



# CHASTÉLARD

A TRAGEDY.

**Offered by —**

**Sri Basanti Ballav Sen**

**6/1-A, Mathur Road, Calcutta-1**

**Phone — 7660-6**

**NOT EXCHANGEABLE AND  
NOT SALABLE.**



# CHASTELARD

A TRAGEDY.

BY

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

Au milieu de l'avril, entre les lys naquit  
Son corps, qui de blancheur les lys mêmes vainquit;  
Et les roses, qui sont du sang d'Adonis teintes,  
Furent par sa couleur de leur vermeil dépeintes.

ROSBARD.

What need ye heeh! and how! ladies?  
What need ye how! for me?  
Ye never saw grace at a graceless face;  
Queen Mary has name to gie.

*The Queen's Marie.*

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:  
JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN, 11, CECILIA STREET,  
1868.

✓  
822  
SW 978 c

G 3706 / 14 / 04  
STATE CENTRAL  
66-A B 1 1  
Calcutta-700 WU  
21. 1. 86

I DEDICATE THIS PLAY,  
AS A PARTIAL EXPRESSION OF REVERENCE  
AND GRATITUDE,

TO THE CHIEF OF LIVING POETS;  
TO THE FIRST DRAMATIST OF HIS AGE;  
TO THE GREATEST EXILE, AND THEREFORE  
TO THE GREATEST MAN OF FRANCE;

TO

VICTOR HUGO.

**Gifted by —**

**Sri Basanti Ballav Sen**  
4/1-A, B. B. Sen Garden Lane  
Calcutta — 700016

**NOT EXCHANGEABLE AND  
NOT SALABLE.**



## PERSONS.

MARY STUART.

MARY BEATON.

MARY SEATON.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

MARY HAMILTON.

PIERRE DE BOSCOSEL DE CHASTELARD.

DARNLEY.

MURRAY.

RANDOLPH.

MORTON.

LINDSAY.

FATHER BLACK.

*Guards, Burgesses, a Preacher, Citizens, &c.*

**Cited by —**

**Sri Basanti Ballav Sen**

**8/1-A, Mathur Sen Garden Lane**

**Cuttack — 700016**

**NOT EXCHANGEABLE AND**

**NOT SALABLE.**



Another Yle is there toward the Northe, in the See Ocean, where that ben fulle cruele and ful euele Wommen of Nature : and thei han precious Stones in hire Eyen ; and thei ben of that kynde, that zif they beholden ony man, thei slen him anon with the beholdyng, as dothe the Basilisk.

MAUNDEVILE'S *Voiage and Trauaile*, Ch. xxviii.

ACT I.

MARY BEATON.



SCENE I.—*The Upper Chamber in Holyrood.*

*The four MARIES.*

MARY BEATON (*sings*):—

1.

*Le navire  
Est à l'eau ;  
Entends rive  
Ce gros flot  
Que fait luire  
Et bruire  
Le vieux sire  
Aquilo.*

2.

*Dans l'espace  
Du grand air  
Le vent passe  
Comme un fer ;*

*Siffle et sonne,  
Tombe et tonne,  
Prend et donne  
À la mer.*

3.

*Vois, la brise  
Tourne au nord,  
Et la bise  
Souffle et mord  
Sur ta pure  
Chevelure  
Qui murmure  
Et se tord.*

MARY HAMILTON.

You never sing now but it makes you sad ;  
Why do you sing ?

MARY BEATON.

I hardly know well why ;  
It makes me sad to sing, and very sad  
To hold my peace.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

I know what saddens you.

MARY BEATON.

Prithee, what ? what ?

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Why, since we came from France,  
You have no lover to make stuff for songs.

MARY BEATON.

You are wise; for there my pain begins indeed,  
Because I have no lovers out of France.

MARY SEYTON.

I mind me of one Olivier de Pesme,  
(You knew him, sweet) a pale man with short hair,  
Wore tied at sleeve the Beaton colour.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Blue—

I know, blue scarfs. I never liked that knight.

MARY HAMILTON.

Me? I know him? I hardly knew his name.

Black, was his hair? no, brown.

MARY SEYTON.

Light pleases you:

I have seen the time brown served you well enough.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Lord Darnley's is a mere maid's yellow.

MARY HAMILTON.

No;

A man's, good colour.

MARY SEYTON.

Ah, does that burn your blood?

Why, what a bitter colour is this red .

That fills your face! if you be not in love,

I am no maiden.

MARY HAMILTON.

Nay, God help true hearts!

I must be stabbed with love then, to the bone,  
Yea to the spirit, past cure.

MARY SEYTON.

What were you saying?  
I see some jest run up and down your lips.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Finish your song; I know you have more of it;  
Good sweet, I pray you do.

MARY BEATON.

I am too sad.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

This will not sadden you to sing; your song  
Tastes sharp of sea and the sea's bitterness,  
But small pain sticks on it.

MARY BEATON.

Nay, it is sad;  
For either sorrow with the beaten lips  
Sings not at all, or if it does get breath



Sings quick and sharp like a hard sort of mirth :  
 And so this song does ; or I would it did,  
 That it might please me better than it does.

MARY SEYTON.

Well, as you choose then. What a sort of men  
 Crowd all about the squares !

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Ay, hateful men ;

For look how many talking mouths be there,  
 So many angers show their teeth at us.  
 Which one is that, stooped somewhat in the neck,  
 That walks so with his chin against the wind,  
 Lips sideways shut ? a keen-faced man—lo there,  
 He that walks midmost.

MARY SEYTON.

That is Master Knox.

He carries all these folk within his skin,  
 Bound up as 'twere between the brows of him  
 Like a bad thought ; their hearts beat inside his ;

They gather at his lips like flies in the sun,  
Thrust sides to catch his face.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Look forth ; so—push  
The window—further—see you anything ?

MARY HAMILTON.

They are well gone ; but pull the lattice in,  
The wind is like a blade aslant. Would God  
I could get back one day I think upon ;  
The day we four and some six after us  
Sat in that Louvre garden and plucked fruits  
To cast love-lots with in the gathered grapes  
This way ; you shut your eyes and reach and luck,  
And catch a lover for each grape you get  
I got but one, a green one, and it broke  
Between my fingers and it ran down through them.

MARY SEYTON.

Ay, and the queen fell in a little wrath

Gifted by  
Sri Basanti Ballav Sen  
6/11-11, 11/11/11, 11/11/11, 11/11/11  
NOT EXCHANGEABLE AND  
NOT SALABLE.

Because she got so many, and tore off  
Some of them she had plucked unwittingly—  
She said, against her will. What fell to you?

MARY BEATON.

Me? nothing but the stalk of a stripped bunch  
With clammy grape-juice leavings at the tip.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Ay, true, the queen came first and she won all;  
It was her bunch we took to cheat you with.  
What, will you weep for that now? for you seem  
As one that means to weep. God pardon me!  
I think your throat is choking up with tears.  
You are not well, sweet, for a lying jest  
To shake you thus much.

MARY BEATON.

I am well enough:  
Give not your pity trouble for my sake.

MARY SEYTON.

If you be well sing out your song and laugh,  
Though it were but to fret the fellows there.—  
Now shall we catch her secret washed and wet  
In the middle of her song; for she must weep  
If she sing through.

MARY HAMILTON.

I told you it was love;  
I watched her eyes all through the masquing time  
Feed on his face by morsels; she must weep.

MARY BEATON.

4.

*Le navire  
Passe et luit,  
Puis chavire  
À grand bruit;  
Et sur l'onde  
La plus blonde  
Tête au monde  
Flotte et fuit.*

5.

*Moi, je rame,  
Et l'amour,  
C'est ma flamme,  
Mon grand jour,  
Ma chandelle  
Blanche et belle,  
Ma chapelle  
De séjour.*

6.

*Toi, mon âme  
Et ma foi,  
Sois ma dame  
Et ma loi ;  
Sois ma nie,  
Sois Marie,  
Sois ma vie,  
Toute à moi !*

MARY SEYTON.

I know the song ; a song of Chastelard's

He made in coming over with the queen.  
How hard it rained! he played that over twice  
Sitting before her, singing each word soft,  
As if he loved the least she listened to.

MARY HAMILTON.

No marvel if he loved it for her sake; .  
She is the choice of women in the world,  
Is she not, sweet?

MARY BEATON.

I have seen no fairer one.

MARY SEYTON.

And the most loving: did you note last night  
How long she held him with her hands and eyes,  
Looking a little sadly, and at last  
Kissed him below the chin and parted so  
As the dance ended?

MARY HAMILTON.

This was courtesy;

So might I kiss my singing-bird's red bill  
After some song, till he bit short my lip.

MARY SEYTON.

But if a lady hold her bird anights  
To sing to her between her fingers—ha?  
I have seen such birds.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

O, you talk emptyly;  
She is full of grace; and marriage in good time  
Will wash the fool called scandal off men's lips.

MARY HAMILTON.

I know not that; I know how folk would gibe  
If one of us pushed courtesy so far.  
She has always loved love's fashions well; you wot,  
The marshal, head friend of this Chastelard's,  
She used to talk with ere he brought her here  
And sow their talk with little kisses thick  
As roses in rose-harvest. For myself,  
I cannot see which side of her that lurks  
Which snares in such wise all the sense of men;

What special beauty, subtle as man's eye  
And tender as the inside of the eyelid is,  
There grows about her.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

I think her cunning speech—  
The soft and rapid shudder of her breath  
In talking—the rare tender little laugh—  
The pitiful sweet sound like a bird's sigh  
When her voice breaks; her talking does it all.

MARY SEYTON.

I say, her eyes with those clear perfect brows:  
It is the playing of those eyelashes,  
The lure of amorous looks as sad as love,  
Plucks all souls toward her like a net.

MARY HAMILTON.

What, what!

You praise her in too lover-like a wise  
For women that praise women; such report  
Is like robes worn the rough side next the skin,  
Frets where it warms



MARY SEYTON.

You think too much in French.

*Enter DARNLEY.*

Here comes your thorn ; what glove against it now ?

MARY HAMILTON.

O, God's good pity ! this a thorn of mine ?

It has not run deep in yet.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

I am not sure :

The red runs over to your face's edge.

DARNLEY.

Give me one word ; nay, lady, for love's sake ;

Here, come this way ; I will not keep you ; no.

—O my sweet soul, why do you wrong me thus ?

MARY HAMILTON.

Why will you give me for men's eyes to burn ?

DARNLEY.

What, sweet, I love you as mine own soul loves me ;  
They shall divide when we do.

MARY HAMILTON.

I cannot say.

DARNLEY.

Why, look you, I am broken with the queen ;  
This is the rancour and the bitter heart  
That grows in you ; by God it is nought else.  
Why, this last night she held me for a fool—  
Ay, God wot, for a thing of stripe and bell.  
I bade her make me marshal in her masque—  
I had the dress here painted, gold and grey  
(That is, not grey but a blue-green like this)—  
She tells me she had chosen her marshal, she,  
The best o' the world for cunning and sweet wit ;  
And what sweet fool but her sweet knight, God  
    help !  
To serve her with that three-inch wit of his ?  
She is all fool and fiddling now ; for me,

I am well pleased ; God knows, if I might choose  
I would not be more troubled with her love.  
Her love is like a briar that rasps the flesh,  
And yours is soft like flowers. Come this way, 'love ;  
So, further in this window ; hark you here.

*Enter* CHASTELARD.

MARY BEATON.

Good morrow, sir.

CHASTELARD.

Good morrow, noble lady.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

You have heard no news ? what news ?

CHASTELARD.

Nay, I have none.

That maiden-tongued male-faced Elizabeth  
Hath eyes unlike our queen's, hair not so soft,  
And hands more sudden save for courtesy ;

And lips no kiss of love's could bring to flower  
In such red wise as our queen's; save this news,  
I know none English.

MARY SEYTON.

Come, no news of her;  
For God's love talk still rather of our queen.

MARY BEATON.

God give us grace then to speak well of her  
You did right joyfully in our masque last night;  
I saw you when the queen lost breath (her head  
Bent back, her chin and lips catching the air—  
A goodly thing to see her) how you smiled  
Across her head, between your lips—no doubt  
You had great joy, sir. Did not you take note  
Once how one lock fell? that was good to see.

CHASTELARD.

Yea, good enough to live for.

MARY BEATON.

Nay, but sweet

C 3706

CHASTELARD.

Nothing. You do not greatly love her, you,  
Who do not—gird, you call it. I am bound to  
France;  
Shall I take word from you to any one?  
So it be harmless, not a gird, I will.

MARY BEATON.

I doubt you will not go hence with your life.

CHASTELARD.

Why, who should slay me? no man northwards  
born,  
In my poor mind; my sword's lip is no maid's  
To fear the iron biting of their own,  
Though they kiss hard for hate's sake.

MARY BEATON.

Lo you, sir,  
How sharp he whispers, what close breath and  
eyes—  
And hers are fast upon him, do you see?

CHASTELARD.

Well, which of these must take my life in hand ?  
Pray God it be the better ; nay, which hand ?

MARY BEATON.

I think, none such. The man is goodly made ;  
She is tender-hearted toward his courtesies,  
And would not have them fall too low to find.  
Look, they slip forth.

[*Exeunt* DARNLEY and MARY HAMILTON.]

MARY SEYTON.

For love's sake, after them,  
And soft as love can.

[*Exeunt* MARY CARMICHAEL and MARY SEYTON.]

CHASTELARD.

True, a goodly man.  
What shapeliness and state he hath, what eyes,  
Brave brow and lordly lip ! were it not fit  
Great queens should love him ?

MARY BEATON.

See you now, fair lord,  
I have but scant breath's time to help myself,  
And I must cast my heart out on a chance ;  
So bear with me. That we twain have loved well,  
I have no heart nor wit to say ; God wot  
We had never made good lovers, you and I.  
Look you, I would not have you love me, sir,  
For all the love's sake in the world. I say,  
You love the queen, and loving burns you up,  
And mars the grace and joyous wit you had,  
Turning your speech to sad, your face to strange,  
Your mirth to nothing : and I am piteous, I,  
Even as the queen is, and such women are ;  
And if I helped you to your love-longing,  
Meseems some grain of love might fall my way  
And love's god help me when I came to love ;  
I have read tales of men that won their loves  
On some such wise.

CHASTELARD.

If you mean mercifully,

I am bound to you past thought and thank ; if worse,  
I will but thank your lips and not your heart.

MARY BEATON.

Nay, let love wait and praise me, in God's name,  
Some day when he shall find me ; yet, God wot,  
My lips are of one colour with my heart.  
Withdraw now from me, and about midnight  
In some close chamber without light or noise  
It may be I shall get you speech of her ;  
She loves you well ; it may be she will speak,  
I wot not what ; she loves you at her heart.  
Let her not see that I have given you word,  
Lest she take shame and hate her love. Till night.  
Let her not see it.

CHASTELARD.

I will not thank you now,  
And then I'll die what sort of death you will.  
Farewell. [*Exit.*

MARY BEATON.

And by God's mercy and my love's  
I will find ways to earn such thank of you. [*Exit.*



SCENE II.—*A Hall in the same.*

*The* QUEEN, DARNLEY, MURRAY, RANDOLPH, *the* MARIES,  
CHASTELARD, &c.

QUEEN.

Hath no man seen my lord of Chastelard ?

Nay, no great matter. Keep you on that side :

Begin the purpose.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Madam, he is here.

QUEEN.

Begin a measure now that other side.

I will not dance ; let them play soft a little.

Fair sir, we had a dance to tread to-night,

To teach our north folk all sweet ways of France ;

But at this time we have no heart to it.

Sit, sir, and talk. Look, this breast-clasp is new,

The French king sent it me.

CHASTELARD.

A goodly thing :

But what device ? the word is ill to catch.

QUEEN.

A Venus crowned, that eats the hearts of men :  
Below her flies a love with a bat's wings,  
And strings the hair of paramours to bind  
Live birds' feet with. Lo what small subtle  
work :

The smith's name, Gian Grisostomo da—what ?  
Can you read that ? The sea froths underfoot ;  
She stands upon the sea and it curls up  
In soft loose curls that run to one in the wind.  
But her hair is not shaken, there's a fault ;  
It lies straight down in close-cut points and tongues,  
Not like blown hair. The legend is writ small :  
Still one makes out this—*Cave*—if you look.

CHASTELARD.

I see the Venus well enough, God wot,  
But nothing of the legend.

QUEEN.

Come, fair lord,  
Shall we dance now? my heart is good again.

*[They dance a measure.]*

DARNLEY.

I do not like this manner of a dance,  
This game of two by two; it were much better  
To meet between the changes and to mix  
Than still to keep apart and whispering  
Each lady out of earshot with her friend.

MARY BEATON.

That's as the lady serves her knight, I think :  
We are broken up too much.

DARNLEY.

Nay, no such thing ;  
Be not wroth, lady, I wot it was the queen  
Pricked each his friend out. Look you now—your  
ear—  
If love had gone by choosing—how they laugh,

Lean lips together, and wring hands underhand !  
What, you look white too, sick of heart, ashamed,  
No marvel—for men call it—hark you though—

[*They pass.*]

MURRAY.

Was the queen found no merrier in France ?

MARY HAMILTON.

Why, have you seen her sorrowful to-night ?

MURRAY.

I say not so much ; blithe she seems at whiles,  
Gentle and goodly doubtless in all ways,  
But hardly with such lightness and quick heart  
As it was said.

MARY HAMILTON.

'Tis your great care of her  
Makes you misdoubt ; nought else.

MURRAY.

Yea, may be so ;  
Shè has no cause I know to sadden her. [*They pass.*]

QUEEN.

I am tired too soon ; I could have danced down hours  
 Two years gone hence and felt no wearier.  
 One grows much older northwards, my fair lord ;  
 I wonder men die south ; meseems all France  
 Smells sweet with living, and bright breath of days  
 That keep men far from dying. Peace ; pray you now,  
 No dancing more. Sing, sweet, and make us mirth ;  
 We have done with dancing measures : sing that song  
 You call the song of love at ebb.

MARY BEATON (*sings*).

1.

*Between the sunset and the sea  
 My love laid hands and lips on me ;  
 Of sweet came sour, of day came night,  
 Of long desire came brief delight :  
 Ah love, and what thing came of thee  
 Between the sea-downs and the sea ?*

2.

*Between the sea-mark and the sea  
 Joy grew to grief, grief grew to me ;*

*Love turned to tears, and tears to fire,  
And dead delight to new desire ;  
Love's talk, love's touch there seemed to be  
Between the sea-sand and the sea.*

3.

*Between the sundown and the sea  
Love watched one hour of love with me ;  
Then down the all-golden water-ways  
His feet flew after yesterdays ;  
I saw them come and saw them flee  
Between the sea-foam and the sea.*

4.

*Between the sea-strand and the sea  
Love fell on sleep, sleep fell on me ;  
The first star saw twain turn to one  
Between the moonrise and the sun ;  
The next, that saw not love, saw me  
Between the sea-banks and the sea.*

QUEEN.

Lo, sirs,

What mirth is here! Some song of yours, fair lord;  
 You know glad ways of rhyming—no such tunes  
 As go to tears.

CHASTELARD.

I made this yesterday;  
 For its love's sake I pray you let it live. [He sings.

I.

*Après tant de jours, après tant de pleurs,  
 Soyez secourable à mon âme en peine.  
 Voyez comme Avril fait l'amour aux fleurs;  
 Dame d'amour, dame aux belles couleurs,  
 Dieu vous a fait belle, Amour vous fait reine.*

2.

*Rions, je t'en prie; aimons, je le veux.  
 Le temps fuit et rit et ne revient guère  
 Pour baiser le bout de tes blonds cheveux,  
 Pour baiser tes cils, ta bouche et tes yeux;  
 L'amour n'a qu'un jour auprès de sa mère.*

QUEEN.

'Tis a true song; love shall not pluck time back  
Nor time lie down with love. For me, I am old;  
Have you no hair changed since you changed to Scot?  
I look each day to see my face drawn up  
About the eyes, as if they sucked the cheeks.  
I think this air and face of things here north  
Puts snow at flower-time in the blood, and tears  
Between the sad eyes and the merry mouth  
In their youth-days.

CHASTELARD.

It is a bitter air.

QUEEN.

Faith, if I might be gone, sir, would I stay?  
I think, for no man's love's sake.

CHASTELARD.

I think not.

QUEEN.

Do you not mind at landing how the quay  
Looked like a blind wet face in waste of wind



And washing of wan waves? how the hard mist  
Made the hills ache? your songs lied loud, my knight,  
They said my face would burn off cloud and rain  
Seen once, and fill the crannied land with fire,  
Kindle the capes in their blind black-grey hoods—  
I know not what. You praise me past all loves;  
And these men lov<sup>e</sup> me little; 'tis some fault,  
I think, to love me: even a fool's sweet fault.  
I have your verse still beating in my head  
Of how the swallow got a wing broken  
In the spring time, and lay upon his side  
Watching the rest fly off i' the red leaf-time,  
And broke his heart with grieving at himself  
Before the snow came. Do you know that lord  
With sharp-set eyes? and him with huge thewed  
throat?

Good friends to me; I had need love them well.  
Why do you look one way? I will not have you  
Keep your eyes here: 'tis no great wit in me  
To care much now for old French friends of mine.—  
Come, a fresh measure; come, play well for me,  
Fair sirs, your playing puts life in foot and heart.—

DARNLEY.

Lo you again, sirs, how she laughs and leans,  
Holding him fast—the supple way she hath!  
Your queen hath none such; better as she is  
For all her measures, a grave English maid,  
Than queen of snakes and Scots.

RANDOLPH.

She is over fair  
To be so sweet and hurt not. A good knight;  
Goodly to look on.

MURRAY.

Yea, a good sword too,  
And of good kin; too light of loving though;  
These jangling song-smiths are keen love-mongers,  
They snap at all meats.

DARNLEY.

What! by God I think,  
For all his soft French face and bright boy's sword,  
There be folks fairer: and for knightliness,

These hot-lipped brawls of Paris breed sweet knights—  
Mere stabbers for a laugh across the wine.—

QUEEN.

There, I have danced you down for once, fair  
lord;

You look pale now, ' Nay then for courtesy  
I must needs help you; do not bow your head,  
I am tall enough to reach close under it.

*[Kisses him.*

Now come, we'll sit and see this passage through.—

DARNLEY.

A courtesy, God help us! courtesy—  
Pray God it wound not where it should heal wounds.  
Why, there was here last year some lord of France  
(Priest on the wrong side as some folk are prince)  
Told tales of Paris ladies—nay, by God,  
No jest for queen's lips to catch laughter of  
That would keep clean; I wot he made good mirth,  
But she laughed over sweetly, and in such wise—  
Nay, I laughed too, but lothly.—

QUEEN.

How they look!

The least thing courteous galls them to the bone.  
What would one say now I were thinking of?

CHASTELARD.

It seems, some sweet thing.

QUEEN.

True, a sweet one, sir—

That madrigal you made Alys de Saulx  
Of the three ways of love; the first kiss honour,  
The second pity, and the last kiss love.  
Which think you now was that I kissed you with?

CHASTELARD.

It should be pity, if you be pitiful;  
For I am past all honouring that keep  
Outside the eye of battle, where my kin  
Fallen overseas have found this many a day  
No helm of mine between them; and for love,

I think of that as dead men of good days  
Ere the wrong side of death was theirs, when God  
Was friends with them.

QUEEN.

Good; call it pity then.

You have a subtle riddling skill at love  
Which is not like a lover. For my part,  
I am resolved to be well done with love,  
Though I were fairer-faced than all the world;  
As there be fairer. Think you, fair my knight,  
Love shall live after life in any man?  
I have given you stuff for riddles.

CHASTELARD.

Most sweet queen,  
They say men dying remember, with sharp joy  
And rapid relictation of desire,  
Some old thing, some swift breath of wind, some word,  
Some sword-stroke or dead lute-strain, some lost sight,  
Some sea-blossom stripped to the sun and burned  
At naked ebb—some river-flower that breathes

Against the stream like a swooned swimmer's mouth—  
Some tear or laugh ere lip and eye were man's—  
Sweet stings that struck the blood in riding—nay,  
Some garment or sky-colour or spice-smell,  
And die with heart and face shut fast on it,  
And know not why, and weep not ; it may be  
Men shall hold love fast always in such wise  
In new fair lives where all are new things else,  
And know not why, and weep not.

QUEEN.

A right rhyme,  
And right a rhyme's worth : nay, a sweet song,  
                  though.

What, shall my cousin hold fast that love of his,  
Her face and talk, when life ends ? as God grant  
His life end late and sweet ; I love him well.  
She is fair enough, his lover ; a fair-faced maid,  
With grey sweet eyes and tender touch of talk ;  
And that, God wot, I wist not. See you, sir,  
Men say I needs must get wed hastily ;  
Do none point lips at him ?

CHASTELARD.

Yea, guessingly.

QUEEN.

God help such lips! and get me leave to laugh!  
What should I do but paint and put him up  
Like a gilt god, a saintship in a shrine,  
For all fools' feast? God's mercy on men's wits!  
Tall as a housetop and as bare of brain—  
I'll have no staves with fool-faced carven heads  
To hang my life on. Nay, for love, no more,  
For fear I laugh and set their eyes on edge  
To find out why I laugh. Good night, fair lords;  
Bid them cease playing. Give me your hand; good  
night.

SCENE III.—MARY BEATON'S Chamber : night.

*Enter CHASTELARD.*

CHASTELARD.

I am not certain yet she will not come ;  
 For I can feel her hand's heat still in mine,  
 Past doubting of, and see her brows half drawn,  
 And half a light in the eyes. If she come now  
 I am no worse than he that dies to-night.  
 This two years' patience gets an end at last,  
 Whichever way I am well done with it.  
 How hard the thin sweet moon is, split and faced  
 And latticed over, just a stray of it  
 Catching and clinging at a strip of wall,  
 Hardly a hand's breadth. Did she turn indeed  
 In going out? not to catch up her gown  
 The page let slip, but to keep sight of me?  
 There was a soft small stir beneath her eyes  
 Hard to put on, a quivering of her blood

Baby Sen

London Lane

1870

NOT EXCHANGEABLE AND  
 NOT SALABLE

Gift

Sister

1871



That knew of the old nights watched out wakefully.  
Those measures of her dancing too were changed—  
More swift and with more eager stops at whiles  
And rapid pauses where breath failed her lips.

*Enter MARY BEATON.*

O, she is come: if you be she indeed  
Let me but hold your hand; what, no word yet?  
You turn and kiss me without word; O sweet,  
If you will slay me be not over quick,  
Kill me with some slow heavy kiss that plucks  
The heart out at the lips. Alas! sweet love,  
Give me some old sweet word to kiss away.  
Is it a jest? for I can feel your hair  
Touch me—I may embrace your body too?  
I know you well enough without sweet words.  
How should one make you speak? This is not  
she.  
Come in the light; nay, let me see your eyes.  
Ah, you it is? what have I done to you?  
And do you look now to be slain for this  
That you twist back and shudder like one stabbed?

MARY BEATON.

Yea, kill me now and do not look at me :  
God knows I meant to die. Sir, for God's love  
Kill me now quick ere I go mad with shame.

CHASTELARD.

Cling not upon my wrists : let go the hilt :  
Nay, you will bruise your hand with it : stand up :  
You shall not have my sword forth.

MARY BEATON.

Kill me now,

I will not rise : there, I am patient, see,  
I will not strive, but kill me for God's sake.

CHASTELARD.

Pray you rise up and be not shaken so :  
Forgive me my rash words, my heart was gone  
After the thing you were : be not ashamed ;  
Give me the shame, you have no part in it ;  
Can I not say a word shall do you good ?  
Forgive that too.

MARY BEATON.

I shall run crazed with shame ;  
But when I felt your lips catch hold on mine  
It stopped my breath : I would have told you  
all ;  
Let me go out : you see I lied to you,  
And I am shamed ; I pray you loose me, sir,  
Let me go out.

CHASTELARD.

Think no base things of me :  
I were most base to let you go ashamed.  
Think my heart's love and honour go with you :  
Yea, while I live, for your love's noble sake,  
I am your servant in what wise may be,  
To love and serve you with right thankful heart.

MARY BEATON.

I have given men leave to mock me, and must bear  
What shame they please : you have good cause to  
mock.  
Let me pass now.

CHASTELARD.

You know I mock you not.

If ever I leave off to honour you,

God give me shame ! I were the worst churl born.

MARY BEATON.

No marvel though the queen should love you too,

Being such a knight. I pray you for her love,

Lord Chastelard, of your great courtesy,

Think now no scorn to give me my last kiss

That I shall have of man before I die.

Even the same lips you kissed and know not of

Will you kiss now, knowing the shame of them,

And say no one word to me afterwards,

That I may see I have loved the best lover

And man most courteous of all men alive !

MARY SEYTON (*within*).

Here, fetch the light : nay, this way ; enter all.

MARY BEATON.

I am twice undone. Fly, get some hiding, sir ;

They have spied upon me somehow.

CHASTELARD.

Nay, fear not;

Stand by my side.

*Enter MARY SEYTON and MARY HAMILTON.*

• MARY HAMILTON.

• Give me that light: this way.

CHASTELARD.

What jest is here, fair ladies? it walks late,  
Something too late for laughing.

MARY SEYTON.

Nay, fair sir,

What jest is this of yours? Look to your lady:  
She is nigh swooned. The queen shall know all this.

MARY HAMILTON.

A grievous shame it is we are fallen upon;  
Hold forth the light. Is this your care of us?  
Nay, come, look up: this is no game, God wot.

CHASTELARD.

Shame shall befall them that speak shamefully :

I swear this lady is as pure and good

As any maiden, and who believes me not

Shall keep the shame for his part and the lie.

To them that come in honour and not in hate

I will make answer. Lady, have good heart

Give me the light there : I will see you forth.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.



ACT II.

DARNLEY.





SCENE I.—*The great Chamber in Holyrood.*

*The QUEEN and MARY SEYTON.*

QUEEN.

But will you swear it?

MARY SEYTON.

Swear it, madam?

QUEEN.

Ay—

Swear it.

MARY SEYTON.

Madam, I am not friends with them

QUEEN.

Swear then against them if you are not friends.

MARY SEYTON.

Indeed I saw them kiss.

QUEEN.

So lovers use—

What, their mouths close? a goodly way of love!  
Or but the hands? or on her throat? Prithee—  
You have sworn that.

MARY SEYTON.

I say what I saw done.

QUEEN.

Ay, you did see her cheeks (God smite them red!)  
Kissed either side? what, they must eat strange food,  
Those singing lips of his?

MARY SEYTON.

Sweet meat enough—

They started at my coming five yards off,  
But there they were.

QUEEN.

A maid may have kissed cheeks  
And no shame in them—yet one would not swear.

You have sworn that. Pray God he be not mad :  
A sickness in his eyes. The left side love  
(I was told that) and the right courtesy.  
'Tis good fools' fashion. What, no more but this ?  
For me, God knows I am no whit wroth ; not I ;  
But, for your fame's sake that her shame will sting,  
I cannot see a way to pardon her—  
For your fame's sake, lest that be prated of.

MARY SEYTON.

Nay, if she were not chaste—I have not said  
She was not chaste.

QUEEN.

I know you are tender of her ;  
And your sweet word will hardly turn her sweet.

MARY SEYTON.

Indeed I would fain do her any good.  
Shall I not take some gracious word to her ?

QUEEN.

Bid her not come or wait on me to-day.

MARY SEYTON.

Will you see him?

QUEEN.

See—O, this Chastelard?

He doth not well to sing maids into shame;  
And folk are sharp here; yet for sweet friends' sake  
Assuredly I'll see him. I am not wroth.  
A goodly man, and a good sword thereto—  
It may be he shall wed her. I am not wroth.

MARY SEYTON.

Nay, though she bore with him, she hath no great love,  
I doubt me, that way.

QUEEN.

God mend all, I pray—  
And keep us from all wrongdoing and wild words.  
I think there is no fault men fall upon  
But I could pardon. Look you, I would swear  
She were no paramour for any man,  
So well I love her.

MARY SEYTON.

Am I to bid him in?

QUEEN.

As you will, sweet. But if you held me hard  
You did me grievous wrong. Doth he wait there?  
Men call me over tender; I had rather so,  
Than too ungracious. Father, what with you?

*Enter* FATHER BLACK.

FATHER BLACK.

God's peace and health of soul be with the queen!  
And pardon be with me though I speak truth.  
As I was going on peaceable men's wise  
Through your good town, desiring no man harm,  
A kind of shameful woman with thief's lips  
Spake somewhat to me over a thrust-out chin,  
Soliciting as I deemed an alms; which alms  
(Remembering what was writ of Magdalen)  
I gave not grudging but with pure good heart,  
When lo some scurril children that lurked near,

Set there by Satan for my stumbling-stone,  
Fell hooting with necks thwart and eyes asquint,  
Screeched and made horns and shot out tongues  
at me,

As at my Lord the Jews shot out their tongues  
And made their heads wag; I considering this  
Took up my cross in patience and passed forth:  
Nevertheless one ran between my feet  
And made me totter, using speech and signs  
I smart with shame to think of: then my blood  
Kindled, and I was moved to smite the knave,  
And the knave howled; whereat the lewd whole herd  
Brake forth upon me and cast mire and stones  
So that I ran sore risk of bruise or gash  
If they had touched; likewise I heard men say,  
(Their foul speech missed not of mine ear) they cried,  
“This devil’s mass-priest hankers for new flesh  
Like a dry hound; let him seek such at home,  
Snuff and smoke out the queen’s French—”

QUEEN.

They said that?

FATHER BLACK.

“—French paramours that breed more shames than  
sons

All her court through ;” forgive me.

QUEEN.

With my heart.

Father, you see the hatefulness of these—

They loathe us for our love. I am not moved :

What should I do being angry ? By this hand

(Which is not big enough to bruise their lips),

I marvel what thing should be done with me

To make me wroth. We must have patience with us

When we seek thank of men.

FATHER BLACK.

Madam, farewell ;

I pray God keep you in such patient heart. [*Exit.*

QUEEN.

Let him come now.

MARY SEYTON.

Madam, he is at hand. [*Exit.*



*Enter CHASTELARD.*

QUEEN.

Give me that broidery frame; how, gone so soon?  
No maid about? Reach me some skein of silk.  
What, are you come, fair lord? Now by my life  
That lives here idle, I am right glad of you;  
I have slept so well and sweet since yesternight  
It seems our dancing put me in glad heart.  
Did you sleep well?

CHASTELARD.

Yea, as a man may sleep.

QUEEN.

You smile as if I jested; do not men  
Sleep as we do? Had you fair dreams in the night?  
For me—but I should fret you with my dreams—  
I dreamed sweet things. You are good at sooth-  
saying:  
Make me a sonnet of my dream.

CHASTELARD.

I will,

When I shall know it.

QUEEN.

I thought I was asleep

In Paris, lying by my lord, and knew

In some wise he was well awake, and yet

I could not wake too; and I seemed to know

He hated me, and the least breath I made

Would turn somehow to slay or stille me.

Then in brief time he rose and went away,

Saying, *Let her dream, but when her dream is out**I will come back and kill her as she wakes.*

And I lay sick and trembling with sore fear,

And still I knew that I was deep asleep;

And thinking *I must dream now, or I die,**God send me some good dream lest I be slain,*

Fell fancying one had bound my feet with cords

And bade me dance, and the first measure made

I fell upon my face and wept for pain:

And my cords broke, and I began the dance

To a bitter tune ; and he that danced with me  
Was clothed in black with long red lines and  
bars

And masked down to the lips, but by the chin  
I knew you though your lips were sewn up close  
With scarlet thread all dabbled wet in blood.  
And then I knew the dream was not for good.  
And striving with sore travail to reach up  
And kiss you (you were taller in my dream)  
I missed your lips and woke.

CHASTELARD.

Sweet dreams, you said ?

An evil dream I hold it for, sweet love.

QUEEN.

You call love sweet ; yea, what is bitter, then ?  
There's nothing broken sleep could hit upon  
So bitter as the breaking down of love.  
You call me sweet ; I am not sweet to you,  
Nor you—O, I would say not sweet to me,  
And if I said so I should hardly lie.

But there have been those things between us, sir.  
That men call sweet.

CHASTELARD.

I know not how *There is*  
Turns to *There hath been*; 'tis a heavier change  
Than change of flesh to dust. Yet though years change  
And good things end and evil things grow great,  
The old love that was, or that was dreamed about,  
That sang and kissed and wept upon itself,  
Laughed and ran mad with love of its own face,  
That was a sweet thing.

QUEEN.

Nay, I know not well.  
'Tis when the man is held fast underground  
They say for sooth what manner of heart he had.  
We are alive, and cannot be well sure  
If we loved much or little: think you not  
It were convenient one of us should die?

CHASTELARD.

Madam, your speech is harsh to understand.

QUEEN.

Why, there could come no change then ; one of us  
Would never need to fear our love might turn  
To the sad thing that it may grow to be.  
I would sometimes all things were dead asleep  
That I have loved, all buried in soft beds  
And sealed with dreams and visions, and each dawn  
Sung to by sorrows, and all night assuaged  
By short sweet kisses and by sweet long loves  
For old life's sake, lest weeping overmuch  
Should wake them in a strange new time, and arm  
Memory's blind hand to kill forgetfulness.

CHASTELARD.

Look, you dream still, and sadly.

QUEEN.

Sooth, a dream ;

For such things died or lied in sweet love's face,  
And I forget them not, God help my wit !  
I would the whole world were made up of sleep  
And life not fashioned out of lies and loves.

We foolish women have such times, you know,  
When we are weary or afraid or sick  
For perfect nothing.

CHASTELARD (*aside*).

Now would one be fain  
To know what bitter or what dangerous thing  
She thinks of, softly chafing her soft lip.  
She must mean evil.

QUEEN.

Are you sad too, sir,  
That you say nothing?

CHASTELARD.

I? not sad a jot—  
Though this your talk might make a blithe man sad.

QUEEN.

O me! I must not let stray sorrows out;  
They are ill to fledge, and if they feel blithe air  
They wail and chirp untunefully. Would God

I had been a man ! when I was born, men say,  
My father turned his face and wept to think  
I was no man.

CHASTELARD.

Will you weep too ?

QUEEN.

In sooth,

If I were man I should be no base man ;  
I could have fought ; yea, I could fight now too  
If men would shew me ; I would I were the king !  
I should be all ways better than I am.

CHASTELARD.

Nay, would you have more honour, having this—  
Men's hearts and loves and the sweet spoil of souls  
Given you like simple gold to bind your hair ?  
Say you were king of thews, not queen of souls,  
An iron headpiece hammered to a head,  
You might fail too.

QUEEN.

No, then I would not fail,

Or God should make me woman back again.  
To be King James—you hear men say *King James*,  
The word sounds like a piece of gold thrown down,  
Rings with a round and royal note in it—  
A name to write good record of; this king  
Fought here and there, was beaten such a day,  
And came at last to a good end, his life  
Being all lived out, and for the main part well  
And like a king's life; then to have men say  
(As now they say of Flodden, here they broke  
And there they held up to the end) years back  
They saw you—*yea, I saw the king's face helmed  
Red in the hot lit foreground of some fight  
Hold the whole war as it were by the bit, a horse  
Fit for his knees' grip—the great rearing war  
That frothed with lips flung up, and shook men's lives  
Off either flank of it like snow; I saw  
(You could not hear as his sword rang), saw him  
Shout, laugh, smite straight, and flaw the riven ranks,  
Move as the wind moves, and his horse's feet  
Stripe their long flags with dust. Why, if one died,  
To die so in the heart and heat of war*



Were a much goodlier thing than living soft  
And speaking sweet for fear of men. Woe's me,  
Is there no way to pluck this body off?  
Then I should never fear a man again,  
Even in my dreams I should not; no, by heaven.

CHASTELARD.

I never thought you did fear anything.

QUEEN.

God knows I do; I could be sick with wrath  
To think what grievous fear I have 'twixt whiles  
Of mine own self and of base men: last night  
If certain lords were glancing where I was  
Under the eyelid, with sharp lip and brow,  
I tell you, for pure shame and fear of them,  
I could have gone and slain them.

CHASTELARD.

Verily,  
You are changed since those good days that fell in  
France;

But yet I think you are not so changed at heart  
As to fear man.

QUEEN.

I would I had no need.

Lend me your sword a little ; a fair sword ;  
I see the fingers that I hold it with  
Clear in the blade, bright pink, the shell-colour,  
Brighter than flesh is really, curved all round.  
Now men would mock if I should wear it here,  
Bound under bosom with a girdle, here,  
And yet I have heart enough to wear it well.  
Speak to me like a woman, let me see  
If I can play at man.

CHASTELARD.

God save King James !

QUEEN.

Would you could change now ! Fie, this will not do ;  
Unclasp your sword ; nay, the hilt hurts my side ;  
It sticks fast here. Unbind this knot for me :  
Stoop, and you'll see it closer ; thank you : there.

Now I can breathe, sir. Ah ! it hurts me, though :  
This was fool's play.

CHASTELARD.

Yea, you are better so,  
Without the sword ; your eyes are stronger things,  
Whether to save or slay.

QUEEN.

Alas, my side !

It hurts right sorely. Is it not pitiful  
Our souls should be so bound about with flesh  
Even when they leap and smite with wings and feet,  
The least pain piucks them back, puts out their eyes,  
Turns them to tears and words ? Ah my sweet  
knight,  
You have the better of us that weave and weep  
While the blithe battle blows upon your eyes  
Like rain and wind : yet I remember too  
When this last year the fight at Corrichie  
Reddened the rushes with stained fen-water,  
I rode with my good men and took delight,

Feeling the sweet clear wind upon my eyes  
And rainy soft smells blown upon my face  
In riding: then the great fight jarred and joined,  
And the sound stung me right through heart and all;  
For I was here, see, gazing off the hills,  
In the wet air; our housings were all wet,  
And not a plume stood stiffly past the ear  
But flapped between the bridle and the neck;  
And under us we saw the battle go  
Like running water; I could see by fits  
Some helm the rain fell shining off, some flag  
Snap from the staff, shorn through or broken short  
In the man's falling: yea, one seemed to catch  
The very grasp of tumbled men at men,  
Teeth clenched in throats, hands riveted in hair,  
Tearing the life out with no help of swords.  
And all the clamour seemed to shine, the light  
Seemed to shout as a man doth; twice I laughed—  
I tell you, twice my heart swelled out with thirst  
To be into the battle; see, fair lord,  
I swear it seemed I might have made a knight,  
And yet the simple bracing of a belt

Makes me cry out; this is too pitiful,  
This dusty half of us made up with fears.—  
Have you been ever quite so glad to fight  
As I have thought men must? pray you, speak truth.

CHASTELARD.

Yea, when the time came, there caught hold of me  
Such pleasure in the head and hands and blood  
As may be kindled under loving lips:  
Crossing the ferry once to the Clerks' Field,  
I mind me how the plashing noise of Seine  
Put fire into my face for joy, and how  
My blood kept measure with the swinging boat  
Till we touched land, all for the sake of that  
Which should be soon.

QUEEN.

Her name, for God's love, sir;  
You slew your friend for love's sake? nay, the name.

CHASTELARD.

Faith, I forget.

QUEEN.

Now by the faith I have  
You have no faith to swear by.

CHASTELARD.

A good sword:  
We left him quiet after a thrust or twain.

QUEEN.

I would I had been at hand and marked them off  
As the maids did when we played singing games:  
You outwent me at rhyming; but for faith,  
We fight best there. I would I had seen you fight.

CHASTELARD.

I would you had; his play was worth an eye;  
He made some gallant way before that pass  
Which made me way through him.

QUEEN.

Would I saw that --  
How did you slay him?

CHASTELARD.

A clean pass—this way ;  
Right in the side here, where the blood has root.  
His wrist went round in pushing, see you, thus,  
Or he had pierced me.

QUEEN.

Yea, I see, sweet knight.  
I have a mind to love you for his sake ;  
Would I had seen.

CHASTELARD.

Hugues de Marsillac—  
I have the name now ; 'twas a goodly one  
Before he changed it for a dusty name.

QUEEN.

Talk not of death ; I would hear living talk  
Of good live swords and good strokes struck withal,  
Brave battles and the mirth of mingling men,  
Not of cold names you greet a dead man with.  
You are yet young for fighting ; but in fight  
Have you never caught a wound ?

CHASTELARD.

Yea, twice or so :

The first time in a little outlying field  
(My first field) at the sleepy grey of dawn,  
They found us drowsy, fumbling at our girths,  
And rode us down by heaps ; I took a hurt  
Here in the shoulder.

QUEEN.

Ah, I mind well now ;

Did you not ride a day's space afterward,  
Having two wounds ? yea, Dandelot it was,  
That Dandelot took word of it. I know,  
Sitting at meat when the news came to us  
I had nigh swooned but for those Florence eyes  
Slanting my way with sleek lids drawn up close—  
Yea, and she said, the Italian brokeress,  
She said such men were good for great queens'  
love.  
I would you might die, when you come to die,  
Like a knight slain. Pray God we make good  
ends.



For love too, love dies hard or easily,  
But some way dies on some day, ere we die.

CHASTELARD.

You made a song once of old flowers and loves,  
Will you not sing that rather ? 'tis long gone  
Since you sang last.

QUEEN.

I had rather sigh than sing  
And sleep than sigh ; 'tis long since verily,  
But I will once more sing ; ay, thus it was. [Sings.

1.

*J'ai eu jamer bien des choses,  
Mainte feuille aller au vent.  
En songeant aux vieilles roses,  
J'ai pleuré souvent.*

2.

*Vois-tu dans les roses mortes  
Amour qui sourit caché ?  
O mon amant, à nos portes  
L'as-tu vu couché ?*

3.

*As-tu vu jamais au monde  
Vénus chasser et courir ?  
Fille de Tonde, avec Tonde  
Doit-elle mourir ?*

4.

*Aux jours de neige et de givre  
L'amour s'éveille et s'endort ;  
Avec mai doit-il revivre,  
Ou bien est-il mort ?*

5.

*Qui sait où s'en vont les roses ?  
Qui sait où s'en va le vent ?  
En songeant à telles choses,  
J'ai pleuré souvent.*

I never heard yet but love made good knights,  
But for pure faith, by Mary's holiness,  
I think she lies about men's lips asleep,  
And if one kiss or pluck her by the hand  
To wake her, why God help your woman's wit,

Faith is but dead ; dig her grave deep at heart,  
And hide her face with cerecloths ; farewell faith.  
Would I could tell why I talk idly. Look,  
Here come my riddle-readers. Welcome all ;

*Enter* MURRAY, DARNLEY, RANDOLPH, LINDSAY, MORTON,  
*and other* LORDS.

Sirs, be right welcome. Stand you by my side,  
Fair cousin, I must lean on love or fall ;  
You are a goodly staff, sir ; tall enough,  
And fair enough to serve. My gentle lords,  
I am full glad of God that in great grace  
He hath given me such a lordly stay as this ;  
There is no better friended queen alive.  
For the repealing of those banished men  
That stand in peril yet of last year's fault,  
It is our will ; you have our seal to that.  
Brother, we hear harsh bruits of bad report  
Blown up and down about our almoner ;  
See you to this : let him be sought into :  
They say lewd folk make ballads of their spleen,

Strew miry ways of words with talk of him;  
If they have cause let him be spoken with.

LINDSAY.

Madam, they charge him with so rank a life  
Were it not well this fellow were plucked out—  
Seeing this is not an eye that doth offend,  
But a blurred glass it were no harm to break;  
Yea rather it were gracious to be done!

QUEEN.

Let him be weighed, and use him as he is;  
I am of my nature pitiful, ye know,  
And cannot turn my love unto a thorn  
In so brief space. Ye are all most virtuous;  
Yea, there is goodness grafted on this land;  
But yet compassion is some part of God.  
There is much heavier business held on hand  
Than one man's goodness: yea, as things fare here,  
A matter worth more weighing. All you wot  
I am to choose a help to my weak feet,  
A lamp before my face, a lord and friend

To walk with me in weary ways, high up  
Between the wind and rain and the hot sun.  
Now I have chosen a helper to myself,  
I wot the best a woman ever won ;  
A man that loves me, and a royal man,  
A goodly love and lord for any queen.  
But for the peril and despite of men  
I have sometime tarried and withheld myself,  
Not fearful of his worthiness nor you,  
But with some lady's loathing to let out  
My whole heart's love ; for truly this is hard,  
Not like a woman's fashion, shamefacedness  
And noble grave reluctance of herself  
To be the tongue and cry of her own heart.  
Nathless plain speech is better than much wit,  
So ye shall bear with me ; albeit I think  
Ye have caught the mark whereat my heart is bent.  
I have kept close counsel and shut up men's lips,  
But lightly shall a woman's will slip out,  
The foolish little wingèd will of her,  
Through check or eye when tongue is charmed asleep.  
For that good lord I have good will to wed,

I wot he knew long since which way it flew,  
Even till it lit on his right wrist and sang.  
Lo, here I take him by the hand: fair lords,  
This is my kinsman, made of mine own blood,  
I take to halve the state and services  
That bow down to me, and to be my head,  
My chief, my master, my sweet lord and king.  
Now shall I never say "sweet cousin" more  
To my dear head and husband; here, fair sir,  
I give you all the heart of love in me  
To gather off my lips. Did it like you,  
The taste of it? sir, it was whole and true.  
God save our king!

DARNLEY.

Nay, nay, sweet love, no lord;  
No king of yours though I were lord of these.

QUEEN.

Let word be sent to all good friends of ours  
To help us to be glad; England and France  
Shall bear great part of our rejoicings up.

Give me your hand, dear lord ; for from this time  
 I must not walk alone. Lords, have good cheer :  
 For you shall have a better face than mine  
 To set upon your kingly gold and shew  
 For Scotland's forehead in the van of things.  
 Go with us now, and see this news set out.

[*Exeunt* QUEEN, DARNLEY, and LORDS.

*As CHASTELARD is going out, enter MARY BEATON.*

MARY BEATON.

Have you yet heard ? You knew of this ?

CHASTELARD.

I know.

I was just thinking how such things were made  
 And were so fair as this is. Do you know  
 She held me here and talked—the most sweet talk  
 Men ever heard of ?

MARY BEATON.

You hate me to the heart.

What will you do ?

CHASTELARD.

I know not: die some day,  
But live as long and lightly as I can.  
Will you now love me? faith, but if you do,  
It were much better you were dead and hearsed.  
Will you do one thing for me?

MARY BEATON.

Yea, all things.

CHASTELARD.

Speak truth a little, for God's sake: indeed  
It were no harm to do. Come, will you, sweet?  
Though it be but to please God.

MARY BEATON.

What will you do?

CHASTELARD.

Ay, true, I must do somewhat. Let me see:  
To get between and tread upon his face—  
Catch both her hands and bid men look at them,  
How pure they were—I would do none of these.



Though they got wedded all the days in the year.  
We may do well yet when all's come and gone.  
I pray you on this wedding night of theirs  
Do but one thing that I shall ask of you,  
And Darnley will not hunger as I shall  
For that good time. Sweet, will you swear me this?

MARY BEATON.

Yea; though to do it were mortal to my soul  
As the chief sin.

CHASTELARD.

I thank you: let us go.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

THE QUEEN.



SCENE I.—*The Queen's Chamber. Night.*

*Lights burning in front of the bed.*

*Enter CHASTELARD and MARY BEATON.*

MARY BEATON.

Be tender of your feet.

CHASTELARD.

I shall not fail :

These ways have light enough to help a man  
That walks with such stirred blood in him as mine.

MARY BEATON.

I would yet plead with you to save your head :  
Nay, let this be then : sir, I chide you not.  
Nay, let all come. Do not abide her yet.

CHASTELARD.

Have you read never in French books the song

Called the Duke's Song, some boy made ages back,  
A song of drag-nets hauled across thwart seas  
And plucked up with rent sides, and caught therein  
A strange-haired woman with sad singing lips,  
Cold in the cheek like any stray of sea,  
And sweet to touch ? so that men seeing her face,  
And how she sighed, out little Ahs of pain  
And soft cries sobbing sideways from her mouth,  
Fell in hot love, and having lain with her  
Died soon ? one time I could have told it through :  
Now I have kissed the sea-witch on her eyes  
And my lips ache with it : but I shall sleep  
Full soon, and a good space of sleep.

MARY BEATON.

Alas !

CHASTELARD.

What makes you sigh though I be found a fool ?  
You have no blame : and for my death, sweet friend,  
I never could have lived long either way.  
Why, as I live, the joy I have of this  
Would make men mad that were not mad with love ;

I hear my blood sing, and my lifted heart  
Is like a springing water blown of wind  
For pleasure of this deed. Now, in God's name,  
I swear if there be danger in delight  
I must die now : if joys have deadly teeth,  
I'll have them bite my soul to death, and end  
In the old asp's way, Egyptian-wise ; he killed  
In a royal purple fashion. Look, my love  
Would kill me if my body were past hurt  
Of any man's hand ; and to die thereof,  
I say, is sweeter than all sorts of life.  
I would not have her love me now, for then  
I should die meanlier some time. I am safe,  
Sure of her face, my life's end in her sight,  
My blood shed out about her feet—by God,  
My heart feels drunken when I think of it.  
See you, she will not rid herself of me,  
Not though she slay me : her sweet lips and life  
Will smell of my spilt blood.

MARY BEATON.

Give me good night.

CHASTELARD.

Yea, and good thanks.

[Exit MARY BEATON.]

Here is the very place :

Here has her body bowed the pillows in  
And here her head thrust under made the sheet  
Smell soft of her mixed hair and spice : even here  
Her arms pushed back the coverlet, pulled here  
The golden silken curtain halfway in  
It may be, and made room to lean out loos  
Fair tender fallen arms. Now, if God would,  
Doubtless he might take pity on my soul  
To give me three clear hours, and then red hell  
Snare me for ever : this were merciful :  
If I were God now I should do thus much.  
I must die next, and this were not so hard  
For him to let me eat sweet fruit and die  
With my lips sweet from it. For one shall have  
This fare for common days'-bread, which to me  
Should be a touch kept always on my sense  
To make hell soft, yea, the keen pain of hell  
Soft as the loosening of wound arms in sleep.  
Ah, love is good, and the worst part of it

More than all things but death. She will be  
here

In some small while, and see me face to face  
That am to give up life for her and go  
Where a man lies with all his loves put out  
And his lips full of earth. I think on her,  
And the old pleasure stings and makes half-tears  
Under mine eyelids. Prithee, love, come fast,  
That I may die soon; yea, some kisses through,  
I shall die joyfully enough, so God  
Keep me alive till then. I feel her feet  
Coming far off; now must I hold my heart,  
Steadying my blood to see her patiently.

*[Hides himself by the bed.]*

*Enter the QUEEN and DARNLEY.*

QUEEN.

Nay, now go back: I have sent off my folk,  
Maries and all. Pray you, let be my hair;  
I cannot twist the gold thread out of it  
That you wound in so close. Look, here it clings:



Ah ! now you mar my hair unwinding it.

Do me no hurt, sir.

DARNLEY.

I would do you ease ;

Let me stay here.

QUEEN.

Nay, will you go, my lord ?

DARNLEY.

Eh ? would you use me as a girl does fruit,  
Touched with her mouth and pulled away for game  
To look thereon ere her lips feed ? but see,  
By God, I fare the worse for you.

QUEEN.

Fair sir,

Give me this hour to watch with and say prayers ;  
You have not faith—it needs me to say prayers,  
That with commending of this deed to God  
I may get grace for it.

DARNLEY.

Why, lacks it grace?

Is not all wedlock gracious of itself?

QUEEN.

Nay, that I know not of. Come, sweet, be hence.

DARNLEY.

' You have a sort of jewel in your neck

That's like mine here.

QUEEN.

Keep off your hands and go :

You have no courtesy to be a king.

DARNLEY.

Well, I will go : nay, but I thwart you not.

Do as you will, and get you grace ; farewell,

And for my part, grace keep this watch with me !

For I need grace to bear with you so much. [*Exit.*

QUEEN.

So, he is forth. Let me behold myself ;

I am too pale to be so hot; I marvel  
So little colour should be bold in the face  
When the blood is not quieted. I have  
But a brief space to cool my thoughts upon.  
If one should wear the hair thus heaped and curled  
Would it look best? or this way in the neck?  
Could one ungirdle in such wise one's heart

*[Taking off her girdle.*

And ease it inwards as the waist is eased  
By slackening of the slid clasp on it!  
How soft the silk is—gracious colour too;  
Violet shadows like new veins thrown up  
Each arm, and gold to fleck the faint sweet green  
Where the wrist lies thus eased. I am right glad  
I have no maids about to hasten me—  
So I will rest and see my hair shed down  
On either silk side of my woven sleeves,  
Get some new way to bind it back with—yea,  
Fair mirror-glass, I am well ware of you,  
Yea, I know that, I am quite beautiful.  
How my hair shines!—Fair face, be friends with  
me

and I will sing to you ; look in my face  
 now, and your mouth must help the song in mine.

*Alys la châtelaine*  
*Voit venir de par Seine*  
*Thiébault le capitaine*  
*Qui parle ainsi :*

Was that the wind in the casement ? nay, no more  
 but the comb drawn through half my hissing hair  
 laid on my arms—yet my flesh moved at it.

*Dans ma camaille*  
*Plus de clou qui vaille,*  
*Dans ma cotte-maille*  
*Plus de fer aussi.*

Oh, but I wrong the ballad-verse : what's good  
 in such frayed fringes of old rhymes, to make  
 their broken burden lag with us ? meseems  
 could be sad now if I fell to think  
 the least sad thing ; aye, that sweet lady's fool,

Fool sorrow, would make merry with mine eyes  
For a small thing. Nay, but I will keep glad,  
Nor shall old sorrow be false friends with me.  
But my first wedding was not like to this—  
Fair faces then and laughter and sweet game,  
And a pale little mouth that clung on mine  
When I had kissed him by the faded eyes  
And either thin cheek beating with faint blood.  
Well, he was sure to die soon; I do think  
He would have given his body to be slain,  
Having embraced my body. Now, God knows,  
I have no man to do as much for me  
As give me but a little of his blood  
To fill my beauty from, though I go down  
Pale to my grave for want—I think not. Pale—  
I am too pale surely—Ah!

*[Sees him in the glass, coming forward.]*

CHASTELARD.

Be not afraid.

QUEEN.

Saint Mary! what a shaken wit have I!

Nay, is it you? who let you through the doors?  
Where be my maidens? which way got you in?  
Nay, but stand up, kiss not my hands so hard;  
By God's fair body, if you but breathe on them  
You are just dead and slain at once. What adder  
Has bit you mirthful mad? for by this light  
A man to have his head laughed off for mirth  
Is no great jest. Lay not your eyes on me;  
What, would you not be slain?

CHASTELARD.

I pray you, madam,  
Bear with me a brief space and let me speak.  
I will not touch your garments even, nor speak  
But in soft wise, and look some other way,  
If that it like you; for I came not here  
For pleasure of the eyes; yet, if you will,  
Let me look on you.

QUEEN.

As you will, fair sir.  
Give me that coif to gather in my hair—  
I thank you—and my girdle—nay, that side.

Speak, if you will: yet if you will be gone,  
Why, you shall go, because I hate you not.  
You know that I might slay you with my lips,  
With calling out? but I will hold my peace.

## CHASTELARD.

Yea, do some while. I had a thing to say;  
I know not wholly what thing. O my sweet,  
I am come here to take farewell of love  
That I have served, and life that I have lived  
Made up of love, here in the sight of you  
That all my life's time I loved more than God,  
Who quits me thus with bitter death for it.  
For you well know that I must shortly die,  
My life being wound about you as it is,  
Who love me not; yet do not hate me, sweet,  
But tell me wherein I came short of love;  
For doubtless I came short of a just love,  
And fell in some fool's fault that angered you.  
Now that I talk men dig my grave for me  
Out in the rain, and in a little while  
I shall be thrust in some sad space of earth

Out of your eyes ; and you, O you my love,  
A newly-wedded lady full of mirth  
And a queen girt with all good people's love,  
You shall be fair and merry in all your days.  
Is this so much for me to have of you ?  
Do but speak, sweet : I know these are no words  
A man should say though he were now to die,  
But I am as a child for love, and have  
No strength at heart ; yea, I am afraid to die,  
For the harsh dust will lie upon my face  
Too thick to see you past. Look how I love you ;  
I did so love you always, that your face  
Seen through my sleep has wrung mine eyes to tears  
For pure delight in you. Why do you thus ?  
You answer not, but your lips curl in twain  
And your face moves ; there, I shall make you  
weep  
And be a coward too ; it were much best  
I should be slain.

QUEEN.

Yea, best such folk were slain ;



Why should they live to cozen fools with lies ?  
You would swear now you have used me faithfully ;  
Shall I not make you swear ? I am ware of you :  
You will not do it ; nay, for the fear of God  
You will not swear. Come, I am merciful ;  
God made a foolish woman, making me,  
And I have loved your mistress with whole heart ;  
Say you do love her, you shall marry her  
And she give thanks : yet I could wish your love  
Had not so lightly chosen forth a face ;  
For your fair sake, because I hate you not.

## CHASTELARD.

What is to say ? why, you do surely know  
That since my days were counted for a man's  
I have loved you ; yea, how past help and sense,  
Whatever thing was bitter to my love,  
I have loved you ; how when I rode in war  
Your face went floated in among men's helms,  
Your voice went through the shriek of slipping swords ;  
Yea, and I never have loved women well,  
Seeing always in my sight I had your lips

Curled over, red and sweet ; and the soft space  
Of carven brows, and splendour of great throat  
Swayed lily-wise : what pleasure should one have  
To wind his arms about a lesser love ?

I have seen you ; why, this were joy enough  
For God's eyes up in heaven, only to see

• And to come never nearer than I am.

Why, it was in my flesh, my bone and blood,  
Bound in my brain, to love you ; yea, and writ  
All my heart over : if I would lie to you  
I doubt I could not lie. Ah, you see now,  
You know now well enough ; yea, there, sweet love,  
Let me kiss there.

QUEEN.

I love you best of them.

Clasp me quite round till your lips cleave on mine,  
False mine, that did you wrong. Forgive them  
dearly,

As you are sweet to them ; for by love's love  
I am not that evil woman in my heart  
That laughs at a rent faith. O Chastelard,  
Since this was broken to me of your new love

I have not seen the face of a sweet hour.  
Nay, if there be no pardon in a man,  
What shall a woman have for loving him?  
Pardon me, sweet.

CHASTELARD.

Yea, so I pardon you,  
And this side now; the first way. Would God please  
To slay me so! who knows how he might please?  
Now I am thinking, if you know it not,  
How I might kill you, kiss your breath clean out,  
And take your soul to bring mine through to God,  
That our two souls might close and be one twain  
Or a twain one, and God himself want skill  
To set us either severally apart.  
O, you must overlive me many years,  
And many years my soul be in waste hell;  
But when some time God can no more refrain  
To lay death like a kiss across your lips,  
And great lords bear you clothed with funeral things,  
And your crown girded over deadly brows,  
Then after all your happy reach of life  
For pity you shall touch me with your eyes,

Remembering love was fellow with my flesh  
Here in sweet earth, and make me well of love  
And heal my many years with piteousness.

QUEEN.

You talk too sadly and too feignedly.

CHASTELARD.

Too sad, but not too feigned; I am sad  
That I shall die here without feigning thus;  
And without feigning I were fain to live.

QUEEN.

Alas, you will be taken presently  
And then you are but dead. Pray you get hence.

CHASTELARD.

I will not.

QUEEN.

Nay, for God's love be away;  
You will be slain and I get shame. God's mercy!  
You were stark mad to come here; kiss me, sweet.

Oh, I do love you more than all men ! yea,  
Take my lips to you, close mine eyes up fast,  
So you leave hold a little ; there, for pity,  
Abide now, and to-morrow come to me.  
Nay, lest one see red kisses in my throat—  
Dear God ! what shall I give you to be gone ?

CHASTELARD.

I will not go. Look, here's full night grown up ;  
Why should I seek to sleep away from here ?  
The place is soft and the lights burn for sleep ;  
Be not you moved ; I shall lie well enough.

QUEEN.

You are utterly undone. Sweet, by my life,  
You shall be saved with taking ship at once.  
For if you stay this foolish love's hour out  
There is not ten days' likely life in you.  
This is no choice.

CHASTELARD.

Nay, for I will not go.

QUEEN.

O me! this is that Bayard's blood of yours  
That makes you mad; yea, and you shall not stay.  
I do not understand. Mind, you must die.  
Alas, poor lord, you have no sense of me;  
I shall be deadly to you.

CHASTELARD.

Yea, I saw that;  
But I saw not that when my death's day came  
You could be quite so sweet to me.

QUEEN.

My love!  
If I could kiss my heart's root out on you  
You would taste love hid at the core of me.

CHASTELARD.

Kiss me twice more. This beautiful bowed head  
That has such hair with kissing ripples in  
And shivering soft eyelashes and brows  
With fluttered blood! but laugh a little, sweetly,

That I may see your sad mouth's laughing look  
I have used sweet hours in seeing. O, will you  
weep?  
I pray you do not weep.

QUEEN.

Nay, dear, I have  
No tears in me; I never shall weep much,  
I think, in all my life; I have wept for wrath  
Sometimes and for mere pain, but for love's pity  
I cannot weep at all. I would to God  
You loved me less; I give you all I can  
For all this love of yours, and yet I am sure  
I shall live out the sorrow of your death  
And be glad afterwards. You know I am sorry.  
I should weep now; forgive me for your part,  
God made me hard, I think. Alas, you see  
I had fain been other than I am.

CHASTELARD.

Yea, love.

Comfort your heart. What way am I to die?

QUEEN.

Ah, will you go yet, sweet ?

CHASTELARD.

No, by God's body.

You will not see ? how shall I make you see ?

Look, it may be love was a sort of curse

Made for my plague and mixed up with my days

Somewise in their beginning ; or indeed

A bitter birth begotten of sad stars

At mine own body's birth, that heaven might  
make

My life taste sharp where other men drank sweet ;

But whether in heavy body or broken soul,

I know it must go on to be my death.

There was the matter of my fate in me

When I was fashioned first, and given such life

As goes with a sad end ; no fault but God's.

Yea, and for all this I am not penitent :

You see I am perfect in these sins of mine,

I have my sins writ in a book to read ;

Now I shall die and be well done with this.





*Enter DARNLEY, and afterwards the MARIES.*

DARNLEY.

Yea, what thing is here ?

Ay, this was what the doors shut fast upon—

Ay, trust you to be fast at prayer, my sweet ?

By God I have a mind——

CHASTELARD.

What mind then, sir ?

A liar's lewd mind, to coin sins for jest,  
Because you take me in such wise as this ?  
Look you, I have to die soon, and I swear,  
That am no liar but a free knight and lord,  
I shall die clear of any sin to you,  
Save that I came for no good will of mine ;  
I am no carle, I play fair games with faith,  
And by mine honour for my sake I swear  
I say but truth ; for no man's sake save mine,  
Lest I die shamed. Madam, I pray you say  
I am no liar ; you know me what I am,  
A sinful man and shortly to be slain,

That in a simple insolence of love  
Have stained with a fool's eyes your holy hours  
And with a fool's words put your pity out ;  
Nathless you know if I be liar or no,  
Wherefore for God's sake give me grace to swear  
(Yea, for mine too) how past all praise you are  
And stainless of all shame ; and how all men  
Lie, saying you are not most good and innocent,  
Yea, the one thing good as God.

DARNLEY.

O sir, we know  
You can swear well, being taken ; you fair French  
Dare swallow God's name for a lewd love-sake  
As it were water. Nay, we know, we know ;  
Save your sweet breath now lest you lack it soon ;  
We are simple, we ; we have not heard of you.  
Madam, by God you are well shamed in him :  
Ay, trust you to be fingering in one's face,  
Play with one's neck-chain ? ah, your maiden's  
man,  
A relic of your people's !

CHASTELARD.

Hold your peace,  
Or I will set an edge on your own lie  
Shall scar yourself. Madam, have out your guard;  
'Tis time I were got hence.

QUEEN.

Sweet Hamilton,  
Hold you my hand and help me to sit down.  
O Henry, I am beaten from my wits—  
Let me have time and live; call out my people—  
Bring forth some armed guard to lay hold on  
him :  
But see no man be slain. Sirs, hide your swords;  
I will not have men slain.

DARNLEY.

What, is this true?  
Call the queen's people—help the queen there,  
you—  
Ho, sirs, come in.



ACT IV.

MURRAY.



SCENE I.—*The Queen's Lodging at St. Andrew's.*

*The QUEEN and the four MARIES.*

QUEEN.

Why will you break my heart with praying to me ?  
You Seyton, you Carmichael, you have wits,  
You are not all run to tears; you do not think  
It is my wrath or will that whets this axe  
Against his neck ?

MARY SEYTON.

Nay, these three weeks ago  
I said the queen's wrath was not sharp enough  
To shear a neck.

QUEEN.

Sweet, and you did me right,  
And look you, what my mercy bears to fruit,  
Danger and deadly speech and a fresh fault  
Before the first was cool in people's lips;  
A goodly mercy: and I wash hands of it.—



Speak you, there; have you ever found me sharp?  
You weep and whisper with sloped necks and heads  
Like two sick birds; do you think shame of me?  
Nay, I thank God none can think shame of me;  
But am I bitter, think you, to men's faults?  
I think I am too merciful, too meek:  
Why if I could I would yet save this man;  
'Tis just boy's madness; a soft stripe or two  
Would do to scourge the fault in his French blood.  
I would fain let him go. You, Hamilton,  
You have a heart thewed harder than my heart;  
When mine would threat it sighs, and wrath in it  
Has a bird's flight and station, starves before  
It can well feed or fly: my pulse of wrath  
Sounds tender as the running down of tears.  
You are the hardest woman I have known,  
Your blood has frost and cruel gall in it,  
You hold men off with bitter lips and eyes—  
Such maidens should serve England; now, perfoy,  
I doubt you would have got him slain at once.  
Come, would you not? come, would you let him live?

MARY HAMILTON.

Yes—I think yes; I cannot tell; maybe  
I would have seen him punished.

QUEEN.

Look you now,  
There's maiden mercy; I would have him live—  
For all my wifehood maybe I weep too:  
Here's a mere maiden falls to slaying at once,  
Small shrift for her; God keep us from such hearts!  
I am a queen too that would have him live,  
But one that has no wrong and is no queen,  
She would—What are you saying there, you twain?

MARY CARMICHAEL.

I said a queen's face and so fair an one's  
Would lose no grace for giving grace away;  
That gift comes back upon the mouth it left  
And makes it sweeter, and sets fresh red on it.

QUEEN.

This comes of sonnets when the dance draws breath;

These talking times will make a dearth of grace.  
 But you—what ails you that your lips are shut?  
 Weep, if you will; here are four friends of yours  
 To weep as fast for pity of your tears.  
 Do you desire him dead? nay, but men say  
 He was your friend, he fought them on your side,  
 He made you songs—God knows what songs he made!  
 Speak you for him a little: will you not?

MARY BEATON.

Madam, I have no words.

QUEEN.

No words? no pity—  
 Have you no mercies for such men? God help!  
 It seems I am the meekest heart on earth—  
 Yea, the one tender woman left alive,  
 And knew it not. I will not let him live,  
 For all my pity of him.

MARY BEATON.

Nay, but, madam,  
 For God's love look a little to this thing.

If you do slay him you are but shamed to death ;  
All men will cry upon you, women weep,  
Turning your sweet name bitter with their tears ;  
Red shame grow up out of your memory  
And burn his face that would speak well of you :  
You shall have no good word nor pity, none,  
Till some such end be fallen upon you : nay,  
I am but cold, I knew I had no words,  
I will keep silence.

QUEEN.

Yea now, as I live,  
I wist not of it : troth, he shall not die.  
See you, I am pitiful, compassionate,  
I would not have men slain for my love's sake,  
But if he live to do me three times wrong,  
Why then my shame would grow up green and red  
Like any flower. I am not whole at heart ;  
In faith, I wot not what such things should be ;  
I doubt it is but dangerous ; he must die.

MARY BEATON.

Yea, but you will not slay him.

QUEEN.

Swear me that,  
I'll say he shall not die for your oath's sake.  
What will you do for grief when he is dead ?

MARY BEATON.

Nothing for grief, but hold my peace and die.

QUEEN.

Why, for your sweet sake one might let him live ;  
But the first fault was a green seed of shame,  
And now the flower, and deadly fruit will come  
With apple-time in autumn. By my life,  
I would they had slain him there in Edinburgh ;  
But I reprieve him ; lo the thank I get,  
To set the base folk muttering like smoked bees  
Of shame and love, and how love comes of shame,  
And how the queen loves shame that comes of love ;  
Yet I say nought and go about my ways,  
And this mad fellow that I respited  
Being forth and free, lo now the second time  
Ye take him by my bed in wait. Now see

If I can get goodwill to pardon him ;  
With what a face may I crave leave of men  
To respite him, being young and a good knight  
And mad for perfect love ? shall I go say,  
*Dear lords, because ye took him shamefully,*  
*Let him not die ; because his fault is foul,*  
*Let him not die ; because if he do live.*  
*I shall be held a harlot of all men,*  
*I pray you, sweet sirs, that he may not die ?*

## MARY BEATON.

Madam, for me I would not have him live ;  
Mine own heart's life was ended with my fame,  
And my life's breath will shortly follow them ;  
So that I care not much ; for you wot well  
I have lost love and shame and fame and all  
To no good end ; nor while he had his life  
Have I got good of him that was my love,  
Save that for courtesy (which may God quit)  
He kissed me once as one might kiss for love  
Out of great pity for me ; saving this,  
He never did me grace in all his life.

And when you have slain him, madam, it may be  
I shall get grace of him in some new way  
In a new place, if God have care of us.

QUEEN.

Bid you my brother to me presently. [*Exeunt* MARIES.  
And yet the thing is pitiful; I would  
There were some way. To send him overseas,  
Out past the long firths to the cold keen sea  
Where the sharp sound is that one hears up here—  
Or hold him in strong prison till he died—  
He would die shortly—or to set him free  
And use him softly till his brains were healed—  
There is no way. Now never while I live  
Shall we twain love together any more  
Nor sit at rhyme as we were used to do,  
Nor each kiss other only with the eyes  
A great way off ere hand or lip could reach;  
There is no way.

*Enter* MURRAY.

O, you are welcome, sir;

You know what need I have ; but I praise heaven,  
Having such need, I have such help of you.  
I do believe no queen God ever made  
Was better holpen than I look to be.  
What, if two brethren love not heartily,  
Who shall be good to either one of them ?

MURRAY.

Madam, I have great joy of your good will.

QUEEN.

I pray you, brother, use no courtesies :  
I have some fear you will not suffer me  
When I shall speak. Fear is a fool, I think,  
Yet hath he wit enow to fool my wits,  
Being but a woman's. Do not answer me  
Till you shall know ; yet if you have a word  
I shall be fain to hear it ; but I think  
There is no word to help me ; no man's word :  
There be two things yet that should do me good,  
A speeding arm and a great heart. My lord,  
I am soft-spirited as women are,



And ye wot well I have no harder heart :  
Yea, with my will I would not slay a thing,  
But all should live right sweetly if I might ;  
So that man's blood-spilling lies hard on me.  
I have a work yet for mine honour's sake,  
A thing to do, God wot I know not how,  
Nor how to crave it of you : nay, by heaven,  
I will not shame myself to show it you •  
I have not heart. •

MURRAY.

Why, if it may be done  
With any honour, or with good men's excuse,  
I shall well do it.

QUEEN.

I would I wist that well.  
Sir, do you love me ?

MURRAY.

Yea, you know I do.

QUEEN.

In faith, you should well love me, for I love

The least man in your following for your sake  
With a whole sister's heart.

MURRAY.

Speak simply, madam ;  
I must obey you, being your bounden man.

QUEEN.

Sir, so it is you know what things have been,  
Even to the endangering of mine innocent name,  
And by no fault, but by men's evil will ;  
If Chastelard have trial openly,  
I am but shamed.

MURRAY.

This were a wound indeed,  
If your good name should lie upon his lip.

QUEEN.

I will the judges put him not to plead,  
For my fame's sake ; he shall not answer them.

MURRAY.

What, think you he will speak against your fame ?

QUEEN.

I know not; men might feign belief of him  
For hate of me; it may be he will speak;  
In brief, I will not have him held to proof.

MURRAY.

Well, if this be, what good is to be done?

QUEEN.

Is there no way but he must speak to them,  
Being had to trial plainly?

MURRAY.

I think, none.

QUEEN.

Now mark, my lord; I swear he will not speak.

MURRAY.

It were the best if you could make that sure.

QUEEN.

There is one way. Look, sir, he shall not do it:

Shall not, or will not, either is one way ;  
I speak as I would have you understand.

MURRAY.

Let me not guess at you ; speak certainly.

QUEEN.

You will not mind me : let him be removed ;  
Take means to get me surety : there be means.

MURRAY.

So, in your mind, I have to slay the man ?

QUEEN.

Is there a mean for me to save the man ?

MURRAY.

Truly I see no mean except your love.

QUEEN.

What love is that, my lord ? what think you of,  
Talking of love and of love's mean in me

And of your guesses and of slaying him ?

Why, I say nought, have nought to say : God help me !

I bid you but take surety of the man,

Get him removed.

MURRAY.

Come, come, be clear with me ;

You bid me to despatch him privily.

QUEEN.

God send me sufferance ! I bid you, sir ?

Nay, do not go : what matter if I did ?

Nathless I never bade you ; no, by God.

Be not so wroth ; you are my brother born ;

Why do you dwell upon me with such eyes ?

For love of God you should not bear me hard.

MURRAY.

What, are you made of flesh ?

QUEEN.

O, now I see

You had rather lose your wits to do me harm  
Than keep sound wits to help me.

MURRAY.

It is right strange :

The worst man living hath some fear, some love,  
Holds somewhat dear a little for life's sake,  
Keeps fast to some compassion ; you have none ;  
You know of nothing that remembrance knows  
To make you tender. I must slay the man ?  
Nay, I will do it.

QUEEN.

Do, if you be not mad.  
I am sorry for him ; and he must needs die.  
I would I were assured you hate me not :  
I have no heart to slay him by my will.  
I pray you think not bitterly of me.

MURRAY.

Is it your pleasure such a thing were done ?

QUEEN.

Yea, by God's body is it, certainly.

MURRAY.

Nay, for your love then, and for honour's sake,  
This thing must be.

QUEEN.

Yea, should I set you on?  
Even for my love then, I beseech you, sir,  
To seek him out, and lest he prate of me  
To put your knife into him ere he come forth:  
Meseems this were not such wild work to do.

MURRAY.

I'll have him in the prison taken off.

QUEEN.

I am bounden to you, even for my name's sake,  
When that is done.

MURRAY.

I pray you fear me not.  
Farewell. I would such things were not to do,  
Or not for me; yea, not for any man. [Exit.]

QUEEN.

Alas, what honour have I to give thanks?  
I would he had denied me: I had held my peace  
Thenceforth for ever; but he wrung out the word,  
Caught it before my lip, was fain of it—  
It was his fault to put it in my mind,  
Yea, and to feign a loathing of his fault.  
Now is he about devising my love's death,  
And nothing loth. Nay, since he must needs die,  
Would he were dead and come alive again  
And I might keep him safe. He doth live now  
And I may do what love I will to him;  
But by to-morrow he will be stark dead,  
Stark slain and dead; and for no sort of love  
Will he so much as kiss me half a kiss.  
Were this to do I would not do it again.

*Re-enter MURRAY.*

What, have you taken order? is it done?  
It were impossible to do so soon.  
Nay, answer me.



MURRAY.

Madam, I will not do it.

QUEEN.

How did you say? I pray, sir, speak again:  
I know not what you said.

MURRAY.

I say I will not;  
I have thought thereof, and have made up my heart  
To have no part in this: look you to it.

QUEEN.

O, for God's sake! you will not have me shamed?

MURRAY.

I will not dip my hand into your sin.

QUEEN.

It were a good deed to deliver me;  
I am but woman, of one blood with you,  
A feeble woman; put me not to shame;

I pray you of your pity do me right.  
Yea, and no fleck of blood shall cleave to you  
For a just deed.

MURRAY.

I know not: I will none.

QUEEN.

O, you will never let him speak to them  
To put me in such shame? why, I should die  
Out of pure shame and mine own burning blood;  
Yea, my face feels the shame lay hold on it,  
I am half burnt already in my thought;  
Take pity of me. Think how shame slays a man;  
How shall I live then? would you have me dead?  
I pray you for our dead dear father's sake,  
Let not men mock at me. Nay, if he speak,  
I shall be sung in mine own towns. Have pity.  
•What, will you let men stone me in the ways?

MURRAY.

Madam, I shall take pains the best I may  
To save your honour, and what thing lieth in me

That will I do, but no close manslayings.

I will not have God's judgment gripe my throat

When I am dead, to hale me into hell

For a man's sake slain on this wise. Take heed.

See you to that.

[*Exit.*

QUEEN.

One of you maidens there

Bid my lord hither. Now by Mary's soul,

He shall not die and bring me into shame.

There's treason in you like a fever, hot,

My holy-natured brother, cheek and eye;

You look red through with it: sick, honour-sick,

Specked with the blain of treason, leper-like—

A scrupulous fair traitor with clean lips—

If one should sue to hell to do him good

He were as brotherly holpen as I am.

This man must live and say no harm of me;

I may reprieve and cast him forth; yea, so—

This were the best; or if he die midway—

Yea, anything, so that he die not here.

[*To the MARIES within.*

Fetch hither Darnley. Nay, ye gape on me—

What, doth he sleep, or feeds, or plays at games?  
Why, I would see him; I am weary for his sake;  
Bid my lord in.—Nathless he will but chide;  
Nay, flee and laugh: what should one say to him?  
There were some word if one could hit on it;  
Some way to close with him: I wot not.—Sir,

*Enter DARNLEY.*

Please it your love I have a suit to you.

DARNLEY.

What sort of suit?

QUEEN.

Nay, if you be not friends—  
I have no suit towards mine enemies.

DARNLEY.

Eh, do I look now like your enemy?

QUEEN.

You have a way of peering under brow

I do not like. If you see anything  
In me that irks you I will painfully  
Labour to lose it: do but show me favour,  
And as I am your faithful humble wife  
This foolishness shall be removed in me.

DARNLEY.

Why do you laugh and mock me with stretched  
hands?

Faith, I see no such thing.

QUEEN.

That is well seen.

Come, I will take my heart between my lips,  
Use it not hardly. Sir, my suit begins;  
That you would please to make me that I am,  
(In sooth I think I am) mistress and queen  
Of mine own people.

DARNLEY.

Why, this is no suit;  
This is a simple matter, and your own.

QUEEN.

It was, before God made you king of me.

DARNLEY.

No king, by God's grace; were I such a king  
I'd sell my kingdom for six roods of rye.

QUEEN.

You are too sharp upon my words; I would  
Have leave of you to free a man condemned.

DARNLEY.

What man is that, sweet?

QUEEN.

Such a mad poor man  
As God desires us use not cruelly.

DARNLEY.

Is there no name a man may call him by?

QUEEN.

Nay, my fair master, what fair game is this?  
Why, you do know him, it is Chastelard.

DARNLEY.

Ay, is it soothly ?

QUEEN.

By my life, it is ;

Sweet, as you tender me, so pardon him.

DARNLEY.

As he doth tender you, so pardon me ;

For if it were the mean to save my life

He should not live a day.

QUEEN.

Nay, shall not he ?

DARNLEY.

Look what an evil wit old Fortune hath :

Why, I came here to get his time cut off.

This second fault is meat for lewd men's mouths ;

You were best have him slain at once : 'tis hot.

QUEEN.

Give me the warrant, and sit down, my lord.

Why, I will sign it; what, I understand  
How this must be. Should not my name stand here?

DARNLEY.

Yea, there, and here the seal.

QUEEN.

Ay, so you say.

Shall I say too what I am thinking of?

DARNLEY.

Do, if you will.

QUEEN.

I do not like your suit.

DARNLEY.

'Tis of no Frenchman fashion.

QUEEN.

No, God wot;

'Tis nowise great men's fashion in French land  
To clap a headsman's taberd on their backs.



DARNLEY.

No, madam ?

QUEEN.

No ; I never wist of that.

Is it a month gone I did call you lord ?

I chose you by no straying stroke of sight,

But with my heart to love you heartily.

Did I wrong then ? did mine eye draw my heart ?

I know not ; sir, it may be I did wrong :

And yet to see you I should call it right

Even yet to love you ; and would choose again,

Again to choose you.

DARNLEY.

There, I love you too ;

Take that for sooth, and let me take this hence.

QUEEN.

O, do you think I hold you off with words ?

Why, take it then ; there is my handwriting,

And here the hand that you shall slay him with.

'Tis a fair hand, a maiden-coloured one :

I doubt yet it has never slain a man.

You never fought yet save for game, I wis.

Nay, thank me not, but have it from my sight;

Go and make haste for fear he be got forth :

It may be such a man is dangerous;

Who knows what friends he hath? and by my faith

I doubt he hath seen some fighting, I do fear

He hath fought and shed men's blood; ye are wise  
men

That will not leave such dangerous things alive;

'Twere well he died the sooner for your sakes.

Pray you make haste; it is not fit he live.

DARNLEY.

What, will you let him die so easily?

QUEEN.

Why, God have mercy! what way should one take  
To please such people? there's some cunning way,  
Something I miss, out of my simple soul.

What, must one say "Beseech you do no harm,"  
Or "for my love, sweet cousins, be not hard,"

Or "let him live but till the vane come round"—  
Will such things please you? well then, have your  
way;

Sir, I desire you, kneeling down with tears,  
With sighs and tears, fair sir, require of you,  
Considering of my love I bear this man,  
Just for my love's sake let him not be hanged  
Before the sundown; do thus much for me,  
To have a queen's prayers follow after you.

DARNLEY.

I know no need for you to gibe at me.

QUEEN.

Alack, what heart then shall I have to jest?  
There is no woman jests in such a wise—  
*For the shame's sake I pray you hang him not,  
Seeing how I love him, save indeed in silk,  
Sweet twisted silk of my sad handiwork.*  
Nay, and you will not do so much for me;  
You vex your lip, biting the blood and all:

Were this so hard, and you compassionate?  
I am in sore case then, and will weep indeed.

DARNLEY.

What do you mean to cast such gibes at me?

QUEEN.

Woe's me, and will you turn my tears to thorns?  
Nay, set your eyes a little in my face;  
See, do I weep? what will you make of me?  
Will you not swear I love this prisoner?  
Ye are wise, and ye will have it; yet for me  
I wist not of it. We are but feeble fools,  
And love may catch us when we lie asleep  
And yet God knows we know not this a whit.  
Come, look on me, swear you believe it not:  
It may be I will take your word for that.

DARNLEY.

Do you not love him? nay, but verily?

QUEEN.

Now then, make answer to me verily,

Which of us twain is wiser? for my part  
I will not swear I love not, if you will;  
Ye be wise men and many men, my lords,  
And ye will have me love him, ye will swear  
That I do love him; who shall say ye lie?  
Look on your paper; maybe I have wept:  
Doubtless I love your hanged man in my heart.  
What, is the writing smutched or gone awry?  
Or blurred—ay, surely so much—with one tear,  
One little sharp tear strayed on it by chance?  
Come, come, the man is deadly dangerous;  
Let him die presently.

DARNLEY.

You do not love him;  
Well, yet he need not die; it were right hard  
To hang the fool because you love him not.

QUEEN.

You have keen wits and thereto courtesy  
To catch me with. No, let this man not die;  
It were no such perpetual praise to you

To be his doomsman and in doglike wise  
Bite his brief life in twain.

DARNLEY.

Truly it were not.

QUEEN.

Then for your honour and my love of you  
(Oh, I do love you ! but you know not, sweet,  
You shall see how much), think you for their sake  
He may go free ?

DARNLEY.

How, freely forth of us !  
But yet he loves you, and being mad with love  
Makes matter for base mouths to chew upon :  
'Twere best he live not yet.

QUEEN.

Will you say that ?

DARNLEY.

Why should he live to breed you bad reports !  
Let him die first.

QUEEN.

Sweet, for your sake, not so.

DARNLEY.

Fret not yourself to pity; let him die.

QUEEN.

Come, let him live a little; it shall be

A grace to us.

DARNLEY.

By God he dies at once.

QUEEN.

Now, by God's mother, if I respite him,

Though you were all the race of you in one

And had more tongues than hairs to cry on me

He should not lose a hair.

DARNLEY.

This is mere mercy—

But you thank God you love him not a whit?

QUEEN.

[t shall be what it please ; and if I please  
[t shall be anything. Give me the warrant.

DARNLEY.

Nay, for your sake and love of you, not I,  
To make it dangerous.

QUEEN.

O, God's pity, sir !  
You are tender of me ; will you serve me so,  
Against mine own will, shew me so much love,  
Do me good service that I loath being done,  
Out of pure pity ?

DARNLEY.

Nay, your word shall stand.

QUEEN.

What makes you gape so beastlike after blood ?  
Were you not bred up on some hangman's hire  
And dieted with fleshmeats at his hand  
And fed into a fool ? Give me that paper.



DARNLEY.

Now for that word I will not.

QUEEN.

Nay, sweet love,  
For your own sake be just a little wise;  
Come, I beseech you.

DARNLEY.

Pluck not at my hands.

QUEEN.

No, that I will not : I am brain-broken, mad ;  
Pity my madness for sweet marriage-sake  
And my great love's ; I love you to say this ;  
I would not have you cross me, out of love.  
But for true love should I not chafe indeed ?  
And now I do not.

DARNLEY.

Yea, and late you chid,  
You chafed and jested and blew soft and hard—  
No, for that "fool" you shall not fool me so.

QUEEN.

You are no churl, sweet, will you see me weep?  
Look, I weep now; be friends with my poor tears.  
Think each of them beseeches you of love  
And hath some tongue to cry on you for love  
And speak soft things; for that which loves not you  
Is none of mine, not though they grow of grief  
And grief of you; be not too hard with them.  
You would not of your own heart slay a man;  
Nay, if you will, in God's name make me weep,  
I will not hate you; but at heart, sweet lord,  
Be not at heart my sweet heart's enemy.  
If I had many mighty men to friend  
I would not plead too lovingly with you  
To have your love.

DARNLEY.

Why, yet you have my love.

QUEEN.

Alas, what shall mine enemies do to me  
If I be used so hardly of my friends?

Come, sir, you hate me ; yet for all your hate  
You cannot have such heart.

DARNLEY.

What sort of heart ?

I have no heart to be used shamefully

If you mean that,

QUEEN.

Would God I loved you not ;  
You are too hard to be used lovingly.

DARNLEY.

You are moved too much for such a little love  
As you bear me.

QUEEN.

God knows you do me wrong ;  
God knows the heart, sweet, that I love you with.  
Hark you, fair sir, I'd have all well with you ;  
Do you not fear at sick men's time of night  
What end may come ? are you so sure of heart ?  
Is not your spirit surprisable in sleep ?  
Have you no evil dreams ? Nay, look you, love,

I will not bring off you heart and hand,  
I am no snake : but tell me for your love  
Have you no fancies how these things will end  
In the pit's mouth ? how all life-deeds will look  
At the grave's edge that lets men into hell ?  
For my part, who am weak and woman-eyed,  
It turns my soul to tears : I doubt this blood  
Fallen on our faces when we twain are dead  
Will scar and burn them : yea, for heaven is sweet,  
And loves sweet deeds that smell not of spilt blood.  
Let us not kill : God that made mercy first  
Pities the pitiful for their deed's sake.

DARNLEY.

Get you some painting ; with a cheek like this  
You'll find no faith in listeners.

QUEEN.

How, fair lord ?

DARNLEY.

I say that looking with this face of yours  
None shall believe you holy ; what, you talk,

Take mercy in your mouth, eat holiness,  
Put God under your tongue and feed on heaven,  
With fear and faith and—faith, I know not what—  
And look as though you stood and saw men slain  
To make you game and laughter : nay, your eyes  
Threaten as unto blood. What will you do  
To make men take your sweet word ? pitiful—  
You are pitiful as he that's hired for death  
And loves the slaying yet better than the hire.

QUEEN.

You are wise that live to threat and tell me so ;  
Do you love life too much ?

DARNLEY.

O, now you are sweet,  
Right tender now : you love not blood nor death,  
You are too tender.

QUEEN.

Yea, too weak, too soft :  
Sweet, do not mock me, for my love's sake ; see

How soft a thing I am. Will you be hard ?  
The heart you have, has it no sort of fear ?

DARNLEY.

Take off your hand and let me go my way  
And do my deed, and when the doing is past  
I will come home and teach you tender things  
Out of my love till you forget my wrath.  
I will be angry when I see good need,  
And will grow gentle after, fear not that ;  
You shall get no wrong of my wrongdoing.  
So I take leave.

QUEEN.

Take what you will ; take all ;  
You have taken half my heart away with words :  
Take all I have, and take no leave ; I have  
No leave to give : yea, shortly shall lack leave,  
I think, to live ; but I crave none of you ;  
I would have none : yet for the love I have,  
If I get ever a mean to show it you,  
I pray God put you some day in my hand  
That you may take that too.

DARNLEY.

Well, as he please ;  
God keep you in such love ; and so farewell. [*Exit.*]

QUEEN.

So fare I as your lover, but not well.—  
Ah sweet, if God be ever good to me  
To put you in my hand ! I am come to shame ;  
Let me think now, and let my wits not go ;  
God, for dear mercy, let me not forget  
Why I should be so angry ; the dull blood  
Beats at my face and blinds me—I am chafed to death,  
And I am ahamed ; I shall go mad and die.  
Truly I think I did kneel down, did pray,  
Yea, weep (who knows ?) it may be—all for that.  
Yea, if I wept not, this was blood brake forth  
And burnt mine eyelids ; I will have blood back,  
And wash them cool in the hottest of his heart,  
Or I will slay myself : I cannot tell :  
I have given gold for brass, and lo the pay  
Cleaves to my fingers : there's no way to mend—  
Not while life stays : would God that it were gone !

The fool will feed upon my fame and laugh ;  
Till one seal up his tongue and lips with blood,  
He carries half my honour and good name  
Between his teeth. Lord God, mine head will fail !  
When have I done thus since I was alive ?  
And these ill times will deal but ill with me—  
My old love slain, and never a new to help,  
And my wits gone, and my blithe use of life,  
And all the grace was with me. Love—perchance  
If I save love I shall well save myself.  
I could find heart to bid him take such fellows  
And kill them to my hand. I was the fool  
To sue to these and shame myself: God knows  
I was a queen born, I will hold their heads  
Here in my hands for this. Which of you waits ?

*Enter MARY BEATON and MARY CARMICHAEL.*

No maiden of them ?—what, no more than this ?

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Madam, the lady Seyton is gone forth ;  
She is ill at heart with watching.



QUEEN.

Ay, at heart—

All girls must have such tender sides to the heart  
They break for one night's watching, ache to death  
For an hour's pity, for a half-hour's love—  
Wear out before the watches, die by dawn,  
And ride at noon, to burial. God's my pity!  
Where's Hamilton? doth she ail too? at heart,  
I warrant her at heart.

MARY BEATON.

I know not, madam.

QUEEN.

What, sick or dead? I am well holpen of you:  
Come hither to me. What pale blood you have—  
Is it for fear you turn such cheeks to me?  
Why, if I were so loving, by my hand,  
I would have set my head upon the chance,  
And loosed him though I died. What will you  
do?  
Have you no way?

MARY BEATON.

None but your mercy.

QUEEN.

Ay?

Why then the thing is piteous. Think, for God's  
sake—

Is there no loving way to fetch him forth?

Nay, what a white thin-blooded thing is love,

To help no more than this doth! Were I in love,

I would unbar the ways to-night and then

Laugh death to death to-morrow, mock him dead;

I think you love well with one half your heart,

And let fear keep the other. Hark you now,

You said there was some friend durst break my bars—

Some Scotch name—faith, as if I wist of it!

Ye have such heavy wits to help one with—

Some man that had some mean to save him by—

Tush, I must be at pains for you!

MARY BEATON.

Nay, madam,

It were no boot: he will not be let forth.

QUEEN.

I say, the name. O, Robert Erskine—yea,  
A fellow of some heart : what saith he ?

MARY BEATON.

Madam,

The thing was sound all through, yea, all went well,  
But for all prayers that we could make to him  
He would not fly: we cannot get him forth.

QUEEN.

Great God ! that men should have such wits as this !  
I have a mind to let him die for that ;  
And yet I wot not. Said he, he loathed his life ?

MARY BEATON.

He says your grace given would scathe yourself,  
And little grace for such a grace as that  
Be with the little of his life he kept  
To cast off some time more unworthily.

●

QUEEN.

God help me ! what should wise folk do with him ?

These men be weaker-witted than mere fools  
When they fall mad once; yet by Mary's soul  
I am sorrier for him than for men right wise.  
God wot a fool that were more wise than he  
Would love me something worse than Chastelard,  
Ay, and his own soul better. Do you think  
(There's no such other sort of fool alive)  
That he may live?

MARY BEATON.

Yea, by God's mercy, madam,  
To your great praise and honour from all men  
If you should keep him living.

QUEEN.

By God's light,  
I have good will to do it. Are you sure,  
If I would pack him with a pardon hence,  
He would speak well of me—not hint and halt,  
Smile and look back, sigh and say love runs out,  
But times have been—with some loose laugh cut short,  
Bit off at lip—eh?

MARY BEATON.

No, by heaven he would not.

QUEEN.

You know how quickly one may be belied—

Faith, you should know it—I never thought the  
worst,

One may touch love and come with clean hands  
off—

But you should know it. What, he will not fly—

Not though I wink myself asleep, turn blind—

Which that I will I say not?

MARY BEATON.

Nay, not he;

We had good hope to bring him well aboard,

Let him slip safe down by the firths to sea,

Out under Leith by night-setting, and thence

Take ship for France and serve there out of sight

In the new wars.

QUEEN.

Ay, in the new French wars—

'You wist thereof too, madam, with good leave—  
A goodly bait to catch mine honour with  
And let me wake up with my name bit through.  
I had been much bounden to you twain, methinks,  
But for my knight's sake and his love's; by God,  
He shall not die in God's despite nor mine.  
Call in our chief lords; bid one see to it:  
Ay, and make haste.

[*Exeunt* MARY BEATON and MARY CARMICHAEL.

Now shall I try their teeth:

I have done with fear; now nothing but pure love  
And power and pity shall have part in me;  
I will not throw them such a spirit in flesh  
To make their prey on. Though he be mad indeed,  
It is the goodliest madness ever smote  
Upon man's heart. A kingly knight—in faith,  
Meseems my face can yet make faith in men  
And break their brains with beauty: for a word,  
An eyelid's twitch, an eye's turn, tie them fast  
And make their souls cleave to me. God be  
thanked,  
This air has not yet curdled all the blood

That went to make me fair. An hour agone,  
I thought I had been forgotten of men's love  
More than dead women's faces are forgot  
Of after lovers. All men are not of earth :  
For all the frost of fools and this cold land  
There be some yet catch fever of my face  
And burning for mine eyes' sake. I did think  
My time was gone when men would dance to death  
As to a music, and lie laughing down  
In the grave and take their funerals for their  
    feasts,  
To get one kiss of me. I have some strength yet,  
Though I lack power on men that lack men's  
    blood.  
Yea, and God wot I will be merciful ;  
For all the foolish hardness round my heart  
That tender women miss of to their praise,  
They shall not say but I had grace to give  
Even for love's sake. Why, let them take their  
    way :  
What ails it them though I be soft or hard ?  
Soft hearts would weep and weep and let men die \*

For very mercy and sweet-heartedness ;  
I that weep little for my pity's sake,  
I have the grace to save men. Let fame go—  
I care not much what shall become of fame,  
So I save love and do mine own soul right ;  
I'll have my mercy help me to revenge  
On all the crew of them. How will he look,  
Having my pardon ! I shall have sweet thanks  
And love of good men for my mercy's love—  
Yea, and be quit of these I hate to death,  
With one good deed.

*Enter the MARIES.*

MARY BEATON.

Madam, the lords are here.

QUEEN.

Stand you about me, I will speak to them.  
I would the whole world stood up in my face  
And heard what I shall say. Bid them come in.



*Enter MURRAY, RANDOLPH, MORTON, LINDSAY, and other  
Lords.*

Hear you, fair lords, I have a word to you ;  
 There is one thing I would fain understand—  
 If I be queen or no ; for by my life  
 Methinks I am growing unqueenly. No man speak ?  
 Pray you take note, sweet lord ambassador,  
 I am no queen : I never was born queen ;  
 Alack, that one should fool us in this wise !  
 Take up my crown, sir, I will none of it  
 Till it hath bells on as a fool's cap hath.  
 Nay, who will have it ? no man take it up ?  
 Was there none worthy to be shamed but I ?  
 Here are enow good faces, good to crown ;  
 Will you be king, fair brother ? or you,  
     lord ?  
 Give me a spinner's curch, a wisp of reed,  
 Any mean thing ; but, God's love, no more gold,  
 And no more shame : let boys throw dice for it,  
 Or cast it to the grooms for tennis-play,  
 For I will none.

MURRAY.

What would your highness have ?

QUEEN.

Yea, yea, I said I was no majesty ;  
I shall be shortly fallen out of grace.  
What would I have ? I would have leave to live ;  
Perchance I shall not shortly : nay, for me  
That have no leave to respite other lives  
To keep mine own life were small praise enow.

MURRAY.

Your majesty hath power to respite men,  
As we well wot ; no man saith otherwise.

QUEEN.

What, is this true ? 'tis a thing wonderful—  
So great I cannot be well sure of it.  
Strange that a queen should find such grace as this  
At such lords' hands as ye be, such great lords :  
I pray you let me get assured again,  
Lest I take jest for truth and shame myself

And make you mirth: to make your mirth of  
 me,  
 God wot it were small pains to you, my lords,  
 But much less honour. I may send reprove—  
 With your sweet leaves I may ?

MURRAY.

Assuredly.

QUEEN.

Lo, now, what grace is this I have of you !  
 I had a will to respite Chastelard,  
 And would not do it for very fear of you :  
 Look you, I wist not ye were merciful.

MORTON.

Madam—

QUEEN.

My lord, you have a word to me ?  
 Doth it displease you such a man should live ?

MORTON.

'Twere a mad mercy in your majesty  
 To lay no hand upon his second fault  
 And let him thrice offend you.

QUEEN.

Ay, my lord?

MORTON.

It were well done to muffle lewd men's mouths  
By casting of his head into their laps :  
It were much best.

QUEEN.

Yea, truly were it so?

But if I will not, yet I will not, sir,  
For all the mouths in Scotland. Now, by heaven,  
As I am pleased he shall not die but live,  
So shall ye be. There is no man shall die,  
Except it please me ; and no man shall say,  
Except it please me, if I do ill or well.  
Which of you now will set his will to mine ?  
Not you, nor you I think, nor none of you,  
Nor no man living that loves living well.  
•  
Let one stand forth and smite me with his hand,  
Wring my crown off and cast it underfoot,  
And he shall get my respite back of me,  
And no man else : he shall bid live or die.

And no man else ; and he shall be my lord,  
And no man else. What, will not one be king ?  
Will not one here lay hold upon my state ?  
I am queen of you for all things come and gone.  
Nay, my chief lady, and no meaner one,  
The chiefest of my maidens, shall bear this  
And give it to my prisoner for a grace ;  
Who shall deny me ? who shall do me wrong ?  
Bear greeting to the lord of Chastelard,  
And this withal for respite of his life,  
For by my head he shall die no such way :  
Nay, sweet, no words, but hence and back again.

[*Exit* MARY BEATON.

Farewell, dear lords ; ye have shown grace to me,  
And some time I will thank you as I may ;  
Till when think well of me and what is done.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

CHASTELARD.



SCENE I.—*Before Holyrood. A crowd of people ; among them Soldiers, Burgesses, a Preacher, &c.*

1ST CITIZEN.

They are not out yet. Have you seen the man ?  
What manner of man ?

2ND CITIZEN.

Shall he be hanged or no ?  
There was a fellow hanged some three days gone  
Wept the whole way : think you this man shall die  
In better sort, now ?

1ST CITIZEN.

Eh, these shawm-players  
That walk before strange women and make songs !  
How should they die well ?

3RD CITIZEN.

Is it sooth men say



Our dame was wont to kiss him on the face  
In lewd folk's sight?

1ST CITIZEN.

Yea, saith one, all day long  
He used to sit and jangle words in rhyme  
To suit with shakes of faint adulterous sound  
Some French lust in men's ears; she made songs too,  
Soft things to feed sin's amorous mouth upon—  
Delicate sounds for dancing at in hell.

4TH CITIZEN.

Is it priest Black that he shall have by him  
When they do come?

3RD CITIZEN.

Ah! by God's leave, not so;  
If the knave show us his peeled onion's head  
And that damned flagging jowl of his—

2ND CITIZEN.

Nay, sirs,

Take heed of words; moreover, please it you,  
This man hath no pope's part in him.

3RD CITIZEN.

I say

That if priest whore's-friend with the lewd thief's  
cheek

Show his foul blinking face to shame all ours,  
It goes back fouler; well, one day hell's fire  
Will burn him black indeed.

A WOMAN.

What kind of man?

'Tis yet great pity of him if he be  
Goodly enow for this queen's paramour.  
A French lord overseas? what doth he here,  
With Scotch folk here?

1ST CITIZEN.

Fair mistress, I think well  
He doth so at some times that I were fain  
To do as well.

THE WOMAN.

Nay, then he will not die.

1ST CITIZEN.

Why, see you, if one eat a piece of bread  
Baked as it were a certain prophet's way,  
Not upon coals, now—you shall apprehend—  
If defiled bread be given a man to eat,  
Being thrust into his mouth, why he shall eat,  
And with good hap shall eat; but if now, say,  
One steal this, bread and beastliness and all,  
When scarcely for pure hunger flesh and bone  
Cleave one to other—why, if he steal to eat,  
Be it even the filthiest feeding—though the man  
Be famine-flayed of flesh and skin, I say  
He shall be hanged.

3RD CITIZEN.

Nay, stolen said you, sir?  
See, God bade eat abominable bread,  
And freely was it eaten—for a sign  
This, for a sign—and doubtless as did God,

So may the devil; bid one eat freely and live,  
Not for a sign.

2ND CITIZEN.

Will you think thus of her?  
But wherefore should they get this fellow slain  
If he be clear toward her?

3RD CITIZEN.

Sir, one must see  
The day comes when a woman sheds her sin  
As a bird moults; and she being shifted so,  
The old mate of her old feather pecks at her  
To get the right bird back; then she being stronger  
Picks out his eyes—eh?

2ND CITIZEN.

Like enough to be;  
But if it be—Is not one preaching there  
With certain folk about him?

1ST CITIZEN.

Yea, the same

Who preached a month since from Ezekiel  
Concerning these twain—this our queen that is  
And her that was, and is not now so much  
As queen over hell's worm.

3RD CITIZEN.

Ay, said he not,  
This was Aholah, the first one of these,  
Called sisters only for a type—being twain,  
Twain Maries, no whit Nazarene? the first  
Bred out of Egypt like the water-worm  
With sides in wet green places baked with slime  
And festered flesh that steams against the sun;  
A plague among all people, and a type  
Set as a flake upon a leper's fell.

1ST CITIZEN.

Yea, said he, and unto her the men went in,  
The men of Pharaoh's, beautiful with red  
And with red gold, fair foreign-footed men,  
The bountiful fair men, the courteous men,  
The delicate men with delicate feet, that went

Curling their small beards Agag-fashion, yea  
Pruning their mouths to nibble words behind  
With pecking at God's skirts—small broken oaths  
Fretted to shreds between most dainty lips,  
And underbreath some praise of Ashtaroth  
Sighed laughingly.

2ND CITIZEN:

Was he not under guard  
For the good word?

1ST CITIZEN.

Yea, but now forth again—  
And of the latter said he—there being two,  
The first Aholah, which interpreted—

3RD CITIZEN.

But, of this latter?

1ST CITIZEN.

Well, of her he said  
How she made letters for Chaldean folk

And men that came forth of the wilderness  
And all her sister's chosen men ; yea, she  
Kept not her lip from any sin of hers  
But multiplied in whoredoms toward all these  
That hate God mightily ; for these, he saith,  
These are the fair French people, and these her kin  
Sought out of England with her love-letters  
To bring them to her kiss of love ; and thus  
With a prayer made that God would break such love  
Ended some while ; then crying out for strong wrath  
Spake with a great voice after : This is she,  
Yea the lewd woman, yea the same woman  
That gat bruised breasts in Egypt, when strange  
men

Swart from great suns, foot-burnt with angry soils  
And strewn with sand of gaunt Chaldean miles,  
Poured all their love upon her : she shall drink  
The Lord's cup of derision that is filled  
With drunkenness and sorrow, great of sides  
And deep to drink in till the dreg drips out :  
Yea, and herself with the twain shards thereof  
Pluck off her breasts ; so said he.

4TH CITIZEN.

See that stir—

Are not they come?

3RD CITIZEN.

There wants an hour of them.  
Draw near and let us hearken; he will speak  
Surely some word of this.

2ND CITIZEN.

What saith he now?

THE PREACHER.

The mercy of a harlot is a sword  
And her mouth sharper than a flame of fire.

Gifted by Sri Basanti Ballav Sen  
10, Mathur Sen Garden Lane  
Calcutta—7000 6  
NOT EXCHANGEABLE AND  
NOT SALABLE. X 2



SCENE II.—*In Prison.*

CHASTELARD.

So here my time shuts up ; and the last light  
Has made the last shade in the world for me.  
The sunbeam that was narrow like a leaf  
Has turned a hand, and the hand stretched to an arm,  
And the arm has reached the dust on the floor, and  
made

A maze of motes with paddling fingers. Well,  
I knew not that a man so sure to die  
Could care so little ; a bride-night's lustiness  
Leaps in my veins as light fire under a wind :  
As if I felt a kindling beyond death  
Of some new joys far outside of me yet ;  
Sweet sound, sweet smell and touch of things far out  
Sure to come soon. I wonder will death be  
Even all it seems now ? or the talk of hell  
And wretched changes of the worn-out soul

Nailed to decaying flesh, shall that be true?  
Or is this like the forethought of deep sleep  
Felt by a tired man? Sleep were good enough—  
Shall sleep be all? But I shall not forget  
For any sleep this love bound upon me—  
For any sleep or quiet ways of death.  
Ah, in my weary dusty space of sight  
Her face will float with heavy scents of hair  
And fire of subtle amorous eyes, and lips  
More hot than wine, full of sweet wicked words  
Babbled against mine own lips, and long hands  
Spread out, and pale bright throat and pale bright  
breasts,  
Fit to make all men mad. I do believe  
This fire shall never quite burn out to the ash  
And leave no heat and flame upon my dust  
For witness where a man's heart was burnt up.  
For all Christ's work this Venus is not quelled,  
But reddens at the mouth with blood of men,  
Sucking between small teeth the sap o' the veins,  
Dabbling with death her little tender lips—  
A bitter beauty, poisonous-pearled mouth.

I am not fit to live but for love's sake,  
 So I were best die shortly. Ah, fair love,  
 Fair fearful Venus made of deadly foam,  
 I shall escape you somehow with my death—  
 Your splendid supple body and mouth on fire  
 And Paphian breath that bites the lips with heat.  
 I had best die.

*Enter MARY BEATON.*

What, is my death's time come,  
 And you the friend to make death kind to me ?  
 'Tis sweetly done ; for I was sick for this.

MARY BEATON.

Nay, but see here ; nay, for you shall not die :  
 She has reprieved you ; look, her name to that,  
 A present respite ; I was sure of her :  
 You are quite safe : here, take it in your hands :  
 I am faint with the end of pain. Read there.

CHASTELARD.

Reprieve ?

Wherefore reprieve ? Who has done this to me ?

MARY BEATON.

I never feared but God would have you live,  
Or I knew well God must have punished me ;  
But I feared nothing, had no sort of fear.  
What makes you stare upon the seal so hard ?  
Will you not read now ?

CHASTELARD.

A reprieve of life—  
Reprieving me from living. Nay, by God,  
I count one death a bitter thing enough.

MARY BEATON.

See what she writes ; your love ; for love of you ;  
Out of her love ; a word to save your life :  
But I knew this too though you love me not :  
She is your love ; I knew that : yea, by heaven.

•

CHASTELARD.

You knew I had to live and be reprieved :  
Say I were bent to die now ?

MARY BEATON.

Do not die,  
 For her sweet love's sake ; not for pity of me,  
 You would not bear with life for me one hour ;  
 But for hers only.

CHASTELARD.

Nay, I love you well,  
 I would not hurt you for more lives than one.  
 But for this fair-faced paper of reprieve,  
 We'll have no riddling to make death shift sides :  
 Look, here ends one of us. [Tearing it.]

For her I love,  
 She will not anger heaven with slaying me ;  
 For me, I am well quit of loving her ;  
 For you, I pray you be well comforted,  
 Seeing in my life no man gat good by me  
 And by my death no hurt is any man's.

MARY BEATON.

And I that loved you ? nay, I loved you ; nay,  
 Why should your like be pitied when they love ?

Her hard heart is not yet so hard as yours,  
Nor God's hard heart. I care not if you die.  
These bitter madmen are not fit to live.  
I will not have you touch me, speak to me,  
Nor take farewell of you. See you die well,  
Or death will play with shame for you, and win,  
And laugh you out of life. I am right glad  
I never am to see you any more,  
For I should come to hate you easily ;  
I would not have you live. [*Erit.*

CHASTELARD.

She has cause enow.

I would this wretched waiting had an end,  
For I wax feebler than I was: God knows  
I had a mind once to have saved this flesh  
And made life one with shame. It marvels me  
This girl that loves me should desire so much  
To have me sleep with shame for bedfellow  
A whole life's space; she would be glad to die  
To escape such life. It may be too her love  
Is but an amorous quarrel with herself,

Not love of me but her own wilful soul ;  
Then she will live and be more glad of this  
Than girls of their own will and their heart's love  
Before love mars them: so God go with her !  
For mine own love—I wonder will she come  
Sad at her mouth a little, with drawn cheeks  
And eyelids wrinkled up? or hot and quick  
To lean her head on mine and leave her lips  
Deep in my neck? For surely she must come;  
And I should fare the better to be sure  
What she will do. But as it please my sweet;  
For some sweet thing she must do if she come,  
Seeing how I have to die. Now three years since  
This had not seemed so good an end for me;  
But in some wise all things wear round betimes  
And wind up well. Yet doubtless she might take  
A will to come my way and hold my hands  
And kiss me some three kisses, throat, mouth, eyes,  
And say some soft three words to soften death:  
I do not see how this should break her ease.  
Nay, she will come to get her warrant back:  
By this no doubt she is sorely penitent,

Her fit of angry mercy well blown out  
And her wits cool again. She must have chafed  
A great while through for anger to become  
So like pure pity; they must have fretted her  
Nigh mad for anger: or it may be mistrust,  
She is so false; yea, to my death I think  
She will not trust me; alas the hard sweet heart!  
As if my lips could hurt her any way  
But by too keenly kissing of her own.  
Ah false poor sweet fair lips that keep no faith,  
They shall not catch mine false or dangerous;  
They must needs kiss me one good time, albeit  
They love me not at all. Lo, here she comes,  
For the blood leaps and catches at my face;  
There go her feet and tread upon my heart;  
Now shall I see what way I am to die.

*Enter the QUEEN.*

QUEEN.

What, is one here? Speak to me for God's sake:  
Where are you lain?



CHASTELARD.

Here, madam, at your hand.

QUEEN.

Sweet lord, what sore pain have I had for you  
And been most patient!—Nay, you are not bound.  
If you be gentle to me, take my hand.  
Do you not hold me the worst heart in the world?  
Nay, you must needs; but say not yet you do.  
I am worn so weak I know not how I live:  
Reach me your hand.

CHASTELARD.

Take comfort and good heart:  
All will find end; this is some grief to you,  
But you shall overlive it. Come, fair love;  
Be of fair cheer: I say you have done no wrong.

QUEEN.

I will not be of cheer: I have done a thing  
That will turn fire and burn me. Tell me not;  
If you will do me comfort, whet your sword.

But if you hate me, tell me of soft things,  
For I hate these, and bitterly. Look up;  
Am I not mortal to be gazed upon?

CHASTELARD.

Yea, mortal, and not hateful.

QUEEN.

O lost heart!

Give me some mean to die by.

CHASTELARD.

Sweet, enough.

You have made no fault; life is not worth a  
world

That you should weep to take it: would mine  
were,

And I might give you a world-worthier gift  
Than one poor head that love has made a spoil;

Take it for jest, and weep not: let me go.

And think I died of chance or malady.

Nay, I die well; one dies not best abed.

QUEEN.

My warrant to reprieve you—that you saw?  
That came between your hands?

CHASTELARD.

Yea, not long since.

It seems you have no will to let me die.

QUEEN.

Alas, you know I wrote it with my heart,  
Out of pure love; and since you were in bonds  
I have had such grief for love's sake and my heart's—  
Yea, by my life I have—I could not choose  
But give love way a little. Take my hand;  
You know it would have pricked my heart's blood  
out  
To write reprieve with.

CHASTELARD.

Sweet, your hands are kind;  
Lay them about my neck, upon my face,  
And tell me not of writing.

QUEEN.

Nay, by heaven,  
I would have given you mine own blood to drink  
If that could heal you of your soul-sickness.  
Yea, they know that, they curse me for your sake,  
Rail at my love—would God their heads were lopped  
And we twain left together this side death!  
But look you, sweet, if this my warrant hold  
You are but dead and shamed; for you must die,  
And they will slay you shamefully by force  
Even in my sight.

CHASTELARD.

Faith, I think so they will.

QUEEN.

Nay, they would slay me too, cast stones at me,  
Drag me alive—they have eaten poisonous words,  
They are mad and have no shame.

CHASTELARD.

Ay, like enough.

QUEEN.

Would God my heart were greater ; but God wot  
I have no heart to bear with fear and die.  
Yea, and I cannot help you : or I know  
I should be nobler, bear a better heart :  
But as this stands—I pray you for good love,  
As you hold honour a costlier thing than life—

CHASTELARD.

Well ?

QUEEN.

Nay, I would not be denied for shame ;  
In brief, I pray you give me that again.

CHASTELARD.

What, my reprieve ?

QUEEN.

Even so ; deny me not,  
For your sake mainly : yea, by God you know  
How fain I were to die in your death's stead.  
For your name's sake. This were no need to swear.

Lest we be mocked to death with a reprieve,  
And so both die, being shamed. What, shall I  
swear?

What, if I kiss you? must I pluck it out?  
You do not love me: no; nor honour. Come,  
I know you have it about you: give it me.

CHASTELARD.

I cannot yield you such a thing again;  
Not as I had it.

QUEEN.

A coward? what shift now?  
Do such men make such cravens?

CHASTELARD.

Chide me not:  
Pity me that I cannot help my heart.

QUEEN.

Heaven mend mine eyes that took you for a man!  
What, is it sewn into your flesh? take heed—  
Nay, but for shame—what have you done with it?

CHASTELARD.

Why, there it lies, torn up.

QUEEN.

God help me, sir!

Have you done this?

CHASTELARD.

Yea, sweet; what should I do?

Did I not know you to the bone, my sweet?

God speed you well! you have a goodly lord.

QUEEN.

My love, sweet love, you are more fair than he,

Yea, fairer many times: I love you much,

Sir, know you that?

CHASTELARD.

I think I know that well.

Sit here a little till I feel you through

In all my breath and blood for some sweet while.

O gracious body that mine arms have had,

And hair my face has felt on it ! grave eyes  
And low thick lids that keep since years ago  
In the blue sweet of each particular vein  
Some special print of me ! I am right glad  
That I must never feel a bitterer thing  
Than your soft curled-up shoulder and amorous  
arms

From this time forth ; nothing can hap to me  
Less good than this for all my whole life through.  
I would not have some new pain after this  
Come spoil the savour. O, your round bird's throat,  
More soft than sleep or singing ; your calm cheeks,  
Turned bright, turned wan with kisses hard and  
hot ;

The beautiful colour of your deep curved hands,  
Made of a red rose that had changed to white ;  
That mouth mine own holds half the sweetness of,  
Yea, my heart holds the sweetness of it, whence  
My life began in me ; mine that ends here  
Because you have no mercy, nay you know  
You never could have mercy. My fair love,  
Kiss me again, God loves you not the less ;



Why should one woman have all goodly things?  
You have all beauty; let mean women's lips  
Be pitiful, and speak truth: they will not be  
Such perfect things as yours. Be not ashamed  
That hands not made like these that snare men's  
souls  
Should do men good, give alms, relieve men's pain;  
You have the better, being more fair than they,  
They are half foul, being rather good than fair;  
You are quite fair: to be quite fair is best.  
Why, two nights hence I dreamed that I could see  
In through your bosom under the left flower,  
And there was a round hollow, and at heart  
A little red snake sitting, without spot,  
That bit—like this, and sucked up sweet—like  
this,  
And curled its lithe light body right and left,  
And quivered like a woman in act to love.  
Then there was some low fluttered talk i' the lips,  
Faint sound of soft fierce words caressing them—  
Like a fair woman's when her love gets away.  
Ah, your old kiss—I know the ways of it:

Let the lips cling a little. Take them off,  
And speak some word or I go mad with love.

QUEEN.

Will you not have my chaplain come to you? .

CHASTELARD.

Some better thing of yours—some handkerchief,  
Some fringe of scarf to make confession to—  
You had some book about you that fell out—

QUEEN.

A little written book of Ronsard's rhymes,  
His gift, I wear in there for love of him—  
See, here between our feet.

CHASTELARD.

Ay, my old lord's—  
The sweet chief poet, my dear friend long since?  
Give me the book. Lo you, this verse of his:  
*With coming lilies in late April came  
Her body, fashioned whiter for their shame;*

*And roses, touched with blood since Adon bled,  
From her fair colour filled their lips with red :*  
A goodly praise : I could not praise you so.  
I read that while your marriage-feast went on.  
Leave me this book, I pray you : I would read  
The hymn of death here over ere I die ;  
I shall know soon how much he knew of death  
When that was written. One thing I know now,  
I shall not die with half a heart at least,  
Nor shift my face, nor weep my fault alive,  
Nor swear if I might live and do new deeds  
I would do better. Let me keep the book.

## QUEEN.

Yea, keep it : as would God you had kept your life  
Out of mine eyes and hands. I am wrung to the  
heart :  
This hour feels dry and bitter in my mouth,  
As if its sorrow were my body's food  
More than my soul's. There are bad thoughts in me—  
Most bitter fancies biting me like birds  
That tear each other. Suppose you need not die ?

CHASTELARD.

You know I cannot live for two hours more.

Our fate was made thus ere our days were  
made :

Will you fight fortune for so small a grief?

But for one thing I were full fain of death.

QUEEN.

What thing is that ?

CHASTELARD.

None need to name the thing.

Why, what can death do with me fit to fear ?

For if I sleep I shall not weep awake ;

Or if their saying be true of things to come,

Though hell be sharp, in the worst ache of it

I shall be eased so God will give me back

• Sometimes one golden gracious sight of you—

The aureole woven flowerlike through your hair,

And in your lips the little laugh as red

As when it came upon a kiss and ceased,

• Touching my mouth.

QUEEN.

As I do now, this way,  
With my heart after : would I could shed tears,  
Tears should not fail when the heart shudders  
so.

But your bad thought ?

CHASTELARD.

Well, such a thought as this :  
It may be, long time after I am dead,  
For all you are, you may see bitter days ;  
God may forget you or be wroth with you :  
Then shall you lack a little help of me,  
And I shall feel your sorrow touching you,  
A happy sorrow, though I may not touch :  
I that would fain be turned to flesh again,  
Fain get back life to give up life for you,  
To shed my blood for help, that long ago  
You shed and were not holpen : and your heart  
Will ache for help and comfort, yea for love,  
And find less love than mine—for I do think  
You never will be loved thus in your life.

QUEEN.

It may be man will never love me more ;  
For I am sure I shall not love man twice.

CHASTELARD.

I know not : men must love you in life's spite ;  
For you will always kill them ; man by man  
Your lips will bite them dead ; yea, though you  
would,  
You shall not spare one ; all will die of you ;  
I cannot tell what love shall do with these,  
But I for all my love shall have no might  
To help you more, mine arms and hands no  
power  
To fasten on you more. This cleaves my heart,  
That they shall never touch your body more.  
But for your grief—you will not have to grieve ;  
For being in such poor eyes so beautiful  
It must needs be as God is more than I  
So much more love he hath of you than mine ;  
Yea, God shall not be bitter with my love,  
Seeing she is so sweet.

QUEEN.

Ah my sweet fool,

Think you when God will ruin me for sin  
My face of colour shall prevail so much  
With him, so soften the toothed iron's edge  
To save my throat a scar? nay, I am sure  
I shall die somehow sadly.

CHASTELARD.

This is pure grief;

The shadow of your pity for my death,  
Mere foolishness of pity: all sweet moods  
Throw out such little shadows of themselves,  
Leave such light fears behind. You, die like me?  
Stretch your throat out that I may kiss all round  
Where mine shall be cut through: suppose my mouth  
The axe-edge to bite so sweet a throat in twain  
With bitter iron, should not it turn soft  
As lip is soft to lip?

QUEEN.

I am quite sure

I shall die sadly some day, Chastelard ;  
I am quite certain.

CHASTELARD.

Do not think such things ;  
Lest all my next world's memories of you be  
As heavy as this thought.

QUEEN.

I will not grieve you ;  
Forgive me that my thoughts were sick with grief.  
What can I do to give you ease at heart ?  
Shall I kiss now ? I pray you have no fear  
But that I love you.

CHASTELARD.

Turn your face to me ;  
I do not grudge your face this death of mine ;  
It is too fair—by God, you are too fair.  
What noise is that ?

QUEEN.

Can the hour be through so soon ?



I bade them give me but a little hour.

Ah! I do love you! such brief space for love!

I am yours all through, do all your will with me;

What if we lay and let them take us fast,

Lips grasping lips? I dare do anything.

• CHASTELARD.

Show better cheer: let no man see you mazed;

Make haste and kiss me; cover up your throat

Lest one see tumbled lace and prate of it.

*Enter the Guard: MURRAY, DARNLEY, MARY HAMILTON*

*MARY BEATON, and others with them.*

DARNLEY.

Sirs, do your charge; let him not have much time.

MARY HAMILTON.

Peace, lest you chafe the queen: look, her brows bend.

CHASTELARD.

Lords, and all you come hither for my sake,

If while my life was with me like a friend  
That I must now forget the friendship of,  
I have done a wrong to any man of you,  
As it may be by fault of mine I have ;  
Of such an one I crave for courtesy  
He will now cast it from his mind and heed  
Like a dead thing ; considering my dead fault  
Worth no remembrance further than my death.  
This for his gentle honour and goodwill  
I do beseech him, doubting not to find  
Such kindness if he be nobly made  
And of his birth a courteous race of man.  
You, my lord James, if you have aught toward me—  
Or you, Lord Darnley—I dare fear no jot,  
Whate'er this be wherein you were aggrieved,  
But you will pardon all for gentleness.

DARNLEY.

For my part—yea, well, if the thing stand thus,  
As you must die—one would not bear folk hard—  
And if the rest shall hold it honourable,  
Why, I do pardon you.

MURRAY.

Sir, in all things  
We find no cause to speak of you but well :  
For all I see, save this your deadly fault,  
I hold you for a noble perfect man.

CHASTELARD.

I thank you, fair lord, for your nobleness.  
You likewise, for the courtesy you have  
I give you thanks, sir ; and to all these lords  
That have not heart to load me at my death.  
Last, I beseech of the best queen of men  
And royallest fair lady in the world  
To pardon me my grievous mortal sin  
Done in such great offence of her : for, sirs,  
If ever since I came between her eyes  
She hath beheld me other than I am  
Or shown her honour other than it is,  
Or, save in royal faultless courtesies,  
Used me with favour ; if by speech or face,  
By salutation or by tender eyes,  
She hath made a way for my desire to live,

Given ear to me or boldness to my breath ;  
I pray God cast me forth before day cease  
Even to the heaviest place there is in hell.  
Yea, if she be not stainless toward all men,  
I pray this axe that I shall die upon  
May cut me off body and soul from heaven.  
Now for my soul's sake I dare pray to you ;  
Forgive me, madam.

QUEEN.

Yea, I do, fair sir :  
With all my heart in all I pardon you.

CHASTELARD.

God thank you for great mercies. Lords, set hence ;  
I am right loth to hold your patience here ;  
I must not hold much longer any man's.  
Bring me my way and bid me fare well forth.

*[As they pass out the QUEEN stays MARY BEATON.]*

QUEEN.

Hark hither, sweet. Get back to Holyrood

And take Carmichael with you : go both up  
In some chief window whence the squares lie clear—  
Seem not to know what I shall do—mark that—  
And watch how things fare under. Have good cheer ;  
You do not think now I can let him die ?  
Nay, this were shameful madness if you did,  
And I should hate you.

RY BEATON.

Pray you love me, madam,  
And swear you love me and will let me live,  
That I may die the quicker.

QUEEN.

Nay, sweet, see,  
Nay, you shall see, this must not seem devised ;  
I will take any man with me, and go ;  
Yea, for pure hate of them that hate him : yea,  
Lay hold upon the headsman and bid strike  
Here on my neck ; if they will have him die,  
Why, I will die too : queens have died this way  
For less things than his love is. Nay, I know

SCENE II.]

CHASTELARD.

209

They want no blood; I will bring swords to boot  
For dear love's rescue though half earth were slain;  
What should men do with blood? Stand fast at  
watch;

For I will be his ransom if I die.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Upper Chamber in Holyrood.*

MARY BEATON *seated* : MARY CARMICHAEL *at  
a window.*

MARY BEATON.

Do you see nothing ?

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Nay, but swarms of men  
And talking women gathered in small space,  
Flapping their gowns and gaping with fools' eyes :  
And a thin ring round one that seems to speak,  
Holding his hands out eagerly ; no more.

MARY BEATON.

Why, I hear more, I hear men shout *The queen.*

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Nay, no cries yet.

MARY BEATON.

Ah, they will cry out soon  
When she comes forth; they should cry out on  
her;

I hear their crying in my heart. Nay, sweet,  
Do not you hate her? all men, if God please,  
Shall hate her one day; yea, one day no doubt  
I shall worse hate her.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Pray you, be at peace;  
You hurt yourself: she will be merciful;  
What, could you see a true man slain for  
you?

I think I could not; it is not like our hearts  
To have such hard sides to them.

MARY BEATON.

O, not you,  
And I could knowise; there's some blood in her  
That does not run to mercy as ours doth:



That fair face and the cursed heart in her  
Made keener than a knife for manslaying  
Can bear strange things.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Peace, for the people come.

Ah—Murray, hooded over half his face  
With plucked-down hat, few folk about him, eyes  
Like a man angered ; Darnley after him,  
Holding our Hamilton above her wrist,  
His mouth put near her hair to whisper with—  
And she laughs softly, looking at his feet.

MARY BEATON.

She will not live long ; God hath given her  
Few days and evil, full of hate and love,  
I see well now.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Hark, there's their cry—*The queen !*  
*Fair life and long, and good days to the queen.*

MARY BEATON.

Yea, but God knows. I feel such patience here  
As I were sure in a brief while to die.

MARY CARMICHAEL.,

She bends and laughs a little, graciously,  
And turns half, talking to I know not whom—  
A big man with great shoulders; ah, the face,  
You get his face now—wide and dusky, yea  
The youth burnt out of it. A goodly man,  
Thewed mightily and sunburnt to the bone;  
Doubtless he was away in banishment,  
Or kept some march far off.

MARY BEATON.

Still you see nothing?

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Yea, now they bring him forth with a great noise,  
The folk all shouting and men thrust about  
Each way from him.

MARY BEATON.

Ah, Lord God, bear with me,  
Help me to bear a little with my love  
For thine own love, or give me some quick death.  
Do not come down ; I shall get strength again,  
Only my breath fails. Looks he sad or blithe ?  
Not sad I doubt yet.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Nay, not sad a whit,  
But like a man who losing gold or lands  
Should lose a heavy sorrow ; his face set,  
The eyes not curious to the right or left,  
And reading in a book, his hands unbound,  
With short fleet smiles. The whole place catches  
breath,  
Looking at him ; she seems at point to speak  
Now she lies back, and laughs, with her brows drawn  
And her lips drawn too. Now they read his crime—  
I see the laughter tightening her chin :  
Why do you bend your body and draw breath ?

They will not slay him in her sight; I am sure  
She will not have him slain.

MARY BEATON.

Forth, and fear not:

I was just praying to myself—one word,  
A prayer I have to say for her to God  
If he will mind it.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Now he looks her side;  
Something he says, if one could hear thus far:  
She leans out, lengthening her throat to hear  
And her eyes shining.

MARY BEATON.

Ah, I had no hope:  
Yea thou-God knowest that I had no hope.  
Let it end quickly.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Now his eyes are wide

And his smile great ; and like another smile  
The blood fills all his face. Her cheek and neck  
Work fast and hard ; she must have pardoned him,  
He looks so merrily. Now he comes forth  
Out of that ring of people and kneels down ;  
Ah, how the helve and edge of the great axe  
Turn in the sunlight as the man shifts hands—  
It must be for a show : because she sits  
And hardly moves her head this way—I see  
Her chin and lifted lips. Now she stands up,  
Puts out her hand, and they fall muttering ;  
Ah !

MARY BEATON.

It is done now ?

MARY CARMICHAEL.

For God's love, stay there ;  
Do not look out. Nay, he is dead by this ;  
But gather up yourself from off the floor ;  
Will she die too ? I shut mine eyes and heard—

Sweet, do not beat your face upon the ground.

Nay, he is dead and slain.

MARY BEATON.

What, slain indeed ?

I knew he would be slain the

neck :

I knew one must be smitten through the neck

To die so quick : if one were stabbed to the

heart,

He would die slower.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Will you behold him dead ?

MARY BEATON.

Yea : must a dead man not be looked upon

That living one was fain of ? give me way.

Lo you, what sort of hair this fellow had ;

The doomsman gathers it into his hand

To grasp the head by for all men to see ;

I never did that.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

For God's love, let me go.

MARY BEATON.

I think sometimes she must have held it so,  
Holding his head back, see you, by the hair  
To kiss his face, still lying in his arms.  
Ay, go and weep : it must be pitiful  
If one could see it. What is this they say ?  
*So perish the queen's traitors !* Yea, but so  
Perish the queen ! God, do thus much to her  
For his sake only : yea, for pity's sake  
Do thus much with her.

MARY CARMICHAEL.

Prithee come in with me :

Nay, come at once.

MARY BEATON.

If I should meet with her  
And spit upon her at her coming in——

But if I live then shall I see one day  
When God will smite her lying harlot's mouth—  
Surely I shall. Come, I will go with you;  
We will sit down together face to face  
Now, and keep silence; for this life is hard,  
And the end of it is quietness at last.  
Come, let us go: here is no word to say.

AN USHER.

Make way there for the lord of Bothwell; room—  
Place for my lord of Bothwell next the queen.

EXPLICIT.



LONDON :

x

SAVILL, EDWARDS AND CO., PRINTERS, CHANDOS STREET,  
COVENT GARDEN.

# ATALANTA.

By ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE.

Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 6s.

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN.

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"He has produced a dramatic poem which abounds from the first page to the last in the finest constituents of poetry—in imagination, fancy, feeling, sentiment, passion, and knowledge of the human heart and soul, combined with a dominant mastery over every species of verse, from the stately pomp of epic metre to the fluent sweetness of song. . . . He has something of that creative force which all great poets have had, whether they were Greek, Italian, or English—a native and inborn strength, which scholarship may mould, but can never originate. If, as we are given to understand, Mr. Swinburne is a young writer, we do not hesitate to assert that his volume is extraordinary, not simply for strength and vividness of imagination, but (what is far more remarkable with inexperience) for maturity of power, for completeness of self-control, for absolute mastery over the turbulent forces of adolescent genius. . . . That strange, sad, hopeless mood in which the ancient Greek regarded the mysteries of life and death—that austere setting of the soul against the iron will of destiny which is so full of an immense dignity and pathos—that divinely sorrowful despair of things which can suffer to the miserable end, and sees no after compensation, and yet goes down to death in majesty, and beauty, and power—these characteristics of the old Greek faith, or want of faith, or whatsoever we may call it, are reflected by Mr. Swinburne with amazing truth and discrimination. There are passages in his poem which seem to wring from the very roots of human experience the sharpest extract of our griefs."—LONDON REVIEW, 8th April, 1886.

"Mr. Swinburne has judged well in his choice of a subject. The legend of Calydon is one of the most beautiful in the whole compass of the Greek mythology; fresh, simple, romantic, solemn, and pathetic, yet without any of those horrors which shock us in the stories of Thebes or Argos—no Jocasta, no Thyestes, but figures full of heroic truth and nobleness, standing out in the clear bright light of the early morning of Greece. . . . A careful study of the Attic dramatists has enabled him to catch their manner, and to reproduce faithfully many of their turns of expression. The scholar is struck, every few

lines, by some phrase which he can fancy a direct translation from the Greek, while yet it is in its place both forcible and unaffected. The matter, although not really Greek in its essence, is thrown with great cleverness into a mould which almost beguiles us into forgetting the author, and imagining that we are listening to one of the contemporaries of Euripides who sought to copy the manner of Æschylus. . . . He is, indeed, never more happy than in painting nature, knowing and loving her well, and inspired by her beauty into a vivid force and fulness of expression."—SATURDAY REVIEW, 6th May, 1865.

"The passion of Althea is much the finest part of the play. The naturalism of maternal instinct struggling with the feeling of what is due to the shade of her mother and her brothers, goes far beyond the struggle in Antigone or Orestes. Out of many noble passages depicting this feeling we choose the last and most passionate—passionate beyond the limits of Greek passion, and too little ingrained with the Greek awe,—but still exceedingly fine."—SPECTATOR, April 15th, 1865.

"He is gifted with no small portion of the all-important divine fire, without which no man can hope to achieve poetic success; he possesses considerable powers of description, a keen eye for natural scenery, and a copious vocabulary of rich yet simple English. . . . We must now part from our author with cordial congratulations on the success with which he has achieved so difficult a task."—TIMES, June 6th, 1865.

"'Atalanta in Calydon' is the work of a poet. . . . Let our readers say whether they often meet with pictures lovelier in themselves or more truly Greek than those in the following invocation to Artemis. . . . Many strains equal to the above in force, beauty and rhythmical flow might be cited from the chorus. Those which set forth the brevity of man's life, and the darkness which enshrouds it, though almost irreverent in their impeachment of the gods, are singularly fine in expression. . . . We yet know not to what poet since Keats we could turn for a representation at once so large in its design and so graphic in its particulars. In the noble hyperbole of description which raises the bear into the veritable scourge of Artemis, there is imagination of the highest kind. A subject for many a painter to come—a grand word-picture, in which the influence of no contemporary can be traced. . . . In the fervour and beauty of his best passages we find no reflection of any modern writer. We must not close without a reference to the Greek lines, plaintive and full of classic grace, which the writer has prefixed to his work in honour of Walter Savage Landor."—ARTIFEX, April 1st, 1865.

"The choruses are so good, that it is difficult to praise them enough. Were our space unlimited, we would transfer them without abridgment to our columns; as it is not, we can only give a few extracts; but we may fairly assume that every one who cares for poetry of a truly high order will make himself familiar with Mr. Swinburne's drama. . . . As we listen to them they seem to set their hearts to a strange but grand music, which lingers long on the ear. Sometimes we are reminded of Æschylus in the lyric passages, but it is these movements of his verse and its wonderful music, that anything else which

strongly a resemblance. . . . Mr. Swinburne has lived with the great Affluent dramatists till his type of thought has somewhat assimilated to theirs, but he has learnt rather to sympathise with them as a contemporary artist, than to copy them as a modern student."—*READER, April 22nd, 1865.*

"Our extracts have shown that we much prefer to let Mr. Swinburne present his own marvellous earnestness and rich delivery of manner than to essay in this, our necessarily brief review, a lengthened criticism or analysis of such a remarkable work of promise. Apart from the serious endeavour and high devoir to which he has devoted himself in his first appeal to public attention, we would remark the sensuousness, brilliancy, and fervour of the lyrics, which here and there relieve the more sombre and sterner phases of the poem. . . . Assuredly this is the choicest and most complete effort which has for a long time announced that a scholar and a poet has come amongst us."—*MORNING HERALD, April 27th, 1865.*

"One grave error, which Mr. Swinburne has almost entirely avoided, is the use of thoughts or expressions which, current now, would be out of place in a tragedy of Greece. He has, with rare artistic feeling, let scarcely a trace appear of modern life. The Poem is all alive with the life of a classic past. . . . The whole play is instinct with power of varied kinds."—*EXAMINER, July 15th, 1865.*

"We have before said Mr. Swinburne is a subtle analyst of human motive, and possesses great tragic power. The present work shows him to have imagination of the highest order, wonderful play of fancy, and a complete command over every form of versification. . . . He has command of imagery as great as his control of language. He has power which rises to sublimity; passion which deepens into terror; daring which soars beyond reach or control. . . . We have said enough to convince our readers that we regard this poem as a worthy companion to 'Chastelard,' and look upon its author as permanently enrolled among great English poets."—*SUNDAY TIMES, December 31st, 1865.*

"These lines are marked by that melancholy that always characterizes the poetry in proportion to the absence of faith. . . . Could he have faith, of which there is not a trace throughout the poem, except the miserable vacuum created by its absence, he might do wonders as a poet."—*THE TABLET, August 12th, 1865.*

"As to the tragedy itself, we find in it everything to praise and nothing to censure. It is one of the few really great poems that have been contributed to English literature since the death of Shelley; and it entitles its author at once to a place among the great poets of his country. . . . A tragedy on the Greek model, which is remarkable for its intense emotional vitality, the richness and reality of its imaginative images, the perfect execution and finish of its construction, and the combined stateliness, severity, and music of its diction."—*ALBION, December 11th, 1865.*

"Not the least remarkable and interesting paper of this volume are those to

which the author has consigned a tribute of veneration to the memory of Walter Savage Landor, in two compositions of Greek elegiac verse. The first is a dedication addressed to Landor while living, in the form of a valediction, on the occasion of his last return to Italy; the second, much the longer of the two, an elegy on his death. No one who has felt how the spirit of the Æschylean tragedy breathes through the English poem, will have been surprised to find—rather, every such reader would have been disappointed if he had not found—that Mr. Swinburne's thoughts move with scarcely less ease and freedom on a modern theme (if indeed Landor may be properly said to belong to his own age so much as to that of Pericles and Augustus) in the language and measures of Callinus and Mimnermus than in his native speech. Of the Greek we will only say that it is not that of a Cambridge prize ode, but something much better—even if more open to minute criticism—than the best of such; not in the least like a cento of dainty classical phrases, but the fresh original gushing of a true poetical vein, nourished by a mastery of the foreign language, like that which Landor himself in his Latin poems . . . . It is evidently the produce, not of the tender lyrical faculty which so often waxes on sensitive youth and afterwards fades into the light of common day, nor even of the classical culture of which it is itself a signal illustration, but of an affluent and apprehensive genius, which, with ordinary care and fair fortune, will take a foremost place in English literature. . . . His abstinence from all overdrawn conceits is remarkable in a young poet of any time, and his careful avoidance of the shadowy border land of metaphysics and poetry in which so many versifiers of our own day take refuge from the open scrutiny of critical sunlight, deserve full praise and recognition."—EDINBURGH REVIEW July, 1865.

---

## CHASTELARD.

BY ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE

Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 7s.

JOHN CAMDEN HORNER.

---

### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The portraits of Mary and of Chastelard are exaggerated, but only as Michael Angelo's heroic statues are. The constant steady tenderness of Chastelard's affection, which, mad as it is, lies deeper than madness, and wild as it is, burns always without flame, is displayed in a way which is most masterly."

As for the Queen, we are quite of opinion that Mr. Swinburne has brought that woman to light again. It will not do, perhaps, to peer closely into her portrait as it lies in these pages; if we do, we become uneasily conscious of blotchy workmanship, with lights too sudden, and shades too deep, and broken harmonies of colour. But close the book, and look at the portrait reflected from it into the mind, and none was ever painted of her so true. It is a portrait which painters and historians alike have only confused; it awaited a poet's hand to this day, and now we have got it. So think we, at any rate, and in saying so we do not exhaust the praise which is due to the author of 'Chastelard.' The dramatic force of the scenes in the latter half of the poem remains to be applauded, but that, luckily for a critic who has come to the end of his tether, is a thing which can only be applauded and cannot be described; we give it our homage. But it is very much to the purpose of this article, that just when the poem becomes more dramatic its faults begin to disappear; and before we come to the admirable scene between Mary and Chastelard in prison, we are blinded to whatever remains. The fact seems to be that Mr. Swinburne is less a poet than a dramatist; it is certain that he is capable of writing in a way which entitles him to small consideration as the one, and to great consideration as the other. . . . But in any case it can never be denied that he is a true man of genius."—*PALL MALL GAZETTE, April 27th, 1866.*

"The two principal figures stand out boldly, and on them the poet has bestowed all the riches of his genius. . . . The scene in which, having sent for Chastelard, she talks to him in a strange wild mood between love and regretfulness, is extremely subtle and fine. . . . It will not be doubted by any one who has the pulse of poetry in his blood that this is noble writing—writing instinct with the highest spirit of the Elizabethan Muse. And in the speech of Chastelard, when waiting for the Queen in her chamber, we have something of the large, imperial style of Shakspeare himself. . . . The scene between Chastelard and the Queen in prison is also pervaded with the highest inspirations of impassioned poetry; and though the love-ravings of Chastelard almost pass the bounds commonly permitted to poets, the shadow of fate, lying dark and heavy over all, seems to cool and moderate the glow. In passages such as these, Mr. Swinburne again proves his right to take a permanent stand among our English poets. . . . Of power, he has abundance; of passion, perhaps more than enough; of poetry, in its fierce, luminous, and fiery shapes, a wonderful and prodigal richness. . . . Whatever his faults, however, he is a man of genius of the most unmistakable mark. We do not know when it has fallen to the lot of any poet to produce within one year two such plays as 'Atlantis in Calydon' and 'Chastelard'—dramas conceived and written in two totally distinct styles, and with marked success in both. . . . He has earned a conspicuous name with singular quickness, and we trust that even greater triumphs lie before him in his onward path."—*LONDON EXRTER, December 8th, 1866.* \*

"The choruses in 'Atlantis' were astonishing for their imaginative insight, their richness of imagery, their depth of impassioned thought, the nervous suppleness of their language, and the lyrical flow of their versification; and many of the

speeches of the characters were full of poetry and dramatic truth. In "Charlotte," again, we have a splendid example of the poetry that lies in vehement and absorbing passion; but there is some reason to fear that Mr. Swinburne is wanting in the higher beauty of moral dignity and sweetness."—*LONDON HERALD, December 30th, 1865.*

"We can only say that it abounds in passages of great poetic merit, and the passion of love is described with all that delicacy and vividness that can only be found in the writings of a poet endowed with extraordinary genius. Mr. Swinburne has well comprehended the character of Mary Stuart, and she is made to stand before the reader a reality, her nature being wonderfully well exhibited. Other characters are represented with marvellous distinctness, and give to the tragedy interest and vitality."—*PUBLIC OPINION, December 16th, 1865.*

"The style is so forcible that there is little that would render the play unfit for the stage, were it not for the great amount of amativeness which the parties have to display before they are disposed of."—*COURT CIRCULAR, December 23rd, 1865.*

"The picture with which this burst concludes, though too much elaborated, has undeniable grandeur. We could point out passages which, in a dramatic point of view, are yet finer. Those given to Mary Beaton—the only touching character in the play—often reach the height of tragic intensity. Nor is it to be disputed that Mr. Swinburne shows at times a keen insight into the subtleties of human motive, but his chief characters are out of the pale of our sympathy; besides being inherently vicious, the language will offend not only those who have reverence, but those who have taste."—*ATHENÆUM, December 23rd, 1865.*

"A tragedy—in which we think he best develops his genius. Once before we said we thought his genius essentially lyric, but he himself has convinced us, not of the contrary, but of the co-existence in him of the dramatic and lyric power."—*COURT JOURNAL, December 19th, 1865.*

"The poem, in fact, is morally repulsive, and all its gilding of fancy and feeling only makes the picture more revolting. . . . The dramatic power, the grace of the beauty of the tragedy no one can deny. . . . His insight into hidden human motives is marvellously indicated. Altogether, if the poem fails to please, that must be attributed to the subject and the author's mind of it, not to any lack of workmanship of the very highest and most delicate order."—*ATLANTIC, December 30th, 1865.*

"It is an unpleasant book, and one by all means to be kept out of the hands of the young and pure-minded, for the licentiousness of many of the images, and profanity of not a few of the sentiments are such as happily are not often found in English poetry. . . . We cannot doubt that the less scrupulous brethren of our Northern poets, would join us in denouncing with indignation and disgust such a lamentable prostitution of the English muse."—*JOHN BUCH, December 23rd, 1865.*

"There are two parts of the play deserving of special praise—the second act, and the storm scene of the fifth. It is in these, and more particularly in the latter, that Mr. Swinburne displays a combination of dramatic and poetic power beyond what is seen in anything that his pen has yet produced."—*THE*

not for their exquisite elegance of expression, these constant exhibitions of passion would deserve severe reprobation. . . . Regarding the work as a whole, we must thank Mr. Swinburne for a dramatic poem of great power, careful elaboration of plot, artistic disposition of scenes; for admirable descriptions of human emotion and passion; for terse, forcible, yet sweet expression, and a generally scrupulous melody of rhythm."—*READER, December 2nd, 1865.*

"Mr. Swinburne has written a tragedy, which not only is one of the most remarkable productions of modern days, but which in originality of conception and boldness of treatment has never been surpassed. The triumph which Mr. Swinburne has achieved in 'Chastelard' is the more noteworthy, as the splendid gifts of which its composition proclaims him the possessor are totally distinct from those which in 'Atalanta in Calydon' gained him a foremost position among modern poets. In the earlier production, amid all the sublime imagery and lyrical sweetness, the grace truly classic, the boldness of thought and the exquisite charm of verification which constituted it a work of accomplished and all but unrivalled beauty, there was no foreshadowing of the dramatic fire and

the weird and almost unholy power which characterize its successor. . . . From this point, where the interest has already reached what appears a climax, each situation is more dramatic and more stirring than the one preceding it. The skill with which—the passions being already at white heat—the action is lightened without anti-climax is absolutely wonderful. . . . The last few words we give in their integrity; no word of ours can add ought to their terrible ethos and dramatic force. With them, and without an added word, we shall include our notice of this most remarkable tragedy of modern times."—*SUNDAY INDEX, December 3rd, 1865.*

"Here, in his new poem of 'Chastelard,' is Mr. Algernon Swinburne writing French chansons of which Chastelard himself or Ronsard might have been proud. So good are they that by many they are imagined to be merely quotations, transcripts from the original French author. But there is no doubt they are Mr. Swinburne's own composition. Here are two which are exquisite in taste, feeling, and spirit."—*MORNING STAR, December 25th, 1865.*

"Here and there occur passages which we unhesitatingly affirm are not surpassed in the language."—*LIVERPOOL ALBION, January 6th, 1866.*

"The public to which Mr. Swinburne appeals will consist exclusively of those readers who enjoy a work of art for its own sake, and who care more for the power of the representation than for any worth in what is represented. . . . Mr. Swinburne has produced a poem which many may dislike but which none can condemn, which many will lay down unread but which few will read once only. It cannot be called an advance upon 'Atalanta,' for it is something totally different, except in its disregard of conventional proprieties, and its independence of the poetical habits of the age. There is the same richness without savdrianism of language, the same novelty without strangeness of expression, the same traditional sense of the indispensable duty of melody in verse, which some of our most pretentious poets either forget or disown. . . . The scene in the Queen's chamber is very beautiful, but ingenuously wicked as the rest. . . . For dis-



terity of force, both in feeling and language, this scene may rank with the masterpieces of our older drama. . . . The gyrations are so unexpected, and the changes so numerous, that in less masterly hands the effect would be rather that of a psychological puzzle than of a dramatic evolution. . . . It is impossible that this play should not highly raise Mr. Swinburne's reputation. There are artistic defects in it, but not to be mentioned beside the artistic merits. His preface to Moore's 'Selections from Byron' is another instance of the fact, too often forgotten, that there is no education for the writing of superior prose like the serious practice of poetry; and with this double power, Mr. Swinburne's future career must be an object of much interest to all who estimate aright the worth and weight of British literature in the intellectual and moral history of mankind."—*FORNIGHTLY REVIEW*, April 14th, 1895.

"He fills out this bold outline, and supplies missing links in the story, and imparts life and form and colour to the whole picture, and reproduces contemporaneous personages and scenery, and, with deep probing of human nature and fine play of imagination, unveils the pathetic tragedy that has so long slept hidden in the dry and trite historic page. The result is a masterpiece of literary art, whether contemplated as to conception of character, ideals of love and heroism, treatment of a grand and moving theme, majesty, beauty, and purity of style, or lesson to the heart and mind."—*LAM ALBION*, December 23rd, 1895.

"The story is vaguely and ineffectively presented. There is little to relieve the repulsive character of the whole tone of the play. It dwells pertinaciously and too warmly upon scenes which are neither noble, edifying, nor decent."—*BOSTON DAILY ADVERTISER*, December, 14th, 1895.

"We have but re-echoed the judgment of all competent critics, in saying that Swinburne rightfully ranks with the few great poets of this and of other ages. His present work is one of the finest artistic efforts which we have ever chanced to encounter. It has more human interest than his 'Atalanta in Calydon,' while it is couched in the same vigorous and splendid diction and 'is richly dight' with melodious and sweetly magnificent songs. . . . His portraiture is one of the simplest, most thoroughly elaborated, and most gorgeously coloured, in the whole wide range of British poetry."—*NEW YORK WEEKLY REVIEW*, December 9th, 1895.

"The sustained and elastic strength of the fourth act, in which the turns and windings of Mary's will as Chastelay's death are drawn out—her perplexity, apprehensions, contempt for a weak man and for a cruel unknighly man, fear of noble scorn, remorse for her love, vindictive bitterness against Darnley all shading one another over her mind, with the subtlest changes—make one of the most superb scenes for which a drama of character gives room. We feel that the writer is rejoicing in his own skill in unravelling the abstruse mysteries of a highly complex character. He exerts in his mastery over the Queen's rapid passage from one mood to another, and in the magic by which he can picture a world by means of a metaphor."—*SARVARY REVIEW*, New York, 1895.

# POEMS AND BALLADS.

By ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE.

Fcap. 8vo, pp. 350, cloth, 9s.

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEB.

*Selections from the VERY NUMEROUS  
OPINIONS OF THE PRESS  
(English and American).*

"Wherever there is any kind of true genius, we have no right to drive it mad by ridicule or invective; we must deal with it wisely, justly, fairly. Some of the passages which have been selected as evidence of (the poet's) plain speaking, have been wantonly misunderstood. The volume, as a whole, is neither profane nor indecent. A little more clothing in our *sacrosanct climate* might perhaps have been attended with advantage. . . . To us this volume, for the first time, conclusively settles that Mr. Swinburne is not a mere brilliant rhetorician or melodious twangler of another man's lyre, but authentically a poet."—FRANK'S MAGAZINE, Nov. 1883.

"There is enough in the volume to have made the fortune of most members of his craft."—THE SCOTSMAN.

"The outcry that has been made over his last published volume of 'Poems and Ballads' is not very creditable to his critics. . . . Old Testament Poetry has fastened upon his imagination quite as strongly as the sublime fatalism of the old Greek dramatists. . . . There is a terrible earnestness about these books. . . . But a book thus dealing with the desire of the flesh should have been denounced as prodigal because it does not paint the outside of the Sodom's apple of like colour of the ashes that it shows within, says little indeed for the thoroughness of its argument."—EXAMINER.

"Coarse animalism, draped with the most seductive lines of art and romance. We will not analyse the poems; we will not even pretend to give the reasons upon which our opinion is based." For sale by Housman & Co., Broadway.—ALBANY JOURNAL.

"The critics seem to be agreed in seeing upon what deserves reprobation without noticing what deserves respect. In this way he has been either blindly or very unfairly dealt with."—**PALL MALL GAZETTE.**

"The theatre of Mr. Swinburne is co-extensive with this knowledge and experience. It will expand, and there is no fear of his being denied an audience crushed by a critique. He is more likely to realize the boast of Nelson, finding himself unmentioned in the 'Gazette,' declared a day would come when he should have one for himself. We are not in the secret of his own defence, or reappearance. He may or may not withdraw poems which have been imputed by designing criticism with a prurieny which was not their own."—**REAS**

"In every page of these poems we meet with evidences of the fire, the fullness and the licence of youth. Swinburne is a genuine bard: he sneers at propriety, he never splits hairs; but gives full vent to his love and hate—his contempt, scorn. He laughs at what other people revere. He would dance in a cathedral."—**STIRLING JOURNAL.**

"It will be a sad day for English poetry when such volumes as this get reappreciated by the better critics, yet the merit of some of the pieces—though by no means high—is greater than of anything heretofore published by this admiring friend of Mr. Jones, Mr. Whistler, and poor old Landor." *For sale by N. S. & Noyes.*—**BOSTON COMMONWEALTH.**

"This is a collection of miscellaneous pieces of poetry, &c., by that young promising writer, Mr. Algernon Charles Swinburne. The work, originally brought out by Moxon & Co., has been reprinted by Carleton of this city in a superior and tasteful style. Of the poems themselves, they are written in an ardency of youth, but many of the pieces breathe forth a love of freedom, and justice in strong but truly poetic language."—**NEW YORK WATCHMAN.**

"This is a famous book. The critics are not by any means unanimous in their estimate of Swinburne. Some laud him for 'outspoken honesty, earnest poetic insight, truth and beauty of expression,' while others regard his poetry as even of doubtful morality. That he is a true poet, a master of nervous English and very bold, no one ought to deny. Whether his poetry is likely to do him another question. The ballad commencing

"If love were what the rose is,  
And I were like the leaf,"

which has lately gone the rounds of the papers, is in this volume, and many of the other pieces of extraordinary merit as compositions."—**RICHMOND DISPATCH, VA.**

"Swinburne is undoubtedly a true poet, having a fine power of expression, with a feeling and very appropriate. His muse is fired with the stirring spirit of youth, and his warm desires are told in language which by beauty of expression and somewhat their greatness."—**PHILADELPHIA DISPATCH.**

No writer of modern times has excited so much interest as Algernon Charles Swinburne. Although a very young man, he has exhibited a maturity of intellect has almost entirely disarmed the critics. The striking originality of his fictions has astonished the literary world, and placed him unquestionably in front rank of English poets. A recent edition of his poems, entitled 'Lansaris, and other Poems and Ballads,' however, has subjected him to a more severe ordeal than he has yet met with, and has called forth from his own penance which will be published in the second edition of his new volume.

There is a music of strength in these poems, outspoken honesty, a sturdy love freedom, earnestness, poetic insight, truth and beauty of expression, beyond anything attained to by other of the young poets of the day. In some of the poems are the passions of youth fearlessly expressed, and stirring depths that have been stirred hitherto by no poet in his youth."—PHILADELPHIA AGE.

As our modern critics are very sensitive, the volume of poems was rather freely denounced. The Mozons were alarmed, and copies were called in as fast as possible. Fortunately one fell in our way, and we read it through, with the result which the virtuous reviewers had flashed upon the book. We found scarcely any deserving the censures of the hyper-prodial press. Much was in the same style in which Landor would write about old Greek stories, much in the same and nervous style in which any but an emasculated laureate would write of some of the middle age legends and romances. The poems seemed to be mainly, vigorous—with none of the effeminacies of Moore, the profanities of Byron, or the suggestive pruriciencies of many modern novelists. We could not help exclaiming, 'Where's the harm?' 'Why decry such poems?' They may be full of faults, the errors of youth, the warmth of passion, but are in many ways worse than scores of the poems of half a century ago, and not half so bad as any of the novels of to-day. However, the censors prevailed, and the volume was withdrawn—only to be republished by Mr. J. Camden Hoton, who, as he says like Messrs. Moxon—does not sell Shelley's Works, has undertaken to give a new edition of the present volume to the world."—BIRMINGHAM JOURNAL.

His poems are remarkable for their rhythmic beauty and wondrous wealth of imagery and exquisite imagery. Even when he has but little to say, his manner of saying that little is so musical, that the melody charms us and lingers in our memory like some sweet strain of music."—NEW HAVEN PALLADIUM.

Every father who finds it in his household, should at once consign it to the flames. For sale by *Newcomb & Co., Broadway.*"—ALBANY JOURNAL.

It is difficult to imagine what could have been the impelling motive of Mr. Swinburne in offering this collection of his writings to the public. He ought to have been aware that it could in no way enhance his reputation as a writer worthy of his age and time. But indeed it may very safely be said that if he had stopped short after the publication of the 'Atlantis in Calydon,' he would have stood much higher as a poet than he now does. Everything which he has since given us

'Chastelard,' 'Boleskine,' and now the volume before us, has been a step forward. This, it is true, is a literary history not sufficiently uncommon to excite our surprise, but it is none the less a matter of regret. Unfortunately he possesses an extraordinary grace and power of expression, and a melodious felicity in use of language and of poetic imagery, which sometimes invests his worst verse with a charm that half veils their vileness." *For sale by Davis and Brother, PORTLAND PRESS.*

"Let us hope that the kingdom on earth which the poets help advance, which already owns the constant service of such men as Tennyson, Longfellow, Bryant, Lowell, may not miss the brilliant and subtle power of Swinburne's verse."—**BROOKLYN UNION.**

"Probably no poet has brought to the simply sensuous delights of love, to the subtle relation by which passion is kindled in heart of man and woman, by which the soul is subdued and disgraced and overwhelmed in intervals of fierce, unutterable joy, to its unutterable anguish following, more of the graces and allurement and bold, unconcealed delineation of passion, than Mr. Swinburne. Byron coarse and cold beside him. Tom Moore is a wayward, superficial chatterer compared to Swinburne. . . . We have no sympathy with the criticism which denounces Mr. Swinburne and his poetry as hopelessly bad."—**BROOKLYN UNION.**

"It is time that such works should cease to be palmed off on the public under the names of authors of good repute, and with the imprint of respectable publishers on their title-pages." "In our review of 'Chastelard' we formed so low an estimate of his ability as to deem him an utterly over-estimated young man."—**WASHINGTON TELEGRAPH.**

"The poems are all strongly characteristic, musical, and gracefully versed. The fatal fault in the eyes of the English critics is the sensual tone of some of the poems, which they exaggerate beyond reason and common sense."—**HARTFORD COURANT.**

"The book seems to be written, like Charles Reade's 'Griffith Gamut' and Walt Whitman's 'Leaves of Grass,' in a spirit of protest to what Reade terms 'prurient prudishness' of the age."—**WASHINGTON STAR.**

(Translation.)

"There is no form of verse which Swinburne does not handle with ease. Many of his poems are the most lovely melodies in words. The English language can hardly boast greater triumphs than in some of Swinburne's lyrics. We all like to see whether he will overcome the present pointing of criticism and public; it is to be hoped that he will overcome it, and as soon as possible."—**REINOLD'S ZEITUNG, 14 February, 1887 (Berlin.)**

THE AUTHOR OF "POEMS AND BALLADS" AND HIS CRITICS.

NOTES ON  
"POEMS AND BALLADS."

By ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE.

8vo, 1s.

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTER.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

Mr. Swinburne here speaks for himself without personality of any kind, but with such general expression of scorn, which the small critics have fairly brought upon themselves. It is to be regretted that a young poet, from whom much was hoped, should be thus forced into explanations that can only humiliate whom they were required."—EXAMINER.

There is no space to dwell any further upon Mr. Swinburne's defects and excels. They are both very great and remarkable."—PALL MALL GAZETTE.

Mr. Swinburne writes ably and eloquently, in prose worthy of the pen which wrote the 'Atalanta' and 'Chastelard'—earnest, graphic, musical. He asserts with force that a poet is not bound to write even for reviewers, that he has thoughts to utter, his own taste to please, and while he admits the right to complain, he only demands that the standard of judgment shall be high and true. He takes his questioned poems, and shows from what point they were written, and how they should be looked at—a point of view that would have been the province of a thorough English poet, trained in the classics, and unable to see why the Ballad stories learned at school and college should be more dry and dusty than the—BIRMINGHAM JOURNAL.

Brook pens some doggerel lines, of which we give a verse, addressed to the reviewers who have condemned his blasphemy and obscenity—

as I  
sok I  
Re he  
re  
"id  
Lies still in kennel, sleek in stable,  
Good creature of the stall or sty;  
Shove scraps for crumbs below the table;  
Lies still, and rises not up to lie.

For degradation to classed such trash as this. Messrs. Mozon and Co. have purchased for the part they have played in relation to the 'Poems and Ballads,'

The *Illustrator* falls foul of these gentlemen, and declares that they are only keep 'a milk-walk for the use of babes.'—SUNDAY GAZETTE.

"We highly approve of the defence made by Mr. Swinburne of the libel writers, and willingly indorse his sentiments:—'Literature, to be worthy of must be large, liberal, sincere, and cannot be chaste if she be prodish. F and prodishness cannot keep house together. Where free speech and fair are interdicted, foul hints and evil suggestions are hatched into staid life STERLING ADVERTISER.

"Terrified by the clamour of a literary clique, Mr. Swinburne's publishers withdrawn their name from the title-page of his book. . . . We cannot a tradesman for declining to carry on the sale of certain goods which may r to the taste of his best customers or supporters. . . . What we find fault is that the public are not allowed to form an opinion for themselves on the m The function of journalism is to sift the wheat, but not to burn what it con to be chaff with unquenchable fire."—THE READER.

"In France, as in Germany, such a misrepresentation as even the for journals have given of Mr. Swinburne's Poems would have been impossible. such abundance of imagination, such plethora of language, such subst passion, as these volumes contain, there is ample food for literary and p phical criticism, without resorting to the methods that strove to crush Leigh Haallit, and Shelley and Keats, that found profligacy in 'Rimini' and blas in 'Adonais.'"—EXAMINER.

"Under the title of 'Notes on Poems and Reviews,' Mr. Algernon C Swinburne has just published, with Mr. Hotten, of Piccadilly, what he app designs to be a crushing reply to the whole body of his critics, and a trium vindication of his own poetic reputation. We, the SW, however, think th thus undertaken with so much audacity, was in itself too flagrantly outrage prove otherwise than an inevitable *fiasco*."—THE SUN.

"That his genius is dramatic—finely dramatic—we have taken the liberty serve on other occasions; it is certain, too, that whatever this dramatic writes, is dramatically written; and it is past all dispute, that what a man do that way is not to be taken as 'the assertion of its author's own festin faith.'"—PALL MALL GAZETTE.

"Swinburne—like Byron—has replied to his critics, not in a poem, but in a pamphlet, entitled 'Notes on Poems and Reviews.' He takes up his poem by one, tells why he wrote them and what he meant, defends himself fro charge of vulgarity, and cites classical authority without stint. Mr. Swin declares he has never written for the purblind or the prudent."—WM. C BAKER'S N. F. REVIVING POET.

"Mr. Swinburne's defence of his poems is well timed. Attacks so intemper done to which his recent volumes of Poems and Ballads was subjected lead of necessity to a reaction. . . . Gradually this reaction has set in with stron

might easily become dangerous. Men whose opinions carry the highest weight in England have pronounced in favour of the victims of so brutal an attack. The most respected organs of public opinion are attempting the rehabilitation of the poet.—*It is too daring to say that Mr. Swinburne's prose composition has the advantage of a splendid style . . . a specimen of English prose has a high warranty of morality, but has no respect whatever for palliated English poetry in the worst and least worthy form of philistinism known.* Mr. Swinburne's merits are so great that when, indignant at the perversity of English society, and the littleness of English art, he kicks over the beam he should obtain indulgence rather than misrepresentation."—*STANDARD*

See [just quoted] passages contain Mr. Swinburne's answer to his detractors. The review of the pamphlet has in it the scorn that a warm-blooded young poet must have for the criticism that which produced the need of such an explanation."—*EXAMINER*.

---

NEW WORK BY MR. SWINBURNE.

ESSAYS ON THE LIFE AND WORKS

OF

WILLIAM BLAKE,

POET AND ARTIST.

Will be shortly published, in 8vo,

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOURED Pencil.

By JOHN CAMDEN HOTTON.

It is known to have been the result of an elaborate study of the poet's works, and the illustrations are more than 100 in number, and are more than 100 in number, and are more than 100 in number.



# POEMS AND MEMOIRS

3. Criticism.

By WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSETTI.

Fcap. 8vo. cloth, 3s. 6d.

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN.

"Let us for a moment stoop to the arbitration of popular breath, let us assume that Homer was a drunkard, that Virgil was a flatterer, that Horace a coward, that Tasso was a madman, observe in what a ludicrous chaos the stultifications of real or fictitious crime have been confused in the contemporary opinions against poetry and poets."—*Spectator*.

"For a criticism friendly by bias, as the author freely admits, as well as by force of sincere critical admiration, this essay of Mr. Rossetti's on Mr. Swinburn's recent volume is a very candid one, and also one of true critical insight. For the whole the criticism of this essay is true criticism and good criticism, never inadequately it estimates some of Mr. Swinburn's greater merits."—*SPECTATOR*.

"Subtle criticism, gracefully and temperately expressed. This volume an exhaustive essay on all Mr. Swinburne's published works."—*THE SPECTATOR*.

"An accomplished and gifted critic has undertaken the task of reviewing a volume of poetry which has seldom been better done. . . . He writes about the poet with the apprehensiveness and discrimination which are the marks of a true critic's value."—*The Spectator*.

"The poems of Mr. Swinburne are a well-weighed effort to establish a new style of poetry, and well-weighed effort to establish a new style of poetry. . . . Mr. Rossetti's criticism, by one, tells us that the poet is not charge of vulgarity. . . . declares he has never seen a more successful poet."—*BRYANT'S N. Y. EVENING HERALD*.

"Mr. Swinburne's defence of his poetry is a defence of those to which his recent volume of *Poems* is a contribution. . . . Gradually this volume of necessity to a reaction . . . Gradually this

