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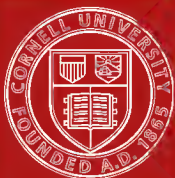
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CHATTO & WINDUS, PICCADILLY, W.

LATTER-DAY LYRICS

BEING

Poems of Sentiment and Reflection
By Living Writers

Selected and Arranged with Notes

By W. DAVENPORT ADAMS



WITH A NOTE ON SOME FOREIGN FORMS OF VERSE
BY AUSTIN DOBSON

London

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1878

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To my Wife.

*O thou most dear,—before thy feet
I strew these flow'rets fair and sweet ;
 These blossoms, latest from the tree
 Of Britain's gold-branch'd poesy,
Now lie where all the virtues meet.*

*Nor will they wither : neither heat
Nor chill of passing Time can cheat
 The world of their rare fragrancy,
 O thou most dear.*

*Nor will Time banish Love, or greet
Thy charms with shadow of defeat :
 They bud and bloom, and still with me
 Their scent and loveliness will be ;
Yes, Love will stay, though Time be fleet,
 O thou most dear.*

W. D. A.





PREFACE.

SO far as the Editor is aware, this is the first attempt that has been made to bring together in one volume specimens of the serious poetry of living writers only. Other collections have been partially indebted to the aid of contemporary authors. The Editor was himself largely assisted by them in the arrangement of his "Lyrics of Love," and was wholly obliged to them in his "Comic Poets of the Nineteenth Century." But whereas the latter work was confined to the poetry of wit and humour, the present is devoted to the poetry of sentiment and reflection. It is therefore unique in aim and character, and will, it is hoped, receive a proportionately hearty welcome.

The collection does not profess to be representative of living poets in the sense of illustrating exhaustively their peculiar powers. The Editor's desire has been rather to avoid the poems which are generally adduced as specimens of the writers' style of thought and of expression, in favour of those which, whilst still characteristic of their authors, have the merit of

being at least comparatively fresh and novel. To the best of his belief, this volume does not contain more than half a dozen poems which have appeared in any previous collection. Some favourite pieces may consequently be found absent from it, but, on the other hand, the book is full of lyrics which, if not familiar to the general reader, ought to be so, and need only to be read to be admired.

In pursuance of this effort towards novelty and freshness, the Editor has gone not only to the recent works of our more celebrated poets, but to the publications of several writers who have only of late years made their reputations. In consequence, many names appear in this volume which have not hitherto figured in such works, and the result, it is believed, will be agreeable to the reader.

Another feature of the present work is the attention paid, for the first time, to the late re-introduction into English poetry of old French measures. Some English specimens of these have been selected, and form the third book of the "Lyrics." Mr. Austin Dobson—in whose "Proverbs in Porcelain" they first attracted notice—has, at the Editor's request, kindly contributed a short "Note" in illustration and description of them, which will be found (the Editor believes) both valuable and interesting, even by those who may not altogether approve of the nationalisation in this country of the forms in question.

The arrangement of the poems is as follows. In the first place, the songs and other lyrics have been separated from the sonnets, which cannot strictly be described as lyrical in character ; whilst the foreign forms have been gathered together in Book III., according to an order which enables them to be read in easy connection with Mr. Dobson's "Note." Further, in placing the poems in Books I. and II., care has been exercised in bringing together pieces which illustrate one another, either in the way of similarity or contrast in idea or form.

A few Notes have been added, and will be found, it is hoped, useful and suggestive ; they have obviously no pretensions to the character of exhaustive criticisms.

The Editor has, in conclusion, to express his gratitude to the poets who have so generously placed their poems at his disposal, notably to those who have permitted him to publish several hitherto unprinted pieces (Nos. 182, 183, 206, 208, 210, 211, 213, 217, 219, 222). He has also to thank those publishers who have in like manner courteously waived their copyright in regard to certain of the poems quoted.

W. DAVENPORT ADAMS.





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BOOK I.

Songs and other Lyrics.



1.

LOVE, THE PILGRIM.

EVERY day a Pilgrim, blindfold,
When the night and morning meet,
Entereth the slumbering city,
Stealeth down the silent street ;
Lingereth round some battered doorway,
Leaves unblest some portal grand,
And the walls, where sleep the children,
Toucheth, with his warm young hand.
Love is passing ! Love is passing !—
Passing while ye lie asleep :
In your blessed dreams, O children,
Give him all your hearts to keep !

Blindfold is this Pilgrim, Maiden ;
Though to-day he touch'd thy door,
He may pass it by to-morrow—
Pass it—to return no more.
Let us then with prayers entreat him,—
Youth ! her heart, whose coldness grieves,

May one morn by Love be softened ;
Prize the treasure that he leaves.
Love is passing ! Love is passing !
All, with hearts to hope and pray,
Bid this pilgrim touch the lintels
Of your doorways every day.

HAMILTON AÏDÉ.





II.

THE GUEST.

HIGHTS Love, the timorous bird, to dwell,
While summer smiles, a guest with you ?
Be wise betimes, and use him well,
And he will stay in winter, too :
For you can have no sweeter thing
Within the heart's warm nest to sing.

The blue-plumed swallows fly away,
Ere autumn gilds a leaf ; and then
Have wit to find, another day,
The little clay-built house again :
He will not know, a second spring,
His last year's nest, if Love take wing.

THOMAS ASHE.





111.

LOVE is come with a song and a smile,
Welcome Love with a smile and a song :
Love can stay but a little while.

Why cannot he stay ? They call him away :
Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong ;
Love will stay for a whole life long.

ALFRED TENNYSON.



*LOVE GIVES ALL AWAY.*

“**A**ND what is Love by nature ?”
My pretty true-love sighs ;
And I reply, In feature
A child with pensive eyes ;

An infant, forehead shaded
With many ringlet rings,
And pearly shoulders faded
In the colour of his wings.

His ways are those of children
Who come to be caressed ;
Or, as a little wild wren
Who fears to leave her nest.

He is shy ; if one shall beckon,
He hides, will not obey ;
He spends, and will not reckon,
For Love gives all away.

He hoards to lavish only,
And lives in miser way,

Now hermit-like is lonely,
Now gallant-like is gay.

Slay Love, he is not broken ;
Wound him, his hurt will heal.
More than his lips have spoken
His cunning eyes reveal.

His sighs the still air sweeten,
As primrose woods do May ;
His locks are pale, as wheaten
Fields in the wan moon-ray.

His palm is always tender,
His eyes are rainy grey ;
His wage-return is slender,
For Love gives all away.

His aspect, as he muses,
Is paler than the dead ;
He weeps more when he loses,
Than he laughs when he is fed.

Love at a touch will falter,
Love at a nod will stay ;
But armies cannot alter
One hairbreadth of his way.

He trembles at a rose-leaf,
And rushes on a spear ;
A thorn-prick and he shows grief,
But Death he cannot fear.

The tyrant may not quench him,
He laughs at prison bars ;
The water-floods may drench him,
The fire may give him scars.

Though thou lay chain and fetter
On ankle, wrist, and hands,
He will not serve thee better,
But soar to unknown lands.

He follows shadow faces
Into graveyards unawares ;
He reaps in sterile places,
And brings home sheaves of tares.

One tear will heal his anger ;
He will wait and watch all day ;
He scoffs at toil and danger,
His last crust gives away.

He will strip off his raiment
To make his dear one gay ;
And will laugh at any payment,
Having given all away.

When care his heart engages,
And his rose-leaf gathers grey,
He will claim a kiss for wages,
And demand a smile for pay.



v.

SWEET LOVE IS DEAD.

SWEET Love is dead :
Where shall we bury him ?
In a green bed,
With no stone at his head,
And no tears nor prayers to worry him.

Do you think he will sleep
Dreamless and quiet ?
Yes, if we keep
Silence, nor weep
O'er the grave where the ground-worms riot.

By his tomb let us part ;
But hark ! he is waking ;
He hath winged a dart,
And the mock-cold heart
With the woe of want is aching.

Feign we no more
Sweet Love lies breathless ;
All we forswore
Be as before !
Death may die, but Love is deathless.

ALFRED AUSTIN.



VI.

LOVE'S VOTARY.



OTHERS have pleasantness and praise,
And wealth ; and hand and glove
They walk with worship all their days,
But I have only Love.

And therefore if Love be a fire,
Then he shall burn me up ;
If Love be water out of mire,
Then I will be the cup.

If Love come worn with wayfaring,
My breast shall be his bed ;
If he come faint and hungering,
My heart shall be his bread.

If Love delight in vassalage,
Then I will be his thrall,
Till, when I end my pilgrimage,
Love give me all for all.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SIMCOX.



VII.

DESTINY.

SOMEWHERE there waiteth in this world of
ours
For one lone soul another lonely soul,
Each chasing each through all the weary
hours,
And meeting strangely at one sudden goal.
Then blend they, like green leaves with golden flowers,
Into one beautiful and perfect whole ;
And life's long night is ended, and the way
Lies open onward to eternal day.

EDWIN ARNOLD.





VIII.

ROCOCO.

BY studying my lady's eyes
I've grown so learned day by day,
So Machiavelian in this wise,
That when I send her flowers, I say

To each small flower (no matter what ;
Geranium, pink, or tuberose,
Syringa, or forget-me-not,
Or violet) before it goes :

“ Be not triumphant, little flower,
When on her haughty heart you lie,
But modestly enjoy your hour :
She'll weary of you by and by.”

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.





1X.

DORUS TO LYCORIS,

WHO REPROVED HIM FOR INCONSTANCY.

WHY should I constant be?
The bird in yonder tree,
This leafy summer,
Hath not his last year's mate,
Nor dreads to venture fate
With a new-comer.

Why should I fear to sip
The sweets of each red lip?
In every bower
The roving bee may taste
(Lest aught should run to waste)
Each fresh-blown flower.

The trickling rain doth fall
Upon us one and all;
The south wind kisses
The saucy milkmaid's cheek,
The nun's, demure and meek,
Nor any misses.

Then ask no more of me
That I should constant be,
 Nor eke desire it;
Take not such idle pains
To hold our love in chains,
 Nor coax, nor hire it.

Rather, like some bright elf,
Be all things in thyself
 For ever changing,
So that thy latest mood
May ever bring new food
 To fancy ranging.

Forget what thou wast first,
And, as I loved thee erst
 In soul and feature,
I'll love thee out of mind
When each new morn shall find
 Thee a new creature.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.





X.

A CHAIN TO WEAR.

I.

WAY! away! The dream was vain;
We meet too soon, or meet too late:
Still wear, as best you may, the chain
Your own hands forged about your fate,
Who could not wait!

II.

What!—you had given your life away
Before you found what most life misses?
Forsworn the bridal dream, you say,
Of that ideal love, whose kisses
Are vain as this is!

III.

Well, I have left upon your mouth
The seal I know must burn there yet;
My claim is set upon your youth;
My sign upon your soul is set;—
Dare you forget?

IV.

And you'll haunt, I know, where music plays,
Yet find a pain in music's tone ;
You'll blush, of course, when others praise
That beauty scarcely now your own.
What's done, is done !

V.

For me, you say, the world is wide—
Too wide to find the grave I seek !
Enough ! whatever now betide,
No greater pang can blanch my cheek.
Hush !—do not speak.

ROBERT, LORD LYTTON.





XI.

HAPLESS doom of woman happy in betrothing!
Beauty passes in a breath and love is lost
in loathing :

Low, my lute ; speak low, my lute, but say
the world is nothing—
Low, lute, low !

Love will hover round the flowers when they first
awaken ;

Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be overtaken ;
Low, my lute ! Oh, low my lute ! we fade and are
forsaken—

Low, dear lute, low !

ALFRED TENNYSON.



*BEFORE PARTING.*

MONTH or twain to live on honeycomb
Is pleasant ; but one tires of scented time,
Cold sweet recurrence of accepted rhyme,
And that strong purple under juice and foam
Where the wine's heart has burst ;
Nor feel the latter kisses like the first.

Once yet, this poor one time, I will not pray
Even to change the bitterness of it,
The bitter taste ensuing on the sweet,
To make your tears fall where your soft hair lay,
All blurred and heavy in some perfumed wise
Over my face and eyes.

And yet who knows what end the scythèd wheat
Makes of its foolish poppies' mouths of red ?
These were not sown, these are not harvested,
They grow a month and are cast under feet,
And none has care thereof,
As none has care of a divided love.

I know each shadow of your lips by rote,
Each change of love in eyelids and eyebrows,
The fashion of fair temples tremulous
With tender blood, and colour of your throat ;
I know not how Love is gone out of this,
Seeing that all was his.

Love's likeness there endures upon all these,
But out of these one shall not gather love.
Day hath not strength, nor the night shade enough
To make Love whole, and fill his lips with ease,
As some bee-builed cell
Feels at filled lips the heavy honey swell.

I know not how this last month leaves your hair
Less full of purple colour and hid spice,
And that luxurious tremble of closed eyes
Is mixed with meaner shadow and waste care :
And love, kissed out by pleasure, seems not yet
Worth patience to regret.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.





XIII.

PARTING AT MORNING.

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim :
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

ROBERT BROWNING.





XIV.

A FAREWELL.

WITH all my will, but much against my
heart,
We two now part.
My Very Dear,
Our solace is, the sad road lies so clear.
It needs no art,
With faint, averted feet
And many a tear,
In our opposèd paths to persevere.
Go thou to East, I West.
We will not say
There's any hope, it is so far away.
But, O my Best,
When the one darling of our widowhood,
The nursling Grief,
Is dead,
And no dews blur our eyes
To see the peach-bloom come in evening skies,
Perchance we may,
Where now this night is day,

And even through faith of still averted feet,
Making full circle of our banishment,
Amazèd meet ;
The bitter journey to the bourne so sweet
Seasoning the termless feast of our content
With tears of recognition never dry.

COVENTRY PATMORE.





"THE PITY OF IT."

IF OUR love may fail, Lily,
If our love may fail,
What will mere life avail, Lily,
Mere life avail!

Seed that promised blossom,
Withered in the mould,
Pale petals overblowing,
Failing from the gold!

When the fervent fingers
Listlessly unclosed,
May the life that lingers
Find repose, Lily,
Find repose!

Who may dream of all the music
Only a lover hears,
Hearken to hearts triumphant
Bearing down the years?
Ah! may eternal anthems dwindle
To a low sound of tears?

Room in all the ages
For our love to grow—
Prayers of both demanded
A little while ago :

And now a few poor moments,
Between life and death,
May be proven all too ample
For love's breath !

Seed that promised blossom,
Withered in the mould,
Pale petals overblowing,
Failing from the gold !

I well believe the fault lay
More with me than you,
But I feel the shadow closing
Cold about us two.


An hour may yet be yielded us,
Or a very little more ;
Then a few tears, and silence
For evermore, Lily,
For evermore !

HON. RODEN NOEL.



XVI.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN!

 HE little gate was reached at last,
Half hid in lilacs down the lane ;
She pushed it wide, and, as she past,
A watchful look she backward cast,
And said—“ *Auf Wiedersehen!* ”

With hand on latch, a vision white
Lingered reluctant, and again
Half doubting if she did aright,
Soft as the dews that fell that night,
She said—“ *Auf Wiedersehen!* ”

The lamp's dear gleam flits up the stair ;
I linger in delicious pain ;
Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
Thinks she—“ *Auf Wiedersehen!* ”

'Tis thirteen years'; once more I press
The turf that silences the lane ;

I hear the rustle of her dress,
I smell the lilacs, and—ah, yes,
I hear—“ *Auf Wiedersehen!* ”

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!
The English words had seemed too fain,
But these—they drew us heart to heart,
Yet held us tenderly apart;
She said—“ *Auf Wiedersehen!* ”

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.





XVII.

SUDDEN LIGHT.

I HAVE been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell :
I know the grass beyond the door,
The sweet keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the
shore.

You have been mine before,—
How long ago I may not know :
But just when at that swallow's soar
Your neck turned so,
Some veil did fall,—I knew it all of yore.

Has this been thus before ?
And shall not thus time's eddying flight
Still with our lives our love restore
In death's despite,
And day and night yield one delight once more ?

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.



XVIII.

I MADE another garden, yea,
For my new love :
I left the dead rose where it lay
And set the new above.
Why did the summer not begin ?
Why did my heart not haste ?
My old love came and walked therein,
And laid the garden waste.

She entered with her weary smile,
Just as of old ;
She looked around a little while,
And shivered at the cold.
Her passing touch was death to all,
Her passing look a blight ;
She made the white rose-petals fall,
And turned the red rose white.

Her pale robe, clinging to the grass,
Seemed like a snake
That bit the grass and ground, alas !
And a sad trail did make.
She went up slowly to the gate ;
And there, just as of yore,
She turned back at the last to wait,
And say farewell once more.

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.





XIX.



H! were I rich and mighty,
With store of gems and gold,
And you, a beggar at my gate,
Lay starving in the cold ;
I wonder, could I bear
To leave you pining there ?

Or, if I were an angel,
And you an earth-born thing,
Beseeching me to touch you
In rising with my wing ;
I wonder should I soar
Aloft, nor heed you more ?

Or, dear, if I were only
A maiden cold and sweet,
And you, a humble lover,
Sighed vainly at my feet ;
I wonder if my heart
Would know no pain or smart ?

LEWIS MORRIS.



xx.

MISCONCEPTIONS.

I.

HIS is a spray the Bird clung to,
Making it blossom with pleasure,
Ere the high tree-top she sprung to,
Fit for her nest and her treasure.
Oh, what a hope beyond measure
Was the poor spray's, which the flying feet hung to,—
So to be singled out, built in, and sung to!

II.

This is the heart the Queen leant on,
Thrilled in a minute erratic,
Ere the true bosom she bent on,
Meet for love's regal dalmatic,
Oh what a fancy ecstatic
Was the poor heart's, ere the wanderer went on,—
Love to be saved for it, proffered to, spent on!

ROBERT BROWNING.



XXI.

ILICET.

WHEN first the rose-light creeps into my room
And stirs the liquid gloom,
My heart awakes, and sighs with its old pain,
Its ringing pulses jar with their old strain,
And Love, my lord and bane,
Renews that wild desire that is my doom.

To free myself from him, I rise and go,
Down terrace-paths below,
Whence watered gardens lead by winding ways
To that green haunt and bay-environed maze,
Where, in these summer days,
She early walks whose soul attracts me so.

Fool and forgetful ! Shall I cool desire
By looking at those lovely eyes of hers,
That passionate Love prefers
To his own brand for setting hearts on fire ?

O fool! to dream that what began with pain
 Could end it! Rather, noiseless, let me fly
 Out of her world, and die,
Where hopeless longing knows that all is vain.

EDMUND W. GOSSE.





XXII.

GATHERED ROSES.



ONLY a bee made prisoner,
Caught in a gathered rose !
Was he not 'ware, a flower so fair
For the first gatherer grows ?

Only a heart made prisoner,
Going out free no more !
Was he not 'ware, a face so fair
Must have been gathered before ?

F. W. BOURDILLON.





XXIII.

A WORM WITHIN THE ROSE.

ROSE, but one, none other rose had I,
A rose, one rose, and this was wondrous fair,
One rose, a rose that gladdened earth and
sky,

One rose, my rose, that sweetened all my air—
I cared not for the thorns ; the thorns were there.

One rose, a rose to gather by and by,
One rose, one rose, to gather and to wear,
No rose but one—what other rose had I ?
One rose, my rose ; a rose that will not die,—
He dies who loves it,—if the worm be there.

ALFRED TENNYSON.





XXIV.

L O V E.

O, the year's done with !
(*Love me for ever !*)
All March begun with,
April's endeavour ;
May-wreaths that bound me
June needs must sever ;
Now snows fall round me,
Quenching June's fever—
(*Love me for ever !*)

ROBERT BROWNING.





xxv.

STAY me no more ; the flowers have ceased to
blow,

The frost begun ;
Stay me no more ; I will arise and go,
My dream is done.

My feet are set upon a sterner way,
And I must on ;
Love, thou hast dwelt with me a summer day,
Now, Love, begone.

ERNEST MYERS.





XXVI.

SIGH in the morning gray !
And a solitary tear,
 Slow to gather, slow to fall ;
And a painful blush of shame
At the mention of thy name—
 This is little, this is all,
False one, that remains to say,
 That thy love of old was here—
That thy love hath passed away !

AUBREV DE VERE.





XXVII.



H ! love is like the rose,
And a month it may not see,
Ere it withers where it grows—
Rosalie !

I loved thee from afar ;
Oh ! my heart was lift to thee
Like a glass up to a star—
Rosalie !

Thine eye was glassed in mine
As the moon is in the sea,
And its shine was on the brine—
Rosalie !

The rose hath lost its red,
And the star is in the sea,
And the briny tear is shed—
Rosalie !

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.



XXVIII.

ALONG the shore, along the shore
I see the wavelets meeting ;
But thee I see—ah, never more,
For all my wild heart's beating.

The little wavelets come and go,
The tide of life ebbs to and fro,
Advancing and retreating :
But from the shore, the steadfast shore,
The sea is parted never :
And mute I hold thee evermore,
For ever and for ever.

Along the shore, along the shore,
I hear the waves resounding,
But thou will cross them never more
For all my wild heart's bounding :
The moon comes out above the tide,
And quiets all the waters wide,
Her pathway bright surrounding :

While on the shore, the dreary shore,
I walk with weak endeavour,
I have thy love's light evermore,
For ever and for ever.

DINAH MARIA CRAIK.





XXIX.

SHE CAME AND WENT.

As a twig trembles which a bird
Lights on to sing, then leaves unbent,
So is my memory thrilled and stirred ;—
I only know she came and went.

As clasps some lake, by gusts unriven,
The blue dome's measureless content,
So my soul held that moment's heaven ;—
I only know she came and went.

As, at one bound, our swift Spring heaps
The orchards full of bloom and scent,
So clove her May my wintry sleeps ;—
I only know she came and went.

An angel stood and met my gaze,
Through the low doorway of my tent ;
The tent is struck, the vision stays ;—
I only know she came and went.

Oh, when the room grows slowly dim,
And life's last oil is nearly spent,
One gush of light these eyes will brim,
Only to think she came and went.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.





XXX.

NEVER AGAIN.

NEVER again. This shivering rose, that sees
Its dwindled blossoms droop and fall to earth
Before the chillness of the autumn rain,
Will bud next summer with more fair than these—
But when have love's waned smiles a second birth?
Never again, never again.

Never again. Oh, dearest, do you know
All the long mournfulness of such a word?
And even you who smile now on my pain
May seek some day for love lost long ago,
And sigh to the long echo faintly heard—
Never again, never again.

Never again. The love we break to-day
May linger in my heart unto the last;
And even with you some memory must remain,
But ah! no more. The sunlight died away
Will wake again, but never wakes the past—
Never again, never again.

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.



XXXI.

I.

WHAT matter—what matter—O friend, though
the Sea
In lines of silvery fire may slide
O'er the sands so tawny and tender and wide,
Murmuring soft as a bee?—

“No matter, no matter, in sooth,” said he :
“But the sunlit sand and the silvery play,
Are a trustful smile long past away :
—No more to me !”

II.

What matter—what matter—dear friend, can it be,
If a long blue stripe, dim-swelling and dark,
Beneath the lighter blue headland, may mark
All of the town we can see?—

“No matter, no matter, in truth,” said he :
“But the streak that fades and fades as we part,
Is a broken voice and a breaking heart :
—No more to me !”

ALFRED-DOMETT.



XXXII.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

SWEET ! in the flow'ry garland of our love,
Where fancy, folly, frenzy, interwove
Our diverse destinies, not all unkind,
A secret strand of purest gold entwined.

While bloomed the magic flowers we scarcely knew
The gold was there. But now their petals strew
Life's pathway ; and instead, with scarce a sigh,
We see the cold but fadeless circlet lie.

With scarce a sigh !—and yet the flowers were fair,
Fed by youth's dew and love's enchanted air.
Ay, fair as youth and love ; but doomed, alas !
Like these and all things beautiful, to pass.

But this bright thread of unadulterate ore—
Friendship—will last though Love exist no more ;
And though it lack the fragrance of the wreath,—
Unlike the flowers, it hides no thorn beneath.

SIR NOEL PATON.



XXXIII.

DALLYING.

DEAR love, I have not ask'd you yet ;
Nor heard you, murmuring low
As wood-doves by a rivulet,
Say if it shall be so.

The colour on your cheek, which plays
Like an imprison'd bliss,
To its unworded language, says,
"Speak, and I'll answer 'Yes.'"

See, pluck this flower of wood-sorrel,
And twine it in your hair ;
Its woodland grace becomes you well,
And makes my rose more fair.

Oft you sit 'mid the daisies here,
And I lie at your feet ;
Yet day by day goes by ;— I fear
To break a trance so sweet.

As some first autumn tint looks strange,
And wakes a strange regret,
Would your soft "yes" our loving change?—
Love, I'll not ask you yet.

THOMAS ASHE.



XXXIV.

CHARMIAN.

IN the time when water-lilies shake
Their green and gold on river and lake,
When the cuckoo calls in the heart o' the
heat,

When the Dog-star foams and the shade is sweet ;
Where cool and fresh the River ran,
I sat by the side of Charmian,
And heard no sound from the world of man.

All was so sweet and still that day !
The rustling shade, the rippling stream,
All life, all breath, dissolved away
Into a golden dream ;
Warm and sweet the scented shade
Drowsily caught the breeze and stirred,
Faint and low through the green glade
Came hum of bee and song of bird.
Our hearts were full of drowsy bliss,
And yet we did not clasp nor kiss,
Nor did we break the happy spell
With tender tone or syllable.

But to ease our hearts and set thought free
We pluckt the flowers of a red Rose-tree,
And leaf by leaf, we threw them, Sweet,
Into the river at our feet,
And in an indolent delight,
Watched them glide onward, out of sight.

Sweet, had I boldly spoken then,
How might my love have garner'd thee !
But I had left the paths of men,
And sitting yonder dreamily,
Was happiness enough for me !
Seeking no gift of word or kiss,
But looking in thy face, was bliss !
Plucking the Rose-leaves in a dream,
Watching them glimmer down the stream,
Knowing that Eastern heart of thine
Shared the dim ecstasy of mine !

Then, while we linger'd, cold and gray
Came twilight, chilling soul and sense ;
And you arose to go away,
Full of a sweet indifference !
I missed the spell—I watch'd it break,—
And such come never twice to man :
In a less golden hour I spoke,
And did *not* win thee, Charmian !

For wearily we turned away
Into the world of everyday,

And from thy heart the fancy fled
Like the Rose-leaves on the river shed ;
But to me that hour is sweeter far
Than the world and all its treasures are :
Still to sit on so close to thee,
Were happiness enough for me !
Still to sit on in a green nook,
Nor break the spell by word or look !
To reach out happy hands for ever,
To pluck the Rose-leaves, Charmian !
To watch them fade on the gleaming River,
And hear no sound from the world of man !

ROBERT BUCHANAN.





XXXV.

NOT LOVE.

HAVE not, yet I would have loved thee, sweet ;
Nor know I wherefore, thou being all thou
art,

The engrafted thought in me throve incomplete,

And grew to summer strength in every part

Of root and leaf, but hath not borne the flower : .
Love hath refrained his fulness from my heart.

I know no better beauty, none with power

To hold mine eyes through change and change as
thine,

Like southern skies that alter with each hour

And yet are changeless, and their calm divine

From light to light hath motionlessly passed
With only different loveliness for sign.

I know no fairer nature, nor where, cast

On the clear mirror of thine own young truth,
The imaged things of heaven lie plainer glassed ;

Nor where more fit alike show tender ruth,
And anger for the right, and hopes aglow,
And joys and sighs of April-hearted youth.

But some day I, so wont to praise thee so,
With unabashed warm words for all to hear,
Shall scarcely name another, speaking low.

Some day, methinks, and who can tell how near,
I may, to thee unchanged, be praising thee
With one not worthier but a world more dear ;

With one I know not yet, who shall, may be,
Be not so fair, be not in aught thy peer ;
Who shall be all that thou art not to me.

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.





XXXVI.

SOMEWHERE OR OTHER.

SOMEWHERE or other there must surely be
The face not seen, the voice not heard,
The heart that not yet—never yet—ah me !
Made answer to my word.

Somewhere or other, may be near or far ;
Past land and sea, clean out of sight ;
Beyond the wandering moon, beyond the star
That tracks her night by night.

Somewhere or other, may be far or near ;
With just a wall, a hedge between ;
With just the last leaves of the dying year
Fallen on a turf grown green.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.





XXXVII.

OUTCRY.

IN all my singing and speaking,
I send my soul forth seeking ;
O soul of my soul's dreaming ;
When wilt thou hear and speak ?

Lovely and lonely seeming,
Thou art there in my dreaming,
Hast thou no sorrow for speaking ?
Hast thou no dream to seek ?

In all my thinking and sighing,
In all my desolate crying,
I send my heart forth yearning,
O heart that may'st be nigh !
Like a bird weary of flying,
My heavy heart, returning,
Bringeth me no replying,
Of word, or thought, or sigh.

In all my joying and grieving,
Living, hoping, believing,
I send my love forth flowing,
To find my unknown love.

O world, that I am leaving,
O heaven, where I am going,
Is there no finding and knowing,
 Around, within, or above ?

O soul of my soul's seeing,
 O heart of my heart's being,
O love of dreaming and waking
 And living and dying for—
Out of my soul's last aching,
Out of my heart just breaking—
Doubting, falling, forsaking,
 I call on you this once more.

Are you too high or too lowly
 To come at length unto me ?
Are you too sweet or too holy
 For me to have and to see ?
Wherever you are, I call you,
Ere the falseness of life enthrall you,
Ere the hollow of death appal you,
 While yet your spirit is free.

Have you not seen, in sleeping,
 A lover that might not stay,
And remembered again with weeping,
 And thought of him through the day ?—
Ah ! thought of him long and dearly,
Till you seemed to behold him clearly,

And could follow the dull time merely
With heart and love far away ?
Have you not known him kneeling
To a deathless vision of you,
Whom only an earth was concealing,
Whom all that was heaven proved true ?
Oh surely some wind gave motion
To his words like a wave of the ocean ;
Ay ! so that you felt his devotion,
And smiled, and wondered, and knew.
And what are you thinking and saying,
In the land where you are delaying ?
Have you a chain to sever ?
Have you a prison to break ?
O love ! there is one love for ever,
And never another love—never ;
And hath it not reached you, my praying
And singing these years for your sake ?
We two, made one, should have power
To grow to a beautiful flower,
A tree for men to sit under
Beside life's flowerless stream ;
But I without you am only
A dreamer fruitless and lonely ;
And you without me, a wonder
In my most beautiful dream.

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.



XXXVIII.

IF.

IF he would come to-day, to-day, to-day,
Oh, what a day to-day would be !
But now he's away, miles and miles away
From me across the sea.

O little bird, flying, flying, flying,
To your nest in the warm west,
Tell him as you pass that I am dying,
As you pass home to your nest.

I have a sister, I have a brother,
A faithful hound, a tame white dove ;
But I had another, once I had another,
And I miss him, my love, my love !

In this weary world it is so cold, so cold,
While I sit here all alone ;
I would not like to wait and to grow old,
But just to be dead and gone.

Make me fair when I lie dead on my bed,
Fair where I am lying ;
Perhaps he may come and look upon me dead—
He for whom I am dying.

Dig my grave for two, with a stone to show it,
And on the stone write my name ;
If he never comes, I shall never know it,
But sleep on all the same.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.





XXXIX.

A SMILE AND A SIGH.



SMILE because the nights are short!
And every morning brings such pleasure
Of sweet love-making, harmless sport :
Love that makes and finds its treasure,
Love, treasure without measure.

A sigh because the days are long!
Long, long these days that pass in sighing,
A burden saddens every song :
While time lags which should be flying,
We live who would be dying.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.





XI.

IF ever, dear,
I might at last the barren victory gain,
After long struggle and laborious pain,
And many a secret tear,
To think, since think I must of thee,
Not otherwise than thou of me.

Haply I might
Thy chilling coldness, thy disdain, thy pride,
Which draw me half reluctant to thy side,
With a like meed requite,
And I my too fond self despise,
Seeing with disenchanted eyes.

But now, alas,
So fast a prisoner am I to thy love,
No power there is that can my chains remove,
So sweet the caged hours pass,
That if it parted me from thee,
I would not willingly grow free.

Nor would I dare
To ask for recompense of love again,
Who love thee for the height of thy disdain.

Thou wouldst not show so fair
If we should burn with equal fire,
Instinct with emulous desire.

Full well I know
That what I worship is not wholly thee,
But a fair dream, a pious fantasy,
Such as at times doth grow
On yearnings of the cloistered mind,
Or the rapt vision of the blind.

Scorn me then, sweet,
I would not thou shouldst leave thy lofty place ;
Thy lover should not see thee face to face,
But prostrate at thy feet.
No recompense, no equal part I seek,
Only that thou be strong and I be weak.

LEWIS MORRIS.





XLI.

A LOVE-THOUGHT.

ALL down the linden-alley's morning shade
Thy form with childly raptures I pursue ;
No hazel-bowered brook can seek the glade
With steps more joyous or with course
more true.

But when all haste and hope I reach my goal,
And Thou at once thy full and earnest eyes
Turnest upon me, my encumbered soul
Bows down in shame and trembles with surprise.

I rise exalted on thy moving grace,
Peace and goodwill in all thy voice I hear ;
Yet if the sudden wonders of thy face
Fall on me, joy is weak and turns to fear.

RICHARD, LORD HOUGHTON.





XLII.

NOCTURNE.

ITALY.

UP to her chamber window
A slight wire trellis goes,
And up this Romeo's ladder
Clambers a bold white rose.

I lounge in the ilex shadows,
I see the lady lean,
Unclasping her silken girdle,
The curtain's folds between.

She smiles on her white-rose lover,
She reaches out her hand
And helps him at the window—
I see it where I stand !

To her scarlet lip she holds him,
And kisses him many a time—
Ah, me ! it was he that won her,
Because he dared to climb !

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.



XLIII.

SHAME upon you, Robin,
Shame upon you now !
Kiss me would you ? with my hands
Milking the cow ?
Daisies grow again,
Kingcups blow again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.
Robin came behind me,
Kissed me well, I vow ;
Cuff him could I ? with my hands .
Milking the cow ?
Swallows fly again,
Cuckoos cry again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.
Come, Robin, Robin,
Come and kiss me now ;
Help it can I ? with my hands
Milking the cow ?
Ringdoves coo again,
All things woo again.
Come behind and kiss me milking the cow.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

E



XLIV.

PANSIE.

CAME, on a Sabbath noon, my sweet,
In white, to find her lover.
The grass grew proud beneath her feet,
The green elm leaves above her—
Meet we no angels, Pansie ?

She said, " We meet no angels now,"
And soft lights streamed upon her ;
And with white hand she touched a bough,
She did it that great honour—
What, meet no angels, Pansie ?

Oh sweet brown hat, brown hair, brown eyes,
Down-dropp'd brown eyes so tender ;
Then what, said I ? gallant replies
Seem flattery and offend her ;
But—meet no angels, Pansie ?

THOMAS ASHE.



XLV.

EVEY.

BUD and leaflet, opening slowly,
Woo'd with tears by winds of Spring,
Now, of June persuaded wholly,
Perfumes, flow'rs, and shadows bring.

Evey, in the linden-alley, .
All alone I met to-day,
Tripping to the sunny valley
Spread across with new-mown hay.

Brown her soft curls, sunbeam-sainted,
Golden, in the wavering flush ;
Darker brown her eyes are, painted
Eye and fringe with one soft brush.

Through the leaves a careless comer,
Never nymph of fount or tree
Could have press'd the floor of summer
With a lighter foot than she.

Can this broad hat, fasten'd under
With a bright blue ribbon's flow,
Change my pet so much, I wonder,
Of a month or two ago ?

Half too changed to speak I thought her,
Till the pictured silence broke,
Sweet and clear as dropping water,
Into words she sung or spoke.

Few her words ; yet, like a sister,
Trustfully she look'd and smiled ;
'Twas but in my soul I kiss'd her
As I used to kiss the child.

Shadows, which are not of sadness,
Touch her eyes, and brow above.
As pale wild roses dream of redness,
Dreams her innocent heart of love.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.





XLVI.

SERENADE.

I.



LEEP, lady fair !

Oh but thy couch should be
The fleeciest cloudlet of the summer air,
The softest billow of the summer sea ;—
Or that unforsaken rest
I keep warm in my true breast,
For thee, for thee !

II.

Dream, lady sweet !

The moon and planets bright
Now thread thy slumbers with unsounding feet,
Now drench thy fancies with unshaped delight :
As my spirit fain would steep
Thine, when only half asleep,
This night, this night !

III.

Wake, lady mine !

See ! are awake the flowers,
Their opening cusps bright tipped with dewy wine,
And, buoyed on song, the moist lark trills and towers.

Wake ! If thou must be away

Nightly, let at least the day

Be ours, be ours !

ALFRED AUSTIN.





XLVII.

AT HER WINDOW.

BEATING heart! we come again
Where my Love reposes :
This is Mabel's window-pane ;
These are Mabel's roses.

Is she nested? Does she kneel
In the twilight stilly ;
Lily clad from throat to heel,
She, my virgin lily?

Soon the wan, the wistful stars,
Fading, will forsake her ;
Elves of light, on beamy bars,
Whisper then, and wake her.

Let this friendly pebble plead
At her flowery grating,
If she hear me will she heed?
Mabel, I am waiting!

Mabel will be deck'd anon,
Zoned in bride's apparel ;
Happy zone !—oh hark to yon
Passion-shaken carol !

Sing thy song, thou trancèd thrush,
Pipe thy best, thy clearest ;—
Hush, her lattice moves, oh hush—
Dearest Mabel !—dearest . . .

FREDERICK LOCKER.





XLVIII.

LOVE-LILY.

BETWEEN the hands, between the brows,
Between the lips of Love-Lily,
A spirit is born whose birth endows
My blood with fire to burn through me ;
Who breathes upon my gazing eyes,
Who laughs and murmurs in mine ear,
At whose least touch my colour flies,
And whom my life grows faint to hear.

Within the voice, within the heart,
Within the mind of Love-Lily,
A spirit is born who lifts apart
His tremulous wings and looks at me ;
Who on my mouth his finger lays,
And shows, while whispering lutes confer,
That Eden of Love's watered ways
Whose winds and spirits worship her.

Brows, hands, and lips, heart, mind, and voice,
Kisses and words of Love-Lily,—
Oh ! bid me with your joy rejoice,
Till riotous longing rest in me!
Ah ! let not hope be still distraught,
But find in her its gracious goal,
Whose speech Truth knows not from her thought
Nor Love her body from her soul.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.





XLIX.

I.

GIVE her but a least excuse to love me !
When—where—
How—can this arm establish her above me,
If fortune fixed her as my lady there,
There already, to eternally reprove me ?
("Hist!"—said Kate the queen ;
But "Oh," cried the maiden, binding her tresses,
" 'Tis only a page that carols unseen,
Crumbling your hounds their messes ! ")

II.

Is she wronged?—To the rescue of her honour,
My heart !
Is she poor?—What costs it to become a donor ?
Merely an earth to cleave, a sea to part.
But that fortune should have thrust all this upon her !
("Nay, list!"—bade Kate the queen ;
And still cried the maiden, binding her tresses,
" 'Tis only a page that carols unseen,
Fitting your hawks their jesses ! ")

ROBERT BROWNING.



L.

THE OBLATION.

ASK nothing more of me, sweet ;
All I can give you I give.
Heart of my heart, were it more,
More would be laid at your feet :
Love that should help you to live,
Song that should spur you to soar.


All things were nothing to give
Once to have sense of you more,
Touch you and taste of you sweet,
Think you and breathe you and live,
Swept of your wings as they soar,
Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more,
Give you but love of you, sweet :
He that hath more, let him give ;
He that hath wings, let him soar ;
Mine is the heart at your feet
Here, that must love you to live.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.



LI.

 HE bee to the heather,
The lark to the sky,
The roe to the greenwood,
And whither shall I ?

Oh, Alice ! ah, Alice !
So sweet to the bee
Are the moorland and heather
By Cannock and Leigh !

Oh, Alice ! ah, Alice !
O'er Teddesley Park
The sunny sky scatters
The notes of the lark !


Oh, Alice ! ah, Alice !
In Beaudesert glade
The roes toss their antlers
For joy of the shade !—

But Alice, dear Alice !
Glade, moorland, nor sky
Without you can content me,
And whither shall I ?



LII.

A DAISY CHAIN.

HE white rose decks the breast of May,
The red rose smiles in June,
Yet autumn chills and winter kills
And leaves their stems alone ;
Ah, swiftly dies the garden's pride
Whose sleep no waking knows;—
But my love she is the daisy
That all the long year grows.

The early woods are gay with green,
The fields are pranked with gold;
But fair must fade and green be greyed
Before the year is old ;
The blue-bell hangs her shining head,
No more the oxslip blows,—
But my love she is the daisy
That all the long year grows.

Still deck, wild woods, your mantle green,
All meads bright jewels wear,
Let showers of spring fresh violets bring -
And sweetness load the air ;
Whilst summer boasts her roses red
And March her scented snows,—
My love be still the daisy,
And my heart whereon she grows.

H. CHOLMONDELEY-PENNELL.





LIII.

A WILD-WOOD SPELL.

COME to the woods, Medora,
Come to the woods with me ;
The leaves are green, the summer sheen
Is on the linden tree.

Up in the woods, Medora,
The thrushes warble free ;
Around, above, they sing of love,
So let me sing to thee !

On the low thorn, Medora,
The finch is fair to see,
A jewel bright, a heart's delight—
Ah ! so art thou to me.

From the dark pines, Medora,
There flows a balmy sea ;
The air's soft kiss is heavenly bliss—
How sweet art thou to me !

Through the wood-moss, Medora,
The emerald lizards flee,
Away, away,—they will not stay ;
Oh, flee not thus from me !

Come to the woods, Medora,
Come to the shade with me ;
The roses bloom in that sweet gloom—
So bloom, dear rose, for me !

EARL OF SOUTHESK.



*REINE D'AMOUR.*

CLOSE as the stars along the sky,
The flowers were in the mead,
The purple heart, and golden eye,
And crimson-flaming weed :—

And each one sigh'd as I went by,
And touch'd my garment green,
And bade me wear her on my heart
And take her for my Queen
Of Love,—
And take her for my Queen.

And one in virgin white was drest
With lowly gracious head ;
And one unveil'd a burning breast
With Love's own ardour red ;
All rainbow bright, with laughter light,
They flicker'd o'er the green,
Each whispering I should pluck her there
And take her for my Queen
Of Love,—
And take her for my Queen.

But sudden at my feet look'd up
A little star-like thing,
Pure odour in pure perfect cup,
That made my bosom sing.
'Twas not for size, nor gorgeous dyes,
But her own self, I ween,
Her own sweet self, that bade me stoop
And take her for my Queen
Of Love,—
And take her for my Queen.

Now all day long and every day
Her beauty on me grows,
And holds with stronger sweeter sway
Than lily or than rose ;
And this one star-outshines by far
All in the meadow green ;—
And so I wear her on my heart
And take her for my Queen
Of Love,—
And take her for my Queen.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE.





THANK thee, dear, for words that fleet,
For looks that long endure,
For all caresses simply sweet
And passionately pure ;

For blushes mutely understood,
For silence and for sighs,
For all the yearning womanhood
Of grey love-laden eyes.

Oh how in words to tell the rest?
My bird, my child, my dove !
Behold I render best for best,
I bring thee love for love.

Oh give to God the love again
Which had from Him its birth,—
Oh bless Him, for He sent the twain
Together on the earth.

*MY NEIGHBOUR.*

“**L**OVE thou thy Neighbour,” we are told,
“Even as thyself.” That creed I hold ;
But love her more, a thousand-fold !

My lovely Neighbour ; oft we meet
In lonely lane, or crowded street ;
I know the music of her feet.

She little thinks how, on a day,
She must have missed her usual way,
And walked into my heart for aye :

Or how the rustle of her dress
Thrills thro’ me like a soft caress,
With trembles of deliciousness.

Wee woman, with her smiling mien,
And soul celestially serene,
She passes me, unconscious Queen !

Her face most innocently good,
Where shyly peeps the sweet red blood :
Her form a nest of Womanhood !

Like Raleigh—for her dainty tread,
When ways are miry—I could spread
My cloak, but, there's my heart instead.

Ah, Neighbour, you will never know
Why 'tis my step is quickened so ;
Nor what the prayer I murmur low.

I see you 'mid your flowers at morn,
Fresh as the rosebud newly born ;
I marvel, can *you* have a thorn?

If so, 'twere sweet to lean one's breast
Against it, and, the more it prest,
Sing like the Bird that sorrow hath blest.

I hear you sing! And thro' me Spring
Doth musically ripple and ring ;
Little you think I'm listening!

You know not, dear, how dear you be ;
All dearer for the secrecy :
Nothing, and yet a world to me.

So near, too! you could hear me sigh,
Or see my case with half an eye ;
But must not. There are reasons why.



LVII.

BLANCHE.

WERE I a breath of summer air,
I'd wander over bank and lea,
And bring, from every wild-flower there,
Sweet messages of love to thee.

Were I a stream, with low soft song,
I'd woo thee to some green retreat,
And linger as I pass'd along,
In bliss to murmur at thy feet.

Were I a bird with mellow throat,
I would forsake the pleasant grove,
And tune for thee the softest note
That music dedicates to love.

For thee my daily wishes burn ;
In dreams thy angel face I see ;
I bid my thoughts to others turn,
My thoughts unbidden turn to thee.

Such love thyself mayst live to prove ;
Yet thine will be unmixed with pain,
For never, surely, canst thou love,
But thou wilt be beloved again.

JAMES HEDDERWICK.





LVIII.

NO AND YES.

IF I could choose my paradise,
And please myself with choice of bliss,
Then I would have your soft blue eyes
And rosy little mouth to kiss ;
Your lips, as smooth and tender, child,
As rose-leaves in a coppice wild.

If fate bade choose some sweet unrest,
To weave my troubled life a snare,
Then I would say " her maiden breast,
And golden ripple of her hair ;"
And weep amid those tresses, child,
Contented to be thus beguiled.

THOMAS ASHE.





LIX.

LOVE within the lover's breast
Burns like Hesper in the West,
O'er the ashes of the sun,
Till the day and night are done ;
Then when dawn drives up his car—
Lo ! it is the morning star.

Love ! thy love pours down on mine
As the sunlight on the vine,
As the snow rill on the vale,
As the salt breeze on the sail ;
As the song unto the bird
On my lips thy name is heard.

As a dewdrop on the rose
In thy heart my passion glows ;
As a skylark to the sky,
Up into thy breast I fly ;
As a sea-shell of the sea
Ever shall I sing of thee.

GEORGE MEREDITH.



LX.

LIKE an island in a river,
Art thou, my love, to me ;
And I journey by thee ever
With a gentle ecstasie.

I arise to fall before thee,
I come to kiss thy feet ;
To adorn thee and adore thee,
Mine only one ! my sweet !

And thy love hath power upon me,
Like a dream upon a brain ;
For the loveliness which won me,
With the love, too, doth remain.
And my life it beautifieth
Though love be but a shade,
Known of only ere it dieth,
By the darkness it hath made.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.



LXI.

THE TREASURE-SHIP.

MY heart is freighted full of love,
As full as any argosy,
With gems below and gems above,
And ready for the open sea ;
For the wind is blowing summerly.

Full strings of nature's beaded pearl,
Sweet tears ! composed in amorous ties
And turkis-lockets, that no churl
Hath fashioned out mechanic-wise,
But all made up of thy blue eyes.

And girdles wove of subtle sound,
And thoughts not trusted to the air,
Of antique mould,—the same as bound,
In Paradise, the primal pair,
Before Love's art and niceness were.

And carcanets of living sighs ;
Gems that have dropped from Love's own stem,
And one small jewel that I prize—

The darling gaud of all of them—
I wot, so rare and fine a gem
Ne'er glowed on Eastern anadem.

I've cased the rubies of thy smiles,
In rich and triply-plated gold ;
But *this* no other wealth defiles,
Itself, itself can only hold—
The stealthy kiss on Maple-wold.

RICHARD, LORD HOUGHTON.





LXII.

I.

SEEK not the tree of silkiest bark
And balmiest bud,
To carve her name while yet 'tis dark
Upon the wood.

The world is full of noble tasks,
And wreaths hard won :
Each work demands strong hearts, strong hands,
Till day is done.

II.

Sing not that violet-veinèd skin,
That cheek's pale roses,
The lily of that form wherein
Her soul reposes :
Forth to the fight, true man, true knight ;
The clash of arms
Shall more prevail than whispered tale
To win her charms.

III.

The warrior for the True, the Right,
Fight's in Love's name :
The love that lures thee from that fight
Lures thee to shame :
The love which lifts the heart, yet leaves
The spirit free,
That love, or none, is fit for one
Man-shaped, like thee.

AUBREY DE VERE.





LXIII.

IN the long enchanted weather,
When lovers came together,
And fields were bright with blossoming,
And hearts were light with song;

When the poet lay for hours,
In a dream among the flowers,
And heard a soft voice murmuring,
His love's name all day long ;

Or for hours stood beholding
The summer time unfolding
Its casket of rich jewelries,
And boundless wealth outpoured ;

Saw the precious-looking roses
Its glowing hand uncloses,
The pearls of dew and emeralds
Spread over grass and sward ;

When he heard besides the singing,
Mysterious voices ringing
With clear unearthly ecstasies
 Through earth and sky and air ;

Then he wondered for whose pleasure
Some king made all that treasure—
That bauble of the universe,
 At whose feet it was laid :

Yea, for what celestial leman,
Bright saint or crownèd demon,
Chimed all the tender harmonies
 Of that rich serenade.

But his heart constrained him, sinking
Back to its sweetest thinking,
His lady all to celebrate,
 And tell her beauty's worth.

And he sought at length what tender
Love-verses he should send her :
Oh, the love within him overflowed,
 And seemed to fill the earth !

So he took, in his emotion,
A murmur from the ocean ;
He took a plaintive whispering
 Of sadness from the wind ;

And a piteous way of sighing
From the leaves when they were dying,
And the music of the nightingales
 With all his own combined ;

Yea, he stole indeed some phrases
Of mystic hymns of praises,
The heaven itself is perfecting
 Out of the earthly things ;

And with these he did so fashion
The poem of his passion,
The lady still is listening,
 And still the poet sings !

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.





LXIV.

A SONG OF THE FOUR SEASONS.

WHEN Spring comes laughing
By vale and hill,
By wind-flower walking
And daffodil,—
Sing stars of morning,
Sing morning skies,
Sing blue of speedwell,
And my Love's eyes.

When comes the Summer,
Full-leaved and strong,
And gay birds gossip
The orchard long,—
Sing hid, sweet honey
That no bee sips ;
Sing red, red roses,
And my Love's lips.

When Autumn scatters
The leaves again,
And piled sheaves bury
The broad-wheeled wain,—
Sing flutes of harvest
Where men rejoice ;
Sing rounds of reapers,
And my Love's voice.

But when comes Winter
With hail and storm,
And red' fire roaring
And ingle warm,—
Sing first sad going
Of friends that part ;
Then sing glad meeting
And my Love's heart.


AUSTIN DOBSON.





LXV.

WILD ROSE.

 O call My Lady where she stood
“A Wild-Rose blossom of the wood,”
Makes but a poor similitude.

For who by such a slight would reach
An aim, consumes the worth in speech,
And sets a crimson rose to bleach.

My Love, whose store of household sense
Gives duty golden recompense,
And arms her goodness with defence :

The sweet reliance of whose gaze
Originates in gracious ways,
And wins that trust the trust repays :

Whose stately figure's varying grace
Is never seen unless her face
Turn beaming toward another place ;

For such a halo round it glows,
Surprised attention only knows
A lively wonder in repose.

Can flowers that breathe one little day
In odorous sweetness life away,
And wavering to the earth decay,

Have any claim to rank with her,
Warmed in whose soul impulses stir
Then bloom to goodness ; and aver

Her worth through spheral joys shall move
When suns and systems cease above,
And nothing lives but perfect Love ?

THOMAS WOOLNER.





LXVI.

DAISY'S DIMPLES.

I.

LITTLE dimples so sweet and soft,
Love the cheek of my love ;
The mark of Cupid's dainty hand,
Before he wore a glove.

II.

Laughing dimples of tender love,
Smile on my darling's cheek ;
Sweet hallowed spots where kisses lurk,
And play at hide and seek.

III.

Fain would I hide my kisses there
At morning's rosy light,
To come and seek them back again
In silver hush of night.

J. ASHBY-STERRY.



LXVII.

GERTRUDE'S GLOVE.

LIPS of a kid-skin deftly sewn,
A scent as through her garden blown,
The tender hue that clothes her dove,
All these, and this is Gerty's glove.

A glove but lately dofft, for look—
It keeps the happy shape it took
Warm from her touch! What gave the glow?
And where's the mould that shaped it so?

It clasp'd the hand, so pure, so sleek,
Where Gerty rests a pensive cheek,
The hand that when the light wind stirs,
Reproves those laughing locks of hers.

Your fingers four, you little thumb!
Were I but you, in' days to come
I'd clasp, and kiss,—I'd keep her—go!
And tell her that I told you so.

FREDERICK LOCKER.



LXVIII.

ANGELICA.

FAIR is my Love, so fair,
I shudder with the sense
Of what a light the world would lose
Could she go hence.

Sweet is my Love, so sweet,
The leaves that, fold on fold,
Swathe up the odours of the rose,
Less sweetness hold.

True is my Love, so true,
Her heart is mine alone,
The music of its rhythmic beat
Throbs through my own.

Dear is my Love, so dear,
If I but hear her name,
My eyes with tears of rapture swim,
My cheek is flame.

Spare her, immortals, spare,
Till all our days are done—
Your heaven is full of angel forms,
Mine holds but one.

WILLIAM SAWYER.





LXIX.

A GARDEN IDYLL.

WE have loiter'd and laugh'd in the flowery
 croft,
 We have met under wintry skies ;
 Her voice is the dearest voice, and soft
 Is the light in her wistful eyes ;
It is sweet in the silent woods, among
 Gay crowds, or in any place
To hear her voice, to gaze on her young
 Confiding face.

For ever may roses divinely blow,
 And wine-dark pansies charm
By the prim box-path where I felt the glow
 Of her dimpled, trusting arm ;
And the sweep of her silk as she turn'd and smil'd,
 A smile as fair as her pearls ;
The breeze was in love with the darling child,
 As it moved her curls.

She show'd me her ferns and woodbine sprays,
 Foxglove and jasmine stars,
A mist of blue in the beds, a blaze
 Of red in the celadon jars :
And velvety bees in convolvulus bells,
 And roses of bountiful June—
Oh, who would think that summer spells
 Could die so soon !

For a glad song came from the milking-shed,
 On a wind of that summer south,
And the green was golden above her head,
 And a sunbeam kiss'd her mouth ;
Sweet were the lips where that sunbeam dwelt—
 And the wings of Time were fleet
As I gazed ; and neither spoke, for we felt
 Life was so sweet !


And the odorous limes were dim above
 As we leant on a drooping bough ;
And the darkling air was a breath of love,
 And a witching thrush sang " Now ! "
For the sun dropt low, and the twilight grew
 As we listen'd, and sigh'd, and leant—
That day was the sweetest day—and we knew
 What the sweetness meant.

FREDERICK LOCKER.



LXX.

NOVEMBER SNOW.

HE snow upon the rose-flow'r sits,
And whitens all the spray ;
Sweet Robin Redbreast o'er it flits,
And shakes the snow away.

The snow upon my life-bloom sits,
And sheds a dreary blight :
Thy spirit o'er my spirit flits,
And crimson comes for white.

EARL OF SOUTHESK.





LXXI.

DAWN.



LILY, with the sun of heaven's
Prime splendour on thy breast !
My scattered passions toward thee run,
Poising to awful rest. .

The darkness of our universe
Smothered my soul in night ;
Thy glory shone ; whereat the curse
Passed molten into light.

Raised over envy ; freed from pain ;
Beyond the storms of chance :
Blessed king of my own world I reign,
Controlling circumstance.

THOMAS WOOLNER.





LXXII.

THE TRYST.

SLEEPING, I dreamed that thou wast mine,
In some ambrosial lover's shrine.
My lips against thy lips were pressed,
And all our passion was confessed ;
So near and dear my darling seemed,
I knew not that I only dreamed.

Waking, this mid and moonlight night,
I clasp thee close by lover's right.
Thou fearest not my warm embrace,
And yet, so like the dream thy face
And kisses, I but half partake
The joy, and know not if I wake.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.





LXXIII.

IN A GONDOLA.

SHE SINGS.

I.

HHE moth's kiss, first !
Kiss me as if you made believe
You were not sure, this eve,
How my face, your flower, had pursed
Its petals up ; so, here and there
You brush it, till I grow aware
Who wants me, and wide ope I burst.

II.

The bee's kiss, now !
Kiss me as if you entered gay
My heart at some noonday,
A bud that dares not disallow
The claim, so all is rendered up,
And passively its shattered cup
Over your head to sleep I bow.

ROBERT BROWNING.



LXXIV.

THE DIAL.



ONLY when Summer's sun is high,
And the blue is broad in the summer sky,
The shadows on the dial face
Tell of day's race.

Only when so we sit together,
And loving eyes make pleasant weather,
Live I—my soul in sunny blisses
Counts life by kisses.

EDWIN ARNOLD.





LXXV.

A KISS.

I.

SWEET mouth ! Oh let me take
One draught from that delicious cup !
The hot Sahara-thirst to slake
That burns me up !

II.

Sweet breath ! all flowers that are,
Within that darling frame must bloom ;
My heart revives so at the rare
Divine perfume !

III.

Nay, 'tis a dear deceit,
A drunkard's cup that mouth of thine ;
Sure poison-flowers are breathing, sweet,
That fragrance fine !

IV.

I drank—the drink betrayed me
Into a madder, fiercer fever ;
The scent of those love-blossoms made me
More faint than ever.

V.

Yet though quick death it were
That rich heart-vintage I must drain,
And quaff that hidden garden's air,
Again—again !


ALFRED DOMETT.





LXXVI.

THE MOUNTAIN FIR.

HEY sat beneath the mountain fir,
Beneath the evening sun ;
With all his soul he looked at her—
And so was love begun.

The tit-mice blue in fluttering flocks
Caressed the fir-tree spray ;
And far below, through rifted rocks,
The river went its way.

As stars in heavenly waters swim,
Her eyes of azure shone ;
With all her soul she looked at him—
And so was love led on.

The squirrel sported on the bough,
And chuckled in his play ;
Above the distant mountain's brow
A golden glory lay.

The fir-tree breathed its balsam baln,
With heather scents united ;
The happy skies were hushed in calm—
And so the troth was plighted.

EARL OF SOUTHESK.





LXXVII.

THE LETTER.

THERE is another sweet as my sweet,
Fine of the fine, and shy of the shy?
Fine little hands, fine little feet—
Dewy blue eye.

Shall I write to her? shall I go?
Ask her to marry me by and by?
Somebody said that she'd say No;
Somebody knows that she'll say Ay!

Ay or no, if ask'd to her face?
Ay or no, from shy of the shy?
Go, little letter, apace, apace,
Fly;

Fly to the light in the valley below—
Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye:
Somebody said that she'd say No;
Somebody knows that she'll say Ay!

ALFRED TENNYSON.



LXXVIII.

MARRIAGE MORNING.

TIGHT, so low upon earth,
You send a flash to the sun.
Here is the golden close of love,
All my wooing is done.

Oh, the woods and the meadows,
Woods where we hid from the wet,
Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,
Meadows in which we met !

Light, so low in the vale,
You flash and lighten afar,
For this is the golden morning of love,
And you are his morning star.

Flash, I am coming, I come,
By meadow and stile and wood ;
Oh, lighten into my eyes and my heart,
Into my heart and my blood !

Heart, are you great enough,
For a love that never tires ?
O heart, are you great enough for love ?
I have heard of thorns and briars.

Over the thorns and briars,
Over the meadows and stiles,
Over the world to the end of it
Flash for a million miles.

ALFRED TENNYSON.





LXXIX.



NE so fair—none so fair.
In her eyes so true
Love's most inner heaven bare
To the balmiest blue !

One so fair—none so fair.
In the skies no Star
Like my Star of Earth so near—
They but shine afar.

One so fair—none so fair.
All too sweet it seems ;
Wake me not, O world of care,
If I walk in dreams.

One so fair—none so fair.
O my bosom-guest,
Love ne'er smiled a happier pair
To the bridal-nest.

One so fair—none so fair.
Lean to me, sweet Wife ;
Light will be the load we bear ;
Two hearts in one life.

GERALD MASSEY.





LXXX.

JOHN ANDERSON'S ANSWER.

I CANNOT kiss thee as I used to kiss ;
Time, who is lord of love, must answer this.
Shall I believe thine eyes have grown less sweet?
Nay, but my life-blood fails on heavier feet.
Time goes, old girl, time goes.

I cannot hold as once I held thy hand ;
Youth is a tree whose leaves fall light as sand.
Hast thou known many trees that shed them so ?
Ay me, sweetheart, I know, ay me, I know.
Time goes, my bird, time goes.

I cannot love thee as I used to love.
Age comes, and little Love takes flight above.
If our eyes fail, have his the deeper glow ?
I do not know, sweetheart, I do not know.
Time goes, old girl, time goes.

Why, the gold cloud grows leaden, as the eve
Deepens, and one by one its glories leave.
And, if you press me, dear, why this is so,
That this is worth a tear is all I know.
Time flows and rows and goes.

In that old day the subtle child-god came ;
Meek were his eyelids, but his eyeballs flame,
With sandals of desire his light feet shod,
With eyes and breath of fire a perfect god
He rose, my girl, he rose.

He went, my girl, and raised your hand and sighed,
“ Would that my spirit always could abide.”
And whispered “ Go your ways and play your day,
Would I were god of time, but my brief sway
Is briefer than a rose.”

Old wife, old love; there is a something yet
That makes amends, though all the glory set ;
The after-love that holds thee trebly mine,
Though thy lips fade, my dove, and we decline,
And time, dear heart, still goes.

HON. JOHN LEICESTER WARREN.



LXXXI.

RENUNCIATION.



H no ! you shall not catch me in the snare—
I will not love, I say !
Life might become a terror, a despair,
If you were ta'en away.

Nothing is given here, 'tis only lent,—
I will not, dare not, trust :
For joy might strike at once his heaven-built tent,
And leave me but its dust.

What horror, after all my life was given,
Adventured on one barque,
If that should go, even to the joy of heaven,
And I left in the dark !

Left on a wreck of sorrow, with no power
My losses to repair ;
With death denied, and every torturing hour
By memory made a snare.

Left with the dregs of life, its wine poured out ;
Left to the past a prey ;
From its sad ghosts that haunt my heart about,
Helpless to flee away.

No ! I renounce life's bliss—love's perfect flower,
Sweet though it be !—I choose
The lower, lasting lot, and keep the power,
Without a pang, to lose.

W. W. STORY.





LXXXII.


WINDLE-STRAWS.

I.

WERE life to last for ever, love,
We might go hand in hand,
And pause and pull the flowers that blow
In all the idle land ;
And we might lie in sunny fields
And while the hours away
With fallings-out and fallings-in
For half a summer day.

But since we two must sever, love,
Since some dim hour we part,
I have no time to give thee much
But quickly take my heart,
“ For ever thine,” and “ thine my love,”—
O Death may come apace.
What more of love could life bestow,
Dearest, than this embrace ?

II.

 HE kissed me on the forehead,
She spake not any word,
The silence flowed between us,
And I nor spoke nor stirred.


So hopeless for my sake it was,
So full of ruth, so sweet,
My whole heart rose and blessed her,
—Then died before her feet.

EDWARD DOWDEN.



LXXXIII.

BAGATELLES.

 HE wanton bee that suck'd the rose
Has lured a leaf away ;
The love that in my bosom glows
Must stay, and stay, and stay,

And when the rose began to die,
The bee ran up away ;
But Kitty in my love shall lie
Beyond the dying day.

I'd like to be the lavender
That makes her linen sweet,
And swoon and sweeten in her breast,
And faint around her feet.

She'd hardly think of me at all,
And shake out lawn and sheet ;
And yet I'd be the lavender
And make her linen sweet.

THEOPHILE MARZIALS.



LXXXIV.

TRAGEDIES.

SHE reach'd a rosebud from the tree,
And bit the tip and threw it by ;
My little rose, for you and me,
The worst is over when we die !

For love is like the China-rose
That leafs so quickly from the tree ;—
And life, though all the honey goes,
Lasts ever, like the pot pourri.

She was only a woman, famish'd for loving,
Mad with devotion, and such slight things
And he was a very great musician,
And used to finger his fiddle-strings.

Her heart's sweet gamut is cracking and breaking
For a look, for a touch,—for such slight things ;
But he's such a very great musician,
Grimacing and fing'ring his fiddle-strings.

In the middle of my garden-bed,
There stands a tall rose-tree ;
I took the stem, and shook and shook it,
Thick the flowers kept covering me.

And oh ! I said, you sweet large roses,
Red as rose can be,
Just drop into my bosom here,
And die along with me !

THEOPHILE MARZIALS.





LXXXV.

MAJOLICA AND ROCOCO.

WHEN I was by Chloe kiss'd,
Ceased or 'gan I to exist?
If 'twas life before without her,
What is this to be about her?

If angels love above in heaven,
Then death must be too oversweet,
For this dear love thy lips have given,
Has made this life, my love, replete.

The rose of her cheek may wane and die,
Her hair's gold fibre dull and decay ;
But love has a colour not fused to fly,
In the fabric that never shall wear away.

THEOPHILE MARZIALS.



LXXXVI.

B A B Y.

HERE did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into here.

Where did you get those eyes so blue?
Out of the sky, as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?
Some of the starry spikes left in.

Where did you get that little tear?
I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high?
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.

What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?
I saw something better than any one knows.

Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get this pearly ear?
God spoke and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands?
Love made itself into bonds and bands.

Feet, whence did you come, you darling things?
From the same box as the cherubs' wings.

How did they all just come to be you?
God thought about me, and so I grew.

But how did you come to us, you dear?
God thought about you, and so I am here.

GEORGE MACDONALD.





LXXXVII.

TO A CHILD.

IF by any device or knowledge
The rosebud its beauty could know,
It would stay a rosebud for ever,
Nor into its fulness grow.

And if thou could'st know thy own sweetness,
O little one, perfect and sweet,
Thou would'st be a child for ever,
Completer whilst incomplete.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE.





LXXXVIII.

PARIS A MACON.

I SAW, I saw the lovely child,
I watched her by the way,
I learnt her gestures sweet and wild,
Her loving eyes and gay.

Her name?—I heard not, nay, nor care,—
Enough it was for me
To find her innocently fair
And delicately free.

Oh cease and go ere dreams be done,
Nor trace the angel's birth,
Nor find the paradisal one
A blossom of the earth!

Thus it is with our subtlest joys,—
How quick the soul's alarm!
How lightly deed or word destroys
That evanescent charm!

It comes unbidden, comes unbought,
Unfettered flees away,—
His swiftest and his sweetest thought
Can never poet say.

FREDERICK MYERS.





LXXXIX.

UNREFLECTING CHILDHOOD.

IT is, indeed, a little while
Since you were born, my happy pet ;
Your future beckons with a smile,
Your by-gones don't exist as yet.

Is all the world with beauty rife ?
Are you a little bird that sings
Her simple gratitude for life,
And lovely things ?

The ocean, and the waning moons,
And starry skies, and starry dells,
And winter sport, and golden Junes,
Art, and divinest Beauty-spells :-
Festa and song, and frolic wit,
And banter, and domestic mirth,—
They all are ours !—dear child, is it
A pleasant earth ?

And poet friends, and poesy,
And precious books, for any mood :
And then that best of company,
Those graver thoughts in solitude
That hold us fast and never pall :
Then there is You, my own, my fair—
And I . . . soon I must leave it all,
—And much you care.

FREDERICK LOCKER.





XC.

NATURÆ REPARATRICI.

CRAY cloud, gray veil 'twixt me and youth
And youth's unclouded weather,
Well mayst thou blot the golden days
And skies effaced for ever.

In vain the veil to silver melts,
And flakes of sun and shadow
Once more invite these alien steps
To chase them o'er the meadow.

Yet nature holds a gracious hand,
Her ancient way pursuing ;
And spreads the charms we loved of old,
To aid the heart's renewing.

Here her long crests of fringèd crag
Allure the sky-ward swallows ;
Here the still dove's low love-note floats
Above her leafy hollows.

Here its calm strength her hillside rears
From heaving slopes of clover ;
Here still the pewit pipes and flits
Within his furzy cover.

Here hums the wild-bee in the thyme,
Here glows the royal heather ;
And youth comes back upon the breeze,
And youth's unclouded weather.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE.





XCI.

FLOWERS WITHOUT FRUIT.

BRUNE thou thy words, the thoughts control
That o'er thee swell and throng ;
They will condense within thy soul,
And change to purpose strong.

But he who lets his feelings run
In soft luxurious flow,
Shrinks when hard service must be done,
And faints at every woe.

Faith's meanest deed more favour bears,
Where hearts and wills are weigh'd,
Than brightest transports, choicest prayers,
Which bloom their hour and fade.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.





XCII.

PLEASURE AND PAIN.

WHO can determine the frontier of Pleasure?
Who can distinguish the limits of Pain?
Where is the moment the feeling to
measure?
Where is experience repeated again?

Ye who have felt the delirium of passion—
Say, can ye sever its joys and its pangs?
Is there a power in calm contemplation
To indicate each upon each as it hangs?

I would believe not ;—for spirit will languish
While sense is most blest and creation most bright ;
And life will be dearer and clearer in anguish
Than ever was felt in the throbs of delight.

See the Fakeer as he swings on his iron,
See the thin Hermit that starves in the wild ;
Think ye no pleasures the penance environ,
And hope the sole bliss by which pain is beguiled ?

No! in the kingdom those spirits are reaching,
Vain are our words the emotions to tell ;
Vain the distinctions our senses are teaching,
For Pain has its Heaven and Pleasure its Hell !

RICHARD, LORD HOUGHTON.





XCIII.

THE HIDDEN SELF.

I KNOW not if a keener smart
Can come to finer souls than his
Who hears men praise him, mind or heart,
For something higher than he is ;—

Who fain would say : “ Behold me, friends,
That which I am, not what you deem
A thing of low and narrow ends,
Sordid, not golden as I seem ;

“ See here the hidden blot of shame,
The weak thought that you take for strong,
The brain too dull to merit fame,
The faint and imitative song ;”

But dares not, lest discovery foul
Not his name only, but degrade
Heights closed but to the soaring soul,
Names which scorn trembles to invade ;

And doth his inner self conceal
From all men in his own despite,
Hiding what he would fain reveal,
And a most innocent hypocrite.

LEWIS MORRIS.





XCIV.

GENIAL moment oft has given
What years of toil and pain,
Of long industrious toil, have striven
To win, and all in vain.

Yet count not, when thine end is won,
That labour merely lost ;
Nor say it had been wiser done
To spare the painful cost.

When heaped upon the altar lie
All things to feed the fire—
One spark alighting from on high—
The flames at once aspire ;

But those sweet gums and fragrant woods,
Its rich materials rare,
By tedious quest o'er lands and floods
Had first been gathered there.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.



XCV.

THE TOYS.

MY little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes,
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up
wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
I struck him, and dismiss'd
With hard words and unkiss'd,
His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own ;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,

And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells
And two French copper coins, ranged there with
careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said :
Ah, when at last we die with trancèd breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood,
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
“ I will be sorry for their childishness.”

COVENTRY PATMORE.





XCVI.

LOSS AND GAIN.

MYRIAD Roses, unregretted, perish in their
vernal bloom,
That the essence of their sweetness *once*
your beauty may perfume.

Myriad Veins of richest life-blood empty for their
priceless worth,
To exalt *one* Will imperial over spacious realms of
earth.

Myriad Hearts are pained and broken that *one* Poet
may be taught
To discern the shapes of passion and describe them
as he ought.

Myriad Minds of heavenly temper pass as passes
moon or star,
That *one* philosophic Spirit may ascend the solar car.

Sacrifice and Self-Devotion hallow earth and fill the
skies,
And the meanest life is sacred whence the highest
may arise.

RICHARD, LORD HOUGHTON.





XCVII.

FEBRUARY.

NOOON—and the north-west sweeps the empty
road,
The rain-washed fields from hedge to hedge
are bare ;

Beneath the leafless elms some hind's abode
Looks small and void, and no smoke meets the air
From its poor hearth : one lonely rook doth dare
The gale, and beats above the unseen corn,
Then turns, and whirling down the wind is borne.

Shall it not hap that on some dawn of May
Thou shalt awake, and, thinking of days dead,
See nothing clear but this same dreary day,
Of all the days that have passed o'er thine head ?
Shalt thou not wonder, looking from thy bed,
Through green leaves on the windless east afire,
That this day too thine heart doth still desire ?

Shalt thou not wonder that it liveth yet,
The useless hope, the useless craving pain,
That made thy face, that lonely noontide, wet
With more than beating of the chilly rain?
Shalt thou not hope for joy new born again,
Since no grief ever born can ever die
Through changeless change of seasons passing by?

WILLIAM MORRIS.





XCVIII.

MARCH.

LAYER of the winter, art thou here again?
O welcome, thou that bring'st the summer night!
The bitter wind makes not thy victory vain,
Nor will we mock thee for thy faint blue sky.
Welcome, O March! whose kindly days and dry
Make April ready for the throstle's song,
Thou first redresser of the winter's wrong!

Yea, welcome March! and though I die ere June,
Yet for the hope of life I give thee praise,
Striving to swell the burden of the tune
That even now I hear thy brown birds raise,
Unmindful of the past or coming days;
Who sing: "O joy! a new year is begun:
What happiness to look upon the sun!"

Ah, what begetteth all this storm of bliss
But Death himself, who crying solemnly,
E'en from the heart of sweet Forgetfulness,
Bids us "Rejoice, lest treasureless ye die.
Within a little time must ye go by.
Stretch forth your open hands, and while ye live
Take all the gifts that Death and Life may give."

WILLIAM MORRIS.





XCIX.

APRIL.



FAIR midspring, besung so oft and oft,
How can I praise thy loveliness enow?
Thy sun that burns not, and thy breezes soft
That o'er the blossoms of the orchard blow,
The thousand things that 'neath the young leaves grow,
The hopes and chances of the growing year,
Winter forgotten long, and summer near.

When Summer brings the lily and the rose,
She brings us fear; her very death she brings
Hid in her anxious heart, the forge of woes;
And, dull with fear, no more the mavis sings.
But thou! thou diest not, but thy fresh life clings
About the fainting autumn's sweet decay,
When in the earth the hopeful seed they lay.

Ah ! life of all the year, why yet do I
Amid thy snowy blossoms' fragrant drift,
Still long for that which never draweth nigh,
Striving my pleasure from my pain to sift,
Some weight from off my fluttering mirth to lift?
—Now, when far bells are ringing, " Come again,
Come back, past years ! why will ye pass in vain ? "

WILLIAM MORRIS.





C.

SPRING IS COMING.

BY the bursting of the leaves,
By the lengthening of the eves,
Spring is coming ;
By the flowers that scent the air,
By the skies more blue and fair,
By the singing everywhere ;
Spring is coming.

All the woods and fields rejoice :
Spring is coming.
Only here and there a voice—
Here of buds the worm has worn,
Here of birds whose nest is torn,
There of those whose life is pent
Far from pleasant sight and scent—
Wails, as if their life's distress
Won a new wild bitterness ;
Spring is coming.

F. W. BOURDILLON.



CI.

A SPRING EVENING.

MCROSS the glory of the evening skies
A veil is drawn of shadowed mists, that rise
From lavishness of God's late gift, the rain.

So after farewell said, fond memories
Of words and looks the sweetest come again
Across the glowing heart, a veil of pain.

F. W. BOURDILLON.





CII.

IN SPRING.

SWEET primrose-time ! when thou art here
I go by grassy ledges
Of long lane-side, and pasture-mead,
And moss-entangled hedges :

And all about her army gay
The primrose weather musters,
In single knots, and scatter'd files,
And constellated clusters.

And golden-headed children go
Among the golden blossoms,
And harvest a whole meadow's wealth,
Heap'd on their dainty bosoms.

Ah ! play your play, sweet little ones,
Whose life is gladness only :
Nor ask an equal mirth from hearts
Which, e'en with you, are lonely.

God to His flowers His flowers gives,
Pure happiness uncloying :
Whilst they, whose primrose time is past,
Enjoy in your enjoying.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE.





CIII.

THE year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn ;
Morning's at seven ;
The hill-side's dew-pearled ;
The lark's on the wing ;
The snail's on the thorn ;
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world.

ROBERT BROWNING.





CIV.

IT was in the prime
Of the sweet Spring-time.
In the linnet's throat
Trembled the love-note ;
And the love-stirred air
Thrilled the blossoms there.
Little shadows danced
Each a tiny elf,
Happy in large light
And the thinnest self.

It was but a minute
In a far-off Spring,
But each gentle thing,
Sweetly-wooing linnet,
Soft-thrilled hawthorn tree,
Happy shadowy elf
With the thinnest self,
Live still on in me.
Oh the sweet, sweet prime
Of the past Spring-time.

GEORGE ELIOT.



CV.

A GLEE FOR WINTER.

I.

HENCE, rude Winter ! crabbed old fellow,
Never merry, never mellow !
Well-a-day ! in rain and snow
What will keep one's heart aglow ?
Groups of kinsmen, old and young,
Oldest they old friends among !
Groups of friends, so old and true,
That they seem our kinsmen too !
These all merry all together,
Charm away chill Winter weather !

II.

What will kill this dull old fellow ?
Ale that's bright, and wine that's mellow !
Dear old songs for ever new ;
Sometimes love, and laughter too ;
Pleasant wit, and harmless fun,
And a dance when day is done !

Music-friends so true and tried—
Whispered love by warm fireside—
Mirth at all times all together—
Make sweet May of Winter weather !

ALFRED DOMETT.





CVI.

MY STAR.

ALL that I know
Of a certain star
Is, it can throw
(Like the angled spar)

Now a dart of red,
Now a dart of blue ;
Till my friends have said
They would fain see, too,
My star that dartles the red and the blue!
Then it stops like a bird ; like a flower, hangs furl'd:
They must solace themselves with the Saturn
above it.

What matter to me if their star is a world ?
Mine has opened its soul to me ; therefore I love it.

ROBERT BROWNING.





CVII.

WOULD thou might'st not vex me with thine
eyes,
Thou fair Ideal Beauty, nor would'st shame
All lower thoughts and visions as they rise,
As in mid-noon a flame.

For now thy presence leaves no prospect fair,
Nor joy in act, nor charm in any maid,
Nor end to be desired, for which men dare,
Thou making me afraid.

Because life seems through thee a thing too great
To spend on these, which else might grow to thee;
So that fast bound, I idly hesitate :
I prithee set me free ;

Or, hold me, if thou wilt, but come not near,
Let me pursue thee still in ghostly grace ;
Far off let me pursue thee, for I fear
To faint before thy face.

LEWIS MORRIS.



CVIII.

THE UNREALIZED IDEAL.

MY only love is always near,—
In country or in town
I see her twinkling feet, I hear
The whisper of her gown.

She fooms it ever fair and young,
Her locks are tied in haste,
And one is o'er her shoulder flung,
And hangs below her waist.

She ran before me in the meads ;
And down this world-worn track
She leads me on ; but while she leads
She never gazes back.

And yet her voice is in my dreams,
To witch me more and more ;
That wooing voice ! Ah me, it seems
Less near me than of yore.

Lightly I sped when hope was high,
And youth beguiled the chase,—
I follow, follow still ; but I
Shall never see her face.

FREDERICK LOCKER.





CIX.

WARM whispering through the slender olive
leaves

Came to me a gentle sound,
Whispering of a secret found
In the clear sunshine 'mid the golden sheaves :

Said it was sleeping for me in the morn,
Called it gladness, called it joy,
Drew me on—"Come hither, boy"—
To where the blue wings rested on the corn.

I thought the gentle sound had whispered true—
Thought the little heaven mine,
Leaned to clutch the thing divine,
And saw the blue wings melt within the blue.

GEORGE ELIOT.





CX.

AFTER-THOUGHT.

MAN dwells apart, though not alone,
He walks among his peers unread ;
The best of thoughts which he hath known,
For lack of listeners are not said.

Yet dreaming on earth's clustered isles,
He saith, "They dwell not lone like men,"
Forgetful that their sun-flecked smiles
Flash far beyond each other's ken.

He looks on God's eternal suns,
That sprinkle the celestial blue,
And saith, "Ah ! happy shining ones,
I would that men were grouped like you !"

Yet this is sure : the loveliest star
That clustered with its peers we see,
Only because from us so far
Doth near its fellows seem to be.

JEAN INGELOW.



CXI.

ISOLATION.

WES! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone*.

The islands feel the enclaspings flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their billows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing ;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour—

Oh ! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent ;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent !
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh might our marges meet again !

Who order'd that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd?
Who renders vain their deep desire?
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.





CXII.

THE SOLITUDE OF LIFE.

WHEN Fancy's exhalations rise
From youth's delicious morn,
Our eyes seem made for others' eyes,
Spirit for spirit born :

But time the truthful faith controls,—
We learn too soon, alas!
How wide the gulf between two souls,
How difficult to pass !

In twilight and in fearfulness
We feel our path along
From heart to heart, yet none the less
Our way is often wrong.
And then new dangers must be faced,
New doubts must be dispelled,—
For not one step can be retraced
That once the Past has held.

To some 'tis given to walk awhile
In Love's unshaded noon,
But clouds are gathering while they smile,
And night is coming soon!
Most happy he whose journey lies
Beneath the starlight sheen
Of unregretful memories
Of glory that has been.

We live together years and years,
And leave unsounded still
Each other's springs of hopes and fears,
Each other's depths of will:
We live together day by day,
And some chance look or tone
Lights up with instantaneous ray
An inner world unknown.

Then wonder not that they who love
The longest and the best,
Are parted by some sudden move
Of passion or unrest:
Nor marvel that the wise and good
Should oft apart remain,
Nor dare, when once misunderstood,
To sympathise again.

Come, Death! and match thy quiet gloom
With being's darkling strife,
Come, set beside the lonely Tomb,
The Solitude of Life ;
And henceforth none who see can fear
Thy hour, which some will crave,
Who feel their hearts, while beating here,
Already in the grave.

RICHARD, LORD HOUGHTON.





CXIII.

NOT TO BE.

THE rose said, " Let but this long rain be past,
And I shall feel my sweetness in the sun,
And pour its fulness into life at last ; "
But when the rain was done,
But when dawn sparkled through unclouded air,
She was not there.


The lark said, " Let but winter be away,
And blossoms come, and light, and I will soar,
And lose the earth, and be the voice of day ; "
But when the snows were o'er,
But when spring broke in blueness overhead,
The lark was dead.

And myriad roses made the garden glow,
And skylarks carolled all the summer long—
What lack of birds to sing and flowers to blow ?
Yet, ah, lost scent, lost song !
Poor empty rose, poor lark that never trilled !
Dead unfulfilled !

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.
M



CXIV.

OO soon so fair, fair lilies ;
To bloom is then to wane ;
The folded bud has still
To-morrows at its will,
Blown flowers can never blow again.

Too soon so bright, bright noontide ;
The sun that now is high
Will henceforth only sink
Towards the western brink ;
Day that's at prime begins to die.

Too soon so rich, ripe summer,
For autumn tracks thee fast ;
Lo, death-marks on the leaf !
Sweet summer, and my grief ;
For summer come is summer past.

Too soon, too soon, lost summer ;
Some hours and thou art o'er.
Ah ! death is part of birth :
Summer leaves not the earth
But last year's summer lives no more.

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.





CXV.

NOTHING LOST.

HERE are last year's snows,
Where the summer's rose,—
Who is there who knows?

Or the glorious note
Of some singer's throat
Heard in years remote?

Or the love they bore
Who, in days of yore,
Loved, but are no more?

Or the faiths men knew
When, before mind grew,
All strange things seemed true?

.
The snows are sweet spring rain,
The dead rose blooms again,
Young voices keep the strain.

The old affection mild
Still springs up undefiled
For love, and friend, and child.

The old faiths grown more wide,
Purer and glorified,
Are still our life-long guide.

Nothing that once has been,
Tho' ages roll between
And it be no more seen,

Can perish, for the Will
Which doth our being fulfil
Sustains and keeps it still.

LEWIS MORRIS.





CXVI.

LIFE knows no dead so beautiful
As is the white cold-coffin'd past ;
This I may love nor be betray'd :
The dead are faithful to the last.
I am not spouseless—I have wed
A memory—a life that's dead.

JOAQUIN MILLER.



*



CXVII.

CHANGED.

FROM the outskirts of the town,
Where of old the milestone stood,
Now a stranger, looking down,
I behold the shadowy crown
Of the dark and haunted wood.

Is it changed, or am I changed?
Ah, the oaks are fresh and green,
But the friends with whom I ranged
Through their thickets are estranged
By the years that intervene.

Bright as ever flows the sea,
Bright as ever shines the sun,
But, alas! they seem to me
Not the sun that used to be,
Not the tides that used to run.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.



CXVIII.

LIKE to the moan of buried rivers,
 Heard faintly as they roam,
While the wild rock around them shivers
 Through sheets of sunless foam ;
Beneath the life that weighs and presses,
 With muffled undertone,
Throbs in the spirit's worn recesses,
 The voice of years long flown.

If, in the tumult of existence,
 It whisper soft and low,
Yea seem, scarce heard through depths of distance,
 To melt away and go :
Yet oft, when stars more whitely glitter,
 When moons are waning chill,
That tide unseen grows loud and bitter,
 The caverned heart to fill.

And, as the other night, unbroken
And starless, hangs around,
Old words, half thought, old thoughts, half spoken,
Pour in to swell the sound.
Though Death's dumb frost all else is hushing,
From that undying past,
The voice not lost, the stream still rushing,
Shall murmur to the last.


SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.





CXIX.

LEAFLESS HOURS.

 HE pale sun, through the spectral wood,
Gleams sparsely, where I pass ;
My footstep, silent as my mood,
Falls in the silent grass.

Only my shadow points before me,
Where I am moving now ;
Only sad memories murmur o'er me
From every leafless bough :
And out of the nest of last year's Redbreast
Is stolen the very snow.

ROBERT, LORD LYTTON.





CXX.



H roses for the flush of youth,
And laurel for the perfect prime ;
But pluck an ivy branch for me
Grown old before my time.

Oh violets for the grave of youth,
And bay for those dead ere their prime ;
Give me the withered leaves I chose
Before in the old time.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.





CXXI.

I.

FOR me no roseate garlands twine,¹
But wear them, Dearest, in my stead ;
Time has a whiter hand than thine,
And lays it on my head.

II.

Enough to know thy place on earth
Is there where roses latest die ;
To know the steps of youth and mirth
Are thine, that pass me by.

AUBREY DE VERE.
SIR HENRY TAYLOR.





CXXII.

BRING a garland for your head,
Of blossoms fresh and fair,
My own hands wound their white and red
To ring about your hair ;
Here is a lily, here a rose,
A warm narcissus that scarce blows,
And fairer blossoms no man knows.

So crowned and chapleted with flowers,
I pray you be not proud ;
For after brief and summer hours
Comes autumn with a shroud ;—
Though fragrant as a flower you lie,
You and your garland, by and by,
Will fade and wither up and die !

EDMUND W. GOSSE.



CXXIII.

THE FALLING ROSE.

PASS, falling rose !
Not now the glory of the spring is round thee ;
Not now the air of summer round thee
blows ;

Pallid and chill the autumn's mists have found thee ;
Pass, falling rose !

Pass, falling rose !
Where are the songs that wooed thy glad unfolding ?
Only the south the wood-dove's soft wail knows ;
Far southern eaves the swallow's nest are holding ;
Pass, falling rose !

Pass, falling rose !
Linger the blooms to birth thy glory wooing ?
Linger the hues that lured thee to uncloset ?
Long, long, their leaves the dark earth have been
strewing ;
Pass, falling rose !

WILLIAM COX BENNETT.



CXXIV.

THE ROSE IN OCTOBER.



LATE and sweet, too sweet, too late !
What nightingale will sing to thee ?
The empty nest, the shivering tree,
The dead leaves by the garden gate,
And cawing crows for thee will wait,
O sweet and late !

Where wert thou when the soft June nights
Were faint with perfume, glad with song ?
Where wert thou when the days were long
And steeped in summer's young delights ?
What hopest thou now but checks and slights,
Brief days, lone nights ?


Stay, there's a gleam of winter wheat
Far on the hill ; down in the woods
A very heaven of stillness broods ;
And through the mellow sun's noon heat,
Lo, tender pulses round thee beat,
O late and sweet !

MARY TOWNLEY.



CXXV.

DOVER BEACH.

HE sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits ;—on the French coast, the
light

Gleams, and is gone ; the cliffs of England stand
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night air !
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the ebb meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
Listen ! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægæan, and it brought

Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery ; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled ;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another ! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain ;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarm of struggle and fight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night !

MATTHEW ARNOLD.





CXXVI.

BURDENS.

ARE sorrows hard to bear,—the ruin
Of flowers, the rotting of red fruit,
A love's decease, a life's undoing,
And summer slain, and song-birds mute,
And skies of snow and bitter air?
These things, you deem, are hard to bear.

But ah the burden, the delight
Of dreadful joys! Noon opening wide,
Golden and great; the gulfs of night,
Fair deaths, and rent veils cast aside,
Strong soul to strong soul rendered up,
And silence filling like a cup.


EDWARD DOWDEN.





CXXVII.

ON THE SHORE.

 HE angry sunset fades from out the west,
A glimmering greyness creeps along the
sea ;
Wild waves be hushed and moan into your
rest,
Soon will all earth be sleeping, why not ye ?


Far off the heavens deaden o'er with sleep,
The purple twilight darkens on the hill ;
Why will ye only ever wake and weep ?
I weary of your sighing, oh ! be still.

But ever, ever, moan ye by the shore,
While all your trouble surges in my breast ;
Oh, waves of trouble surge in me no more,
Or be but still awhile and let me rest.

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.



CXXVIII.

HE waters are rising and flowing
Over the weedy stone—
Over it, over it going ;
It is never gone.

Over it joys go sweeping,
'Tis there—the ancient pain :
Yea, drowned in waves and waves of weeping,
It will rise again.

GEORGE MACDONALD.





CXXIX.



LIFE, O death, O world, O time,
O grave, where all things flow,
'Tis yours to make our lot sublime
With your great weight of woe.

Though sharpest anguish hearts may wring,
Though bosoms torn may be,
Yet suffering is a holy thing ;
Without it what were we ?

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.





CXXX.

OASIS.

LET them go by—the heats, the doubts, the
strife ;
I can sit here and care not for them now,
Dreaming beside the glimmering wave of life
Once more,—I know not how.

There is a murmur in my heart, I hear
Faint, O so faint, some air I used to sing ;
It stirs my sense ; and odours dim and dear
The meadow-breezes bring.

Just this way did the quiet twilights fade
Over the fields and happy homes of men,
While one bird sang as now, piercing the shade,
Long since,—I know not when.

EDWARD DOWDEN.



CXXXI.

THE EPICUREAN.

HOW gently, beautiful, and calm,
The quiet river murmurs by ;
How soft the light, how full of balm,
The breeze that soothes the dark'ning sky!

In every clime, in every state,
We may be happy if we will ;
Man wrestles against iron fate,
And then complains of pain and ill.

The flowers, the beasts, the very heaven,
Calmly their destined paths pursue ;
All take the pleasures that are given,
We only find them short and few.

Oh that mankind, alive to truth,
Would cease a hopeless war to wage ;
Would reap in youth the joys of youth,—
In age the peacefulness of age !

Upon an everlasting tide
 Into the silent seas we go ;
But verdure laughs along the side,
 And roses on the margin blow.

Nor life, nor death, nor aught they hold,
 Rate thou above their natural height ;
Yet learn that all our eyes behold,
 Has value, if we mete it right.

Pluck then the flowers that line the stream,
 Instead of fighting with its power ;
But pluck as flowers, not gems, nor deem
 That they will bloom beyond their hour.

Whate'er betides, from day to day,
 An even pulse and spirit keep ;
And, like a child, worn out with play,
 When wearied with existence, sleep.

SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.





CXXXII.

DEPARTURE.

IT was not like your great and gracious ways !
Do you, that have naught other to lament,
Never, my Love, repent
Of how, that July afternoon,
You went,
With sudden, unintelligible phrase,
And frighten'd eye,
Upon your journey of so many days,
Without a single kiss or a good-bye ?
I knew, indeed, that you were parting soon ;
And so we sate, within the low sun's rays,
You whispering to me, for your voice was weak,
Your harrowing praise.
Well, it was well, my Wife,
To hear you such things speak,
And see your love
Make of your eyes a growing gloom of life,
As a warm South wind sombres a March grove.
And it was like your great and gracious ways
To turn your talk on daily things, my Dear,

Lifting the luminous, pathetic lash
To let the laughter flash,
Whilst I drew near,
Because you spoke so low that I could scarcely hear.
But all at once to leave me at the last,
More at the wonder than the loss aghast,
With huddled, unintelligible phrase,
And frighten'd eye,
And go your journey of all days
With not one kiss or a good-bye,
And the only loveless look the look with which you
pass'd,
'Twas all unlike your great and gracious ways.

COVENTRY PATMORE.





CXXXIII.

BEFORE SEDAN.

HERE, in this leafy place,
Quiet he lies,
Cold, with his sightless face
Turned to the skies ;
'Tis but another dead ;
All you can say is said.

Carry his body hence,—
Kings must have slaves ;
Kings climb to eminence
Over men's graves :
So this man's eye is dim ;—
Throw the earth over him.

What was the white you touched,
There, at his side ?
Paper his hand had clutched
Tight e'er he died ;—
Message or wish, may be ;—
Smooth the folds out and see.

Hardly the worst of us
Here could have smiled !—
Only the tremulous
Words of a child ;—
Prattle, that has for stops
Just a few ruddy drops.

Look. She is sad to miss,
Morning and night,
His—her dead father's—kiss ;
Tries to be bright,
Good to mamma, and sweet.
That is all. “ Marguerite.”


Ah, if beside the dead
Slumbered the pain !
Ah, if the hearts that bled
Slept with the slain !
If the grief died ;—But no ;—
Death will not have it so.

AUSTIN DOBSON.





CXXXIV.

“  BAI RN, when I am dead,
How shall ye keep frae harm?
What hand shall gie ye bread?
What fire will keep ye warm?
How shall ye dwell on earth awa' frae me? ”—
“ O Mither, dinna dee ! ”

“ O bairn, by night or day
I hear nae sounds ava',
But voices of winds that blaw,
And the voices of ghaists that say,
' Come awa ! come awa ! '
The Lord that made the wind, and made the sea,
Is sore on my son and me,
And I melt in His breath like snaw. ”—
“ O Mither, dinna dee ! ”

“ O bairn, it is but closing up the een,
And lying down never to rise again.
Many a strong man’s sleeping hae I seen,—
There is nae pain !
I’m weary, weary, and I scarce ken why ;
My summer has gone by,
And sweet were sleep, but for the sake o’ thee.”—
“ O Mither, dinna dee !”

ROBERT BUCHANAN.





CXXXV.

(FROM "'TIS PITY SHE'S A QUEEN,"—A.D. 1610),
ACT IV. SCENE 2.

*The LADY MARGARET, with SUSAN and LUCY ; LADY
M. at her embroidery frame, singing.*

GIRLS, when I am gone away,
On this bosom strew
Only flowers meek and pale,
And the yew.

Lay these hands down by my side,
Let my face be bare ;
Bind a kerchief round the face,
Smooth my hair.

Let my bier be borne at dawn,
Summer grows so sweet,
Deep into the forest green
Where boughs meet.

Then pass away, and let me lie
One long, warm, sweet day
There alone with face upturn'd,
One sweet day.

When the morning light grows broad,
While noon sleepeth sound,
While the evening falls and faints,
While the world goes round.

EDWARD DOWDEN.





CXXXVI.

PASSING away, saith the World, passing away :
Chances, beauty and youth sapped day by
day :

Thy life never continueth in one stay.
Is the eye waxen dim, is the dark hair changing to
grey
That hath won neither laurel nor bay?
I shall clothe myself in Spring and bud in May ;
Thou, root-stricken, shalt not rebuild thy decay
On my bosom for aye.
Then I answered : Yea.

Passing away, saith my Soul, passing away :
With its burden of fear and hope, of labour and play ;
Hearken what the past doth witness and say :
Rust in thy gold, a moth is in thine array,
A canker is in thy bud, thy leaf must decay.
At midnight, at cockcrow, at morning, one certain
day
Lo, the Bridegroom shall come and shall not delay :
Watch thou and pray.
Then I answered : Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing away :
Winter passeth after the long delay :
New grapes on the vine, new figs on the tender spray,
Turtle calleth turtle in Heaven's May.
Though I tarry, wait for Me, trust Me, watch and pray,
Arise, come away, night is past and lo it is day.
My Love, My Sister, My Spouse, thou shalt hear me
say.
Then I answered : Yea.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.





CXXXVII.

PUSH off the boat,
Quit, quit the shore,
The stars will guide us back : —
O gathering cloud,
O wide, wide sea,
O waves that keep no track !

On through the pines !
The pillared woods,
Where silence breathes sweet breath :—
O labyrinth,
O sunless gloom,
The other side of death !

GEORGE ELIOT.



*"THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY."*

COULD we but know
The land that ends our dark, uncer-
tain travel,

Where lie those happier hills and meadows low,—
Ah, if beyond the spirit's inmost cavel,
Aught of that country could we surely know,
Who would not go?

Might we but hear
The hovering angels' high imagined chorus,
Or catch, betimes, with wakeful eyes and clear,
One radiant vista of the realm before us,—
With one rapt moment given to see and hear,
Ah, who would fear?

Were we quite sure
To find the peerless friend who left us lonely,
Or there, by some celestial stream as pure,
To gaze in eyes that here were lovelit only,—
This weary mortal coil, were we quite sure,
Who would endure?



CXXXIX.

NOT YET.

NOT yet, not yet, the light ;
Underground, out of sight,
Like moles, we blindly toil.
On, though we know not where ;
Some day the upper air,
The sun, and all things fair,
We reach through the dark soil.

BEATRIX TOLLEMACHE.





CXI.

BY-AND-BY.

WAITING, waiting. 'Tis so far
To the day that is to come :
One by one the days that are
All to tell their countless sum ;
Each to dawn and each to die—
What so far as by-and-by ?

Waiting, waiting. 'Tis not ours
This to-day that flies so fast :
Let them go, the shadowy hours
Floating, floated, into Past.
Our day wears to-morrow's sky,—
What so near as by-and-by ?

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.





CXLI.

AFTER.



LITTLE time for laughter,
A little time to sing,
A little time to kiss and cling,
And no more kissing after.

A little while for scheming
Love's unperfected schemes ;
A little time for golden dreams,
Then no more any dreaming.

A little while 'twas given
To me to have thy love ;
Now, like a ghost, alone I move
About a ruined heaven.

A little time for speaking,
Things sweet to say and hear ;
A time to seek, and find thee near,
Then no more any seeking.

A little time for saying
Words the heart breaks to say,
A short, sharp time wherein to pray,
Then no more need for praying ;

But long, long years to weep in,
And comprehend the whole
Great grief that desolates the soul,
And eternity to sleep in.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.





CXLII.

THE SICK MAN AND THE BIRDS.

THE SICK MAN.

SPRING,—art thou come, O Spring !
I am too sick for words ;
How hast thou heart to sing,
O Spring, with all thy birds ?

THE BLACKBIRD.

I sing for joy to see again
The merry leaves along the lane,
The little bud grown ripe ;
And look, my love upon the bough !
Hark, how she calleth to me now,—
“ Pipe ! Pipe ! ”

THE SICK MAN.

Ah ! weary is the sun ;
Love is an idle thing :
But, Bird, thou restless one,
What ails thee, wandering ?

THE SWALLOW.

By shore and sea I come and go,
To seek I know not what—and lo !
 On no man's eaves I sit
But voices bid me rise once more,
To flit again by sea and shore,—
 “ Flit ! Flit ! ”

THE SICK MAN.

This is Earth's bitter cup :—
 Only to seek, not know.
But Thou, that strivest up,
 Why dost thou carol so ?

THE LARK.

A secret Spirit gifteth me
With song, and wing that lifteth me,
 A Spirit for whose sake,
Striving amain to reach the sky,
Still to the old dark earth I cry—
 “ Wake ! Wake ! ”

THE SICK MAN.

My hope hath lost its wing.
 Thou, that to Night dost call,
How hast thou heart to sing,
 Thy tears made musical ?

THE NIGHTINGALE.

Alas for me ! a dry desire
Is all my song,—a waste of fire
That will not fade or fail ;
To me, dim shapes of ancient crime
Moan through the windy ways of Time,
“ Wail ! wail ! ”

THE SICK MAN.

Thine is the sick man's song,—
Mournful, in sooth, and fit ;
Unrest that cries “ How long ? ”
And the Night answers it.

AUSTIN DOBSON.





CXLIII.

R E S T.

WHEN the tumult of day is done,
And the winds are at rest,
When the glory is all but gone
In the wonderful west.

Why, heart, is thy trouble so deep?
. Why, spirit, thy care?
Full soon thou shalt quieter sleep
Than the quietest there.

JAMES RHOADES.





CXLIV.

A VOICE FROM AFAR.

WEEP not for me ;—
Be blithe as wont, nor tinge
with gloom

The stream of love that circles home,
Light hearts and free !
Joy in the gifts Heaven's bounty lends ;
Nor miss my face, dear friends !

I still am near ;—
Watching the smiles I prized on earth,
Your converse mild, your blameless mirth ;
Now too I hear
Of whisper'd sounds the tale complete,
Low prayers, and musings sweet.

A sea before
The throne is spread ;—its pure still glass
Pictures all earth-scenes as they pass.

We on its shore,
Share, in the bosom of our rest,
God's knowledge, and are blest.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.





CXLV.

THE world is great : the birds all fly from me,
The stars are golden fruit upon a tree
All out of reach : my little sister went,
And I am lonely.

The world is great : I tried to mount the hill
Above the pines, where the light lies so still,
But it rose higher : little Lisa went,
And I am lonely.

The world is great : the wind comes rushing by,
I wonder where it comes from ; sea-birds cry
And hurt my heart : my little sister went,
And I am lonely.

The world is great : the people laugh and talk,
And make loud holiday : how fast they walk !
I'm lame, they push me : little Lisa went,
And I am lonely.

GEORGE ELIOT.



CXLVI.

IF but thy heart were stone—
Strong stone or steel—
It never had made this moan,
It never had learnt to feel.

The storm should never have swept
Over the place of its rest ;
It never had listened and leapt
At the cry of a life opprest.

It had never been shaken and torn
At the sight of a loved one's pain ;
It had never stood still, forlorn,
At the thought " Is there meeting again ? "

It had stood by itself secure,
Bound round and beneath and above,
Fenced from the plaint of the poor,
And free from the fires of love.

Thou hadst smiled in god-like mirth,
Thou hadst lived serene, alone,
Thou hadst lived a lord of earth,
If but thy heart were stone.

ERNEST MYERS.





CXLVII.

THE SEA-LIMITS.

CONSIDER the sea's listless chime ;
Tune's self it is, inaudible,—
The murmur of the earth's own shell.

Secret continuance sublime

Is the sea's end : our sight may pass
No furlong further. Since time was,
This sound hath told the lapse of time.

No quiet, which is death's,—it hath
The mournfulness of ancient life,
Enduring always at dull strife.

As the world's heart of rest and wrath,
Its painful pulse is in the sands.
Last utterly, the whole sky stands,
Grey and not known, along its path.

Listen alone beside the sea,
Listen alone among the woods ;
Those voices of twin's solitudes
Shall have one sound alike to thee :

Hark ! where the murmurs of thronged men
Surge and smile back, and surge again,—
Still the one voice of wave and tree.

Gather a shell from the strown beach
And listen at its lips : they sigh
The same desire and mystery,
The echo of the whole sea's speech.
And all mankind is thus at heart
Not anything but what thou art :
And Earth, Sea, Man, are all in each.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.





CXLVIII.

VIOLETS.

VIOLETS, shy violets !
How many hearts with thee compare !
Who hide themselves in thickest green,
And thence unseen,
Ravish the enraptured air
With sweetness, dewy fresh and rare !

Violets, shy violets !
Human hearts to me shall be
Viewless violets in the grass,
And as I pass,
Odours and sweet imagery
Will wait on mine and gladden me !


GEORGE MEREDITH.





CXLIX.

THE APOLOGY.

HINK me not unkind and rude
That I walk alone in grove and glen ;
I go to the god of the wood
To fetch his word to men.

Tax not my sloth that I
Fold my arms beside the brook ;
Each cloud that floated in the sky
Writes a letter in my book.

Chide me not, laborious band,
For the idle flowers I brought ;
Every aster in my hand
Goes home loaded with a thought.

There was never mystery
But 'tis figured in the flowers ;
Was never secret history
But birds tell it in the bowers.

One harvest in thy field
Homeward brought the oxen strong ;
A second crop thine acres yield,
Which I gather in a song.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.





CL.

L'ENVOI.

HOLD within my hand a lute,
A lute that hath not many strings.
A little bird above it sings,
And singing soars and claps its wings ;
Sing, little bird ; when thou art mute,
The music dies within my lute.

Sing on, thou little bird, until
I hear a voice expected long,
That bids an after-silence fill
The space that once was filled with song.
Then fold thy wings upon my breast,
Upon my heart, and give it rest.

DORA GREENWELL.



BOOK II.

S o n n e t s.



CLI.

THE SINGER'S PLEA.

WHY do I sing? I know not why, my friend ;
The ancient rivers, rivers of renown,
A royal largess to the sea roll down,
And on those liberal highways nations send
Their tributes to the world,—stored corn and wine,
Gold-dust, the wealth of pearls, and orient spar,
And myrrh, and ivory, and cinnabar,
And dyes to make a presence-chamber shine.
But in the woodlands, where the wild flowers are,
The rivulets, they must have their innocent will
Who all the summer hours are singing still ;
The birds care for them, and sometimes a star,
And should a tired child rest beside the stream,
Sweet memories would slide into his dream.

EDWARD DOWDEN.





CLII.

SHAKSPEARE.



THERS abide our question—Thou art free !
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge ! So some sovran hill
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the border, often, of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality ;

And thou, whose head did stars and sunbeams know,
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,
Didst walk on earth unguess'd at.—Better so !

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



CLIII.

LETTY'S GLOBE.

WHEN Letty had scarce pass'd her third glad
year,
And her young artless words began to flow,
One day we gave the child a colour'd
sphere

Of the wide earth, that she might mark and know
By tint and outline all its sea and land.
She patted all the world; old empires peep'd
Between her baby-fingers; her soft hand
Was welcome at all frontiers; how she leap'd,
And laugh'd, and prattled in her pride of bliss!
But when we turn'd her sweet unlearnèd eye
On our own isle, she rais'd a joyous cry,
"Oh yes! I see it, Letty's home is there!"
And while she hid all England with a kiss,
Bright over Europe fell her golden hair.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.



CLIV.

LOVE THE MUSICIAN.

LOVE is the Minstrel ; for in God's own sight,
The master of all melody, he stands,
And holds a golden rebeck in his hands,
And leads the chorus of the saints in light ;
But ever and anon those chambers bright
Detain him not, for down to these low lands
He flies, and spreads his musical commands,
And teaches men some fresh divine delight.
For with his bow he strikes a single chord
Across a soul, and wakes in it desire
To grow more pure and lovely, and aspire
To that ethereal country where, outpoured
From myriad stars that stand before the Lord,
Love's harmonies are like a flame of fire.

EDMUND W. GOSSE.





CLV.

LOVE PASSING.



H wherefore ever onward, Love ! Oh why
Not rest with me awhile, and bid me take
Thine own sweet flowers that everywhere grow
high

In meadows glorious made by that deep lake,
Reflecting clear the heaven of thy sweet grace :
Teach me, O Love, to pluck these flowers of thine,
Give me to see and know thy blessed face,
That everlasting wisdom may be mine :—
I feel the charm of sweetest misery,
I know the mountain-land of quick extremes,
Thick flowers and deepest snows I also see,
I feel great sorrow mix with brightest dreams :—
Sweet Love ! Oh rush not thus so quickly by,
But live with me that joy may never die.

J. W. INCHBOLD.





CLVI.

LOVE'S QUEST.

LOVE walks with weary feet the upward way,
Love without joy and led by suffering ;
Love's un-kissed lips have now no song to
sing,

Love's eyes are blind and cannot see the day.

Love walks in utter darkness, and I say :

“Oh, Love, 'tis summer ;” or, “Behold the spring ;”

Or, “Love, 'tis autumn, and leaves withering ;”

And “Now it is the winter bleak and gray ;”

And still Love heedeth not. “Oh, Love,” I cry,

“Wilt thou not rest ? the path is over steep :”

Love answers not, but passeth all things by ;

Nor will he stay, for those who laugh or weep.

I follow Love who follows Grief ; but lo,

Where the way ends, not Love himself can know.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.



CLVII.

LOVE'S ANSWER.

I SAID to Love, "Lo one thing troubles me !
How shall I show the way in which I love?
Is any word, or look, or kiss enough
To show to her my love's extremity ?
What is there I can say, or do, that she
May know the strength and utter depth thereof?
For words are weak, such love as mine to prove,
Though I should pour them forth unceasingly."
Then fell Love's smile upon me as he said,
"Thou art a child in love, not knowing this ;
That could she know thy love by word or kiss,
Or gauge it by its show, 'twere all but dead :
For not by bounds, but shoreless distances,
Full knowledge of the sea is compassèd."

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.





CLVIII.

WINGED HOURS.

EACH hour until we meet is as a bird
That wings from far his gradual way along
The rustling covert of my soul,—his song
Still loudlier trilled through leaves more deeply
stirr'd.

But at the hour of meeting, a clear word
Is every note he sings, in Love's own tongue ;
Yet, Love, thou know'st the sweet strain suffers
wrong,
Through our contending kisses oft unheard.


What of that hour at last, when for her sake
No wing may fly to me nor song may flow ;
When, wandering round my life unleaved, I know
The blooded feathers scattered in the brake,
And think how she, far from me, with like eyes
Sees through the tuneful bough the wingless
skies ?

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.



CLIX.

BROKEN MUSIC.

HE mother will not turn, who thinks she hears
Her nursling's speech first grow articulate ;
But breathless with averted eyes elate
She sits, with open lips and open ears,
That it may call her twice. 'Mid doubts and fears
Thus oft my soul has hearkened ; till the song,
A central moan for days, at length found tongue.
And the sweet music welled and the sweet tears.

But now, whatever while the soul is fain
To list that wonted murmur, as it were
The speech-bound sea-shell's low importunate strain,—
No breath of song, thy voice alone is there,
Oh bitterly beloved ! and all her gain
Is but the pang of unpermitted prayer.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.





CLX.

NIGHTINGALES.

WHAT spirit moves the quiring nightingales
To utter forth their notes so soft and clear?
What purport hath their music, which pre-
vails

At midnight, thrilling all the darkened air?
'Tis said, some weeks before the hén-birds land
Upon our shores, their tuneful mates appear;
And, in that space, by hope and sorrow spann'd,
Their sweetest melodies 'tis ours to hear;
And is it so? for solace till they meet,
Does this most perfect chorus charm the grove?
Do these wild voices, round me and above,
Of amorous forethought and condolence treat?
Well may such lays be sweetest of the sweet,
That aim to fill the intervals of Love!

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.





CLXI.

LILITH.

(FOR A PICTURE.)



OF Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told
 (The witch he loved before the gift of Eve),
 That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue
 could deceive,
And her enchanted hair was the first gold.
And still she sits, young, while the earth is old,
 And, subtly of herself contemplative,
 Draws men to watch the bright web she can
 weave,
Till heart and body and life are in its hold.

The rose and poppy are her flowers ; for where
 Is he not found, O Lilith, whom shed scent
And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall snare ?
 Lo ! as that youth's eyes burned at thine, so went
 Thy spell through him, and left his straight neck
 bent,
And round his heart one strangling golden hair.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.



CLXII.

LOVE-SWEETNESS.

SWEET dimness of her loosened hair's downfall
About thy face ; her sweet hands round thy
head

In gracious fostering union garlanded ;
Her tremulous smiles ; her glances' sweet recall
Of love ; her murmuring sighs memorial ;
Her mouth's culled sweetness by thy kisses shed
On cheeks and neck and eyelids, and so led
Back to her mouth which answers there for all ;—

What sweeter than these things, except the thing
In lacking which all these would lose their
sweet :—

The confident heart's still fervour ; the swift beat
And soft subsidence of the spirit's wing,
Then when it feels, in cloud-girt wayfaring,
The breath of kindred plumes against its feet ?

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.





CLXIII.

THE BRIDESMAID.



BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was tied,
Thine eyes so wept that they could scarcely
see ;
Thy sister smiled and said, "No tears for
me !

A happy bridesmaid makes a happy bride."
And then, the couple standing side by side,
Love lighted down between them full of glee,
And over his left shoulder laugh'd at thee,
"O happy bridesmaid, make a happy bride."
And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,
For while the tender service made thee weep,
I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not hide,
And prest thy hand, and knew the press return'd,
And thought, "My life is sick of single sleep ;
O happy bridesmaid, make a happy bride !"

ALFRED TENNYSON.





CLXIV.

SPRING LOVE.

FROM morn to evening, this day, yesterday,
We've walked within the garden'd paths
of love,
Till the moon rose the darkening woods
above :

We've seen the blossoming apple's crimson spray,
And watched the hiving bees work lustily,
As if their time was short as it was sweet :
Along love's meadow-lands too, with glad feet,
We've welcomed all the wild flowers come with May.

Bend thy sweet head ; I've strung this long woodbine
With primroses and cowslips—golden fringe
For golden hair, the flowers that best express
The opening of the year, the mild sunshine,
And the frank clearness of those thoughtless eyes,
Through which there gleams scarce-trusted
blessedness.

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.



CLXV.

W H Y.

“**W**HY do I love thee?” Thus, in earnest wise,
I answer : Sweet ! I love thee for thy
face

Of rarest beauty ; and for every grace
That in thy voice and air and motion lies ;

I love thee for the love-look in thine eyes,—

The melting glance which óny one may see

Of all who mark how beautiful they be ;

I love thee for thy mind (which yet denies,

For modesty, how wonderful it is !)

I love thee for thy heart so true and warm,

I love thee for thy bosom’s hidden charm ;

I love thee for thy mouth so sweet to kiss ;

Because of these I love thee ; yet above

All else, because I cannot choose but love !


JOHN GODFREY SAXE.





CLXVI.

REMEMBRANCE.

 O think of thee ! it was thy fond request
When yesterweek we parted. Ah ! how well
I heed thy bidding only Love may tell
Beneath his roses. As, for welcome rest,
The bird, wing-weary, seeks her downy nest,
So oft, dear heart ! from toil and care I flee,
And, nestling in my happy thought of thee,
With sweet repose my weary soul is blest.
To think of thee—who evermore art near
My conscious spirit, like the halo spread
In altar-pictures round some stately head,
As 'twere of Heaven the golden atmosphere—
What can I else, until in death I sink,
And, thinking of my darling, cease to think ?

JOHN GODFREY SAXE.





CLXVII.

LET not our lips pronounce the word Farewell
To those we cherish ;—if one needs must part,
On hope's illusion let the fancy dwell,
Nor deem that distance can make cold the
heart !

Though I should look through sorrow's dim eclipse,
And print warm partings on the loved one's lips—
To speak the last sad word my tongue were dumb ;
Or, if it syllabled my soul's emotion,
'Twould be to tell how pilgrim steps have come
To worship at the shrine of love's devotion !
So be the language of despair unspoken
By those whose hearts, nor time, nor space can sever—
A fountain seal'd till hope be lost for ever,
And only gushing when the heart is broken.

JAMES HEDDERWICK.





CLXVIII.

WOULD not have this perfect love of ours
Grow from a single root, a single stem,
Bearing no goodly fruit, but only flowers
That idly hide life's iron diadem :
It should grow always like that eastern tree
Whose limbs take root and spread forth constantly ;
That love for one, from which there doth not spring
Wide love for all, is but a worthless thing.
Not in another world, as poets prate,
Dwell we apart above the tide of things,
High floating o'er earth's clouds our faëry wings :
But our pure love doth ever elevate
Into a holy bond of brotherhood
All earthly things, making them pure and good.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.





CLXIX.



UR love is not a fading, earthly flower :
Its wingèd seed dropped down from Paradise,
And, nursed by day and night, by sun and
shower,

Doth momentarily to fresher beauty rise :
To us the leafless autumn is not bare,
Nor winter's rattling boughs lack lusty green.
Our summer hearts make summer's fulness, where
No leaf, or bud, or blossom may be seen :
For nature's life in love's deep life doth lie,
Love,—whose forgetfulness is beauty's death,
Whose mystic key these cells of Thou and I
Into the infinite freedom openeth,
And makes the body's dark and narrow grate
The wide-flung leàves of Heaven's palace-gate.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.





CLXX.

AFTER DEATH.

HE curtains were half drawn, the floor was swept
And strewn with rushes, rosemary and may
Lay thick upon the bed on which I lay,
Where through the lattice ivy-shadows crept.
He leaned above me, thinking that I slept
And could not hear him ; but I heard him say :
“ Poor child, poor child ! ” and as he turned away
Came a deep silence, and I knew he wept.
He did not touch the shroud, or raise the fold
That hid my face, or take my hand in his,
Or ruffle the smooth pillows for my head :
He did not love me living ; but once dead
He pitied me ; and very sweet it is
To know he still is warm, though I am cold.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.





CLXXI.

LOVE, TIME, AND DEATH.

WH me, dread friends of mine,—Love, Time,
and Death :

Sweet Love, who came to me on sheeny wing,
And gave her to my arms—her lips, her breath,
And all her golden ringlets clustering :
And Time, who gathers in the flying years,
He gave me all, but where is all he gave ?
He took my love and left me barren tears,
Weary and lone I follow to the grave.
There Death will end this vision half divine,
Wan Death, who waits in shadow evermore,
And silent, ere he gave the sudden sign ;
Oh, gently lead me thro' thy narrow door,
Thou gentle Death, thou trustiest friend of mine—
Ah me, for Love—will Death my love restore ?

FREDERICK LOCKER.





*

CLXXII.

HOARDED JOY.

I SAID : "Nay, pluck not,—let the first fruit be ;
Even as thou sayest, it is sweet and red,
But let it ripen still. The tree's bent head
Sees in the stream its own fecundity
And bides the day of fulness. Shall not we
At the sun's hour that day possess the shade,
And claim our fruit before its ripeness fade,
And eat it from the branch and praise the tree?"

I say : "Alas ! our fruit hath wooed the sun
Too long,—'tis fallen and floats adown the stream.
Lo, the last clusters ! Pluck them every one,
'And let us sup with summer ; ere the gleam
Of autumn set the year's pent sorrow free,
And the woods wail like echoes from the sea."

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.





CLXXIII.

RURAL NATURE.

HERE art thou loveliest, O Nature, tell!
Oh where may be thy Paradise? Where
grow

Thy happiest groves? And down what woody dell
Do thy most fancy-winning waters flow?
Tell where thy softest breezes longest blow?
And where thy ever blissful mountains swell
Upon whose sides the cloudless sun may throw
Eternal summer, while the air may quell

His fury. Is it 'neath his morning car,
Where jewell'd palaces, and golden thrones,
Have aw'd the eastern nations through all time?

Or o'er the western seas, or where afar
Our winter sun warms up the southern zones
With summer? Where can be the happy climes?

WILLIAM BARNES.
R



CLXXIV.

WHEN man alone, or leagued in governments,
The works of Christian duty would fulfil,
His faltering steps defeat his anxious will,
As heights attain'd reveal but fresh ascents :

How poor his efforts to his high intents !
Fain would he uproot every human ill ;
But fields neglected open to him still,
And woe on woe its piteous tale presents.
Nature alone succeeds in all she tries :
She drops her dews, and not a flower is miss'd ;
She bids the universal grass arise,
Till stony ways and wilds antagonist
Are into emerald beauty softly kiss'd,
To show the power in gentleness that lies.

JAMES HEDDERWICK.





CLXXV.

HERE never yet was flower fair in vain,
Let classic poets rhyme it as they will :
The seasons toil that it may blow again,
And summer's heart doth feel its every ill ;
Nor is a true soul ever born for naught ;
Wherever any such hath lived and died,
There hath been something for true freedom wrought,
Some bulwark levelled on the evil side :
Toil on, then, Greatness ! thou art in the right,
However narrow souls may call thee wrong ;
Be as thou wouldst be in thine own clear sight
And so thou wilt in all the world's ere long ;
For worldlings cannot, struggle as they may,
From man's great soul one great thought hide away.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.





CLXXVI.

T may be that our homeward longings made
That other lands were judged with partial eyes ;
But fairer in my sight the mottled skies,
With pleasant interchange of sun and shade,
And more desired the meadow and deep glade
Of sylvan England, green with frequent showers,
Than all the beauty which the vaunted bowers
Of the parched South have in mine eyes displayed ;
Fairer and more desired !— this well might be,
For let the South have beauty's utmost dower
And yet my heart might well have turned to thee,
My home, my country, when a delicate flower
Within thy pleasant borders was for me
Tended, and growing up thro' sun and shower.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.





CLXXVII.

I SAW in dream where met proud rivers twain
From the East and West—one without storm
or stain,

Clear-eyed and paved with crystal, as to glass
The merest speck that in the air might pass
Above it; the other, from remoter springs,
Soil'd with long travel and passionate outgoings,
Full-vein'd and swoll'n with ore from the iron rock,
Impetuous sped to meet it: at the shock
Earth reeled, and heaven grew dark with sudden gloam
Above the unpenetrable spray. What wonder,
If men's eyes, baffled by the blinding foam,
Saw not beyond, where, 'scaped the smoke and thunder,
Through prosperous fields, bright blazon'd fold on fold,
One clear strong stream their glorious course they hold.

JAMES RHOADES.





CLXXVIII.

BELOW THE OLD HOUSE.

BENEATH those buttressed walls with lichen
grey,
Beneath the slopes of trees whose flickering
shade

Darkens the pools by dun green velveted,
The stream leaps like a living thing at play,—
In haste it seems ; it cannot, cannot stay !

The great boughs changing there from year to
year,
And the high jackdaw-haunted eaves, still hear
The burden of the rivulet,—Passing away !

And sometime certainly that oak no more
Will keep the winds in check ; his breadth of
beam

Will go to rib some ship for some far shore ;
 Those coigns and eaves will crumble, while that
 stream
Will still run whispering, whispering night and day,
That over-song of Father Time,—Passing away !

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.





CLXXIX.

PROJECTED SHADOWS.

XH, memory ! ah, ruthless memory !
Shall I not have one hour unfill'd for thee ?
Why wilt thou thus usurp the days to be,
Unsatisfied with all thy realms that lie
Behind the Present ? why o'ercloud the sky,
Glad with gold star-scripts of Futurity ?
Hast thou not made the fleeting hours for me
Sunless enough, that thou must flicker by
The shrouding years, and hovering on the verge
Of my horizon's blue, blot out the forms
Of all my pleasant creatures of delight,
Won with much wrestling from the haggard
night,—
And in their stead paint up a sky of storms
And the stern Fury sworded with the scourge ?

JOHN PAYNE.





CLXXX.

COUNT each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee ; do thou
With courtesy receive him ; rise and bow ;
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first his heavenly feet to lave ;
Then lay before him all thou hast ; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality ; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
The soul's marmoreal calmness : Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate ;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free ;
Strong to consume small troubles ; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the
end.

AUBREY DE VERE.





CLXXXI.

BLESSED is he who hath not trod the ways
Of secular delights, nor learned the lore
Which loftier minds are studious to abhor :
Blessed is he who hath not sought the praise
That perishes, the rapture that betrays ;
Who hath not spent in Time's vainglorious war
His youth ; and found, a schoolboy at fourscore,
How fatal are those victories which raise
Their iron trophies to a temple's height
On trampled Justice ; who desires not bliss,
But peace ; and yet when summoned to the fight,
Combats as one who combats in the sight
Of God and of His Angels, seeking this
Alone, how best to glorify the right.

AUBREY DE VERE.





CLXXXII.

NOW OR WHEN.



N the tall buttress of a Minster gray,
The glorious work of long-forgotten men,
I read this Dial-legend,—“Now or When.”
Well had these builders used their little day
Of service—witness this sublime display
Of blossom'd stone, dazzling the gazer's ken.
These towers attest they knew 'twas there and then,
Not some vague morrow, they must work and pray.
Oh ! let us seize this transitory Now
From which to build a life-work that shall last :
In humble prayer and worship let us bow
Ere fleeting opportunity is past.
When once Life's sun forsakes the Dial-plate,
For work and for repentance 'tis too late !

RICHARD WILTON.





CLXXXIII.

*THE HAWTHORN AND THE WILD
ROSE.*

LEARNT a lesson from the flowers to-day :—
As o'er the fading hawthorn-blooms I sighed,
Whose petals fair lay scattered far and wide,
Lo, suddenly upon a dancing spray
I saw the first wild roses clustered gay.
What though the smile I loved, so soon had died
From one sweet flower—there, shining at its side,
The blushing Rose surpassed the snowy May.
So, if as Life glides on, we miss some flowers
Which once shed light and fragrance on our way,
Yet still the kindly-compensating hours
Weave us fresh wreaths in beautiful array ;
And long as in the paths of peace we stay,
Successive benedictions shall be ours !

RICHARD WILTON.





CLXXXIV.

THE SOUND OF THE SEA.

THE sea awoke at midnight from its sleep,
And round the pebbly beaches far and wide
I heard the first wave of the rising tide
Rush onward with uninterrupted sweep ;
A voice out of the silence of the deep,
A sound mysteriously multiplied
As of a cataract from the mountain's side,
Or roar of winds upon a wooded steep.
So comes to us at times, from the unknown
And inaccessible solitudes of being,
The rushing of the sea-tides of the soul ;
And inspirations, that we deem our own,
Are one divine foreshadowing and foreseeing
Of things beyond our reason and control.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.





CLXXXV.

ASK not for those thoughts, that sudden leap
From being's sea, like the isle-seeming Kraken,
With whose great rise the ocean all is shaken
And a heart-tremble quivers through the deep ;
Give me that growth which some perchance deem sleep,
Wherewith the steadfast coral-stems uprise,
Which, by the toil of gathering energies,
Their upward way into clear sunshine keep,
Until, by Heaven's sweetest influences,
Slowly and slowly spreads a speck of green
Into a pleasant island in the seas,
Where, 'mid tall palms, the cane-roofed home is seen,
And wearied men shall sit at sunset's hour,
Hearing the leaves and loving God's dear power.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.





CLXXXVI.

• • •

GRIEVE not that ripe Knowledge takes away
The charm that Nature to my childhood wore,
For, with that insight, cometh, day by day,
A greater bliss than wonder was before ;
The real doth not clip the poet's wing,—
To win the secret of a weed's plain heart
Reveals some clew to spiritual things,
And stumbling guess becomes firm-footed art :
Flowers are not flowers unto the poet's eyes,
Their beauty thrills him by an inward sense ;
He knows that outward seemings are but lies,
Or, at the most, but earthly shadows, whence
The soul that looks within for truth may guess
The presence of some wondrous heavenliness.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.





CLXXXVII.

TO HELEN.

MMOMENTARY wish passed through my
brain,
To be the monarch of some magic place,
Thick-sown with burning gems, or to con-
strain

The uncouth help of some half-demon race,
Vexing the pearl-paved billows of the main
For thee, and starry caverns in far space.

It was a wish unwisely formed, and vain ;

Even in the humblest trifles, love can trace
That which no mine can give, no Geni's wing
From depths beneath or heights above can bring ;
The memories of each kind look and tone,

Gestures, and glancing smiles, into the gift

Pass like a living spirit, and uplift

Its value, to the level of their own.

SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.





CLXXXVIII.

AUTUMN.

NOW Autumn's fire burns slowly along the woods,
And day by day the dead leaves fall and melt,
And night by night the monitory blast
Wails in the key-hole, telling how it pass'd
O'er empty fields, or upland solitudes,
Or grim wide wave ; and now the power is felt
Of melancholy, tenderer in its moods
Than any joy indulgent summer dealt.
Dear friends, together in the glimmering eve,
Pensive and glad, with tones that recognise
The soft invisible dew in each one's eyes,
It may be, somewhat thus we shall have leave
To walk with memory, when distant lies
Poor Earth, where we were wont to live and grieve.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.





CLXXXIX.

OCTOBER.



Y, thou art welcome, heaven's delicious breath!
When woods begin to wear the crimson leaf,
And suns grow meek, and the meek suns
grow brief,

And the year smiles as it draws near its death.

Wind of the sunny south! oh, still delay

In the gay woods and in the golden air,

Like to a good old age released from care,

Journeying, in long serenity, away.

In such a bright, late quiet, would that I

Might wear out life like thee, 'mid bowers and
brooks,

And, dearer yet, the sunshine of soft looks,

And music of kind voices ever nigh;

And when my last sand twinkled in the glass,

Pass silently from men, as thou dost pass.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.





CXC.

WORLDLY PLACE.

B *VEN in a palace, life may be led well!*
So spoke the imperial sage, purest of men,
Marcus Aurelius.—But the stifling den
Of common life, where, crowded up pell-mell,

Our freedom for a little bread we sell,
And drudge under some foolish master's ken,
Who rates us, if we peer outside our pen—
Match'd with a palace, is not this a hell?

Even in a palace! On his truth sincere,
Who spoke these words, no shadow ever came;
And when my ill-school'd spirit is aflame

Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,
I'll stop, and say: "There were no succour here!
The aids to noble life are all within."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.





CXCI.

*THE GOOD SHEPHERD WITH
THE KID.*

H*E saves the sheep, the goats he doth not save!*
So rang Tertullian's sentence, on the side
Of that unpiſtying Phrygian ſect which cried:
“ Him can no fount of freſh forgiveness lave,

Who ſins, once waſh'd by the baptiſmal wave !”
So ſpake the fierce Tertullian. But ſhe ſigh'd,
The infant Church ! of love ſhe felt the tide
Stream on her from her Lord's yet recent grave.

And then ſhe ſmil'd ; and in the Catacombs,
With eye ſuffuſed but heart inſpired true,
On thoſe walls ſubterranean, where ſhe hid

Her head in ignominy, death, and tombs,
She her Good Shepherd's haſty image drew—
And on his ſhoulders, not a lamb, a kid.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.





CXCII.

EAST LONDON.

' WAS August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal
Green,
And the pale weaver, through his window
seen

In Spitalfields, look'd thrice dispirited ;

I met a preacher there I knew, and said :

“ Ill and o'erwork'd, how fare you in this scene ? ”

“ Bravely ! ” said he ; “ for I of late have been
Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ, *the living
bread.* ”

O human soul ! as long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,

To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam,
Not with lost toil thou labourest through the night !
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



CXCIII.

THE BETTER PART.

LONG fed on boundless hopes, O race of man,
How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler fare !
"Christ," some one says, "was human as we
are.
No judge eyes us from Heaven, our sin to
scan.

We live no more, when we have done our span."—
"Well, then, for Christ," thou answerest, "who can
care ?
From sin, which Heaven records not, why forbear ?
Live we like brutes our life without a plan !"

So answerest thou ; but why not rather say :
"Hath man no second life ?—*Pitch this one high !*
Sits there no judge in Heaven, our sin to see ?—

More strictly, then, the inward judge obey !
Was Christ a man like us ?—*Ah ! let us try*
If we then, too, can be such men as He !"

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



CXCIV.

IMMORTALITY.

FOIL'D by our fellow-men, depress'd, outworn,
We leave the brutal world to take its way,
And, *Patience! in another life, we say,*
The world shall be thrust down, and we
up-borne!

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn
The world's poor, routed leavings? or will they,
Who fail'd under the heat of this life's day,
Support the fervours of the heavenly morn?

No, no! the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun!
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,

From strength to strength advancing—only he,
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.





CXCV.

DEVELOPMENT IN NATURE.

DRAINED up in sense we know no general plan:
Æons long past creative power went on,
Evolving lights and forces round the
throne,

And in the ordered nucleus of the plan
Blossomed and brightened the umbrageous span
Of this our world, beneath the Fates' fell care,
The Tree of Life outspreading everywhere,
And seedling fruits from short-lived blooms began.

Have these old mysteries ceased? from fiery steeps,
From deepening swamps the mute snake writhed
along;

Anon the bird screamed—then the furred beast creeps
Growling; then Adam speaks erect and strong.
Shall there not rise again from Nature's deeps
One more, whose voice shall be the perfect song?

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT:





CXCVI.

SCIENCE ABORTIVE.

WITH what vain speculations do we slake
The mental thirst ! What matter, cycles
hence,

If Higher Creatures at mankind's expense
Start into life with senses broad awake
To truths we only dream of ; hands to shake
The pillars of the temple we but grope
Feebly about, who will gain entrance, cope
With the dæmon, and all prison-fetters break ?

The churchyard dust a thousand times blown wide
Would see them, hear them not ; the question men
Ten hundred various creeds and gods have raised
To answer, by Death's door we must abide ;
Blinded by life itself, by fears half-crazed,
We raise another god and ask again !

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.





CXCVII.

SELF-DECEPTION.

HERE'S a Seer's peak on Ararat, they say,
From which we can descry the better
world ;
Not that supernal kingdom whence were
hurled
The rebel-angels ere Creation's day,
But Eden-garden, Adam's first array,
Round which the Flood-waves stood back like a
wall,
And whither still are sent the souls of all
The good dead, where the cherubim sing and play.
Dear lovely land we wait for and desire,
Whence fondly-loved lost faces look back still,
Waiting for us, so distant and apart ;
But from the depths between what mists aspire—
What wrinkled sea rolls severing hill from hill—
Vision! 'tis but the reflex of the heart !

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.



CXCVIII.

PAST AND FUTURE.

FAIR garden, where the man and woman dwelt,
And lov'd, and work'd, and where, in work's
reprieve,
The sabbath of each day, the restful eve,
They sat in silence, with lock'd hands, and felt
The voice which compass'd them, a-near, a-far,
Which murmur'd in the fountains and the breeze,
Which breathed in spices from the laden trees,
And sent a silvery shout from each lone star.
Sweet dream of Paradise! and if a dream,
One that has help'd us when our faith was weak ;
We wake, and still it holds us, but would seem
Before us, not behind,—the good we seek,—
The good from lowest root which waxes ever,
The golden age of science and endeavour.

EMILY PFEIFFER.





CXCIX.

F A I T H.

“**F**OLLOW Me,” Jesus said ; and they uprose,
Peter and Andrew rose and followed Him,
Followed Him even to heaven through
death most grim,

And through a long hard life without repose,
Save in the grand ideal of its close.

“Take up your cross and come with Me,” He
said ;

And the world listens yet through all her dead,
And still would answer had we faith like those.

But who can light again such beacon-fire !

With gladsome haste and with rejoicing souls—

How would men gird themselves for the emprise ?
Leaving their black boats by the dead lake’s mire,
Leaving their slimy nets by the cold shoals,
Leaving their old oars, nor once turn their eyes.

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.



CC.

THE FOOTPRINTS.

COME to green under-glooms,—and in your hair
Weave night-shade, foxglove red, and rank
wolf's-bane ;

And slumber and forget Him ; if in vain
Ye try to slumber off your sorrow there,
Arise once more and openly repair

To busy haunts where men and women sigh,
And if all things but echo back your care,

Cry out aloud, "There is no God !" and die.
But if upon a day when all is dark,

Thou, stooping in the public ways, shalt mark

Strange luminous footprints as of feet that shine,
Follow them ! follow them ! O soul bereaven !

God had a Son,—He hath passed that way to heaven ;
Follow and look upon that Face divine !

ROBERT BUCHANAN.



BOOK III.

English Examples
OF
French Forms of Verse.



CCI.

[TRIOLET.]

WHEN first we met we did not guess
That Love would prove so hard a master;
Of more than common friendliness
When first we met we did not guess.
Who could foretell this sore distress,
This ir retrievable disaster,
When first we met?—We did not guess
That Love would prove so hard a master.

ROBERT BRIDGES.





CCII.

A KISS.

[TRIOLET.]

ROSE kissed me to-day.
Will she kiss me to-morrow ?
Let it be as it may,
Rose kissed me to-day.
But the pleasure gives way
To a savour of sorrow ;
Rose kissed me to-day,—
Will she kiss me to-morrow ?

AUSTIN DOBSON.





CCIII.

[RONDEL.]

KISS me, sweetheart ; the Spring is here,
And Love is Lord of you and me !
The blue-bells beckon each passing bee ;
The wild wood laughs to the flowered year :
There is no bird in brake or brere,
But to his little mate sings he,
“ Kiss me, sweetheart ; the Spring is here,
And Love is Lord of you and me ! ”

The blue sky laughs out sweet and clear ;
The missel-thrush upon the tree
Pipes for sheer gladness, loud and free ;
And I go singing to my dear,
“ Kiss me, sweetheart ; the Spring is here,
And Love is Lord of you and me ! ”

JOHN PAYNE.





CCIV.

[RONDEAU.]

HIS poisoned shafts, that fresh he dips
In juice of plants that no bēe sips,
He takes, and with his bow renown'd,
Goes out upon his hunting ground,
Hanging his quiver at his hips.

He draws them one by one, and clips
Their heads between his finger tips,
And looses with a twanging sound
His poisoned shafts.

But if a maiden with her lips
Suck from the wound the blood that drips,
And drink the poison from the wound,
The simple remedy is found
That of their deadly terror strips
His poisoned shafts.

ROBERT BRIDGES.





CCV.

[RONDEAU.]

WITH pipe and flute the rustic Pan
Of old made music sweet for man ;
And wonder hushed the warbling bird,
And closer drew the calm-eyed herd,—
The rolling river slower ran.

Ah ! would,—ah ! would, a little span,
Some air of Arcady could fan
This age of ours, too seldom stirred
With pipe and flute !

But now for gold we plot and plan ;
And from Beersheba unto Dan,
Apollo's self might pass unheard,
Or find the night-jar's note preferred. . .
Not so it fared, when time began,
With pipe and flute !

AUSTIN DOBSON.





CCVI.

[RONDEAU.]

IF Love should faint, and half decline
Below the fit meridian sign,
And, shorn of all his golden dress,
His regal state and loveliness,
Be no more worth a heart like thine,

Let not thy nobler passion pine,
But, with a charity divine,
Let Memory ply her soft address
If Love should faint.

And oh! this laggard soul of mine,
Like some halt pilgrim stirred with wine,
Shall ache in pity's dear distress
Until the balms of thy caress
To work the finished cure combine,
If Love should faint.

EDMUND W. GOSSE.





CCVII.

[RONDEAU.]

LIFE lapses by for you and me ;
Our sweet days pass us by and flee ;
And evermore death draws us nigh ;
The blue fades fast out of our sky ;
The ripple ceases from our sea.

What would we not give, you and I,
The early sweet of life to buy !
Alas ! sweetheart, that cannot we :
Life lapses by.

But though our young years buried lie,
Shall Love with Spring and Summer die ?
What if the roses faded be ?
We in each other's eyes will see
New Springs, nor question how or why
Life lapses by.

JOHN PAYNE.






CCVIII.

THE COQUETTE.

[RONDEAU.]

 HIS pirate bold upon Love's sea
Will let no passing heart go free ;
No barque by those bright eyes espied
May sail away o'er life's blue tide
Till all its treasure yielded be.

Her craft, the *Conquest*, waits for thee
Where her swift rapine none may see ;—
From shadowy coves on thee will glide
This pirate bold.

Yet thou, if thou her power wouldst flee,
Go, feign thyself love's refuge,
And crave sweet shelter ; she'll deride
Thy piteous suit with scornful pride ;
And thou, thou shalt escape in glee
This pirate bold !

SAMUEL WADDINGTON.



CCIX.

CARPE DIEM.

[RONDEAU.]

TO-DAY, what is there in the air
That makes December seem sweet May?
There are no swallows anywhere,
Nor crocuses to crown your hair,
And hail you down my garden way.

Last night the full moon's frozen stare
Struck me, perhaps ; or did you say
Really, you'd come, sweet friend and fair,
To-day ?

To-day is here ;—come, crown to-day
With Spring's delight or Spring's despair !
Love cannot bide old Time's delay—
Down my glad gardens light winds play,
And my whole life shall bloom and bear
To-day.

THEOPHILE MARZIALS.



CCX.

[RONDEAU REDOUBLÉ.]

MY day and night are in my lady's hand ;
I have no other sunrise than her sight ;
For me her favour glorifies the land ;
Her anger darkens all the cheerful light.

Her face is fairer than the hawthorn white,
When all a-flower in May the hedgerows stand ;
Whilst she is kind, I know of no affright ;
My day and night are in my lady's hand.

All heaven in her glorious eyes is spanned ;
Her smile is softer than the Summer night,
Gladder than daybreak on the Faery strand ;
I have no other sunrise than her sight.

Her silver speech is like the singing flight
Of runnels rippling o'er the jewelled sand ;
Her kiss, a dream of delicate delight ;
For me, her favour glorifies the land.

What if the Winter chase the Summer bland !
The gold sun in her hair burns ever bright.

If she be sad, straightway all joy is banned ;
Her anger darkens all the cheerful light.

Come weal or woe, I am my lady's knight,
And in her service every ill withstand ;

Love is my Lord in all the world's despite,
And holdeth in the hollow of his hand

My day and night.

JOHN PAYNE.





CCXI.

[RONDEAU REDOUBLÉ.]

MY soul is sick of nightingale and rose,
The perfume and the darkness of the
grove ;

I weary of the fevers and the throes,
And all the enervating dreams of love.

At morn I love to hear the lark, and rove
The meadows, where the simple daisy shows
Her guiltless bosom to the skies above—
My soul is sick of nightingale and rose.

The afternoon is sweet, and sweet repose,
But let me lie where breeze-blown branches move.

I hate the stillness where the sunbeams doze,
The perfume and the darkness of the grove.

I love to hear at eve the gentle dove
Contented coo the day's delightful close.

She sings of joy and all the calm thereof,—
I weary of the fevers and the throes.

I love the night who like a mother throws
Her arms round hearts that throbbed and limbs
that strove,

As kind as Death, that puts an end to woes
And all the enervating dreams of Love.

Because my soul is sick of fancies wove
Of fervid ecstasies and crimson glows,

Because the taste of cinnamon and clove
Palls on my palate—let no man suppose
My soul is sick.

W. COSMO MONKHOUSE.





CCXII.

[KYRIELLE.]

X LARK in the mesh of the tangled vine,
A bee that drowns in the flower-cup's wine,
A fly in the sunshine,—such is man.
All things must end, as all began.

A little pain, a little pleasure,
A little heaping up of treasure,
Then no more gazing upon the sun.
All things must end that have begun

Where is the time for hope or doubt
A puff of the wind, and life is out.
A turn of the wheel, and rest is won.
All things must end that have begun.

Golden morning and purple night,
Life that fails with the failing light!
Death is the only deathless one.
All things must end that have begun.

Ending waits on the brief beginning ;
Is the prize worth the stress of winning ?
E'en in the dawning the day is done.
All things must end that have begun.

Weary waiting and weary striving,
Glad outseting and sad arriving ;
What is it worth when the goal is won ?
All things must end that have begun.

Speedily fades the morning glitter ;
Love grows irksome and wine grows bitter.
Two are parted from what was one.
All things must end that have begun.

Toil and pain and the evening rest ;
Joy is weary and sleep is best ;
Fair and softly the day is done.
All things must end that have begun.

JOHN PAYNE.





CCXIII.

SPRING SADNESS.

[VIRELAI.]

AS I sat sorrowing
Love came and bade me sing
A joyous song and meet ;
For see (said he) each thing
Is merry for the Spring,
And every bird doth greet
The break of blossoming,
That all the woodlands ring
Unto the young hours' feet.

Wherefore put off defeat,
And rouse thee to repeat
The chime of merles that go,
With flutings shrill and sweet,
In every green retreat,
The tune of streams that flow
And mark the fair hours' beat,
With running ripples fleet
And breezes soft and low.

For who should have, I trow,
Such joyance in the glow
 And pleasance of the May,—
In all sweet bells that blow,
In death of Winter's woe
 And birth of Springtide gay,
When in woodwalk and row
Hand-linked the lovers go,—
 As he to whom alway

God giveth day by day
To set to roundelay
 Life's sad and sunny hours,—
To weave into a lay
Life's golden years and gray,
 Its sweet and bitter flowers,—
To sweep, with hands that stray
In many a devious way,
 Its harp of sun and showers ?

Nor in this life of ours,
Whereon the sky oft lowers,
 Is any lovelier thing
Than in the wild wood bowers
The cloud of green that towers,
 The blithe birds welcoming
The vivid vernal hours
Among the painted flowers
 And all the pomp of Spring.

True, Life is on the wing,
And all the birds that sing,
 And all the flowers that be
Amid the glow and ring,
The pomp and glittering
 Of Spring's sweet pageantry,
Have here small sojourning,—
And all our sweet hours bring
 Death nearer, as they flee.

Yet this thing learn of me :
The sweet hours fair and free
 That we have had of yore,
The fair things we did see,
The linked melody
 Of waves upon the shore
That rippled in their glee,—
Are not lost utterly,
 Though they return no more.

But in the true heart's core
Thought treasures evermore
 The tune of birds and breeze ;
And there the slow years store
The flowers our dead Springs wore
 And scent of blossomed leas :
There murmur o'er and o'er
The sound of woodlands hoar
 With newly burgeoned trees.

So for the sad soul's ease
Remembrance treasures these
 Against Time's harvesting,
That so, when mild Death frees
The soul from Life's disease
 Of strife and sorrowing,
In glass of memories
The new hope looks and sees
 Through Death a brighter Spring.

JOHN PAYNE





CCXIV.

[VILLANELLE.]¹

WHEN I saw you last, Rose,
You were only so high ;—
How fast the time goes !

Like a bud ere it blows,
You just peeped at the sky
When I saw you last, Rose !

Now your petals unclose,
Now your May-time is nigh ;—
How fast the time goes !

You would prattle your woes,
All the wherefore and why,
When I saw you last, Rose !

Now you leave me to prose,
And you seldom reply ;—
How fast the time goes !

And a life,—how it grows !
 You were scarcely so shy
When I saw you last, Rose !

In your bosom it shows
 There's a guest on the sly ;
(How fast the time goes !)

Is it Cupid? Who knows !
 Yet you used not to sigh
When I saw you last, Rose !
How fast the time goes !

AUSTIN DOBSON.





CCXV.

[VILLANELLE.]



SUMMER-TIME, so passing sweet,
But heavy with the breath of flowers,
But languid with the fervent heat,

They chide amiss who call thee fleet,—
Thee, with thy weight of daylight hours,
O Summer-time, so passing sweet !

Young Summer, thou art too replete,
Too rich in choice of joys and powers,
But languid with the fervent heat.

Adieu ! my face is set to meet
Bleak Winter, with his pallid showers—
O Summer-time, so passing sweet !

Old Winter steps with swifter feet,
He lingers not in wayside bowers,
He is not languid with the heat ;

His rounded day, a pearl complete,
 Gleams on the unknown night that lowers ;
O Summer-time, so passing sweet,
But languid with the fervent heat !

EMILY PFEIFFER.





CCXVI.

[VILLANELLE.]

WOULDST thou not be content to die
When low-hung fruit is hardly
clinging,
And golden Autumn passes by?

If we could vanish, thou and I,
While the last woodland bird is singing,
Wouldst thou not be content to die?

Deep drifts of leaves in the forest lie,
Red vintage that the frost is flinging,
And golden Autumn passes by.

Beneath this delicate rose-gray sky,
While sunset bells are faintly ringing,
Wouldst thou not be content to die?

For wintry webs of mist on high
Out of the muffled earth are springing,
And golden Autumn passes by.

O now when pleasures fade and fly,
 And Hope her southward flight is winging,
Wouldst thou not be content to die?

Lest Winter come, with wailing cry,
 His cruel icy bondage bringing,
When golden Autumn hath passed by,

And thou with many a tear and sigh,
 While Life her wasted hands is wringing,
Shalt pray in vain for leave to die
When golden Autumn hath passed by.


EDMUND W. GOSSE.





CCXVII.

[VILLANELLE.]

 HE air is white with snow-flakes clinging ;
 Between the gusts that come and go,
Methinks I hear the woodlark singing ;

Methinks I see the primrose springing
 On many a bank and hedge, although
The air is white with snowflakes clinging.

Surely, the hands of Spring are flinging
 Woodscents to all the winds that blow ;
Methinks I hear the woodlark singing ;

Methinks I see the swallow winging
 Across the woodlands sad with snow ;
The air is white with snowflakes clinging.

Was that the cuckoo's woodchime swinging ?
 Was that the linnets fluting low ?
Methinks I hear the woodlark singing.

Or can it be the breeze is bringing
 The breath of violets?—Ah no!
The air is white with snow-flakes clinging.

It is my lady's voice that's stringing
 Its beads of gold to song—and so
Methinks I hear the woodlark singing.

The violets I see upspringing
 Are in my lady's eyes, I trow:
The air is white with snow-flakes clinging.

Dear, while thy tender tones are ringing,—
 Even though amidst the winter's woe
The air is white with snow-flakes clinging,
Methinks I hear the woodlark singing.

JOHN PAYNE.





CCXVIII.

THE PRODIGALS.

[BALLADE.]

“**P**RINCES!—and you, most valorous,
Nobles and barons of all degrees!
Hearken awhile to the prayer of us,—
Prodigals driven of destinies!
Nothing we ask or of gold or fees;
Harry us not with the hounds we pray;
Lo,—for the surcote’s hem we seize,—
Give us—ah! give us—but Yesterday.”

“Dames most delicate, amorous!
Damosels blithe as the belted bees!
Beggars are we that pray thee thus,—
Beggars outworn of miseries!
Nothing we ask of the things that please;
Wearied are we, and old, and gray;
Lo,—for we clutch and we clasp your knees,—
Give us—ah! give us—but Yesterday!”

“Damosels—Dames, be piteous !”

(But the dames rode fast by the roadway trees.)

“Hear us, O Knights, magnanimous !”

(But the knights pricked on in their panoplies.)

Nothing they gat of hope or ease,

But only to beat on the breast and say :—

“Life we drank to the dregs and lees ;

Give us—ah ! give us—but Yesterday !”

ENVOY.

Youth, take heed to the prayer of these !

Many there be by the dusty way,—

Many that cry to the rocks and seas

“Give us—ah ! give us—but Yesterday !”

AUSTIN DOBSON.





CCXIX.

[BALLADE.]

1.

WHAT do we here who with reverted eyes
Turn back our longing from the modern
air

To the dim gold of long-*evanished* skies,
When other songs in other mouths were fair?
Why do we stay the load of life to bear,
To measure still the weary worldly ways,
Waiting upon the still-recurring sun,
That ushers in another waste of days,
Of roseless Junes and unenchanted Mays,
Why but because our task is yet undone?

11.

Were it not thus, could but our high emprise
Be once fulfilled, which of us would forbear
To seek that haven where contentment lies?
Who would not doff at once life's load of care
To be at peace among the silence there?

Ah, who alas?—Across the heat and haze
 Death beckons to us in the shadow dun—
Favouring and fair—“ My rest is sweet,” he says :
But we, reluctantly, avert our gaze,
 Why but because our task is yet undone ?

III.

Songs have we sung, and many melodies
 Have from our lips had issue rich and rare :
But never yet the conquering chant did rise,
 That should ascend the very heaven's stair,
 To rescue life from anguish and despair.
Often and again, drunk with delight of lays,
 “ Lo ! ” have we cried, “ this is the golden one
That shall deliver us ! ”—Alas ! Hope's rays
Die in the distance, and Life's sadness stays,
 Why but because our task is yet undone ?

ENVOY.

Great God of Love, thou whom all poets praise,
 Grant that the aim of rest for us be won ;
Let the light shine upon our life that strays
Disconsolate within the desert maze ;
 Why but because our task is yet undone ?

JOHN PAYNE.



CCXX.

*THE BALLAD OF PROSE AND
RHYME.*

[BALLADE À DOUBLE REFRAIN.]

WHEN the roads are heavy with mire and rut,
In November fogs, in December snows,
When the North Wind howls, and the
doors are shut,

There is place and enough for the pains of prose ;—
But whenever a scent from the whitethorn blows,
And the jasmine-stars to the lattice climb,
And a Rosalind-face at the casement shows,
Then hey !—for the ripple of laughing rhyme !

When the brain gets dry as an empty nut,
When the reason stands on its squarest toes,
When the mind (like a beard) has a “formal cut,”
There is place and enough for the pains of prose ;—
But whenever the May-blood stirs and glows,
And the young year draws to the “golden prime,”—
And Sir Romeo sticks in his ear a rose,
Then hey !—for the ripple of laughing rhyme !

In a theme where the thoughts have a pedant-strut,
In a changing quarrel of "Ayes" and "Noes,"
In a starched procession of "If" and "But,"
There is place and enough for the pains of prose ;—
But whenever a soft glance softer grows,
And the light hours dance to the trysting time,
And the secret is told "that no one knows,"
Then hey !—for the ripple of laughing rhyme !

ENVOY.

In the work-a-day world,—for its needs and woes,
There is place and enough for the pains of prose ;
But whenever the May-bells clash and chime,
Then hey !—for the ripple of laughing rhyme !

AUSTIN DOBSON.





CCXXI.

THE GOD OF WINE.

[CHANT ROYAL.]

1.

BEHOLD, above the mountains there is light,
A streak of gold, a line of gathering fire,
And the dim East hath suddenly grown
bright

With pale aëreal flame, that drives up higher
The lurid airs that all the long night were
Breasting the dark ravines and coverts bare ;
Behold, behold ! the granite gates unclose,
And down the vales a lyric people flows,
Who dance to music, and in dancing fling
Their frantic robes to every wind that blows,
And deathless praises to the Vine-god sing.

II.

Nearer they press, and nearer still in sight,
Still dancing blithely in a seemly choir ;
Tossing on high the symbol of their rite,
The cone-tipped thyrsus of a god's desire ;
Nearer they come, tall damsels flushed and fair,
With ivy circling their abundant hair,
Onward, with even pace, in stately rows
With eye that flashes, and with cheek that glows,
And all the while their tribute-songs they bring,
And newer glories of the past disclose,
And deathless praises to the Vine-god sing.

III.

The pure luxuriance of their limbs is white,
And flashes clearer as they draw the nigher,
Bathed in an air of infinite delight,
Smooth without wound of thorn, or fleck of mire,
Borne up by song as by a trumpet's blare,
Leading the van to conquest, on they fare,
Fearless and bold, whoever comes and goes,
These shining cohorts of Bacchantes close,
Shouting and shouting till the mountains ring,
And forests grim forget their ancient woes,
And deathless praises to the Vine-god sing.

IV.

And youths are there for whom full many a night
 Brought dreams of bliss, vague dreams that haunt
 and tire,
Who rose in their own ecstasy bedight,
 And wandered forth through many a scourging brier,
And waited shivering in the icy air,
And wrapped the leopard-skin about them there,
 Knowing, for all the bitter air that froze,
 The time must come, that every poet knows,
When he shall rise and feel himself a king,
 And follow, follow where the ivy grows,
And deathless praises to the Vine-god sing.

V.

But oh ! within the heart of this great flight,
 Whose ivory arms hold up the golden lyre,
What form is this of more than mortal height ?
 What matchless beauty, what inspired ire !
The brindled panthers know the prize they bear,
And harmonise their steps with stately care ;
 Bent to the morning, like a living rose,
 The immortal splendour of his face he shows.
And, where he glances, leaf, and flower, and wing
 Tremble with rapturé, stirred in their repose,
And deathless praises to the Vine-god sing.

ENVOY.

Prince of the flute and ivy, all thy foes
Record the bounty that thy grace bestows,
 But we, thy servants, to thy glory cling,
And with no frigid lips our songs compose,
 And deathless praises to the Vine-god sing.

EDMUND W. GOSSE.





CCXXII.

THE GOD OF LOVE.

[CHANT ROYAL.]

I.



MOST fair God, O Love both new and old,
That wert before the flowers of morn-
ing blew,
Before the glad sun in his mail of gold
Leapt into light across the first day's dew!
That art the first and last of our delight,
That in the blue day and the purple night
Holdest the hearts of servant and of king :
Lord of liesse, sovran of sorrowing,
That in thy hand hast heaven's golden key,
And Hell beneath the shadow of thy wing,
Thou art my Lord to whom I bend the knee !

II.

What thing rejects thy mastery? who so bold
 But at thine altars in the dusk they sue?
Even the strait pale goddess, silver-stoled,
 That kissed Endymion when the Spring was new,
To thee did homage in her own despite,
When in the shadow of her wings of white
 She slid down trembling from her moonèd ring
 To where the Latmian boy lay slumbering,
And in that kiss put off cold chastity.
 Who but acclaim with voice and pipe and string,
“Thou art my Lord to whom I bend the knee?”

III.

Master of men and gods, in every fold
 Of thy wide vans the sorceries that renew
The labouring earth tranced with the winter's cold
 Lie hid,—the quintessential charms that woo
The souls of flowers, slain with the sullen might
Of the dead year, and draw them to the light.
 Balsam and blessing to thy garments cling:
 Skyward and seaward, when thy white hands
 fling
Their spells of healing over land and sea,
 One shout of homage makes the welkin ring,
“Thou art my Lord to whom I bend the knee!”

IV.

I see thee throned aloft : thy fair hands hold
 Myrtles for joy, and euphrasy and rue :
Laurels and roses round thy white brows rolled,
 And in thine eyes the royal heaven's hue :
But in thy lips' clear colour, ruddy bright,
The heart's-blood shines of many a hapless wight.
 Thou art not only fair and sweet as Spring ;
 Terror and beauty, fear and wondering
Meet on thy brow, amazing all that see :
 All men do praise thee, ay ! and everything ;
Thou art my Lord to whom I bend the knee !

V.

I fear thee, though I love. Who can behold
 The sheer sun burning in the orbèd blue,
What while the noontide over hill and wold
 Flames like a fire, except his mazèd view
Wither and tremble ? So thy splendid sight
Fills me with mingled gladness and affright.
 Thy visage haunts me in the wavering
 Of dreams, and in the dawn awakening,
I feel thy radiance streaming full on me.
 Both joy and fear unto thy feet I bring ;
Thou art my Lord to whom I bend the knee !

ENVOY.

God above gods, High and Eternal King,
To whom the spheral symphonies do sing,
 I find no whither from thy power to flee,
Save in thy pinions' vast o'ershadowing.
 Thou art my Lord to whom I bend the knee!

JOHN PAYNE.



*A NOTE ON SOME FOREIGN FORMS
OF VERSE.*

*“ They are a school to win
The fair French daughter to learn English in ;
And, graced with her song,
To make the language sweet upon her tongue.”*

—BEN JONSON, *Underwoods.*



SOME FOREIGN FORMS OF VERSE.



BY way of Appendix to the foregoing selection of later English lyrics, I have been asked by the Editor to supply some brief notes as to the rules for writing the old French forms, of which the book contains sundry English examples. The request is in a measure embarrassing, because the pieces of this kind in our language are not very numerous, and being few in number, can scarcely be held to be fairly representative. They come, not "in battalions," but rather as "single spies,"—with something on them of the strangeness born of another air and sun. They have, besides, a little of that hesitation which betokens those who are not quite sure of the welcome they will receive. To quit metaphor, it has been urged, and by some whose opinions are entitled to the utmost consideration, that the austere and lofty spirit of our island Muse is averse to the poetry of art pure and simple;—that genuine inspiration and emotion do not express or exhibit themselves in stereotyped shapes and set refrains;—and it must be candidly admitted that it is by no means easy to combat such objections. Then

again, there are opponents of less weight, to whom (it may be), in the words of the "great Author" in Fielding's "Amelia,"—"Rhymes are difficult things, —they are stubborn things, Sir!"—and to such, committed (perchance) to the comfortable but falsely-seductive immunities of blank verse, the introduction of outlandish complications is a gratuitous injury. To them it appears conclusive to say—"These forms are certainly not new: if they are so excellent, why were they not introduced before?" There is, at all events, one answer, which once held equally good of not a few foreign products which have since become domestic necessities—"Because no one has introduced them." When the English sonnet was in leading-strings, there were doubtless contemporary critics who regarded it as a merely new-fangled Italian conceit, suitable enough for the fantastic gallantries of Provençal "Courts of Love," but affording little or no room for earnest or serious effort. They could not foresee "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints,"—in the primitive essays of Surrey and Wyatt. And who shall say that some Shakespeare of the future (or the present) shall not "unlock his heart" with a *Rondeau*? Not that it is for a moment proposed to put the *Rondeau* on a level with the Sonnet. Still, it must not be forgotten that the Sonnet, however deservedly popular with English writers, is nevertheless a "foreign product" and an "arbitrary form."

But without entering further into these considerations, it may be conceded that the majority of the forms now in question are not at present suited for,

nor are they intended to rival the more approved national rhythms in, the treatment of grave or elevated themes. What is modestly advanced for some of them (by the present writer at least) is that they may add a new charm of buoyancy,—a lyric freshness,—to amatory and familiar verse, already too much condemned to faded measures and out-worn cadences. Further, upon the assumption that merely graceful or tuneful trifles may be sometimes written (and even read), that they are admirable vehicles for the expression of trifles or *jeux d'esprit*. * They have also a humbler and obscurer use. If, to quote the once-hackneyed, but now too-much-forgotten maxim of Pope—

“Those move easiest that have learned to dance,”

what better discipline, among others, could possibly be devised for “those about to versify” than a course of *Rondeaux*, *Triolets*, and *Ballades*? After all, it is chiefly as an aid in this direction that the following rules for writing the six principal forms, as given by French authorities, are here reproduced. Into their history and origin it is not proposed to enter minutely; but those curious in these respects are referred

* Do we not just a little forget, now-a-days, that our “*nugæ*” should be “*canoræ*”?—that one requisite, at least, of a song is that it shall be musical?—

“Parnassus’ peaks still catch the sun;
But why—O lyric brother!—
Why build a Pulpit on the one,
A Platform on the other?”

We can never want for lectures or sermons, in their proper places.

to an article in the *Cornhill Magazine* for July 1877,* as also to the *Odes Funambulesques*, the *Petit Traité de Poésie Française*, and other works of M. Théodore de Banville. To M. de Banville in particular, and to the second French Romantic School in general, the happy modernisation in France of the old measures of Marot, Villon, and Charles of Orleans is mainly to be ascribed.

TRIOLET, RONDEL, RONDEAU.—These three are classed together, because originally the names appear to have been used indifferently. For example, in his "History of English Rhythms," Dr. Guest quotes,—from an old French authority, the "*Jardin de Plaisance*,"—a poem of *eight* lines corresponding to the modern *Triolet*, but commencing thus :—

" *Ainsi se font communs rondeaulx*
Ne plus ne moins que cestuy ci."

And Charles of Orleans seems to have called what we now style his *Rondels*, *Rondeaux* or *Chansons*. What is less intelligible is, that M. Gustave Masson in "*La Lyre Française*" (Macmillan) unaccountably prints a pair of these as "*Triolets*." The fact would appear to be, that the *Rondel* and the *Triolet* are the earlier forms, and the *Rondeau* is an evolved product of both. The natural tendency, in the first instance, would be to somewhat overwork the refrain, then afterwards to make it less prominent, and finally to enlarge the field of operation. This is exactly what appears to have taken place.

* By Mr. E. W. Gosse.

The modern TRIOLET consists of *eight* lines with *two* rhymes. The first pair of lines are repeated as the seventh and eighth, while the first is repeated as the fourth. The order of rhymes is thus as follows :—*a,b,a,a,b,a,b*. The following example by, of all persons in the world, a grave French magistrate, Jacques Ranchin, has been christened by Ménage the “King of *Triolets* ;”—

“ *Le premier jour du mois de mai
Fut le plus heureux de ma vie.
Le beau dessein que je formai,
Le premier jour du mois de mai.
Je vous vis et je vous aimai :
Si ce dessein vous plut, Silvie,
Le premier jour du mois de mai
Fut le plus heureux de ma vie.*”

Here is another, and a less sentimental one, by M. Alexis Piron—“*qui ne fut rien, Pas même académicien.*” It is, in fact, addressed to the Academy, against whom—“*semper ardentes acuens sagittas*”—he discharged quite a quiver of arrowy little epigrams :—

“ *Grâce à monsieur l'abbé Ségui,
Messieurs, vous revoilà quarante.
On dit que vous faites aussi
Grâce à monsieur l'abbé Ségui.
Par la mort de je ne sais qui,
Vous n'étiez plus que neuf et trente :
Grâce à monsieur l'abbé Ségui,
Messieurs, vous revoilà quarante.*”

As far as can be ascertained, the *Triolet* has not

been written at all in English until quite recently. Mr. Swinburne's admirable "Match" ("Poems and Ballads," 1st series, 1866), is apparently reminiscent of this form; but the pair of *Triolets* * by Mr. Robert Bridges ("Poems," Pickering, 1873) seem the first of their kind. The *Triolet* is perhaps best adapted for Epigram. The weight of its *raison d'être* rests upon the fifth and sixth line, while the perfection of its execution lies in the skill with which the third line is connected with the fourth, and the final couplet with the one preceding it. If, as in Piron's, the writer is able to give a new sense to the fourth line, the general effect is increased.

The modern RONDEL is a poem of *fourteen* lines with *two* rhymes. As in the *Triolet*, the initial couplet is repeated at the close. It is also repeated after the sixth line, forming the seventh and eighth lines. Thus the whole falls naturally into three groups or stanzas, two of four lines and one of six. The usual arrangement of the rhymes is—*a, b, b, a*; *a, b, a, b*;—*a, b, b, a, a, b*, as in the following from Charles of Orleans:—

" *Alez vous en, alez, alez,*
Soussy, Soing, et Merencolie,
Me cuidez sous (pensez-vous) toute ma vie
Gouverner, comme fait avez ?

" *Je vous prometz que non ferez,*
Raison aura sur vous maistrrie.
Alez vous en, alez, alez,
Soussy, Soing, et Merencolie.

* *Vide* No. cci.—[ED.]

“ *Se jamais plus vous retournez
Avecques vostre compaignie,
Je pri à Dieu qu'il vous maudie,
Et ce par qui vous revendrez.
Alez vous en, alez, alez,
Soussy, Soing, et Merencolie.*”

Mr. John Payne's "Kiss me, Sweetheart," which appeared in the "Athenæum" for August 18, 1877, is a correct English example.* Some writers content themselves with repeating one line only, the first, at the close, thus making the *Rondel* of thirteen lines. But as M. de Banville gives the rule in one way, and writes the poem in another, it may be assumed that this is a matter in which his English followers are also at liberty to use their discretion.

The beauty of the *Rondel* lies in the skilful management of the refrain. In the most successful specimens it will be found to recur without effort, and with a certain indefinable air of novelty at each recurrence. Most of the masterpieces in this form are contained in the works of Charles of Orleans, although M. de Banville has written some graceful examples. Beyond the English *Rondels* attributed to the former writer, one of which is printed in Cary's "Early French Poets," there would appear to be but few antique *Rondels* in our language. Guest, it is true, speaks of a "Roundle" by Lidgate; and a very clumsy one by Hoccleve is quoted by Professor Morley in his "Shorter English Poems." It is possible, as Chaucer, in the "Legende of Good Women," expressly speaks to his own authorship of—

* *Vide* No. cciii.—[ED.]

“ Many a himpne for your holy daies
That highten balades, *roundels*, *virelaises*,”—

that further search would reveal others. Meanwhile, it is matter for speculation whether Sidney's “ My true love hath my heart and I have his,” quoted in Puttenham's “ *Arte of English Poesie*,” is not in form a memory of the *Rondel*.

As has been already said, the modern RONDEAU is a modification of the *Rondel*. It is made up of *thirteen* lines with *two* rhymes and two *unrhyming* refrains, generally the first half of the first line, sometimes only the first word.* As in the *Rondel*, the lines fall into three groups, a first of five lines, a second of three (and refrain), and a third of five (and refrain). The usual sequence of the rhymes is *a, a, b, b, a*;—*a, a, b* (and refrain);—*a, a, b, b, a* (and refrain), as shown in the following early example by Victor Brodeau. It is in ten-syllable lines; most modern *Rondeaux* are in eight:—

“ *Au bon vieux temps, que l'amour par bouquets
Se démenoit, et par joyeux caquets,
La femme étoit trop sottte, ou trop peu fine:
Le temps depuis, qui tout fine et affine,
Lui a montré à faire ses acquets.*

“ *Lors les seigneurs étoient petits naquets (garçons);
D'aulx et oignons se faisoient les banquets;
Et n'étoit bruit de ruer en cuisine,
Au bon vieux temps.*

“ *Dames aux huis n'avoient clefs ni loquets;
Leur garderobe étoit petits paquets*

* *Vide* Nos. cciv. to ccix.—[ED.]

De canevas, ou de grosse etamine :
Or, diamants, on laissoit en leur mine,
Et les couleurs porter aux perroquets,
Au bon vieux temps."

But Marot and Villon, and even Voiture, occasionally wrote a shorter *Rondeau* of ten lines, thus—*a, b, b, a*;—*a, b* (and refrain);—*a, b, b, a* (and refrain). A very beautiful English example of this latter form is Mr. D. G. Rossetti's translation of the "*Lay, ou plustost Rondeau*," in Villon's *Grand Testament*—

"Death, of thee do I make my moan,
 Who had'st my lady away from me,
 Nor wilt assuage thine enmity
 Till with her life thou hast mine own;
 For since that hour my strength has flown,
 Lo! what wrong was her life to thee,
 Death?"

"Two we were, and the heart was one;
 Which now being dead, dead I must be,
 Or seem alive as lifelessly
 As in the choir the painted stone,
 Death!"

The *Rondel*, it will be seen, is well suited for the expression of brief emotions, and sportive or amatory incident; in short, for any light lyrical theme of defined extent, which is rather enhanced than impaired by the iteration of its keynote. The *Rondeau* offers the same advantages, with this in addition — that it may be more successfully employed in playful irony or satire. Probably it is the latter characteristic which makes it more popular in France than the elder form. An ingenious anti-climax is frequently

obtained by the introduction of a play of words into the refrain. Thus Prépétit de Grammont, addressing Benserade upon that egregious performance of his,—the translation of the whole of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* into *Rondeaux* (the very "Table of Errata" is a *Rondeau*),—takes for refrain "*À la fontaine*," which he skilfully converts at the close into a reference to the famous fabulist. In the efforts of Vincent de Voiture, the master of what Voltaire called "*baladinages*," the inner secrets of the modern *Rondeau* are to be studied at their best. Nothing can be more successful than his management of the refrain, whether for play of words or otherwise, while he thoroughly understands the difficult art of giving that difficult stepping-stone, the second stanza, its precise import and value. Furthermore, he is careful to make the refrain, as it should be, the natural overflow of the eighth and thirteenth lines, and not, as it is too often, a merely detachable and meaningless phrase. As to the arrangement of rhymes, however, it should be added, that some writers, and particularly that "spoiled child of the Muses," Alfred de Musset, do not exactly follow Marot and Voiture; and in one of the most happy of our English specimens, the "*Carpe Diem*" * of Mr. Theo. Marzials, its author has apparently followed M. de Musset. On the other hand, M. Maurice Bouchor, a young French poet of whom much is expected, appears to favour the second form, of which Mr. Rosseti's translation furnished our example.

There were a few *Rondeaux* written in English

* *Vide* No. ccix.—[ED.]

during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, in the "Rolliad" and elsewhere. The well-known "Jenny kiss'd me" of Leigh Hunt is of course irregular; but, like the splendid and also irregular sonnet of Keats—"Bright Star, would I were steadfast as thou art,"—it will survive that disadvantage.

Before quitting the *Rondeau*, it should be noted that there is a variety of it called the "*Rondeau Redoublé*."* It consists of *six* quatrains (*a,b,a,b*), with *two* rhymes only. The first four lines form in succession the last lines of the second, third, fourth, and fifth quatrains. At the end of the final quatrain, the first words of the poem are added as an unrhyming and independent refrain. Sometimes the final quatrain is styled the *Envoi*.

VIRELAI, VILLANELLE.—The *Virelai* (*lai*, a lay, and *virer*, to turn), need not long detain us. In its modern form it appears as a poem of *two* rhymes, and of uncertain length, in which the lines forming the initial couplet are alternately repeated at the close of a paragraph, or at the pleasure of the writer.† Of the VILLANELLE, a regularised *Virelai*, we shall give the typical example, that of Jean Passerat (1534-1602)—

" *J'ai perdu ma tourterelle.*
N'est-ce-point elle que j'oi (j'entends),
Je veux aller après elle.

" *Tu regrettes ta femelle:*
Hélas! aussi fais-je, moi:
J'ai perdu ma tourterelle.

* See Nos. ccx., ccxi.—[Ed.]

† See No. ccxiii. for the early form.—[ED.]

“ *Si ton amour est fidèle
Aussi est ferme ma foi ;
Je veux aller après elle.*

“ *Ta plainte se renouvelle :
Toujours plaindre je me doi :
J’ai perdu ma tourterelle.*

“ *En ne voyant plus ma belle
Plus rien de beau je ne voi ;
Je veux aller après elle.*

“ *Mort, que tant de fois j’appelle,
Prends ce qui se donne à toi.
J’ai perdu ma tourterelle.
Je veux aller après elle.”*

“ *Ipsa mollities!*” as Sir Henry Wotton said of “Comus.” One might almost fancy it, with its tender cooing burden, to be taken from the purer pages of that charming pastoral, the “Daphnis and Chloe” of Longus, more charming still in the quaint old French of Amyot. The primitive *Villanelle* was, in truth, a “shepherd’s song ;” and, according to rule, “the thoughts should be full of sweetness and simplicity.” The arrangement of rhymes requires no further explanation. The first and third line must form the final couplet, but there is no restriction as to the number of stanzas.* A good modern example is that entitled “*La Marquise Aurore*” in the “*Deux Saisons*” of the late Philoxène Boyer ; but we have not met with many French poems in this form.

BALLADE, CHANT ROYAL.—The BALLADE † is a

* See Nos. ccxiv. to ccxvii.—[ED.]

† See Nos. ccxviii. to ccxx.—[ED.]

poem of three stanzas and a half stanza styled the *Envoi*, the last line being identical in each, and forming a refrain. The rhymes of the first stanza must be repeated throughout. The formula is generally as follows:—*a, b, a, b, b, c, b, c,* for the first, second, and third stanzas, and *b, c, b, c,* for the *Envoi*. Or the stanzas may be dixains, thus *a, b, a, b, b, c, c, d, c, d,* and *c, c, d, c, d,* for *Envoi*. They may even consist of a larger or smaller number of lines, so long as the rhymes are continued throughout. Strictly, the *Envoi* should commence "Prince," "Princess," &c., as the older *Ballades* were generally dedicated, or "*envoyées*," to some one or other dignitary, actual or symbolical. Another rule of the early *Ballade* writers was that the number of lines in the stanzas should be regulated by the number of syllables in the refrain. This is no longer rigorously observed; but as it assumes the conception of the refrain to precede everything else, affords a hint (if hint be needed) of the paramount importance of the refrain in this form. To give the reader a French specimen, here is De Banville's "*Ballade des Pendus*,"* which more than any other shows him to be, in his own words,—"*vieux Gaulois et fils du bon Villon*:"—

" *Sur ses larges bras étendus,
La forêt où s'éveille Flore,*

* From the comedy of "*Gringoire*." Perhaps Mr. A. Lang, whose charming "*Ballads and Lyrics of Old France*" (Longmans, 1872) virtually led the van in the matter of these forms, will one day give us a version of this sombre poem.

*A des chapelets de pendus
 Que le matin caresse et dore.
 Ce bois sombre, où le chêne arbore
 Des grappes de fruits inouis
 Même chez le Turc et le More,
 C'est le verger du roi Louis.*

*" Tous ces pauvres gens morfondus,
 Roulant des pensers qu'on ignore,
 Dans les tourbillons éperdus
 Voltigent, palpitants encore.
 Le soleil levant les devore.
 Regardez-les, cieux éblouis,
 Danser dans les feux de l'aurore.
 C'est le verger du roi Louis.*

*" Ces pendus, du diable entendus,
 Appellent des pendus encore.
 Tandis qu'aux cieux, d'azur tendus,
 Où semble luire un météore,
 La rosée en l'air s'évapore,
 Un essaim d'oiseaux réjouis
 Par dessus leur tête picore.
 C'est le verger du roi Louis.*

Envoi.

*" Prince, il est un bois que décore
 Un tas de pendus enfouis
 Dans le doux feuillage sonore,
 C'est le verger du roi Louis."*

There is, if we mistake not, a certain plate in Callot's "Miseries of War" which might serve as a fitting headpiece to the above. This wood, with its "*fruits inouis*" bathed in the morning sun and swinging in the morning breeze; the grim suggestion of—

*" Ces pendus, du diable entendus,
 Appellent des pendus encore ;"—*

the black birds blown about above, and the rumbling of "rs" in the refrain, as of distant thunder through the leaves;—all combine to make a most striking and effective picture. Other specimens as fine will be found in De Banville's "*Trente-six Ballades Joyeuses*" (Alphonse Lemerre, 1873); or the curious may consult the beautiful "*Livre des Ballades*," issued by the same publisher in 1876, which contains a choice selection from Froissart downwards. In England *Ballades* have been written by Mr. Swinburne and others. A large number, mostly on political themes, have also been printed in the "London" newspaper, and prove conclusively that this form presents no insurmountable difficulties to skilful writers. Many sprightly examples of most of the other forms, it should be added, are to be found in the same periodical.

There is a variety of the *Ballade* called the *Double Ballade*. This is simply a ballad of six huitains or dixains in lieu of three, generally without "*Envoi*." De Banville has written several. The unique English specimen is the "*Ballade of Dead Lions*," which recently appeared in the "London" for January 12, 1878. Another variety is the *Ballade à double refrain*,* which the "*Art Poétique*" of Thomas Sibilet, 1555, declares to be "*autant rare que plaisante*." Indeed there seems to be but one well-known French example,—the "*Frère Lubin*" of Clement Marot.

The CHANT ROYAL may be defined as a *ballade* of five stanzas of eleven lines with an "*Envoi*" of five.

* See No. ccxx.—[Ed.]

According to the strict rules it should be an Allegory, the solution of which is contained in the *Envoi*. Such is Marot's "*Chant Royal de la Conception*." The examples in English are at present (we believe) confined to three or four. One is the splendid *Chant Royal* of the God of Wine, published by Mr. E. W. Gosse in his article in the "Cornhill Magazine," already referred to,* which has the additional distinction of being the first of its class.

The rhymes play so important a part in the foregoing rules, that a few words on this head may not unfitly close these notes, especially as those who write the forms do not appear to be wholly agreed in the matter. On the one hand, it is advanced that the forms are sufficiently difficult in French, and that to transfer them to our tongue without at the same time adopting the French system of rhyming is to hamper them with superfluous difficulties. By the French system of rhyming, is meant the license used by French writers to rhyme words of exactly similar sound and spelling so long as they have different meanings. This is not held to be admissible in English, although cases might be cited. Milton, for example, has "Ruth" and "ruth" in one of his sonnets. On the other hand, it is contended that if we import these forms, we must, to make them really English, adopt them with all their native difficulties, and add our own as well. It will be clear, however, to both sides that so long as these forms remain in the category of *tours-de-force*, which they must do if the latter view be taken,

* See No. ccxxi.—[Ed.]

they will be of little or no service as popular additions to our stock of forms. As a middle course the present writer would suggest that it should be allowable to rhyme such words as "hail" and "hale;" but not allowable to rhyme such words as "prove," "approve," "reprove," in which the philological relationship is of the closest. Even in the former case, however, the skilful writer will be careful not to bring the rhymes into close proximity; and, in the shorter forms, will probably find it best to avoid them altogether. The purist would never employ them under any circumstances.

A. D.



Notes to the Poems.



NOTES TO THE POEMS.



No. 1.—Page 3.

From the *Romance of the Scarlet Leaf and other Poems* (1865). The author describes it as having been “suggested by a Sketch of E. Jones’s.” It has been set to music by M. Blumenthal. Mr. Aïdé himself is well known as one of the most versatile of our living writers, having been successful alike as poet, novelist, and dramatist. He is also a musical composer.

No. 2.—Page 5.

From *Now and Then* (1876); a collection of miscellaneous verse by Mr. Ashe, whose poetry has generally an old-fashioned quaintness about it which is very delightful. See also Nos. 33, 44, and 58.

No. 3.—Page 6.

From *Harold* (1876), act i., scene 2, where it is sung by Edith. It is a worthy addition to the long and splendid roll of Mr. Tennyson’s songs, which, like those of Shakespeare and Shelley, may be said to be “set” to their own music.

No. 4.—Page 7.

From *Searching the Net* (1873). This poem, in some passages, reminds one of the fine old lyric, beginning

“ Over the mountains
And over the waves,”

in which the following lines occur:—

“ Some think to lose him
By having him confined,
And some do suppose him,
Poor thing, to be blind ;
But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
Do the best that you may,
Blind Love, if so ye call him,
Will find out his way.”

Mr. Warren's poetry may be said to belong, in style and tone, to the Swinburnian school, but has nevertheless a distinct note of its own. There are some very happy passages in “Love gives all Away.”

No. 5.—Page 10.

This originally appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, and may be compared with Miss Rossetti's lines, *An End*:—

“ Love, strong as Death, is dead ;
Come, let us make his bed
Among the dying flowers :
A green turf at his head ;
And a stone at his feet,
Whereon we may sit
In the quiet evening hours.”

Mr. Austin has a decidedly original lyrical faculty, which he has exercised admirably in this and No. 46. His longer poems are noticeable for their lofty aim and well-sustained power.

No. 6.—Page 11.

From *Poems and Romances* (1869). Mr. Simcox may be described as another disciple of Mr. Swinburne, also with a distinct "note" of his own, to save him from the charge of imitation.

No. 7.—Page 12.

From one of Mr. Edwin Arnold's earlier volumes. Compare the idea running through it with the well-known lines of Longfellow:—

“ No one is so accursed by fate,
No one so utterly desolate,
But some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.”

The idea itself, of course, is as old as Plato.

No. 8.—Page 13.

From *Flower and Thorn* (1877). This, as well as No. 42, by the same writer, has an airy grace not very frequent in the works of Transatlantic writers. Mr. Aldrich deserves to be better known in this country than he is.

No. 9.—Page 14.

This poem, which first appeared in *Scribner's*

Monthly Magazine, is quite in the style of our own Sedley and Rochester. Mr. Stedman is another of those American writers who ought to have more readers in Great Britain than they have, for his verse is very agreeable, if not powerful. Perhaps the best of his lighter poetic efforts is his "Pan in Wall Street."

No. 10.—Page 16.

From *The Wanderer* (1859); a series of poems written in the cynical period of the writer's literary career. Lord Lytton's later work is of a much sounder quality; *vide* his *Fables in Song* (1874). *The Wanderer*, nevertheless, contains perhaps the truest poetry, *quâ* poetry, that he has written or will ever write. There can be no question of the superiority of his poetic powers over those of his more famous father, though the latter's verse is perhaps too sternly slighted in these superfine days.

No. 11.—Page 18.

From *Queen Mary* (1875), act v., scene 2, where it is sung by the heroine of the play; the play itself being, in spite of the swifter movement of *Harold*, the better of the two dramas Mr. Tennyson has yet given to the world.

No. 12.—Page 19.

From *Poems and Ballads*, first series (1866). In point of melody this lyric is far surpassed by its (companion?) poem, *At Parting*, of which the first verse runs:—

“ For a night and a day Love sang to us, played with us,
 Folded us round from the dark and the light,
 And our hearts were full-filled of the music he made with us,
 Made with our lips and our hearts while he stayed with us,
 Stayed in mid-passage his pinions from flight,
 For a day and a night.”

No. 14.—Page 22.

From *The Unknown Eros and other Odes* (1877); a volume of striking poetry from the pen of one whose previous works had hardly prepared the public for a book of such peculiar power. The contrast between these *Odes* and *The Angel in the House* is, indeed, so great, that those who have formed their estimate of Mr. Patmore's poetical capacity, after a perusal of the latter volume, will now find it necessary to revise it. The writer handles the metre of the *Odes* with great success. See Nos. 95 and 132.

No. 15.—Page 24.

From *The Red Flag and other Poems* (1872). Mr. Roden Noel has recently produced a drama, called *The House of Ravensburg*, which does more justice to his unmistakable powers than any one of his previous publications. It contains at least one charming lyric.

No. 16.—Page 26.

Mr. Lowell's serious poetry has not yet filtered through the hands of the select few in Britain, into those of the “ordinary reader”—either on account of its generally didactic character, or because Mr.

Lowell's reputation as a "sentimental" poet has been obscured by the popularity of his "Biglow Papers." As in the case of the elder Hood, the American writer suffers from his success in humorous work; the public does not seem able to conceive of the same man as at once a great humorist and an imaginative poet of decided genius.

No. 17.—Page 28.

From the *Poems* (1870), and one of the most happy of the poet's efforts. It is both clear and musical. Mr. Rossetti's work is generally musical, but not always clear. He is seen perhaps at his strongest in his sonnets, for a selection from which see Book III., *passim*. The most obvious characteristic of Mr. Rossetti's poetry generally is the impression of power it conveys.

No. 18.—Page 29.

From *Music and Moonlight, and other Poems* (1874). Mr. O'Shaughnessy is another of the Swinburnian school. This is one of his most admirable pieces.

No. 19.—Page 31.

From *Song of Two Worlds*, third series (1875), and the production of a writer who, on the publication of the first series of the *Songs*, at once took a high position as one of the most vigorous of our younger poets. He is perhaps more original in his lyric forms

than in the ideas embodied in them, though the latter have frequently a suggestiveness of their own. His *Epic of Hades*, if in style too reminiscent of the Tennysonian manner, is a very interesting poem, full of fine thoughts and felicitous expressions.

No. 20.—Page 32.

One of the most characteristic of Mr. Browning's shorter lyrics.

No. 21.—Page 33.

From *On Viol and Flute* (1873); a volume of short poems by a writer, who, showing in this early book a keen sense of style, afterwards essayed a higher and not less successful flight in his drama of *King Erik* (1876), a work of great imaginative power. The few lyrics in it are quite Elizabethan in their tone. Mr. Gosse is further notable as one of the few living writers who have handled old French measures with skill. He is undoubtedly one of the most able of the new generation of poets.

No. 22.—Page 35.

From *The Spectator*; to which Mr. Bourdillon has contributed a series of short lyrics, worthy of remark for their completeness of idea and form.

No. 23.—Page 36.

From *Pelleas and Ettarre*, in *The Idylls of the King*.

No. 25.—Page 38.

From the *Poems* (1877) of a writer who ranks, with his brother, Mr. Frederick Myers, among the most thoughtful of the younger singers.

No. 26.—Page 39.

From *The Infant Bridal and other Poems* (1864) of Mr. Aubrey de Vere, who is one of the most attractive of our meditative poets. His verse is more nearly Wordsworthian than that of any of his contemporaries, except Mr. Matthew Arnold in some moods.

No. 27.—Page 40.

From *Festus* (1839); a work of which the interpolated lyrics are not, of course, the strongest feature. Still, they are interesting as the productions of a poet who has written one of the most striking works of modern times, and is yet one of the least known and understood of living writers.

No. 28.—Page 41.

A pleasing specimen of the verse of a lady whose greatest literary successes have been achieved in the path of prose fiction.

No. 30.—Page 45.

By the most dramatic of living lady poets, as well as one of the most tender of feminine lyrists. It is from *A Woman Sold, and other Poems* (1867). Mrs.

Webster has a large number of admirers, but her merits have yet to be made known to "the many." Her chief notes are sounded on the chord of the evanescent character of human joys.

No. 31.—*Page 46.*

From *Flotsam and Jetsam* (1877); a collection of poems old and new, by the poet to whom his friend Robert Browning has given fame as "Waring." Mr. Domett's poetry deserves to be read, however, for its own sake. See, especially, No. 105.

No. 32.—*Page 47.*

From *Spindrift* (1867). Sir Noel Paton is like Mr. D. G. Rossetti, a painter-poet, and is almost as successful on paper as he is on canvass in perpetuating the delicacy of his fancy.

No. 34.—*Page 49.*

One of the most musical things Mr. Buchanan has written: it appeared originally in a magazine.

No. 36.—*Page 54.*

Miss Rossetti is unquestionably the most popular female poet of the day, and well deserves her laurels. Her work is, on the whole, the best poetic soil on which the sentiment of her own sex could be nurtured, for, although it is melancholy in its general cast, it has many moments of spiritual elevation. See, notably, No. 136.

No. 38.—Page 58.

This appeared first in *The Argosy*.

No. 41.—Page 63.

One of the happiest passages in Lord Houghton's volumes. Here, as elsewhere in this poet's writings, there is a distinct tone as of the best verse of the seventeenth century.

No. 43.—Page 65.

From *Queen Mary*, act iii., scene 5 ; where it is supposed to be sung behind the scenes by a milkmaid.

No. 45.—Page 67.

From the collected *Poems* (1877) of Mr. Allingham, who is one of the freshest and most idyllic of our poets. The last two lines in this lyric are charming.

No. 46.—Page 69.

From the *Human Tragedy*, act iv.

No. 47.—Page 71.

From *London Lyrics* (1877) ; a volume of delightful verse, which has already gone into eight or nine editions, and seems destined to go into a dozen more. It will always be a valued possession of every true lover of the alternately vivacious and pathetic, limpid and pointed in modern poetry. Mr. Locker is too often regarded as only a society-poet—that is, as

exclusively a laureate of Mayfair, its doings and its sayings. He is this, but he is more, for he has written some of the most successful "serious" poetry of the day.

No. 50.—Page 76.

From *Songs before Sunrise* (1871). Mr. Swinburne is seen at his best, perhaps, in brief lyric flights like this.

No. 51.—Page 77.

The production of a poet the amount of whose lyric work has been but small, whilst its excellence is sufficient to make us wish for more. From the fact that a new edition of Sir Henry Taylor's poems has recently been issued, it is safe to argue that they are now more appreciated by the "general" than they were. There is a solid and sonorous beauty about them which the present generation seems to find it difficult to appreciate. The plays are emphatically for the closet, but they are none the worse for that in an age when theatrical representations are beset by so many drawbacks for poetic work.

No. 52.—Page 78.

From *Pegasus Resaddled* (1877); a mélange of verse, full of fluency and verve.

No. 53.—Page 80.

From *Greenwood's Farewell, and other Poems* (1876); a volume which worthily maintained the

reputation won by *Jonas Fisher* (1875) and since confirmed by *The Meda Maiden and other Poems* (1877).

No. 54.—Page 82.

The work of one whose reputation is greater in the field of criticism than in the field of song, but whose verse has nevertheless much spontaneity of fancy as well as depth of thought. The refrain of this particular poem recalls, in its peculiar lilt, that of one of Sir Walter Scott's most happy lyrics:—

“ Adieu for evermore,
My Love!
And adieu for evermore.”

No. 55.—Page 84.

From *St. Paul and other Poems* (1870). *St. Paul* itself is a soliloquy, supposed to be uttered by the Apostle, and marked by fervid and melodious rhetoric. It represents the highest level to which, up to the present time, the writer's powers have attained.

No. 56.—Page 85.

From *A Tale of Eternity and other Poems* (1869). This lyric reminds one a little both of Charles Lamb's *Hester* and Frederick Locker's *My Neighbour Rose*. Its best praise is, that it is not unworthy to rank near those masterpieces. It has a pathetic quaintness which is very pleasing.

No. 57.—Page 87.

From *Lays of Middle Age and other Poems* (1859),

by a Scotch journalist, who has for too many years "given up" to the Press the talents which were "meant for" Literature in its more permanent forms.

No. 59.—Page 90.

By a writer who has of recent years preferred to cultivate the field of fiction, rather than that of poetry, in which he was once so noticeable a labourer. This, and No. 148, are taken from Mr. Meredith's earliest volume (1851). His strongest verse, perhaps, is to be found in *Modern Love* (1862).

No. 61.—Page 92.

There is a touch of Carew about this lyric.

No. 64.—Page 99.

From *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877). Mr. Austin Dobson is, like Mr. Locker, too often looked upon as merely a producer of society-verse. He has certainly written some of the best specimens in English of that difficult *genre*; he has, in fact, displayed in *vers de société* an originality of style and tone which proclaims him one of its most accomplished masters. Like Mr. Locker, however—though in quite a different way, for Mr. Dobson is thoroughly individual in his work—he has done admirable things in the poetry both of "sentiment" and "reflection." (See, for example, Nos. 133 and 142.) His efforts in the direction of French forms in English speak for themselves. Altogether, Mr. Dobson has a high and secure position among the singers of the day.

No. 65.—Page 101.

From *My Beautiful Lady* (1863); a series of well-wrought cameos by a poet-sculptor.

No. 66.—Page 103.

From *Boudoir Ballads* (1876); the work of a facile and agreeable writer.

No. 68.—Page 105.

From *A Year of Song* (1872). This, and the "Rose Song," are perhaps Mr. Sawyer's happiest performances in verse. "Angelica" has been set to music.

No. 69.—Page 107.

This used to be called *Geraldine and I*, and originally appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* for 1868. In revising it for his edition of 1876, Mr. Locker gave it its present title, which, by the way, is also the title of one of Mr. Austin Dobson's *Vignettes in Rhyme* (1873).

No. 77.—Page 118.

This and the following poem are from *The Window, or the Songs of the Wrens* (1870); a little lyrical drama, so to speak, which has hardly attained to the popularity that might have been anticipated for it. Yet it contains some of the Laureate's most delicate work.

No. 81.—Page 125.

From *Graffiti d'Italia* (1869), by another poet-sculptor. Mr. Story is, however, rather a poet of rhetoric than of magic, having vigour but not charm.

No. 82.—Page 127.

From the *Poems* (1876) of a writer who, like Mr. Palgrave, is best known and appreciated as a critic, in which character he has added at least one permanent work to our literature, in the shape of his essay upon *Shakspeare's Mind and Art*. His verse is that of a man of culture, who thinks for himself, and has considerable powers of rhythmical expression.

No. 83.—Page 129.

From *The Gallery of Pigeons, and other Poems* (1873). Mr. Marzials' poetry deals perhaps too much in fantasy to be very popular; yet it contains some charming things, among which these "Bagatelles," and Nos. 84 and 85, may be fairly ranked. If Mr. Marzials' belongs to any school at all, it is to that over which Mr. Browning presides, and in which Mr. Meredith is a highly-placed scholar.

No. 86—Page 133.

The work of a poet, novelist, and essayist, whose most enduring verse is probably that which is to be read in *Phantastes* and *The Disciple*.

No. 89.—Page 138.

The success with which Mr. Locker treats the subject of childhood in his poetry has been often noted.

No. 91.—Page 142.

From *Verses on Various Occasions* (1868); a volume of strong-pithed if not melodious writing. Dr. Newman's ablest poetic performance is, of course, *The Dream of Gerontius*.

No. 92.—Page 143.

Another instance, and an excellent one, of the poetry of rhetoric, of which Lord Houghton has given us so many valuable examples.

No. 94.—Page 147.

The note immediately above may be applied to this poem also, which is a fair specimen of the Archbishop's thoughtful and cultivated muse.

No. 97.—Page 152.

This, with the two following lyrics, is from *The Earthly Paradise* (1868), and is sufficiently indicative of Mr. Morris's reflective tone. The poet has all Jaques' power of sucking melancholy out of song, or rather, of permeating song with melancholy. His Muse is certainly not an inspiring one, but it is musical and tender, and has attractiveness if not charm. Mr. Morris is more successful perhaps in narrative than in reflection.

No. 104.—Page 163.

From *The Spanish Gypsy* (1868); a dramatic poem from which, also, Nos. 109 and 137 are taken. These lyrics have a light and graceful flow about them, which ought to make them popular. The blank verse in which they are enshrined has the qualities of sonority and strength; and indeed the poem altogether is worthy of far more attention than the critics generally have accorded to it.

No. 105.—Page 164.

This is usually looked upon as Mr. Domett's most excellent piece of work. It was originally published many years ago.

No. 110.—Page 171.

Compare this poem with the one that follows, and compare both with Mr. Arnold's "Self-Dependence."

No. 111.—Page 172.

From the series entitled "Switzerland," which includes some of the writer's most delightful pieces.

No. 112.—Page 174.

The fourth verse of this poem recalls a passage in Mr. Arnold's "Buried Life," whilst the fifth verse seems to re-echo more than one passage in others of the latter writer's poems.

No. 113.—Page 177.

Originally printed in *The Cornhill Magazine*.

No. 114.—Page 178.

This and No. 140 are extracted from *Yu-pe-ya's Lute* (1874), a Chinese story of pathetic interest.

No. 116.—Page 182.

From *Songs of the Sierras* (1871). Mr. Miller's poetry is, as a rule, as wild and lawless in character as the life he sings about.

No. 117.—Page 183.

One of the poet's later lyrics, and quite in his old familiar style.

No. 118.—Page 184.

This, like No. 112, recalls some lines by Mr. Arnold. Note the last four of the first verse: how irresistibly they suggest to us the following:—

“ Through the deep recesses of our breast
The unregarded river of our life
Pursues with indiscernible flow its way.”

No. 121.—Page 188.

A very happy specimen of collaboration. It is difficult to say which verse is the prettier in idea.

No. 122.—Page 189.

From *King Erik*. See the Note to No. 21.

No. 123.—Page 190.

Mr. Bennett is most at home in song-writing, to

which he has almost wholly given himself up, and in which his successes have been many.

No. 124.—Page 191.

From *The Atlantic Monthly* (1877).

No. 125:—Page 192.

In every way a characteristic poem; notable for its thoroughly Arnoldian sentiment, and the happy way in which the irregular metre is managed.

No. 129.—Page 197.

The idea of this little lyric may be found in Longfellow's familiar lines:—

“ Learn how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.”

But how much nearer adequacy is the Archbishop's treatment of it!

No. 131.—Page 199.

Here is another instance in which Mr. Arnold's “notes” find an echo in a contemporary's song. Compare the second verse with a very similar passage in *Empedocles on Etna*.

No. 133.—Page 203.

This originally appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*. It has been slightly retouched.

No. 134.—Page 205.

From "Meg Blane," a poem first published in *North Coast and other Poems* (1867). The interlocutors are Meg and her half-witted son.

No. 135.—Page 207.

An excellent imitation of the Elizabethan manner; directly reminding us, indeed, of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Lay a garland on my hearse."

No. 136.—Page 209.

This has been highly praised by Mr. Swinburne.

No. 139.—Page 213.

From *The Spectator*.

No. 141.—Page 215.

From *All in All* (1874). See, also, Nos. 156 and 157, which are derived from the same volume.

No. 143.—Page 220.

From Mr. Rhoades' single volume of *Poems*, from which, also, No. 177 is taken. Mr. Rhoades used to be a frequent contributor to *The Spectator*; he now rarely publishes.

No. 145.—Page 223.

From the volume of miscellaneous verse entitled *Jubal* (1874). This volume contains what is perhaps

George Eliot's highest flight in poetry—the lines about “the choir invisible.”

No. 149.—Page 229.

Mr. Emerson's verse is thoroughly individual, and well worthy of study; but it lacks genuine inspiration, and has none of the glamour of true poetry.

No. 150.—Page 231.

From *Camera Obscura* (1876); a little volume of verse and prose, by a writer who is always tender and graceful.

No. 152.—Page 236.

The finest tribute to Shakespeare since Milton's.

No. 153.—Page 237.

Originally published in *Macmillan's Magazine*.

No. 155.—Page 239.

From *Annus Amoris* (1876); a book of sonnets, which are not, however, in strict sonnet form, as regards the position of the rhymes. This specimen follows the Shakespearean arrangement.

No. 158.—Page 242.

Mr. Rossetti, strange to say, is not always true to the Italian model, in which the last six lines have but two rhymes between them. His sonnets are, however, full of masterly expression.

No. 159.—*Page 243.*

Note, here, the fine sweep of the eleventh line.

No. 160.—*Page 244.*

Not so thoroughly satisfying as No. 153, but elegant nevertheless.

No. 163.—*Page 247.*

Mr. Tennyson's sonnets are not quite so highly esteemed as they deserve to be. This is one of his best.

No. 165.—*Page 249.*

Reminiscent, surely, of one of Mrs. Browning's sonnets. No. 166 is more original.

No. 173.—*Page 257.*

By a writer who is best known as a poet in dialect, and that dialect the Dorsetshire. His literary English is, however, very interesting, as this poem testifies.

No. 177.—*Page 261.*

A sonnet only in the sense that it consists of fourteen lines. The idea is excellent.

No. 179.—*Page 264.*

From *Intaglios* (1871); a volume of vigorously-written sonnets.

No. 182.—*Page 267.*

This and No. 183 are two hitherto unpublished pieces by the author of *Wood-Notes and Church Bells*. Mr. Wilton handles the sonnet form with great ease and effect.

No. 184.—*Page 269.*

From one of Mr. Longfellow's later volumes. The ninth, tenth, and eleventh lines may be paralleled by these of Mr. Matthew Arnold's:—

“ From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs and floating echoes, and convey
A melancholy into all our day.”

No. 189.—*Page 274.*

Mr. Bryant is perhaps the most truly national of all American poets. He is certainly more so than Mr. Longfellow, who has, however, outstripped him in popularity in Britain.

No. 190.—*Page 275.*

This and the following specimens of Mr. Arnold's sonnet-writing show how skilfully he adapts himself to a kind of verse which can no longer be called “foreign;” which could not, indeed, be called so after Shakespeare and Milton had adopted it.

No. 195.—*Page 280.*

Apart altogether from the intrinsic value of his poetry, which (in regard especially to the sonnets and

the ballads) is obviously great, Mr. Scott may be regarded as the Nestor of the school of writers in which Messrs. Swinburne and Rossetti are the leading masters. He is happier, perhaps, in his ballads than in his sonnets, though the latter are original in subject and bold in treatment. His proper place among contemporaries is a high one.

No. 198.—Page 283.

A fair example of Mrs. Pfeiffer's work. This lady has imagination, if not fancy; and the matter of her verse is always valuable.

No. 201.—Page 289.

From *Poems* (1873). This triolet is so neatly turned that it is to be regretted Mr. Bridges has not written more in this form than he has. As it is, he is entitled to the credit of having been the first to use it in English poetry.

No. 202.—Page 290.

This is one of several examples of the same form, printed in *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877). Here is another specimen:—

“ Oh, Love's but a dance,
 Where Time plays the fiddle !
 See the couples advance,—
 Oh, Love's but a dance !
 A whisper, a glance,—
 ‘ Shall we twirl down the middle ? ’
 Oh, Love's but a dance,
 Where Time plays the fiddle ! ”

No. 203.—Page 291.

From *The Athenæum*. The reader will remark how largely and successfully Mr. Payne figures in this volume as an imitator of the old French forms. His facility in rhyme and rhythm is not more remarkable than the intrinsic poetry of his work. This rondel especially has a happy charm. So has the rondeau which forms No. 207. Nos. 210, 213, 217, 219, and 222 are here printed, by Mr. Payne's permission, for the first time. It may be mentioned that Mr. Payne has achieved, and is about to publish, a translation into English, in the original metres, of the whole poetical works of François Villon.

No. 204.—Page 292.

From *Poems* (1873), where it is accompanied by two other rondeaux.

No. 206.—Page 294.

Kindly written for this volume by Mr. Gosse, who is one of the leaders in the new movement for the Anglicisation of French metres.

No. 208.—Page 296.

Hitherto unprinted. Mr. Waddington is known as a graceful contributor to the magazines.

No. 209.—Page 297.

From *The Athenæum*. See Mr. Dobson's *Note* (page 342). Mr. Dobson has himself written a

rondeau in this form ; *i.e.*, the following lines, originally printed in *The Spectator*, but not republished in his recent volume :—

Rose, in the hedge-row grown,
Where the scent of the fresh sweet hay
Comes up from the fields new-mown,
You know it—you know it—alone,
So I gather you here to-day.

For here—was it not here, say ?—
That she came by the woodland way,
And my heart with a hope unknown
Rose ?

Ah, yes !—with her bright hair blown,
And her eyes like the skies of May,
And her steps like the rose-leaves strewn
When the winds in the rose-trees play—
It was here—O my love—my own
ROSE !

No. 211.—Page 300.

Hitherto unpublished, also. Mr. Monkhouse has written more than one “old form” in English, and always skilfully. They will no doubt appear among his forthcoming *Poems*.

No. 212.—Page 302.

This originally appeared in *St. Paul's Magazine*. The form in which it is written is one of the most ancient of French measures.

No. 215.—Page 310.

First printed in *The Spectator* (1877), and since republished in *Gerard's Monument* (second edition,

1878). It is Mrs. Pfeiffer's most successful effort in this way.

No. 216.—Page 312.

Originally given in an article contributed by Mr. Gosse to *The Cornhill* (1877).

No. 218.—Page 316.

From *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877), and the first original piece of its kind in English. It has been slightly retouched for this volume.

No. 220.—Page 320.

First published in *Belgravia* (1878), and, up to the present time, the only one of its kind in English.

No. 221.—Page 322.

Reproduced from *The Cornhill* article, by Mr. Gosse, above mentioned. Also the first of its kind published in English.



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