, who carried off his cattle. In Dante, he is made the symbol of fraud and guardian of Malebolge.

193, 5. **Beloved and blest, etc.** Victor Hugo. Hauteville-House, on the island of Guernsey, was the home of Victor Hugo from 1856 to 1870.

194. **MARCH: AN ODE.** *Poems and Ballads*, III. Dated 1887. The only poem in octometers in the English language.

199. **A FORSAKEN GARDEN.** *Poems and Ballads*, II.

204. **ON THE VERGE.** *A Midsummer Holiday and Other Poems.* This is Section IX. in *A Midsummer Holiday.*

204, 6. **Land's End.** The southwestern extremity of Cornwall.

206. **RECOLLECTIONS.** *A Century of Roundels.*

209, 2. **The mother of months.** "In May, that moder is of monthes glade." Chaucer. *Troilus and Criseyde*, II. 50. Shelley, in *Prometheus Unbound*, IV., calls the moon the mother of the months."

209, 6. **Itylus.** Aedon, wife of the Theban King Zethus, envious of Niobe, her sister-in-law, for having six sons, tries to kill the eldest, but by mistake kills her own son Itylus. Changed into a nightingale by Zeus, she forever bewails her lost son.

211, 6. **The Mænad and the Bassarid.** See Notes 115, 23, and 226, 6.

213, 20. **Rhodope.** The highest mountain-range in Thrace.

214, 6. **A God, a great God strange of name.** Boreas, who captured Oreithyia, daughter of Erechtheus, and carried her off to Thrace.

217, 10. **For the new bride's sake.** Chthonia, daughter of Erechtheus, sacrificed by her father at the behest of the oracle, in consequence whereof the Eleusinians were defeated in their assault upon Athens.

218. **CHORUS.** This is the closing chorus of *Erechtheus*, and is perhaps the most extraordinary example of unbroken anapaestic rhythm to be found in Swinburne.

219. HESPERIA. The Western land, Italy or Spain.
- 223, 1. O my Dolores! See *Dolores, Poems and Ballads*, 1.
226. TWO PRELUDES. *A Century of Roundels*. *Lohengrin* and *Tristan und Isolde* are two of the music-dramas of Richard Wagner.
227. A WASTED VIGIL. *Poems and Ballads*, 11.
230. THE SUNDEW. *Poems and Ballads*, 1. The sundew (*Drosera*) is best known to readers as an insectivorous plant, described in the writings of Darwin and other naturalists. This is the only instance known to the editor of its use for poetical purposes.
232. A MATCH. *Poems and Ballads*, 1.
234. THE SALT OF THE EARTH. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*.
235. OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*. This is Section xxii. of the collection of childhood lyrics entitled *A Dark Month*. The poem has no title of its own.
236. A CHILD'S LAUGHTER. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*.
237. A CHILD'S FUTURE. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*.
239. A BABY'S DEATH. *A Century of Roundels*.
- 242, 12. His name crowned once, etc. Michelangelo.
243. HOPE AND FEAR. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*.
244. "NON DOLET." *Songs before Sunrise*. Pætus Cæcina, ordered by the Emperor Claudius to put an end to his life, hesitated to strike the suicidal blow, whereupon his wife Arria took the dagger, plunged it into her own breast, then handed it to him, saying: Pæte, non dolet (Pætus, it does not hurt). See Pliny, *Letter* 316, 6.
244. PELAGIUS. *A Midsummer Holiday and Other Poems*. Pelagius was a Celtic theologian of the fifth century, who opposed the doctrine of original sin, and was formally condemned as a heretic by a council of bishops held in Carthage.
247. THE DESCENT INTO HELL. *Songs of Two Nations*. *Diræ*, xvi. Dated Jan. 9, 1873. These sonnets commemorate the death of Louis Napoleon.
248. THE MODERATES. *Songs of Two Nations*. *Diræ*, xi. Dated February, 1870. The Latin motto is from Persius, 3, 38.

“They beheld virtue, and forsaking her, withered away.” This thought is reproduced in the last line of the sonnet. The Moderates were the conservatives in Italian politics, who, after the death of Cavour in 1861, looked to Louis Napoleon as Italy’s best friend, and opposed the revolutionary activities of Garibaldi.

249. THE BURDEN OF AUSTRIA. *Songs of Two Nations. Diræ*, v. Dated 1866.

249, 21. **Is it not thou that now art but a name?** “A geographical expression” was Metternich’s sneering designation of Italy.

250. APOLOGIA. *Songs of Two Nations. Diræ*, xxii. The closing sonnet in this series of invectives.

250. ON THE RUSSIAN PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*. Dated Jan. 23, 1882.

251. DYSTHANATOS. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*. Dated March 14, 1881. Dysthanatos means unpleasant death, as opposed to euthanasia, or pleasant death. The Latin motto means: Few kings go down to the son-in-law of Ceres without violence and wounds, or tyrants by a dry death. Juvenal, x. 111–12. Wordsworth in the sonnet, *Look now on that adventurer who hath paid*, says of Napoleon :

“And, if old judgments keep their sacred course,
Him from that height shall Heaven precipitate
By violent and ignominious death.”

252. CARNOT. *A Channel Passage and Other Poems*. Dated June 25, 1894. Marie-François Sadi-Carnot, President of the French Republic, was assassinated by an anarchist June 24, 1894.

253. VOS DEOS LAUDAMUS. *A Midsummer Holiday and Other Poems*. These sonnets were occasioned by the discussion that took place in the English press over the acceptance of a peerage by Alfred Tennyson.

255, 9. **Such hands as wove**, etc. Sophocles, *Œdipus at Colonus*.

255. IN SAN LORENZO. *Songs before Sunrise*. The sacristy of the church of San Lorenzo, in Florence, was built by Michelangelo, and contains his famous figures of Day and Night. The poet

Strozzi, a contemporary of the sculptor, inscribed the statue of Night with the following verses :

“ La Notte, che tu vedi in sì dolci atti
Dormire, fu da un Angelo scolpita
In questo sasso, e perchè dorme ha vita ;
Destala, se no 'l credi, e parleratti.”

(Night, whom thou beholdest thus softly slumbering, was by an Angel sculptured in this stone, and because she sleeps is alive ; awaken her, if thou doubtest, and she will speak to thee.) Whereupon Michelangelo replied, having reference to the evil days of tyranny and injustice upon which he had fallen :

“ Grato m' è 'l sonno, e più l' esser di sasso,
Mentre che 'l danno e la vergogna dura :
Non veder, non sentir, m' è gran ventura ;
Però non mi destar ; deh ! parla basso ! ”

(Grateful to me is sleep, and still more to be of stone, while evil and shame endure : neither to see nor to hear is to me great good fortune ; therefore do not awaken me ; ah ! speak low !) In this sonnet, Swinburne compares the condition of Italy in Michelangelo's time with her condition under the Papal and Austrian tyranny of the middle nineteenth century.

256. THE FESTIVAL OF BEATRICE. *Astrophel and Other Poems*. Dante's Beatrice died June 8, 1290. This sonnet celebrates the six hundredth anniversary of her death.

256, 12. Behold we well, etc. *Purgatorio*, xxx. 73.

257. CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*.

257, 15. If all the pens, etc. Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great*, Part the First, v. 1.

258. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*.

258. JOHN WEBSTER. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*. This and the two preceding sonnets are from a series of twenty-one *Sonnets on English Dramatic Poets (1590-1650)*, supplemented by one on *Cyril Tourneur* in *Poems and Ballads*, 11., and by the series of *Prologues* which close *A Channel Passage and Other Poems*.

259. COR CORDIUM. *Songs before Sunrise*. These are the words upon Shelley's tombstone in the Protestant Cemetery at Rome.

260. DICKENS. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*.

261. ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*. Both these writers died in 1881.

262. ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT BROWNING. *Astrophel and Other Poems*. The last of a sequence of seven sonnets, dated Dec. 13-15, 1889.

263. THALASSIUS. *Songs of the Springtides*. This poem is a highly symbolical spiritual autobiography, and hence of great significance for the study of Swinburne.

264, 3. *Cymothoe*. One of the Nereids.

264, 22. *But he that found*, etc. Walter Savage Landor.

267, 4. *And gladly should man die to gain*, etc. These two lines freely translate Landor's inscription for the Spanish patriots who gave their lives in defending their country against the Napoleonic invasion. The inscription is as follows :

Emeriti . lubenter . quiescerimus.

Libertate . partâ.

Quiescimus . amissâ . perlubenter.

A more literal translation occurs in Swinburne's *Song for the Centenary of Walter Savage Landor*.

Gladly we should rest ever, had we won

Freedom : we have lost, and very gladly rest.

It is interesting to compare with this the version by Sir Henry Taylor, in *St. Clement's Eve*.

And say I gladly would have lived to serve her,

Wherein defeated, I as gladly die.

279, 7. *The furred Bassarides*. See Note 116, 6.

280, 23. *Erigone*. The daughter of Icarus, ending her life through grief at her father's murder, and set by Zeus among the stars as the constellation Virgo. This story is closely connected with the legend of the coming of Dionysus to Attica.

283, 2. *Wild mares in Thessaly*. For this legend see *Iliad*, 20, 223, and *Georgics*, 3, 275.

285. ADIEUX À MARIE STUART. *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*.

285, 7. Queen, for whose house my fathers fought. A reference to the poet's Jacobite ancestry.

290, 6. The song . . . that took your praise up twenty years ago. The three parts of Swinburne's dramatic trilogy were published in 1865, 1874, and 1881, respectively.

290. ON A COUNTRY ROAD. *A Midsummer Holiday and Other Poems*. This is Section III. of *A Midsummer Holiday*.

292. IN THE BAY. *Poems and Ballads*, II.

294, 17. Son of the songs of morning. Christopher Marlowe.

297, 3. Like spray these waves cast off her foe-men's fleet. The defeat of the Spanish Armada.

299, 5. He that rose our mightiest. Shakespeare.

299, 18. The twin-souled brethren, etc. Beaumont and Fletcher.

300, 3. That fixed fervour, etc. John Ford.

300, 15. You twain the same swift year. Marlowe and Shelley died in their thirtieth year.

305. IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR. *Poems and Ballads*, I. Landor died in Florence Sept. 17, 1864, a few months before the provisional establishment in that city of the capital of United Italy.

306, 9. I came as one, etc. Swinburne went to Italy in 1864, and paid a visit to Landor, bringing a letter of introduction from R. M. Milnes.

307. TO VICTOR HUGO. *Poems and Ballads*, I. This is the first of Swinburne's many tributes to the great French poet. His more elaborate *Birthday Ode* (1880), in the Pindaric form, with the series of strophe, antistrophe, and epode thirteen times repeated, occurs in *Songs of the Springtides*. *The Statue of Victor Hugo*, in *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*, is almost equally noteworthy.

311, 3. Help to my sires and home. An allusion to Swinburne's ancestors, exiled by their devotion to the Stuart cause.

314, 3. Still shows him exile, etc. This poem was written when Hugo was living, a voluntary exile, in Guernsey.

316. AVE ATQUE VALE. *Poems and Ballads*, II. The verses

from Baudelaire may be translated as follows: "Yet should we bear him a few flowers; the dead, the unhappy dead, have great sorrows, and when October, pruner of ancient trees, breathes its melancholy winds about their tombs, assuredly, the living must seem to them very ingrates."

317, 1-3. **Lesbian promontories . . . Leucadian grave.** Sappho, born in the isle of Lesbos, was reputed to have cast herself into the sea from the rock of Leucas.

319, 6. **Some pale Titan-woman, etc.** See Baudelaire, *La Géante*.

322. **And lay, Orestes-like, etc.** See Æschylus, *Choëphoræ*, 4-8.

322, 15. **Him, the King.** Agamemnon.

324, 11. **That obscure Venus of the hollow hill.** The Venus of classical mythology, transformed into an evil spirit by the mediæval religious imagination, was supposed to hold her court in the recesses of the Venusberg or Hörselberg, in Thuringia (Central Germany). This is made familiar by the Tannhäuser legend.

324, 14. **Erycine.** From Eryx, in Sicily, the seat of a temple to Aphrodite Urania; that is, to Aphrodite as the goddess of the higher and purer love.

325, 1. **And now no sacred staff, etc.** An allusion to the Tannhäuser legend. The knight, escaping from the snare of Lady Venus, makes a pilgrimage to Rome, to implore pardon for his sins. Cursed by the Pope, he is told that it is no more possible he should be forgiven than that the dry staff in the hand of God's vicegerent should break forth into fresh flower. After his departure, this miracle occurs, and messengers are despatched to find him, bearing with them the blossoming staff. See Swinburne, *Laus Veneris*.

326. **LINES ON THE MONUMENT OF GIUSEPPE MAZZINI.** *A Midsummer Holiday and Other Poems.* This monument is in the Campo Santo of Genoa, just outside the city.

329. **THE DEATH OF RICHARD WAGNER.** *A Century of Roundels.* Wagner died in Venice, Feb. 13, 1883.

331. **DEDICATION.** *Poems and Ballads*, 1. "To my friend Edward Burne-Jones, these poems are affectionately and admiringly inscribed."

335. DEDICATION. *Poems and Ballads*, II. "Inscribed to Richard F. Burton, in redemption of an old pledge, and in recognition of a friendship which I must always count among the highest honours of my life."

337. HENDECASYLLABICS. *Poems and Ballads*, I. It is interesting to compare Tennyson's study in the same metre.

345. GRAND CHORUS OF BIRDS FROM ARISTOPHANES. *Studies in Song*. "I was allured into the audacity of this experiment by consideration of a fact which hitherto does not seem to have been taken into consideration by any translator of the half divine humourist in whose incomparable genius the highest qualities of Rabelais were fused and harmonized with the supremest gifts of Shelley: namely that his marvellous metrical invention of the anapæstic heptameter was almost exactly reproducible in a language to which all variations and combinations of anapæstic, iambic, or trochaic metre are as natural and pliable as all dactylic and spondaic forms of verse are unnatural and abhorrent. As it happens, this highest central interlude of a most adorable masterpiece is as easy to detach from its dramatic setting, and even from its lyrical context, as it was easy to give line for line of it in English. In two metrical points only does my version vary from the verbal pattern of the original. I have of course added rhymes, and double rhymes, as necessary makeweights for the imperfection of an otherwise inadequate language; and equally of course I have not attempted the impossible and undesirable task of reproducing the rare exceptional effect of a line overcharged on purpose with a preponderance of heavy-footed spondees: and this for the obvious reason that even if such a line — which I doubt — could be exactly represented, foot by foot and pause for pause, in English, this English line would no more be a verse in any proper sense of the word than is the line I am writing at this moment. And my main intention, or at least my main desire, in the undertaking of this brief adventure was to renew as far as possible for English ears the music of this resonant and triumphant metre, which goes ringing at full gallop as of horses who

‘dance as ’twere to the music
Their own hoofs make.’

I would not seem over-curious in search of an apt or an inapt

quotation ; but nothing can be fitter than a verse of Shakespeare's to praise at once and to describe the most typical verse of Aristophanes." Swinburne.

345, 8. **Prodicus.** A Greek sophist, contemporary with Socrates.

347, 6. **Orestes the thief.** A notorious footpad of Athens, perhaps thus nicknamed because he feigned madness.

348. **A JACOBITE'S FAREWELL.** *Poems and Ballads*, III.

348, 5. **Tyne.** To lose.

349. **A JACOBITE'S EXILE.** *Poems and Ballads*, III.

349, 20. **On dark Drumossie's day.** Drumossie Moor is another name for Culloden, where the Young Pretender met his final defeat, April 16, 1746.

351, 3. **A weird for dreeing.** A fate to be endured.

351, 9. **Thole.** To bear.

353. **THE HIGHER PANTHEISM IN A NUTSHELL.** *The Heptalogia.* A parody upon Tennyson's *The Higher Pantheism*.

355. **SONNET FOR A PICTURE.** *The Heptalogia.* A parody upon Rossetti. This is a composite of suggestions rather than an imitation of any particular sonnet.

356. **NEPHELIDIA.** *The Heptalogia.* The title may be translated as "Cloudlets." Few poets have been parodied as extensively as Swinburne, but no one else has been quite as successful as Swinburne himself, in the present attempt, to mock at his own mannerisms of diction and rhythmical effect.



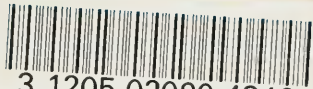


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