

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON

But a steer ripp'd up MacPherson in the Cooraminta
yards,

And Sullivan was drown'd at Sink-or-swim ;
And Mostyn—poor Frank Mostyn—died at last a fearful
wreck,

In ' the horrors ', at the Upper Wandinong,
And Carisbrooke, the rider, at the Horsefall broke his neck,
Faith ! the wonder was he saved his neck so long !
Ah ! those days and nights we squander'd at the Logans'
in the glen—

The Logans, man and wife, have long been dead.
Elsie's tallest girl seems taller than your little Elsie then ;
And Ethel is a woman grown and wed.

I've had my share of pastime, and I've done my share
of toil,

And life is short—the longest life a span ;
I care not now to tarry for the corn or for the oil,
Or the wine that maketh glad the heart of man.
For good undone and gifts misspent and resolutions vain,
'Tis somewhat late to trouble. This I know—
I should live the same life over, if I had to live again ;
And the chances are I go where most men go.

The deep blue skies wax dusky, and the tall green trees
grow dim,

The sward beneath me seems to heave and fall ;
And sickly, smoky shadows through the sleepy sunlight
swim,

And on the very sun's face weave their pall.
Let me slumber in the hollow where the wattle blossoms
wave,

With never stone or rail to fence my bed ;
Should the sturdy station children pull the bush flowers
on my grave,

I may chance to hear them romping overhead.

373. *After the Quarrel*

HE never gave me a chance to speak,
 And he call'd her—worse than a dog—
 The girl stood up with a crimson cheek,
 And I fell'd him there like a log.

I can feel the blow on my knuckles yet—
 He feels it more on his brow.
 In a thousand years we shall all forget
 The things that trouble us now.

FRANCIS ROBERT ST. CLAIR ERSKINE

EARL OF ROSSLYN

1833-1890

374. *Bed-time*

'TIS bedtime ; say your hymn, and bid ' Good-night,
 God bless Mamma, Papa, and dear ones all,'
 Your half-shut eyes beneath your eyelids fall,
 Another minute you will shut them quite.
 Yes, I will carry you, put out the light,
 And tuck you up, although you are so tall !
 What will you give me, Sleepy One, and call
 My wages, if I settle you all right ?
 I laid her golden curls upon my arm,
 I drew her little feet within my hand,
 Her rosy palms were joined in trustful bliss,
 Her heart next mine beat gently, soft and warm ;
 She nestled to me, and, by Love's command,
 Paid me my precious wages—' Baby's kiss.'

JOHN NICHOL

1833-1894

375.

Good Night

GOOD night, my love, good night !
Farewell ! the breeze is sighing
Along the harbour height ;
The fleecy clouds are flying
Beneath Astarte's light.
My mariners are crying
' In favouring winds away !
And I, my love denying,
Must cleave th' Aegean spray.
The song that the sea is singing
On the bay is tender and bright :
The bark like a bird is springing
And speeding from thy sight :
And a tune in my head is ringing
That thrills my heart for flight
Across the waves—soon winging
Return to thee, and bringing
Treasures for thy delight.
Good night, my love ! good night !

376.

Song

THE feathers of the willow
 Are half of them grown yellow
 Above the swelling stream ;
 And ragged are the bushes,
 And rusty now the rushes,
 And wild the clouded gleam.

The thistle now is older,
 His stalks begin to moulder,
 His head is white as snow ;
 The branches all are barer,
 The linnet's song is rarer,
 The robin pipeth low.

377.

Humanity

THERE is a soul above the soul of each,
 A mightier soul, which yet to each belongs :
 There is a sound made of all human speech,
 And numerous as the concourse of all songs :
 And in that soul lives each, in each that soul,
 Tho' all the ages are its life-time vast ;
 Each soul that dies in its most sacred whole
 Receiveth life that shall for ever last.

And thus for ever with a wider span
 Humanity o'erarches time and death ;
 Man can elect the universal man
 And live in life that ends not with his breath ;
 And gather glory that increases still
 Till Time his glass with Death's last dust shall fill.

378.

Tolerance

CALL no faith false which e'er has brought
 Relief to any laden life,
 Cessation from the pain of thought,
 Refreshment 'mid the dust of strife.

What though the thing to which they kneel
 Be dumb and dead as wood or stone,
 Though all the rapture which they feel
 Be for the worshipper alone ?

They worship, they adore, they bow
 Before the Ineffable Source, before
 The hidden soul of good ; and thou,
 With all thy wit, what dost thou more ?

Kneel with them, only if there come
 Some zealot or sleek knave who strives
 To mar the sanctities of home,
 To tear asunder wedded lives ;

Or who by subtle wile has sought,
 By shameful promise, shameful threat,
 To turn the thinker from his thought,
 To efface the eternal landmarks set

'Twixt faith and knowledge ; hold not peace
 For such, but like a sudden flame
 Let loose thy scorn on him, nor cease
 Till thou hast cover'd him with shame.

A Separation Deed

WHEREAS we twain, who still are bound for life,
 Who took each other for better and for worse,
 Are now plunged deep in hate and bitter strife,
 And all our former love is grown a curse ;
 So that 'twere better, doubtless, we should be
 In loneliness, so that we were apart,
 Nor in each other's changed eyes looking, see
 The cold reflection of an alien heart :
 To this insensate parchment we reveal
 Our joint despair, and seal it with our seal.

Forgetting the dear days not long ago,
 When we walk'd slow by starlight through the corn :
 Forgetting, since our hard fate wills it so,
 All but our parted lives and souls forlorn ;
 Forgetting the sweet fetters strong to bind
 Which childish fingers forge, and baby smiles,
 Our common pride to watch the growing mind,
 Our common joy in childhood's simple wiles,
 The common tears we shed, the kiss we gave,
 Standing beside the open little grave ;

Forgetting these and more, if to forget
 Be possible, as we would fain indeed.
 And if the past be not too deeply set
 In our two hearts, with roots that, touch'd, will bleed
 Yet, could we cheat by any pretext fair
 The world, if not ourselves—'twere so far well—
 We would not put our bonds from us, and bare
 To careless eyes the secrets of our hell ;
 So this indenture witnesseth that we,
 As follows here, do solemnly agree.

SIR LEWIS MORRIS

We will take each our own, and will abide
Separate from bed and board for all our life ;
Whatever chance of weal or woe betide,
Naught shall re-knit the husband and the wife.
Though one grow gradually poor and weak,
The other, lapt in luxury, will not heed ;
Though one, in mortal pain, the other seek,
The other may not answer to the need ;
We, who thro' long years did together rest
In wedlock, heart to heart, and breast to breast.

One shall the daughter take, and one the boy,—
Poor boy, who shall not hear his mother's name,
Nor feel her kiss ; poor girl, for whom the joy
Of her sire's smile is changed for sullen shame :
Brother and sister, who, if they should meet,
With faces strange, amid the careless crowd,
Will feel their hearts beat with no quicker beat,
Nor inward voice of kinship calling loud :
Two widow'd lives, whose fullness may not come ;
Two orphan lives, knowing but half of home.

We have not told the tale, nor will, indeed,
Of dissonance, whether cruel wrong or crime,
Or sum of petty injuries which breed
The hate of hell when multiplied by time,
Dishonour, falsehood, jealous fancies, blows,
Which in one moment wedded souls can sunder ;
But, since our yoke intolerable grows,
Therefore we set our seals and souls as under :
Witness the powers of Wrong and Hate and Death.
And this Indenture also witnesseth.

380. *On a Thrush Singing in Autumn*

SWEET singer of the Spring, when the new world
 Was fill'd with song and bloom, and the fresh year
 Tripp'd, like a lamb playful and void of fear,
 Through daisied grass and young leaves scarce unfurl'd,
 Where is thy liquid voice
 That all day would rejoice?
 Where now thy sweet and homely call,
 Which from grey dawn to evening's chilling fall
 Would echo from thin copse and tassell'd brake,
 For homely duty tuned and love's sweet sake?

The spring-tide pass'd, high summer soon should come.
 The woods grew thick, the meads a deeper hue;
 The pipy summer growths swell'd, lush and tall;
 The sharp scythes swept at daybreak through the dew.
 Thou didst not heed at all,
 Thy prodigal voice grew dumb;
 No more with song mightst thou beguile,
 —She sitting on her speckled eggs the while—
 Thy mate's long vigil as the slow days went,
 Solacing her with lays of measureless content.

Nay, nay, thy voice was Duty's, nor would dare
 Sing were Love fled, though still the world were fair;
 The summer wax'd and waned, the nights grew cold,
 The sheep were thick within the wattled fold,
 The woods began to moan,
 Dumb wert thou and alone;
 Yet now, when leaves are sere, thy ancient note
 Comes low and halting from thy doubtful throat.
 Oh, lonely loveless voice! what dost thou here
 In the deep silence of the fading year?

SIR LEWIS MORRIS

Thus do I read the answer of thy song :
' I sang when winds blew chilly all day long ;
I sang because hope came and joy was near,
I sang a little while, I made good cheer ;
In summer's cloudless day
My music died away ;
But now the hope and glory of the year
Are dead and gone, a little while I sing
Songs of regret for days no longer here,
And touched with presage of the far-off Spring.'

Is this the meaning of thy note, fair bird ?
Or do we read into thy simple brain
Echoes of thoughts which human hearts have stirred,
High-soaring joy and melancholy pain ?
Nay, nay, that lingering note
Belated from thy throat—
' Regret,' is what it sings, ' regret, regret !
The dear days pass, but are not wholly gone.
In praise of those I let my song go on ;
'Tis sweeter to remember than forget.'

381.

Song

LOVE took my life and thrill'd it
Through all its strings,
Play'd round my mind and fill'd it
With sound of wings :
But to my heart he never came
To touch it with his golden flame.

SIR LEWIS MORRIS

Therefore it is that singing
I do rejoice,
Nor heed the slow years bringing
A harsher voice :
Because the songs which he has sung
Still leave the untouch'd singer young.

But whom in fuller fashion
The Master sways,
For him, swift wing'd with passion,
Fleet the brief days :
Betimes the enforcèd accents come,
And leave him ever after dumb.

JAMES THOMSON

1834-1882

382.

Gifts

GIVE a man a horse he can ride,
Give a man a boat he can sail ;
And his rank and wealth, his strength and health
On sea nor shore shall fail.

Give a man a pipe he can smoke,
Give a man a book he can read :
And his home is bright with a calm delight,
Though the room be poor indeed.

JAMES THOMSON

Give a man a girl he can love,
As I, O my love, love thee ;
And his heart is great with the pulse of Fate,
At home, on land, on sea.

383.

The Bridge

O WHAT are you waiting for here, young man ?
, What are you looking for over the bridge ? '
A little straw hat with the streaming blue ribbons
Is soon to come dancing over the bridge.

Her heart beats the measure that keeps her feet dancing,
Dancing along like a wave o' the sea ;
Her heart pours the sunshine with which her eyes glancing
Light up strange faces in looking for me.

The strange faces brighten in meeting her glances ;
The strangers all bless her, pure, lovely, and free :
She fancies she walks, but her walk skips and dances,
Her heart makes such music in coming to me.

O, thousands and thousands of happy young maidens
Are tripping this morning their sweethearts to see ;
But none whose heart beats to a sweeter love-cadence
Than hers who will brighten the sunshine for me.

' O, what are you waiting for here, young man ?
What are you looking for over the bridge ? '
A little straw hat with the streaming blue ribbons ;
—And here it comes dancing over the bridge !

Songs

384.

i

LIKE violets pale i' the Spring o' the year
Came my Love's sad eyes to my youth ;
Wan and dim with many a tear,
But the sweeter for that in sooth :
Wet and dim,
Tender and true,
Violet eyes
Of the sweetest blue.

Like pansies dark i' the June o' the year
Grow my Love's glad eyes to my prime ;
Rich with the purple splendour clear
Of their thoughtful bliss sublime :
Deep and dark,
Solemn and true,
Pansy eyes
Of the noblest blue.

385.

ii

MY love is the flaming Sword
To fight through the world ;
Thy love is the Shield to ward,
And the Armour of the Lord
And the Banner of Heaven unfurl'd.

386.

iii

LET my voice ring out and over the earth,
 Through all the grief and strife,
 With a golden joy in a silver mirth :
 Thank God for Life !

Let my voice swell out through the great abyss
 To the azure dome above,
 With a chord of faith in the harp of bliss :
 Thank God for Love !

Let my voice thrill out beneath and above,
 The whole world through :
 O my Love and Life, O my Life and Love,
 Thank God for you !

387.

The Vine

THE wine of Love is music,
 And the feast of Love is song :
 And when Love sits down to the banquet,
 Love sits long :

Sits long and arises drunken,
 But not with the feast and the wine ;
 He reeleth with his own heart,
 That great, rich Vine.

388.

Midsummer Courtship

O HOW the nights are short,
 , These heavenly nights of June !
 The long hot day amort
 With toil, the time to court
 So stinted in its boon !

JAMES THOMSON

But three or four brief hours
Between the afterglow
And dawnlight ; while the flowers
Are dreaming in their bowers,
And birds their song forgo ;

And in the noon of night,
As in the noon of day,
Flowers close on their delight,
Birds nestle from their flight,
Deep stillness holdeth sway :

Only the nightingales
Yet sing to moon and stars,
Although their full song fails ;
The corncrake never quails,
But through the silence jars.

So few brief hours of peace ;
And only one for us,
Alone, in toil's surcease,
To feed on love's increase :
It is too cruel thus !

Did little Mother chide
Because our sewing dropp'd
And we sat dreamy-eyed ?
Dear Mother, good betide,
The scolding must be stopp'd.

Dear Mother, good and true,
All-loving while you blame,
When spring brings skies of blue
And buds and flowers anew,
I come in with my claim !

JAMES THOMSON

I claim my Love, my Own,
Yet ever yours the while,
Under whose care hath grown
The sweetest blossom blown
In all our flower-loved isle.

The Spring renews its youth
And youth renews its Spring :
Love's wildest dreams are truth,
Magic is sober sooth ;
Charm of the Magic Ring !

389.

Art

WHAT precious thing are you making fast
In all these silken lines ?
And where and to whom will it go at last ?
Such subtle knots and twines !

I am tying up all my love in this,
With all its hopes and fears,
With all its anguish and all its bliss,
And its hours as heavy as years.

I am going to send it afar, afar,
To I know not where above ;
To that sphere beyond the highest star
Where dwells the soul of my Love.

But in vain, in vain, would I make it fast
With countless subtle twines ;
For ever its fire breaks out at last,
And shrivels all the lines.

In the Room

THE sun was down, and twilight grey
 Fill'd half the air ; but in the room,
 Whose curtain had been drawn all day,
 The twilight was a dusky gloom :
 Which seem'd at first as still as death,
 And void ; but was indeed all rife
 With subtle thrills, the pulse and breath
 Of multitudinous lower life.

In their abrupt and headlong way
 Bewilder'd flies for light had dash'd
 Against the curtain all the day,
 And now slept wintrily abash'd ;
 And nimble mice slept, wearied out
 With such a double night's uproar ;
 But solid beetles crawl'd about
 The chilly hearth and naked floor.

And so throughout the twilight hour
 That vaguely murmurous hush and rest
 There brooded ; and beneath its power
 Life throbbing held its throbs suppress'd :
 Until the thin-voiced mirror sigh'd,
 I am all blurr'd with dust and damp,
 So long ago the clear day died,
 So long has gleamed nor fire nor lamp.

Whereon the curtain murmur'd back,
 Some change is on us, good or ill ;
 Behind me and before is black
 As when those human things lie still :

JAMES THOMSON

But I have seen the darkness grow
As grows the daylight every morn ;
Have felt out there long shine and glow,
In here long chilly dusk forlorn.

The cupboard grumbled with a groan,
Each new day worse starvation brings :
Since *he* came here I have not known
Or sweets or cates or wholesome things :
But now ! a pinch of meal, a crust,
Throughout the week is all I get.
I am so empty ; it is just
As when they said we were to let.

What is become, then, of our Man ?
The petulant old glass exclaim'd ;
If all this time he slumber can,
He really ought to be ashamed.
I wish we had our Girl again,
So gay and busy, bright and fair :
The girls are better than these men,
Who only for their dull selves care.

It is so many hours ago—
The lamp and fire were both alight—
I saw him pacing to and fro,
Perturbing restlessly the night.
His face was pale to give one fear,
His eyes when lifted looked too bright ;
He mutter'd ; what, I could not hear :
Bad words though ; something was not right.

The table said, He wrote so long
That I grew weary of his weight ;
The pen kept up a cricket song,
It ran and ran at such a rate :

JAMES THOMSON

And in the longer pauses he
With both his folded arms downpress'd
And stared as one who does not see,
Or sank his head upon his breast.

The fire-grate said, I am as cold
As if I never had a blaze ;
The few dead cinders here I hold,
I held unburn'd for days and days.
Last night he made them flare ; but still
What good did all his writing do ?
Among my ashes curl and thrill
Thin ghosts of all those papers too.

The table answer'd, Not quite all ;
He saved and folded up one sheet,
And seal'd it fast, and let it fall ;
And here it lies now white and neat.
Whereon the letter's whisper came,
My writing is closed up too well ;
Outside there 's not a single name,
And who should read me I can't tell.

The mirror sneer'd with scornful spite,
(That ancient crack which spoil'd her looks
Had marr'd her temper), Write and write !
And read those stupid, worn-out books !
That 's all he does,—read, write, and read,
And smoke that nasty pipe which stinks :
He never takes the slightest heed
How any of us feels or thinks.

But Lucy fifty times a day
Would come and smile here in my face,
Adjust a tress that curl'd astray,
Or tie a ribbon with more grace :

JAMES THOMSON

She look'd so young and fresh and fair,
She blush'd with such a charming bloom,
It did one good to see her there,
And brighten'd all things in the room.

She did not sit hours stark and dumb
As pale as moonshine by the lamp ;
To lie in bed when day was come,
And leave us curtain'd chill and damp.
She slept away the dreary dark,
And rose to greet the pleasant morn ;
And sang as gaily as a lark
While busy as the flies sun-born.

And how she loved us every one ;
And dusted this and mended that,
With trills and laughs and freaks of fun,
And tender scoldings in her chat !
And then her bird, that sang as shrill
As she sang sweet ; her darling flowers
That grew there in the window-sill,
Where she would sit at work for hours.

It was not much she ever wrote ;
Her fingers had good work to do ;
Say, once a week a pretty note ;
And very long it took her too.
And little more she read, I wis ;
Just now and then a pictured sheet,
Besides those letters she would kiss
And croon for hours, they were so sweet.

She had her friends too, blithe young girls,
Who whisper'd, babbled, laugh'd, caress'd,
And romp'd and danced with dancing curls,
And gave our life a joyous zest.

JAMES THOMSON

But with this dullard, glum and sour,
Not one of all his fellow-men
Has ever pass'd a social hour ;
We might be in some wild beast's den.

This long tirade aroused the bed,
Who spoke in deep and ponderous bass,
Befitting that calm life he led,
As if firm-rooted in his place :
In broad majestic bulk alone,
As in thrice venerable age,
He stood at once the royal throne,
The monarch, the experienced sage :

I know what is and what has been ;
Not anything to me comes strange,
Who in so many years have seen
And lived through every kind of change.
I know when men are good or bad,
When well or ill, he slowly said ;
When sad or glad, when sane or mad,
And when they sleep alive or dead.

At this last word of solemn lore
A tremor circled through the gloom,
As if a crash upon the floor
Had jarr'd and shaken all the room :
For nearly all the listening things
Were old and worn, and knew what curse
Of violent change death often brings,
From good to bad, from bad to worse ;

They get to know each other well,
To feel at home and settled down ;
Death bursts among them like a shell,
And strews them over all the town.

JAMES THOMSON

The bed went on, This man who lies
Upon me now is stark and cold ;
He will not any more arise,
And do the things he did of old.

But we shall have short peace or rest ;
For soon up here will come a rout,
And nail him in a queer long chest,
And carry him like luggage out.
They will be muffled all in black,
And whisper much, and sigh and weep :
But he will never more come back,
And some one else in me must sleep.

Thereon a little phial shrill'd,
Here empty on the chair I lie :
I heard one say, as I was fill'd,
With half of this a man would die.
The man there drank me with slow breath,
And murmur'd, Thus ends barren strife :
O sweeter, thou cold wine of death,
Than ever sweet warm wine of life !

One of my cousins long ago,
A little thing, the mirror said,
Was carried to a couch to show,
Whether a man was really dead.
Two great improvements marked the case :
He did not blur her with his breath,
His many-wrinkled, twitching face
Was smooth old ivory : verdict, Death.—

It lay, the lowest thing there, lull'd
Sweet-sleep-like in corruption's truce ;
The form whose purpose was annull'd,
While all the other shapes meant use.

JAMES THOMSON

It lay, the *he* become now *it*,
Unconscious of the deep disgrace,
Unanxious how its parts might flit
Through what new forms in time and space.

It lay and preach'd, as dumb things do,
More powerfully than tongues can prate ;
Though life be torture through and through,
Man is but weak to plain of fate :
The drear path crawls on drearier still
To wounded feet and hopeless breast ?
Well, he can lie down when he will,
And straight all ends in endless rest.

And while the black night nothing saw,
And till the cold morn came at last,
That old bed held the room in awe
With tales of its experience vast.
It thrill'd the gloom ; it told such tales
Of human sorrows and delights,
Of fever moans and infant wails,
Of births and deaths and bridal nights.

391.

William Blake

HE came to the desert of London town
Grey miles long ;
He wander'd up and he wander'd down,
Singing a quiet song.

He came to the desert of London town,
Mirk miles broad ;
He wander'd up and he wander'd down,
Ever alone with God.

JAMES THOMSON

There were thousands and thousands of human kind
In this desert of brick and stone :
But some were deaf and some were blind,
And he was there alone.

At length the good hour came ; he died
As he had lived, alone :
He was not miss'd from the desert wide,—
Perhaps he was found at the Throne.

THE HON. RODEN BERKELEY
WRIOTHESLEY NOEL

1834-1894

392. *A Lady to a Lover*

IF the sun low down in the West, my friend,
Fill'd earth with fiery wine,
If a hand were on my breast, my friend,
And lips were laid on mine,
And we together
In summer weather
Lay in a leafy dell,
Could the weariness,
Or the long distress,
Or any fiends from hell,
Wipe out that hour of rest, my friend,
And the rapture all divine ?
Then if thy blade were buried deep
Within this heart of mine,
From the warm whiteness fierce would leap
My fiery blood like wine ;
Earth all about the West, my friend,
After orgies of rich wine,
Wan lying in the sun's decline,
And I in arms of thine, my friend,
In dying arms of thine !

The Swimmer

WHO would linger idle,
 Dallying would lie,
 When wind and wave, a bridal
 Celebrating, fly?
 Let him plunge among them,
 Who hath woo'd enough,
 Flirted with them, sung them!
 In the salt sea-trough
 He may win them, onward
 On a buoyant crest,
 Far to seaward, sunward,
 Ocean-borne to rest!
 Wild wind will sing over him,
 And the free foam cover him,
 Swimming seaward, sunward,
 On a blithe sea-breast!
 On a blithe sea-bosom
 Swims another too,
 Swims a live sea-blossom,
 A grey-wing'd seamew!
 Grape-green all the waves are,
 By whose hurrying line
 Half of ships and caves are
 Buried under brine;
 Supple, shifting ranges
 Lucent at the crest,
 With pearly surface-changes
 Never laid to rest:
 Now a dripping gunwale
 Momently he sees,
 Now a fuming funnel,
 Or red flag in the breeze.

THE HON. RODEN NOEL

Arms flung open wide,
Lip the laughing sea :
For playfellow, for bride,
Claim her impetuously !

394. *The Water-Nymph and the Boy*

I FLUNG me round him,
I drew him under ;
I clung, I drown'd him,
My own white wonder ! . . .

Father and mother,
Weeping and wild,
Came to the forest,
Calling the child,
Came from the palace,
Down to the pool,
Calling my darling,
My beautiful !
Under the water,
Cold and so pale !
Could it be love made
Beauty to fail ?

Ah me for mortals !
In a few moons,
If I had left him,
After some Junes
He would have faded,
Faded away,
He, the young monarch, whom
All would obey,

THE HON. RODEN NOEL

Fairer than day ;
Alien to springtime,
Joyless and gray,
He would have faded,
Faded away,
Moving a mockery,
Scorn'd of the day !
Now I have taken him
All in his prime,
Saved from slow poisoning
Pitiless Time,
Fill'd with his happiness,
One with the prime,
Saved from the cruel
Dishonour of Time.
Laid him, my beautiful,
Laid him to rest,
Loving, adorable,
Softly to rest,
Here in my crystalline,
Here in my breast !

395.

Vale!

O TENDER dove, sweet circling in the blue,
Whom now a delicate cloud receives from view,
A cool, soft, delicate cloud, we name dim Death !
O pure white lamb-lily, inhaling breath
From spiritual ether among bowers
Of evergreen in the ever-living flowers
Yonder aloft upon the airy height,
Mine eyes may scarce arrive at thy still light !

THE HON. RODEN NOEL

Wandering ever higher, O, farewell !
Wilt thou the dear God tell
We loved thee well,
While He would lend thee ? Why may we not follow ?
Do thou remember us in our dim hollow !
Farewell, love ! O, farewell, farewell, farewell !
We wave to thee, as when of old
Thou waved, and we waved, heart of gold !
Parting for a little while ?
And is all parting only for a while ?
O faint perfume from realms beyond the sky !
Waft of a low celestial melody !
O pure live water from our earthly well,
Whom Love changed to a heavenly oenamel,
The while he kiss'd the bowl with longing lip,
And drew the soul therein to fellowship !
Shimmer of white wings, ere ye vanish !
Glimmer of white robes, are ye banish,
With your full glory, mortal eyes
From paradise !
So far, so far,
Little star !
Unless thine own dear happiness it mar,
Remember us in our low dell,
Who love thee well !
Farewell !

396.

The Old

THEY are waiting on the shore
For the bark to take them home :
They will toil and grieve no more ;
The hour for release hath come.

THE HON. RODEN NOEL

All their long life lies behind
Like a dimly blending dream :
There is nothing left to bind
To the realms that only seem.

They are waiting for the boat ;
There is nothing left to do :
What was near them grows remote,
Happy silence falls like dew ;
Now the shadowy bark is come,
And the weary may go home.

By still water they would rest
In the shadow of the tree :
After battle sleep is best,
After noise, tranquillity.

GEORGE LOUIS PALMELLA BUSSON

DU MAURIER

1834-1896

397.

Music

(AFTER SULLY PRUDHOMME)

KINDLY watcher by my bed, lift no voice in prayer,
Waste not any words on me when the hour is nigh,
Let a stream of melody but flow from some sweet player,
And meekly will I lay my head and fold my hands to die.

Sick I am of idle words, past all reconciling,
Words that weary and perplex and pander and conceal,
Wake the sounds that cannot lie, for all their sweet be-
guiling ;
The language one need fathom not, but only hear and feel.

GEORGE DU MAURIER

Let them roll once more to me, and ripple in my hearing,
Like waves upon a lonely beach where no craft anchoreth :
That I may steep my soul therein, and craving naught,
nor feeling,
Drift on through slumber to a dream, and through a
dream to death.

WILLIAM MORRIS

1834-1899

398.

Shameful Death

THERE were four of us about that bed ;
The mass-priest knelt at the side,
I and his mother stood at the head,
Over his feet lay the bride ;
We were quite sure that he was dead,
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,
He did not die in the day,
But in the morning twilight
His spirit pass'd away,
When neither sun nor moon was bright,
And the trees were merely grey.

He was not slain with the sword,
Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,
Yet spoke he never a word
After he came in here ;
I cut away the cord
From the neck of my brother dear.

WILLIAM MORRIS

He did not strike one blow,
For the recreants came behind,
In the place where the hornbeams grow,
A path right hard to find,
For the hornbeam boughs swing so,
That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,
When his arms were pinion'd fast,
Sir John the Knight of the Fen,
Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,
With knights threescore and ten,
Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,
And my hair is all turn'd grey,
But I met Sir John of the Fen,
Long ago on a summer day,
And am glad to think of the moment when
I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,
And my strength is mostly pass'd,
But long ago I and my men,
When the sky was overcast,
And the smoke roll'd over the reeds of the fen,
Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, knights all of you,
I pray you pray for Sir Hugh,
A good knight and a true,
And for Alice, his wife, pray too.

399. *The Sailing of the Sword*

ACROSS the empty garden-beds,
When the Sword went out to sea,
 I scarcely saw my sisters' heads
 Bow'd each beside a tree.
 I could not see the castle leads,
When the Sword went out to sea.

Alicia wore a scarlet gown,
When the Sword went out to sea,
 But Ursula's was russet brown :
 For the mist we could not see
 The scarlet roofs of the good town,
When the Sword went out to sea.

Green holly in Alicia's hand,
When the Sword went out to sea,
 With sere oak-leaves did Ursula stand ;
 O ! yet alas for me !
 I did but bear a peel'd white wand,
When the Sword went out to sea.

O, russet brown and scarlet bright,
When the Sword went out to sea,
 My sisters wore ; I wore but white ;
 Red, brown, and white, are three ;
 Three damozels ; each had a knight,
When the Sword went out to sea.

WILLIAM MORRIS

Sir Robert shouted loud, and said,
When the Sword went out to sea,
'Alicia, while I see thy head,
What shall I bring for thee?'
'O, my sweet Lord, a ruby red:'
The Sword went out to sea.

Sir Miles said, while the sails hung down,
When the Sword went out to sea,
'Oh, Ursula! while I see the town,
What shall I bring for thee?'
'Dear knight, bring back a falcon brown:'
The Sword went out to sea.

But my Roland, no word he said
When the Sword went out to sea;
But only turn'd away his head,—
A quick shriek came from me:
'Come back, dear lord, to your white maid!'—
The Sword went out to sea.

The hot sun bit the garden-beds,
When the Sword came back from sea;
Beneath an apple-tree our heads
Stretch'd out toward the sea;
Grey gleam'd the thirsty castle-leads,
When the Sword came back from sea.

Lord Robert brought a ruby red,
When the Sword came back from sea;
He kiss'd Alicia on the head:
'I am come back to thee;
'Tis time, sweet love, that we were wed,
Now the Sword is back from sea!'

WILLIAM MORRIS

Sir Miles he bore a falcon brown,
When the Sword came back from sea ;
His arms went round tall Ursula's gown,—
'What joy, O love, but thee ?
Let us be wed in the good town,
Now the Sword is back from sea !'

My heart grew sick, no more afraid,
When the Sword came back from sea ;
Upon the deck a tall white maid
Sat on Lord Roland's knee ;
His chin was press'd upon her head,
When the Sword came back from sea !

400. *The Eve of Crecy*

GOLD on her head, and gold on her feet,
And gold where the hems of her kirtle meet,
And a golden girdle round my sweet ;—
Ab ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Margaret's maids are fair to see,
Freshly dress'd and pleasantly ;
Margaret's hair falls down to her knee ;—
Ab ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
I would kiss the place where the gold hems meet,
And the golden girdle round my sweet—
Ab ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Ah me ! I have never touch'd her hand,
When the arriere-ban goes through the land,
Six basnets under my pennon stand ;—
Ab ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

WILLIAM MORRIS

And many an one grins under his hood :
' Sir Lambert de Bois, with all his men good,
Has neither food nor firewood ;'—

Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
And the golden girdle of my sweet,
And thereabouts where the gold hems meet ;

Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Yet even now it is good to think,
While my few poor varlets grumble and drink
In my desolate hall, where the fires sink,—

Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,
In glory of gold and glory of hair,
And glory of glorious face most fair ;—

Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Likewise to-night I make good cheer,
Because this battle draweth near :
For what have I to lose or fear ?—

Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

For, look you, my horse is good to prance
A right fair measure in this war-dance,
Before the eyes of Philip of France ;—

Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

And sometime it may hap, perdie,
While my new towers stand up three and three,
And my hall gets painted fair to see—

Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite—

WILLIAM MORRIS

That folks may say : ' Times change, by the rood !
For Lambert, banneret of the wood,
Has heaps of food and firewood ;—

Ab ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite ;—

' And wonderful eyes, too, under the hood
Of a damsel of right noble blood : '
St. Ives, for Lambert of the wood !—

Ab ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

401. *The Judgement of God*

' **S**WERVE to the left, son Roger,' he said,
' When you catch his eyes through the helmet-slit,
Swerve to the left, then out at his head,
And the Lord God give you joy of it ! '

The blue owls on my father's hood
Were a little dimm'd as I turn'd away ;
This giving up of blood for blood
Will finish here somehow to-day.

So—when I walk'd out from the tent,
Their howling almost blinded me ;
Yet for all that I was not bent
By any shame. Hard by, the sea

Made a noise like the aspens where
We did that wrong ; but now the place
Is very pleasant, and the air
Blows cool on any passer's face.

WILLIAM MORRIS

And all the wrong is gather'd now
Into the circle of these lists—
Yea, howl out, butchers! tell me how
His hands were cut off at the wrists;

And how Lord Roger bore his face
A league above his spear-point, high
Above the owls, to that strong place
Among the waters—yea, yea, cry:

'What a brave champion we have got!
Sir Oliver, the flower of all
The Hainault knights.' The day being hot,
He sat beneath a broad white pall,

White linen over all his steel;
What a good knight he look'd! his sword
Laid thwart his knees; he liked to feel
Its steadfast edge clear as his word.

And he look'd solemn: how his love
Smiled whitely on him, sick with fear!
How all the ladies up above
Twisted their pretty hands! so near

The fighting was—Ellayne! Ellayne!
They cannot love like you can, who
Would burn your hands off, if that pain
Could win a kiss—am I not true

To you for ever? therefore I
Do not fear death or anything;
If I should limp home wounded, why,
While I lay sick you would but sing,

WILLIAM MORRIS

And soothe me into quiet sleep.
If they spat on the recreant knight,
Threw stones at him, and cursed him deep,
Why then—what then? your hand would light

So gently on his drawn-up face,
And you would kiss him, and in soft
Cool scented clothes would lap him, pace
The quiet room and weep oft,—oft

Would turn and smile, and brush his cheek
With your sweet chin and mouth; and in
The order'd garden you would seek
The biggest roses—any sin.

And these say: 'No more now my knight,
Or God's knight any longer'—you
Being than they so much more white,
So much more pure and good and true,

Will cling to me for ever—There,
Is not that wrong turn'd right at last
Through all these years, and I wash'd clean?
Say, yea, Ellayne; the time is past,

Since on that Christmas-day last year
Up to your feet the fire crept,
And the smoke through the brown leaves sere
Blinded your dear eyes that you wept;

Was it not I that caught you then,
And kiss'd you on the saddle-bow?
Did not the blue owl mark the men
Whose spears stood like the corn a-row?

WILLIAM MORRIS

This Oliver is a right good knight,
And must needs beat me, as I fear,
Unless I catch him in the fight,
My father's crafty way—John, here!

Bring up the men from the south gate,
To help me if I fall or win,
For even if I beat, their hate
Will grow to more than this mere grin.

402.

Summer Dawn

PRAY but one prayer for me 'twixt thy closed lips,
Think but one thought of me up in the stars.
The summer night waneth, the morning light slips
Faint and gray 'twixt the leaves of the aspen, betwixt
the cloud-bars,
That are patiently waiting there for the dawn :
Patient and colourless, though Heaven's gold
Waits to float through them along with the sun.
Far out in the meadows, above the young corn,
The heavy elms wait, and restless and cold
The uneasy wind rises ; the roses are dun ;
Through the long twilight they pray for the dawn
Round the lone house in the midst of the corn.
Speak but one word to me over the corn,
Over the tender, bow'd locks of the corn.

i

LOVE is enough : though the World be a-waning,
 And the woods have no voice but the voice of com-
 plaining,
 Though the sky be too dark for dim eyes to discover
 The gold-cups and daisies fair blooming thereunder,
 Though the hills be held shadows, and the sea a dark
 wonder,
 And this day draw a veil over all deeds pass'd over,
 Yet their hands shall not tremble, their feet shall not
 falter ;
 The void shall not weary, the fear shall not alter
 These lips and these eyes of the loved and the lover.

ii

LOVE is enough : ho ye who seek saving,
 Go no further ; come hither ! there have been who
 have found it,
 And these know the House of Fulfilment of Craving ;
 These know the Cup with the roses around it ;
 These know the World's wound and the balm that
 hath bound it :
 Cry out, the World heedeth not, ' Love, lead us home ! '

He leadeth, He hearkeneth, He cometh to you-ward ;
 Set your faces as steel to the fears that assemble
 Round his goad for the faint, and his scourge for the
 froward :
 Lo his lips, how with tales of last kisses they tremble !
 Lo his eyes of all sorrow that may not dissemble !
 Cry out, for he heedeth, ' O Love, lead us home ! '

WILLIAM MORRIS

O hearken the words of his voice of compassion :

‘ Come cling round about me, ye faithful who sicken
Of the weary unrest and the world’s passing fashion !
As the rain in mid-morning your troubles shall thicken,
But surely within you some Godhead doth quicken,
As ye cry to me heeding and leading you home.

‘ Come—pain ye shall have, and be blind to the ending !
Come—fear ye shall have, mid the sky’s overcasting !
Come—change ye shall have, for far are ye wending !
Come—no crown ye shall have for your thirst and your
fasting,
But the kiss’d lips of Love and fair life everlasting !
Cry out, for one heedeth, who leadeth you home ! ’

Is he gone ? was he with us ?—ho ye who seek saving,
Go no further ; come hither ! for have we not found it ?
Here is the House of Fulfilment of Craving ;
Here is the Cup with the roses around it ;
The World’s wound well healed, and the balm that
hath bound it :
Cry out ! for he heedeth, fair Love that led home.

404. *Inscription for an Old Bed*

THE wind’s on the wold
And the night is a-cold,
And Thames runs chill
’Twixt mead and hill.
But kind and dear
Is the old house here
And my heart is warm
Midst winter’s harm.
Rest then and rest,
And think of the best

WILLIAM MORRIS

'Twixt summer and spring,
When all birds sing
In the town of the tree,
And ye lie in me
And scarce dare move,
Lest the earth and its love
Should fade away
Ere the full of the day.
I am old and have seen
Many things that have been ;
Both grief and peace
And wane and increase.
No tale I tell
Of ill or well,
But this I say :
Night treadeth on day,
And for worst or best
Right good is rest.

405. *The Message of the March Wind*

FAIR now is the spring-tide, now earth lies beholding
With the eyes of a lover, the face of the sun ;
Long lasteth the daylight, and hope is enfolding
The green-growing acres with increase begun.

Now sweet, sweet it is thro' the land to be straying,
'Mid the birds and the blossoms and the beasts of the field ;
Love mingles with love, and no evil is weighing
On thy heart or mine, where all sorrow is heal'd.

From township to township, o'er down and by tillage,
Far, far have we wander'd and long was the day ;
But now cometh eve at the end of the village,
Where over the grey wall the church riseth grey.

WILLIAM MORRIS

There is wind in the twilight; in the white road
before us

The straw from the ox-yard is blowing about;
The moon's rim is rising, a star glitters o'er us,
And the vane on the spire-top is swinging in doubt.

Down there dips the highway, toward the bridge crossing
over

The brook that runs on to the Thames and the sea.
Draw closer, my sweet, we are lover and lover;
This eve art thou given to gladness and me.

Shall we be glad always? Come closer and hearken:
Three fields further on, as they told me down there,
When the young moon has set, if the March sky should
darken,
We might see from the hill-top the great city's glare.

Hark, the wind in the elm-boughs! from London it
bloweth,

And telleth of gold, and of hope and unrest;
Of power that helps not; of wisdom that knoweth,
But teacheth not aught of the worst and the best.

Of the rich men it telleth, and strange is the story
How they have and they hanker, and grip far and wide;
And they live and they die, and the earth and its glory
Has been but a burden they scarce might abide.

Hark! the March wind again of a people is telling;
Of the life that they live there, so haggard and grim,
That if we and our love amidst them had been dwelling,
My fondness had falter'd, thy beauty grown dim.

WILLIAM MORRIS

This land we have loved in our love and our leisure,
For them hangs in heaven, high out of their reach ;
The wide hills o'er the sea-plain for them have no pleasure,
The grey homes of their fathers no story to teach.

The singers have sung and the builders have builded,
The painters have fashioned their tales of delight ;
For what and for whom hath the world's book been gilded,
When all is for these but the blackness of night ?

How long, and for what is their patience abiding ?
How long and how oft shall their story be told,
While the hope that none seeketh in darkness is hiding,
And in grief and in sorrow the world groweth old ?

Come back to the inn, love, and the lights and the fire,
And the fiddler's old tune and the shuffling of feet ;
For there in a while shall be rest and desire,
And there shall the morrow's uprising be sweet.

Yet, love, as we wend, the wind bloweth behind us,
And beareth the last tale it telleth to-night,
How here in the spring-tide the message shall find us ;
For the hope that none seeketh is coming to light.

Like the seed of midwinter, unheeded, unperish'd,
Like the autumn-sown wheat 'neath the snow lying green,
Like the love that o'ertook us, unawares and uncherish'd,
Like the babe 'neath thy girdle that groweth unseen ;

So the hope of the people now buddeth and groweth,
Rest fadeth before it, and blindness and fear ;
It biddeth us learn all the wisdom it knoweth ;
It hath found us and held us, and biddeth us hear :

WILLIAM MORRIS

For it beareth the message : ' Rise up on the morrow,
And go on thy ways toward the doubt and the strife ;
Join hope to our hope and blend sorrow with sorrow,
And seek for men's love in the short days of life.'

But lo, the old inn, and the lights, and the fire,
And the fiddler's old tune and the shuffling of feet ;
Soon for us shall be quiet and rest and desire,
And to-morrow's uprising to deeds shall be sweet.

JOHN LEICESTER WARREN

LORD DE TABLEY

1835-1895

406.

Nuptial Song

SIGH, heart, and break not ; rest, lark, and wake not !
Day I hear coming to draw my Love away.
As mere-waves whisper, and clouds grow crisper,
Ah, like a rose he will waken up with day !

In moon-light lonely, he is my Love only,
I share with none when Luna rides in grey.
As dawn-beams quicken, my rivals thicken,
The light and deed and turmoil of the day.

To watch my sleeper to me is sweeter,
Than any waking words my Love can say ;
In dream he finds me and closer winds me !
Let him rest by me a little more and stay.

Ah, mine eyes, close not : and, tho' he knows not,
My lips, on his be tender while you may ;
Ere leaves are shaken, and ring-doves waken,
And infant buds begin to scent new day.

LORD DE TABLEY

Fair Darkness, measure thine hours, as treasure
Shed each one slowly from thine urn, I pray ;
Hoard in and cover each from my lover ;
I cannot lose him yet ; dear night, delay !

Each moment dearer, true-love lie nearer,
My hair shall blind thee lest thou see the ray ;
My locks encumber thine ears in slumber,
Lest any bird dare give thee note of day.

He rests so calmly ; we lie so warmly ;
Hand within hand, as children after play ;—
In shafted amber on roof and chamber
Dawn enters ; my Love wakens ; here is day.

407.

Ode

SIRE of the rising day,
Lord of the faded ray,
King of sweet ways of morn or daylight done.
Ruler of cloud and sleep,
Whose tread is on the deep,
Whose feet are red in glory like the sun.
Whose hand binds up the winds as in a sheaf,
Whose shadow makes them tremble like a leaf.

Lordship and Fear are thine,
Upon whose brow divine
The diadem of pale eternal fire
Burns over eyes that fear
No stain of earthly tear,
Nor soften for a yearning world's desire.
The treasure of strong thunder at thy hand
Waits like an eagle watching thy command.

LORD DE TABLEY

Thee rosy beams enshroud ;
Rich airs and amber cloud
Reach the calm golden spaces of thy hall.
The floods awake with noise
Churning the deep, whose voice
Thou heedest not, altho' the storm-wind call
And break beneath the swollen vapour-bands,
In wild rains wearing at the sodden lands.

Can then our weak-wing'd prayer
Ascend and touch thee there,
Sailing between the gleaming gates of heaven ?
Can our wail climb and smite
Thy council-seat of light ?
Where for a garment is the moon-ray given
To clothe thy shoulders, and blue star-dust strown
Bickers about the borders of thy throne.

Ah, Lord, who may withstand
One reaching of thy hand,
Who from thy fury fence his house secure ?
What citadel is there,
In lifted hand or prayer,
If all the radiant heaven may not endure
The scathing of thine anger, keen to blight
The strong stars rolling in their fields of light ?

Arise and take thine ease,
For thou art Lord ; and these
Are but as sprinkled dust before thy power.
Art thou the less divine,
If they lift hands and whine,
Or less eternal since they crawl an hour ?
After a little pain to fold their hands,
And perish like the beasts that till'd their lands.

LORD DE TABLEY

They dug their field and died,
Believed thee or denied ;
Cursed at thy name, or fed thy shrine with fume.
Loved somewhat, hated more,
Hoarded, grew stiff and sore,
Gat sturdy sons to labour in their room ;
Became as alien faces in their land ;
Died, worn and done with as a waste of sand.

Strong are alone the dead.
They need not bow the head,
Or reach one hand in ineffectual prayer.
Safe in their iron sleep
What wrong shall make them weep,
What sting of human anguish reach them there ?
They are gone safe beyond the strong one's reign,
Who shall decree against them any pain ?

Will they entreat in tears
The inexorable years
To sprinkle trouble gently on their head ?
Safe in their house of grass,
Eternity may pass,
And be to these an instant in its tread,
Calm as an autumn night, brief as the song
Of the wood dove. The dead alone are strong.

Love is not there, nor Hate,
Weak slaves of feebler Fate,
Their lord is nothing here, his reign is done.
Here side by side can lie
Glory and Infamy,
Hero and herdsman in red earth are one.
Their day is over : sad they silence keep,
Abash'd before the perfect crowning sleep.

LORD DE TABLEY

408.

Chorus from 'Medea'

SWEET are the ways of death to weary feet,
Calm are the shades of men.
The phantom fears no tyrant in his seat,
The slave is master then.

Love is abolish'd ; well, that this is so ;
We knew him best as Pain.
The gods are all cast out, and let them go !
Who ever found them gain ?

Ready to hurt and slow to succour these ;
So, while thou breathest, pray.
But in the sepulchre all flesh has peace ;
Their hand is put away.

409.

Fortune's Wheel

I HAD a true-love, none so dear,
And a friend both leal and tried.
I had a cask of good old beer,
And a gallant horse to ride.

A little while did Fortune smile
On him and her and me.
We sang along the road of life
Like birds upon a tree.

My lady fell to shame and hell,
And with her took my friend.
My cask ran sour, my horse went lame,—
So alone in the cold I end.

LORD DE TABLEY

410. *The Two Old Kings*

IN ruling well what guerdon ? Life runs low,
As yonder lamp upon the hour-glass lies,
Waning and wasted. We are great and wise,
But Love is gone ; and Silence seems to grow
Along the misty road where we must go.
From summits near the morning star's uprise
Death comes, a shadow from the northern skies,
As, when all leaves are down, there comes the snow.

Brother and King, we hold our last carouse.
One loving-cup we drain and then farewell.
The night is spent : the crystal morning ray
Calls us, as soldiers laurell'd on our brows,
To march undaunted while the clarions swell—
Heroic hearts, upon our lonely way.

RICHARD GARNETT

1835-1906

411. *Fading-Leaf and Fallen-Leaf*

SAID Fading-leaf to Fallen-leaf :—
' I toss alone on a forsaken tree,
It rocks and cracks with every gust that racks
Its straining bulk ; say, how is it with thee ? '

Said Fallen-leaf to Fading-leaf :—
' A heavy foot went by, an hour ago ;
Crushed into clay I stain the way ;
The loud wind calls me, and I cannot go.'

RICHARD GARNETT

Said Fading-leaf to Fallen-leaf :—

‘ Death lessons Life, a ghost is ever wise ;
Teach me a way to live till May
Laughs fair with fragrant lips and loving eyes.’

Said Fallen-leaf to Fading-leaf :—

‘ Hast loved fair eyes and lips of gentle breath ?
Fade then and fall—thou hast had all
That Life can give : ask somewhat now of Death.’

412.

The Fair Circassian

FORTY Viziers saw I go
Up to the Seraglio,
Burning, each and every man,
For the fair Circassian.

Ere the morn had disappear'd,
Every Vizier wore a beard ;
Ere the afternoon was born,
Every Vizier came back shorn.

‘ Let the man that woos to win
Woo with an unhairy chin : ’
Thus she said, and as she bid
Each devoted Vizier did.

From the beards a cord she made,
Loop'd it to the balustrade,
Glided down and went away
To her own Circassia.

RICHARD GARNETT

When the Sultan heard, wax'd he
Somewhat wroth, and presently
In the noose themselves did lend
Every Vizier did suspend.

Sages all, this rhyme who read,
Of your beards take prudent heed,
And beware the wily plans
Of the fair Circassians.

413.

Epigram

AMID all Triads let it be confest
The Chase, the Feast, the Song compose the best ;
So aptly link'd a mutual aid to lend
To life's enjoyment, their concurrent end.
The chase provides what doth to feasts belong ;
The banquet prompts and animates the song ;
The song, resounding with a twofold grace,
Cheers the repast, and celebrates the chase.

414.

Nocturne

KEEN winds of cloud and vaporous drift
Disrobe yon star, as ghosts that lift
A snowy curtain from its place,
To scan a pillow'd beauty's face.

They see her slumbering splendours lie
Bedded on blue unfathom'd sky.
And swoon for love and deep delight,
And stillness falls on all the night.

RICHARD GARNETT

415.

Sonnet—Age

I WILL not rail or grieve when torpid eld
Frosts the slow-journeying blood, for I shall see
The lovelier leaves hang yellow on the tree,
The nimbler brooks in icy fetters held.
Methinks the aged eye that first beheld
Pale Autumn in her waning pageantry,
Then knew himself, dear Nature, child of thee,
Marking the common doom, that all compell'd.

No kindred we to her beloved broods,
If, dying these, we draw a selfish breath ;
But one path travel all their multitudes,
And none dispute the solemn Voice that saith :
Sun to thy setting ; to your autumn, woods ;
Stream to thy sea ; and man unto thy death.

SIR ALFRED COMYN LYALL

1835-1911

416.

Studies at Delhi

i. The Hindu Ascetic

HERE as I sit by the Jumna bank,
Watching the flow of the sacred stream,
Pass me the legions, rank on rank,
And the cannon roar, and the bayonets gleam.

Is it a god or a king that comes ?
Both are evil, and both are strong ;
With women and worshipping, dancing and drums,
Carry your gods and your kings along.

SIR ALFRED COMYN LYALL

Fanciful shapes of a plastic earth,
These are the visions that weary the eye ;
These I may 'scape by a luckier birth,
Musing, and fasting, and hoping to die.

When shall these phantoms flicker away
Like the smoke of the guns on the wind-swept hill,
Like the sounds and colours of yesterday :
And the soul have rest, and the air be still ?

ii. Badminton

Hardly a shot from the gate we storm'd,
Under the Moree battlement's shade ;
Close to the glacis our game was form'd,
There had the fight been, and there we play'd.

Lightly the demoiselles titter'd and leapt,
Merrily caper'd the players all ;
North, was the garden where Nicholson slept,
South, was the sweep of a batter'd wall.

Near me a Musalmán, civil and mild,
Watch'd as the shuttlecocks rose and fell ;
And he said, as he counted his beads and smiled,
' God smite their souls to the depths of hell.'

Primroses

I

LATEST, earliest, of the year,
 Primroses that still were here,
 Snugly nestling round the boles
 Of the cut down chestnut poles,
 When December's tottering tread
 Rustled 'mong the deep leaves dead,
 And with confident young faces
 Peep'd from out the shelter'd places
 When pale January lay
 In its cradle day by day,
 Dead or living, hard to say ;
 Now that mid-March blows and blusters,
 Out you steal in tufts and clusters,
 Making leafless lane and wood
 Vernal with your hardihood.
 Other lovely things are rare,
 You are prodigal as fair.
 First you come by ones, and ones,
 Lastly in battalions ;
 Skirmish along hedge and bank,
 Turn old Winter's wavering flank ;
 Round his flying footsteps hover,
 Seize on hollow, ridge, and cover,
 Leave nor slope nor hill unharried,
 Till, his snowy trenches carried,
 O'er his sepulchre you laugh,
 Winter's joyous epitaph.

ALFRED AUSTIN

II

This, too, be your glory great,
Primroses, you do not wait,
As the other flowers do,
For the Spring to smile on you ;
But with coming are content,
Asking no encouragement.
Ere the hardy crocus cleaves
Sunny borders 'neath the eaves ;
Ere the thrush his song rehearse,
Sweeter than all poets' verse ;
Ere the early bleating lambs
Cling like shadows to their dams ;
Ere the blackthorn breaks to white,
Snowy-hooded anchorite ;
Out from every hedge you look,
You are bright by every brook,
Wearing for your sole defence
Fearlessness of innocence.
While the daffodils still waver,
Ere the jonquil gets its savour ;
While the linnets yet but pair,
You are fledged, and everywhere.
Nought can daunt you, nought distress,
Neither cold nor sunlessness.
You, when Lent sleet flies apace,
Look the tempest in the face
As descend the flakes more slow,
From your eyelids shake the snow,
And, when all the clouds have flown,
Meet the sun's smile with your own.
Nothing ever makes you less
Gracious to ungraciousness.
March may bluster up and down,

ALFRED AUSTIN

Pettish April sulk and frown ;
Closer to their skirts you cling,
Coaxing Winter to be Spring.

III

Then, when your sweet task is done,
And the wild-flowers, one by one,
Here, there, everywhere do blow,
Primroses, you haste to go,
Satisfied with what you bring,
Fading morning-stars of Spring.
You have brighten'd doubtful days,
You have sweeten'd long delays,
Fooling our enchanted reason
To miscalculate the season.
But when doubt and fear are fled,
When the kine leave wintry shed,
And 'mong grasses green and tall
Find their fodder, make their stall ;
When the wintering swallow flies
Homeward back from southern skies,
To the dear old cottage thatch
Where it loves to build and hatch,
That its young may understand,
Nor forget, this English land ;
When the cuckoo, mocking rover,
Laughs that April loves are over ;
When the hawthorn, all ablow,
Mimics the defeated snow ;
Then you give one last look round,
Stir the sleepers underground,
Call the champion to awake,
Tell the speedwell courage take,
Bid the eyebright have no fear,

ALFRED AUSTIN

Whisper in the bluebell's ear
Time has come for it to flood
With its blue waves all the wood,
Mind the stitchwort of its pledge
To replace you in the hedge,
Bid the ladysmocks good-bye,
Close your bonnie lids and die ;
And, without one look of blame,
Go as gently as you came.

418.

The Lover's Song

WHEN Winter hoar no longer holds
The young year in his gripe,
And bleating voices fill the folds,
And blackbirds pair and pipe ;
Then coax the maiden where the sap
Awakes the woodlands drear,
And pour sweet wildflowers in her lap,
And sweet words in her ear.
For Springtime is the season, sure,
Since Love's game first was play'd,
When tender thoughts began to lure
The heart of April maid,
Of maid,
The heart of April maid.

When June is wreath'd with wilding rose,
And all the buds are blown,
And O, 'tis joy to dream and doze
In meadows newly mown ;
Then take her where the graylings leap,
And where the dabchick dives,
Or where the bees in clover reap
The harvest for their hives.

ALFRED AUSTIN

419.

Love's Trinity

SOUL, heart, and body, we thus singly name,
Are not in love divisible and distinct,
But each with each inseparably link'd.
One is not honour, and the other shame,
But burn as closely fused as fuel, heat, and flame.

They do not love who give the body and keep
The heart ungiven; nor they who yield the soul,
And guard the body. Love doth give the whole;
Its range being high as heaven, as ocean deep,
Wide as the realms of air or planet's curving sweep.

THOMAS ASHE

1836-1889

420. *Meet we no Angels, 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 stream'd upon her;
And with white hand she touch'd a bough;
She did it that great honour:—
What! meet no angels, Pansie?

O 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?

421.

The City Clerk

'TIS strange how my head runs on! 'tis a puzzle to
understand
Such fancies stirring in me, for a whiff of hay in the
Strand!

I see the old farmhouse, and garden wall, and the bees;
I see the mowers stretch'd, with their bottles, under the
trees;

I hear the little brook a-ripple down in the dell;
I hear the old-folk croon—'Our son, he is doing well!'

O yes, I am doing well; but I'd be again, for a day,
A simple farmer's lad, among the girls in the hay.

422.

A Machine Hand

MY little milliner has slipp'd
The doctors, with their drugs and ways:
Her years were only twenty-two,
Though long enough her working-days.

At eight she went, through wet or snow,
Nor dallied for the sun to shine;
And walk'd an hour to work, and home
Content if she was in by nine.

She had a little gloomy room,
Up stair on stair, within the roof;
Where hung her pictures on the wall,
Wherever it was weather-proof.

THOMAS ASHE

She held her head erect and proud,
Nor ask'd of man or woman aid ;
And struggled, till the last ; and died
But of the parish pit afraid.

Jennie, lie still ! The hair you loved
You wraps, unclipp'd, if you but knew !
We by a quiet graveyard wall,
For love and pity, buried you !

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

1836-1907

423.

Prescience

THE new moon hung in the sky,
The sun was low in the west,
And my betroth'd and I
In the churchyard paused to rest—
Happy maiden and lover,
Dreaming the old dream over :
The light winds wander'd by,
And robins chirp'd from the nest.

And lo ! in the meadow-sweet
Was the grave of a little child,
With a crumbling stone at the feet,
And the ivy running wild—
Tangled ivy and clover
Folding it over and over :
Close to my sweetheart's feet
Was the little mound up-piled.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

Stricken with nameless fears
She shrank and clung to me,
And her eyes were fill'd with tears
For a sorrow I did not see :
Lightly the winds were blowing,
Softly her tears were flowing—
Tears for the unknown years,
And a sorrow that was to be !

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

b. 1836

424.

Coleridge

I SEE thee pine like her in golden story
Who, in her prison, woke and saw, one day,
The gates thrown open—saw the sunbeams play,
With only a web 'tween her and summer's glory ;
Who, when that web—so frail, so transitory,
It broke before her breath—had fallen away,
Saw other webs and others rise for aye,
Which kept her prisoned till her hair was hoary.
Those songs half-sung that yet were all divine—
That woke Romance, the queen, to reign afresh—
Had been but preludes from that lyre of thine,
Could thy rare spirit's wings have pierced the mesh
Spun by the wizard who compels the flesh,
But lets the poet see how heav'n can shine.

425.

Mother Carey's Chicken

I CANNOT brook thy gaze, beloved bird ;
That sorrow is more than human in thine eye ;
Too deeply, brother, is my spirit stirr'd
To see thee here, beneath the landmen's sky,

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

Coop'd in a cage with food thou canst not eat,
Thy 'snow-flake' soil'd, and soil'd those conquering feet
That walk'd the billows, while thy '*sweet-sweet-sweet*'
Proclaim'd the tempest nigh.

Bird whom I welcomed while the sailors cursed,
Friend whom I bless'd wherever keels may roam,
Prince of my childish dreams, whom mermaids nursed
In purple of billows—silver of ocean-foam,
Abash'd I stand before the mighty grief
That quells all other : Sorrow's King and Chief,
Who rides the wind and holds the sea in fief,
Then finds a cage for home !

From out thy jail thou seest yon heath and woods,
But canst thou hear the birds or smell the flowers ?
Ah, no ! those rain-drops twinkling on the buds
Bring only visions of the salt sea-showers.
'The sea !' the linnets pipe from hedge and heath ;
'The sea !' the honeysuckles whisper and breathe,
And tumbling waves, where those wild-roses wreath,
Murmur from inland bowers.

These winds so soft to others—how they burn !
The mavis sings with gurgle and ripple and plash,
To thee yon swallow seems a wheeling tern ;
And when the rain recalls the briny lash,
Old Ocean's kiss we love—oh, when thy sight
Is mocked with Ocean's horses—manes of white,
The long and shadowy flanks, the shoulders bright—
Bright as the lightning's flash—

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

When all these scents of heather and brier and whin,
All kindly breaths of land-shrub, flower, and vine,
Recall the sea-scents, till thy feather'd skin
Tingles in answer to a dream of brine—
When thou, remembering there thy royal birth,
Dost see between the bars a world of dearth,
Is there a grief—a grief on all the earth—
So heavy and dark as thine ?

But I can buy thy freedom—I (thank God !),
Who loved thee more than albatross or gull—
Loved thee, and loved the waves thy footsteps trod—
Dream'd of thee when, becalm'd, we lay a-hull—
'Tis I, thy friend, who once, a child of six,
To find where Mother Carey fed her chicks,
Climb'd up the boat and then with bramble sticks
Tried all in vain to scull—

Thy friend who shared thy Paradise of Storm—
The little dreamer of the cliffs and coves,
Who knew thy mother, saw her shadowy form
Behind the cloudy bastions where she moves,
And heard her call : ' Come ! for the welkin thickens,
And tempests mutter and the lightning quickens !'
Then, starting from his dream, would find the chickens
Were daws or blue rock-doves—

Thy friend who owned another Paradise,
Of calmer air, a floating isle of fruit,
Where sang the Nereids on a breeze of spice,
While Triton, from afar, would sound salute :
There wast thou winging, though the skies were calm ;
For marvellous strains, as of the morning's shalm,
Were struck by ripples round that isle of palm
Whose shores were Ocean's lute.

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

And now to see thee here, my king, my king,
Far-glittering memories mirror'd in those eyes,
As if there shone within each iris-ring
An orbèd world—ocean and hills and skies!—
Those black wings ruffled whose triumphant sweep
Conquer'd in sport!—yea, up the glimmering steep
Of highest billow, down the deepest deep,
Sported with victories!—

To see thee here!—a coil of wilted weeds
Beneath those feet that danced on diamond spray,
Rider of sportive Ocean's reinless steeds—
Winner in Mother Carey's Sabbath-fray
When, stung by magic of the Witch's chant,
They rise, each foamy-crested combatant—
They rise and fall and leap and foam and gallop and pant
Till albatross, sea-swallow, and cormorant
Must flee like doves away!

And shalt thou ride no more where thou hast ridden,
And feast no more in hyaline halls and caves,
Master of Mother Carey's secrets hidden,
Master and monarch of the wind and waves,
Who never, save in stress of angriest blast,
Ask'd ship for shelter—never till at last
The foam-flakes hurled against the sloping mast
Slash'd thee like whirling glaives?

Right home to fields no seamew ever kenn'd,
Where scarce the great sea-wanderer fares with thee,
I come to take thee—nay, 'tis I, thy friend!
Ah, tremble not—I come to set thee free;
I come to tear this cage from off this wall,
And take thee hence to that fierce festival
Where billows march and winds are musical,
Hymning the Victor-Sea!

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

Yea, lift thine eyes to mine. Dost know me now ?
'Thou'rt free ! thou'rt free ! Ah, surely a bird can
smile !

Dost know me, Petrel ? Dost remember how
I fed thee in the wake for many a mile,
Whilst thou wouldst pat the waves, then, rising, take
The morsel up and wheel about the wake ?
Thou'rt free, thou'rt free, but for thine own dear sake
I keep thee caged awhile.

Away to sea ! no matter where the coast :
The road that turns for home turns never wrong ;
Where waves run high my bird will not be lost :
His home I know : 'tis where the winds are strong—
Where, on a throne of billows, rolling hoary
And green and blue and splash'd with sunny glory,
Far, far from shore—from farthest promontory—
Prophetic Nature bares the secret of the story
That holds the spheres in song !

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

1837-1909

426.

Chorus from 'Atalanta'

BEFORE the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears ;
Grief, with a glass that ran ;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven ;
Summer, with flowers that fell ;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
And madness risen from hell ;
Strength without hands to smite ;
Love that endures for a breath ;
Night, the shadow of light,
And life, the shadow of death.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears,
And a measure of sliding sand
From under the feet of the years ;
And froth and drift of the sea ;
And dust of the labouring earth ;
And bodies of things to be
In the houses of death and of birth ;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
And fashion'd with loathing and love,
With life before and after
And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a span
With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
They gather'd as unto strife ;
They breathed upon his mouth,
They fill'd his body with life ;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
For the veils of the soul therein,
A time for labour and thought,
A time to serve and to sin ;
They gave him light in his ways,
And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire ;
With his lips he travaileth ;
In his heart is a blind desire,
In his eyes foreknowledge of death ;

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

He weaves, and is clothed with derision ;
Sows, and he shall not reap ;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

427. *The Death of Meleager*

MELEAGER

LET your hands meet
Round the weight of my head ;
Lift ye my feet
As the feet of the dead ;
For the flesh of my body is molten, the limbs of it molten
as lead.

CHORUS

O thy luminous face,
Thine imperious eyes !
O the grief, O the grace,
As of day when it dies !
Who is this bending over thee, lord, with tears and
suppression of sighs ?

MELEAGER

Is a bride so fair ?
Is a maid so meek ?
With unchapleted hair,
With unfilleted cheek,
Atalanta, the pure among women, whose name is as
blessing to speak.

ATALANTA

I would that with feet
Unsandall'd, unshod,
Overbold, overfleet,
I had swum not nor trod
From Arcadia to Calydon northward, a blast of the envy
of God.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

MELEAGER

Unto each man his fate ;
Unto each as he saith
In whose fingers the weight
Of the world is as breath ;
Yet I would that in clamour of battle mine hands had
laid hold upon death.

CHORUS

Not with cleaving of shields
And their clash in thine ear,
When the lord of fought fields
Breaketh spearshaft from spear,
Thou art broken, our lord, thou art broken, with travail
and labour and fear.

MELEAGER

Would God he had found me
Beneath fresh boughs !
Would God he had bound me
Unawares in mine house,
With light in mine eyes, and songs in my lips, and a crown
on my brows !

CHORUS

Whence art thou sent from us ?
Whither thy goal ?
How art thou rent from us,
Thou that wert whole,
As with severing of eyelids and eyes, as with sundering
of body and soul !

MELEAGER

My heart is within me .
As an ash in the fire ;

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Whosoever hath seen me,
Without lute, without lyre,
Shall sing of me grievous things, even things that were
ill to desire.

CHORUS

Who shall raise thee
From the house of the dead ?
Or what man praise thee
That thy praise may be said ?
Alas thy beauty ! alas thy body ! alas thine head !

MELEAGER

But thou, O mother,
The dreamer of dreams,
Wilt thou bring forth another
To feel the sun's beams
When I move among shadows a shadow, and wail by
impassable streams ?

GENEUS

What thing wilt thou leave me
Now this thing is done ?
A man wilt thou give me,
A son for my son,
For the light of mine eyes, the desire of my life, the
desirable one ?

CHORUS

Thou wert glad above others,
Yea, fair beyond word ;
Thou wert glad among mothers ;
For each man that heard
Of thee, praise there was added unto thee, as wings to
the feet of a bird.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

ÆNEUS

Who shall give back
Thy face of old years
With travail made black,
Grown grey among fears,
Mother of sorrow, mother of cursing, mother of tears ?

MELEAGER

Though thou art as fire
Fed with fuel in vain,
My delight, my desire,
Is more chaste than the rain,
More pure than the dewfall, more holy than stars are
that live without stain.

ATALANTA

I would that as water
My life's blood had thawed,
Or as winter's wan daughter
Leaves lowland and lawn
Spring-stricken, or ever mine eyes had beheld thee made
dark in thy dawn.

CHORUS

When thou dravest the men
Of the chosen of Thrace,
None turn'd him again
Nor endured he thy face
Clothed round with the blush of the battle, with light
from a terrible place.

ÆNEUS

Thou shouldst die as he dies
For whom none sheddeth tear

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Filling thine eyes
And fulfilling thine ears
With the brilliance of battle, the bloom and the beauty,
the splendour of spears.

CHORUS

In the ears of the world
It is sung, it is told,
And the light thereof hurl'd
And the noise thereof roll'd
From the Acroceraunian snow to the ford of the fleece
of gold.

MELEAGER

Would God ye could carry me
Forth of all these ;
Heap sand and bury me
By the Chersonese,
Where the thundering Bosphorus answers the thunder of
Pontic seas.

OENEUS

Dost thou mock at our praise
And the singing begun,
And the men of strange days
Praising my son
In the folds of the hills of home, high places of Calydon ?

MELEAGER

For the dead man no home is ;
Ah, better to be
What the flower of the foam is
In fields of the sea,
That the sea-waves might be as my raiment, the gulf-
stream a garment for me !

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

CHORUS

Who shall seek thee and bring
And restore thee thy day,
When the dove dipt her wing
And the oars won their way
Where the narrowing Symplegades whiten'd the straits
of Propontis with spray ?

MELEAGER

Will ye crown me my tomb
Or exalt me my name,
Now my spirits consume,
Now my flesh is a flame ?
Let the sea slake it once, and men speak of me sleeping
to praise me or shame.

CHORUS

Turn back now, turn thee,
As who turns him to wake ;
Though the life in thee burn thee,
Couldst thou bathe it and slake
Where the sea-ridge of Helle hangs heavier, and east
upon west waters break ?

MELEAGER

Would the winds blow me back,
Or the waves hurl me home ?
Ah, to touch in the track
Where the pine learnt to roam
Cold girdles and crowns of the sea-gods, cool blossoms
of water and foam !

CHORUS

The gods may release
That they made fast :

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Thy soul shall have ease
In thy limbs at the last ;
But what shall they give thee for life, sweet life that is
overpast ?

MELEAGER

Not the life of men's veins,
Not of flesh that conceives ;
But the grace that remains,
The fair beauty that cleaves
To the life of the rains in the grasses, the life of the
dews on the leaves.

CHORUS

Thou wert helmsman and chief ;
Wilt thou turn in an hour,
Thy limbs to the leaf,
Thy face to the flower,
Thy blood to the water, thy soul to the gods who divide
and devour ?

MELEAGER

The years are hungry,
They wail all their days ;
The gods wax angry
And weary of praise ;
And who shall bridle their lips ? and who shall straiten
their ways ?

CHORUS

The gods guard over us
With sword and with rod ;
Weaving shadow to cover us,
Heaping the sod,
That law may fulfil herself wholly, to darken man's face
before God.

428. *Hymn to Proserpine*

(AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF THE
CHRISTIAN FAITH)

Vicisti, Galilae.

I HAVE lived long enough, having seen one thing, that
love hath an end ;
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me now and
befriend.

Thou art more than the day or the morrow, the seasons
that laugh or that weep ;
For these give joy and sorrow ; but thou, Proserpina,
sleep.

Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet the feet of the
dove ;

But a goodlier gift is thine than foam of the grapes or love.
Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and harpstring of gold,
A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God to behold ?

I am sick of singing : the bays burn deep and chafe :
I am fain

To rest a little from praise and grievous pleasure and pain.
For the Gods we know not of, who give us our daily
breath,

We know they are cruel as love or life, and lovely as death.
O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast forth, wiped out
in a day !

From your wrath is the world released, redeem'd from
your chains, men say.

New Gods are crown'd in the city ; their flowers have
broken your rods ;

They are merciful, clothed with pity, the young com-
passionate Gods.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

But for me their new device is barren, the days are bare ;
Things long past over suffice, and men forgotten that
were.

Time and the Gods are at strife ; ye dwell in the midst
thereof,

Draining a little life from the barren breasts of love.

I say to you, cease, take rest ; yea, I say to you all, be
at peace,

Till the bitter milk of her breast and the barren bosom
shall cease.

Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean ? but these thou shalt
not take,

The laurel, the palms and the paeon, the breasts of the
nymphs in the brake ;

Breasts more soft than a dove's, that tremble with
tenderer breath ;

And all the wings of the Loves, and all the joy before
death ;

All the feet of the hours that sound as a single lyre,
Dropp'd and deep in the flowers, with strings that flicker
like fire.

More than these wilt thou give, things fairer than all
these things ?

Nay, for a little we live, and life hath mutable wings.

A little while and we die ; shall life not thrive as it may ?

For no man under the sky lives twice, outliving his day.

And grief is a grievous thing, and a man hath enough of
his tears :

Why should he labour, and bring fresh grief to blacken
his years ?

Thou hast conquer'd, O pale Galilean ; the world has
grown grey from thy breath ;

We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed on the
fullness of death.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet for a day ;
But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel outlives
not May.

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

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

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

But her ears are vex'd with the roar and her face with
the foam of the tides.

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

O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of gibbeted Gods !
Though all men abase them before you in spirit, and all
knees bend,

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

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

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

Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and between the
remote sea-gates,

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

Where, mighty with deepening sides, clad about with the
seas as with wings,

And impell'd of invisible tides, and fulfill'd of unspeakable
things,

White-eyed and poisonous-finn'd, shark-tooth'd and
serpentine-curl'd,

Rolls, under the whitening wind of the future, the wave
of the world.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

The depths stand naked in sunder behind it, the storms
flee away ;
In the hollow before it the thunder is taken and snared
as a prey ;
In its sides is the north-wind bound ; and its salt is of
all men's tears ;
With light of ruin, and sound of changes, and pulse of
years :
With travail of day after day, and with trouble of hour
upon hour ;
And bitter as blood is the spray ; and the crests are as
fangs that devour :
And its vapour and storm of its steam as the sighing of
spirits to be ;
And its noise as the noise in a dream ; and its depth as
the roots of the sea :
And the height of its heads as the height of the utmost
stars of the air :
And the ends of the earth at the might thereof tremble,
and time is made bare.
Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins, will ye chasten
the high sea with rods ?
Will ye take her to chain her with chains, who is older
than all ye Gods ?
All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire shall ye pass and
be past ;
Ye are Gods, and behold, ye shall die, and the waves be
upon you at last.
In the darkness of time, in the deeps of the years, in the
changes of things,
Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and the world shall
forget you for kings.
Though the feet of thine high priests tread where thy
lords and our forefathers trod,

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Though these that were Gods are dead, and thou being
dead art a God,
Though before thee the throned Cytherean be fallen,
and hidden her head,
Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy dead shall go
down to thee dead.
Of the maiden thy mother men sing as a goddess with
grace clad around ;
Thou art throned where another was king ; where another
was queen she is crown'd.
Yea, once we had sight of another : but now she is queen,
say these.
Not as thine, not as thine was our mother, a blossom of
flowering seas,
Clothed round with the world's desire as with raiment,
and fair as the foam,
And fleeter than kindled fire, and a goddess, and mother
of Rome.
For thine came pale and a maiden, and sister to sorrow ;
but ours,
Her deep hair heavily laden with odour and colour of
flowers,
White rose of the rose-white water, a silver splendour,
a flame,
Bent down unto us that besought her, and earth grew
sweet with her name.
For thine came weeping, a slave among slaves, and
rejected ; but she
Came flush'd from the full-flush'd wave, and imperial,
her foot on the sea.
And the wonderful waters knew her, the winds and the
viewless ways,
And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the sea-blue stream
of the bays.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Ye are fallen, our lords, by what token? we wist that
ye should not fall.
Ye were all so fair that are broken; and one more fair
than ye all.
But I turn to her still, having seen she shall surely abide
in the end;
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me now and
befriend.
O daughter of earth, of my mother, her crown and
blossom of birth,
I am also, I also, thy brother; I go as I came unto
earth.
In the night where thine eyes are as moons are in heaven,
the night where thou art,
Where the silence is more than all tunes, where sleep
overflows from the heart,
Where the poppies are sweet as the rose in our world, and
the red rose is white,
And the wind falls faint as it blows with the fume of the
flowers of the night,
And the murmur of spirits that sleep in the shadow of
Gods from afar
Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the deep dim soul
of a star,
In the sweet low light of thy face, under heavens untrod
by the sun,
Let my soul with their souls find place, and forget what
is done and undone.
Thou art more than the Gods who number the days of
our temporal breath;
For these give labour and slumber; but thou, Proserpina,
death.
Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a season in silence.
I know

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

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

For the glass of the years is brittle wherein we gaze for
a span;

A little soul for a little bears up this corpse which is
man.

So long I endure, no longer; and laugh not again, neither
weep.

For there is no God found stronger than death; and
death is a sleep.

429.

A Match

IF love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,
Blown fields or flowerful closes,
Green pleasure or grey grief;
If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath ;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy ;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day ;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein ;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

430. *A Leave-taking*

LET us go hence, my songs ; she will not hear.
 Let us go hence together without fear ;
 Keep silence now, for singing-time is over,
 And over all old things and all things dear.
 She loves not you nor me as all we love her.
 Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear,
 She would not hear.

Let us rise up and part ; she will not know.
 Let us go seaward as the great winds go,
 Full of blown sand and foam ; what help is here ?
 There is no help, for all these things are so,
 And all the world is bitter as a tear.
 And how these things are, though ye strove to show,
 She would not know.

Let us go home and hence ; she will not weep.
 We gave love many dreams and days to keep,
 Flowers without scent, and fruits that would not grow,
 Saying ' If thou wilt, thrust in thy sickle and reap.'
 All is reap'd now ; no grass is left to mow ;
 And we that sow'd, though all we fell on sleep,
 She would not weep.

Let us go hence and rest ; she will not love.
 She shall not hear us if we sing hereof,
 Nor see love's ways, how sore they are and steep.
 Come hence, let be, lie still ; it is enough.
 Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep ;
 And though she saw all heaven in flower above,
 She would not love.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Let us give up, go down ; she will not care.
Though all the stars made gold of all the air,
And the sea moving saw before it move
One moon-flower making all the foam-flowers fair ;
Though all those waves went over us, and drove
Deep down the stifling lips and drowning hair,
She would not care.

Let us go hence, go hence ; she will not see.
Sing all once more together ; surely she,
She too, remembering days and words that were,
Will turn a little toward us, sighing ; but we,
We are hence, we are gone, as though we had not been
there.
Nay, and though all men seeing had pity on me,
She would not see.

431.

Before the Mirror

(VERSES WRITTEN UNDER A PICTURE)

I

WHITE rose in red rose-garden
Is not so white ;
Snowdrops that plead for pardon
And pine for fright
Because the hard East blows
Over their maiden rows
Grow not as this face grows from pale to bright.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Behind the veil, forbidden,
Shut up from sight,
Love, is there sorrow hidden,
Is there delight ?
Is joy thy dower or grief,
White rose of weary leaf,
Late rose whose life is brief, whose loves are light ?

Soft snows that hard winds harden
Till each flake bite,
Fill all the flowerless garden
Whose flowers took flight
Long since, when summer ceased,
And men rose up from feast,
And warm west wind grew east, and warm day night.

II

' Come snow, come wind or thunder
High up in air,
I watch my face, and wonder
At my bright hair ;
Nought else exalts or grieves
The rose at heart, that heaves
With love of her own leaves and lips that pair.

' She knows not loves that kiss'd her
She knows not where.
Art thou the ghost, my sister,
White sister there,
Am I the ghost, who knows ?
My hand, a fallen rose,
Lies snow-white on white snows, and takes no care.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

'I cannot see what pleasures
Or what pains were ;
What pale new loves and treasures
New years will bear ;
What beam will fall, what shower,
What grief or joy for dower ;
But one thing knows the flower ; the flower is fair.'

III

Glad, but not flush'd with gladness,
Since joys go by ;
Sad, but not bent with sadness,
Since sorrows die ;
Deep in the gleaming glass
She sees all past things pass,
And all sweet life that was lie down and lie.

There glowing ghosts of flowers
Draw down, draw nigh ;
And wings of swift spent hours
Take flight and fly ;
She sees by formless gleams,
She hears across cold streams,
Dead mouths of many dreams that sing and sigh.

Face fallen and white throat lifted,
With sleepless eye
She sees old loves that drifted,
She knew not why,
Old loves and faded fears
Float down a stream that hears
The flowing of all men's tears beneath the sky.

OUT of the golden remote wild west where the sea
 without shore is,
 Full of the sunset, and sad, if at all, with the fullness
 of joy,
 As a wind sets in with the autumn that blows from the
 region of stories,
 Blows with a perfume of songs and of memories
 beloved from a boy,
 Blows from the capes of the past oversea to the bays of
 the present,
 Fill'd as with shadow of sound with the pulse of
 invisible feet,
 Far out to the shallows and straits of the future, by
 rough ways or pleasant,
 Is it thither the wind's wings beat? is it hither to me,
 O my sweet?
 For thee, in the stream of the deep tide-wind blowing
 in with the water,
 Thee I behold as a bird borne in with the wind from
 the west,
 Straight from the sunset, across white waves whence rose
 as a daughter
 Venus thy mother, in years when the world was a water
 at rest.
 Out of the distance of dreams, as a dream that abides
 after slumber,
 Stray'd from the fugitive flock of the night, when the
 moon overhead
 Wanes in the wan waste heights of the heaven, and stars
 without number
 Die without sound, and are spent like lamps that are
 burnt by the dead,

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Comes back to me, stays by me, lulls me with touch of
forgotten caresses,
One warm dream clad about with a fire as of life that
endures ;
The delight of thy face, and the sound of thy feet, and
the wind of thy tresses,
And all of a man that regrets, and all of a maid that
allures.
But thy bosom is warm for my face and profound as
a manifold flower,
Thy silence as music, thy voice as an odour that fades
in a flame ;
Not a dream, not a dream is the kiss of thy mouth, and
the bountiful hour
That makes me forget what was sin, and would make
me forget were it shame.
Thine eyes that are quiet, thine hands that are tender,
thy lips that are loving,
Comfort and cool me as dew in the dawn of a moon
like a dream ;
And my heart yearns baffled and blind, moved vainly
toward thee, and moving
As the refluent seaweed moves in the languid exuberant
stream,
Fair as a rose is on earth, as a rose under water in prison,
That stretches and swings to the slow passionate pulse
of the sea,
Closed up from the air and the sun, but alive, as a ghost
rearsen,
Pale as the love that revives as a ghost rearsen in me.
From the bountiful infinite west, from the happy
memorial places
Full of the stately repose and the lordly delight of the
dead,

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Where the fortunate islands are lit with the light of
ineffable faces,
And the sound of a sea without wind is about them,
and sunset is red,
Come back to redeem and release me from love that
recalls and represses,
That cleaves to my flesh as a flame, till the serpent has
eaten his fill ;
From the bitter delights of the dark, and the feverish,
the furtive caresses
That murder the youth in a man or ever his heart
have its will.
Thy lips cannot laugh and thine eyes cannot weep ; thou
art pale as a rose is,
Paler and sweeter than leaves that cover the blush of
the bud ;
And the heart of the flower is compassion, and pity the
core it encloses,
Pity, not love, that is born of the breath and decays
with the blood.
As the cross that a wild nun clasps till the edge of it
bruises her bosom,
So love wounds as we grasp it, and blackens and burns
as a flame ;
I have loved overmuch in my life ; when the live bud
bursts with the blossom,
Bitter as ashes or tears is the fruit, and the wine thereof
shame.
As a heart that its anguish divides is the green bud cloven
asunder ;
As the blood of a man self-slain is the flush of the
leaves that allure ;
And the perfume as poison and wine to the brain, a
delight and a wonder ;

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

And the thorns are too sharp for a boy, too slight for
a man, to endure.
Too soon did I love it, and lost love's rose ; and I cared
not for glory's :
Only the blossoms of sleep and of pleasure were mix'd
in my hair.
Was it myrtle or poppy thy garland was woven with,
O my Dolores ?
Was it pallor of slumber, or blush as of blood, that
I found in thee fair ?
For desire is a respite from love, and the flesh not the
heart is her fuel ;
She was sweet to me once, who am fled and escaped
from the rage of her reign ;
Who behold as of old time at hand as I turn, with her
mouth growing cruel,
And flush'd as with wine with the blood of her lovers,
Our Lady of Pain.
Low down where the thicket is thicker with thorns than
with leaves in the summer,
In the brake is a gleaming of eyes and a hissing of
tongues that I knew ;
And the lithe long throats of her snakes reach round her,
their mouths overcome her,
And her lips grow cool with their foam, made moist
as a desert with dew.
With the thirst and the hunger of lust though her
beautiful lips be so bitter,
With the cold foul foam of the snakes they soften and
redden and smile ;
And her fierce mouth sweetens, her eyes wax wide and
her eyelashes glitter,
And she laughs with a savour of blood in her face, and
a savour of guile.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

She laughs, and her hands reach hither, her hair blows
hither and hisses,
As a low-lit flame in a wind, back-blown till it shudder
and leap ;
Let her lips not again lay hold on my soul, nor her
poisonous kisses,
To consume it alive and divide from thy bosom, Our
Lady of Sleep.
Ah daughter of sunset and slumber ! if now it return into
prison,
Who shall redeem it anew ? but we, if thou wilt, let
us fly ;
Let us take to us, now that the white skies thrill with
a moon unarisen,
Swift horses of fear or of love, take flight and depart
and not die.
They are swifter than dreams, they are stronger than
death ; there is none that hath ridden,
None that shall ride in the dim strange ways of his life
as we ride ;
By the meadows of memory, the highlands of hope, and
the shore that is hidden,
Where life breaks loud and unseen, a sonorous invisible
tide ;
By the sands where sorrow has trodden, the salt pools
bitter and sterile,
By the thundering reef and the low sea-wall and the
channel of years,
Our wild steeds press on the night, strain hard through
pleasure and peril,
Labour and listen and pant not or pause for the peril
that nears ;
And the sound of them trampling the way cleaves night
as an arrow asunder,

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

And slow by the sand-hill and swift by the down with
its glimpses of grass,
Sudden and steady the music, as eight hoofs trample and
thunder,
Rings in the ear of the low blind wind of the night
as we pass ;
Shrill shrieks in our faces the blind bland air that was
mute as a maiden,
Stung into storm by the speed of our passage, and deaf
where we past ;
And our spirits too burn as we bound, thine holy but
mine heavy-laden,
As we burn with the fire of our flight ; ah love ! shall
we win at the last ?

433. *A Forsaken Garden*

I N a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Wall'd round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its
roses
Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand ?
So long have the grey bare walks lain guestless,
Through branches and briars if a man make way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
Night and day.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled
That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
Of all but the thorns that are touch'd not of time.
The thorns he spares when the rose is taken ;
The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
These remain.

Not a flower to be press'd of the foot that falls not ;
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry ;
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls
not,
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
Over the meadows that blossom and wither
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song ;
Only the sun and the rain come hither
All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
In a round where life seems barren as death.
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, ' Look thither,'
Did he whisper ? ' look forth from the flowers to the
sea ;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms
wither,
And men that love lightly may die—but we ? '

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

And the same wind sang and the same waves whiten'd,
And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whisper'd, the eyes that had lighten'd,
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither?
And were one to the end—but what end who knows?
Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?
What love was ever as deep as a grave?
They are loveless now as the grass above them
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,
When as they that are free now of weeping and laughter
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again for ever;
Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,
Who have left nought living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,
While the sun and the rain live, these shall be;
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,

Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
 The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,
 Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
 Stretch'd out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
 As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
 Death lies dead.

434. *To Victor Hugo*

IN the fair days when God
 By man as godlike trod,
 And each alike was Greek, alike was free,
 God's lightning spared, they said,
 Alone the happier head
 Whose laurels screen'd it; fruitless grace for thee,
 To whom the high gods gave of right
 Their thunders and their laurels and their light.

 Sunbeams and bays before
 Our master's servants wore,
 For these Apollo left in all men's lands;
 But far from these ere now
 And watch'd with jealous brow
 Lay the blind lightnings shut between God's hands,
 And only loosed on slaves and kings
 The terror of the tempest of their wings.

 Born in those younger years
 That shone with storms of spears
 And shook in the wind blown from a dead world's pyre,
 When by her back-blown hair
 Napoleon caught the fair
 And fierce Republic with her feet of fire,
 And stay'd with iron words and hands
 Her flight, and freedom in a thousand lands:

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Thou sawest the tides of things
Close over heads of kings,
And thine hand felt the thunder, and to thee
Laurels and lightnings were
As sunbeams and soft air
Mix'd each in other, or as mist with sea
Mix'd, or as memory with desire,
Or the lute's pulses with the louder lyre.

For thee man's spirit stood
Disrobed of flesh and blood,
And bare the heart of the most secret hours ;
And to thine hand more tame
Than birds in winter came
High hopes and unknown flying forms of powers,
And from thy table fed, and sang
Till with the tune men's ears took fire and rang.

Even all men's eyes and ears
With fiery sound and tears
Wax'd hot, and cheeks caught flame and eyelid light,
At those high songs of thine
That stung the sense like wine,
Or fell more soft than dew or snow by night,
Or wail'd as in some flooded cave
Sobs the strong broken spirit of a wave.

But we, our Master, we
Whose hearts uplift to thee,
Ache with the pulse of thy remember'd song,
We ask not nor await
From the clench'd hands of fate,
As thou, remission of the world's old wrong ;
Respite we ask not, nor release ;
Freedom a man may have, he shall not peace.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Though thy most fiery hope
Storm heaven, to set wide ope
The all-sought-for gate whence God or Chance debars
All feet of men, all eyes—
The old night resumes her skies,
Her hollow hiding-place of clouds and stars,
Where nought save these is sure in sight ;
And, paven with death, our days are roof'd with night.

One thing we can ; to be
Awhile, as men may, free ;
But not by hope or pleasure the most stern
Goddess, most awful-eyed,
Sits, but on either side
Sit sorrow and the wrath of hearts that burn,
Sad faith that cannot hope or fear,
And memory grey with many a flowerless year.

Not that in stranger's wise
I lift not loving eyes
To the fair foster-mother France, that gave
Beyond the pale fleet foam
Help to my sires and home,
Whose great sweet breast could shelter those and save
Whom from her nursing breasts and hands
Their land cast forth of old on gentler lands.

Not without thoughts that ache
For theirs and for thy sake,
I, born of exiles, hail thy banish'd head ;
I whose young song took flight
Toward the great heat and light
On me a child from thy far splendour shed,
From thine high place of soul and song,
Which, fallen on eyes yet feeble, made them strong.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Ah, not with lessening love
For memories born hereof,
I look to that sweet mother-land, and see
The old fields and fair full streams,
And skies, but fled like dreams
The feet of freedom and the thought of thee ;
And all between the skies and graves
The mirth of mockers and the shame of slaves.

* She, kill'd with noisome air,
Even she ! and still so fair,
Who said ' Let there be freedom,' and there was
Freedom ; and as a lance
The fiery eyes of France
Touch'd the world's sleep, and as a sleep made pass
Forth of men's heavier ears and eyes
Smitten with fire and thunder from new skies.

Are they men's friends indeed
Who watch them weep and bleed ?
Because thou hast loved us, shall the gods love thee ?
Thou, first of men and friend,
Seest thou, even thou, the end ?
Thou knowest what hath been, knowest thou what shall be ?
Evils may pass and hopes endure ;
But fate is dim, and all the gods obscure.

O nursed in airs apart,
O poet highest of heart,
Hast thou seen time, who hast seen so many things ?
Are not the years more wise,
More sad than keenest eyes,
The years with soundless feet and sounding wings ?
Passing we hear them not, but past
The clamour of them thrills us, and their blast.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Thou art chief of us, and lord ;
Thy song is as a sword
Keen-edged and scented in the blade from flowers ;
Thou art lord and king ; but we
Lift younger eyes, and see
Less of high hope, less light on wandering hours ;
Hours that have borne men down so long,
Seen the right fail, and watch'd uplift the wrong.

But thine imperial soul,
As years and ruins roll
To the same end, and all things and all dreams
With the same wreck and roar
Drift on the dim same shore,
Still in the bitter foam and brackish streams
Tracks the fresh water-spring to be
And sudden sweeter fountains in the sea.

As once the high God bound
With many a rivet round
Man's saviour, and with iron nail'd him through,
At the wild end of things,
Where even his own bird's wings
Flagg'd, whence the sea shone like a drop of dew,
From Caucasus beheld below
Past fathoms of unfathomable snow ;

So the strong God, the chance
Central of circumstance,
Still shows him exile who will not be slave ;
All thy great fame and thee
Girt by the dim strait sea
With multitudinous walls of wandering wave ;
Shows us our greatest from his throne,
Fate-stricken, and rejected of his own.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Yea, he is strong, thou say'st,
A mystery many-faced,
The wild beasts know him and the wild birds flee ;
The blind night sees him, death
Shrinks beaten at his breath,
And his right hand is heavy on the sea :
We know he hath made us, and is king ;
We know not if he care for anything.

Thus much, no more, we know ;
He bade what is be so,
Bade light be and bade night be, one by one ;
Bade hope and fear, bade ill
And good redeem and kill,
Till all men be aweary of the sun
And his world burn in its own flame
And bear no witness longer of his name.

Yet though all this be thus,
Be those men praised of us
Who have loved and wrought and sorrow'd and not sinn'd
For fame or fear or gold,
Nor wax'd for winter cold,
Nor changed for changes of the worldly wind ;
Praised above men of men be these,
Till this one world and work we know shall cease.

Yea, one thing more than this,
We know that one thing is,
The splendour of a spirit without blame,
That not the labouring years
Blind-born, nor any fears,
Nor men nor any gods can tire or tame ;
But purer power with fiery breath
Fills, and exalts above the gulfs of death.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Praised above men be thou,
Whose laurel-laden brow,
Made for the morning, droops not in the night ;
Praised and beloved, that none
Of all thy great things done
Flies higher than thy most equal spirit's flight ;
Praised, that nor doubt nor hope could bend
Earth's loftiest head, found upright to the end.

435. *Super Flumina Babylonis*

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

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

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

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

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

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

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

And with harrows men harrow'd us, and subdued with
 spears,
 And crush'd with shame ;
And the summer and winter was, and the length of years,
 And no change came.

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

And they slept and they rioted on their rose-hung beds,
 With mouths on flame,
And with love-locks vine-chapleted, and with rose-
 crown'd heads
 And robes of shame.

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

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

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

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

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

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

In thy grief had we follow'd thee, in thy passion loved,
 Loved in thy loss ;
In thy shame we stood fast to thee, with thy pangs were
 moved,
Clung to thy cross.

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

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

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

By the stone of the sepulchre we return'd to weep,
From far, from prison ;
And the guards by it keeping it we beheld asleep,
But thou wast risen.

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

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

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

' As of old time she spake to you, and you hardly heard,
Hardly took heed,
So now also she saith to you, yet another word,
Who is risen indeed.

' By my saying she saith to you, in your ears she saith,
Who hear these things,
Put no trust in men's royalties, nor in great men's breath,
Nor words of kings.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

‘ For the life of them vanishes and is no more seen,
Nor no more known ;
Nor shall any remember him if a crown hath been,
Or where a throne.

‘ Unto each man his handiwork, unto each his crown,
The just Fate gives ;
Whoso takes the world’s life on him and his own lays
down,
He, dying so, lives.

‘ Whoso bears the whole heaviness of the wrong’d world’s
weight
And puts it by,
It is well with him suffering, though he face man’s fate ;
How should he die ?

‘ Seeing death has no part in him any more, no power
Upon his head ;
He has bought his eternity with a little hour,
And is not dead.

‘ For an hour if ye look for him, he is no more found,
For one hour’s space ;
Then ye lift up your eyes to him and behold him crown’d,
A deathless face.

‘ On the mountains of memory, by the world’s well-
springs,
In all men’s eyes,
Where the light of the life of him is on all past things,
Death only dies.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

' Not the light that was quench'd for us, nor the deeds
that were,
Nor the ancient days,
Nor the sorrows not sorrowful, nor the face most fair
Of perfect praise.'

So the angel of Italy's resurrection said,
So yet he saith ;
So the son of her suffering, that from breasts nigh dead
Drew life, not death.

That the pavement of Golgotha should be white as snow,
Not red, but white ;
That the waters of Babylon should no longer flow,
And men see light.

436. *A Jacobite's Exile*

1746

THE weary day rins down and dies,
The weary night wears through :
And never an hour is fair wi' flower,
And never a flower wi' dew.

I would the day were night for me,
I would the night were day :
For then would I stand in my ain fair land,
As now in dreams I may.

O lordly flow the Loire and Seine,
And loud the dark Durance :
But bonnier shine the braes of Tyne
Than a' the fields of France ;
And the waves of Till that speak sae still
Gleam goodlier where they glance.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

O weel were they that fell fighting
On dark Drumossie's day :
They keep their hame ayont the faem,
And we die far away.

O sound they sleep, and saft, and deep,
But night and day wake we ;
And ever between the sea-banks green
Sounds loud the sundering sea.

And ill we sleep, sae sair we weep,
But sweet and fast sleep they ;
And the mool that haps them roun' and laps them
Is e'en their country's clay ;
But the land we tread that are not dead
Is strange as night by day.

Strange as night in a strange man's sight,
Though fair as dawn it be :
For what is here that a stranger's cheer
Should yet wax blithe to see ?

The hills stand steep, the dells lie deep,
The fields are green and gold :
The hill-streams sing, and the hill-sides ring,
As ours at home of old.

But hills and flowers are nane of ours,
And ours are oversea :
And the kind strange land whereon we stand,
It wotsna what were we
Or ever we came, wi' scathe and shame,
To try what end might be.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Scathe, and shame, and a waefu' name,
And a weary time and strange,
Have they that seeing a weird for dreeing
Can die, and cannot change.

Shame and scorn may we thole that mourn,
Though sair be they to dree :
But ill may we bide the thoughts we hide,
Mair keen than wind and sea.

Ill may we thole the night's watches,
And ill the weary day :
And the dreams that keep the gates of sleep,
A waefu' gift gie they ;
For the sangs they sing us, the sights they bring us,
The morn blaws all away.

On Aikenshaw the sun blinks braw,
The burn rins blithe and fain :
There 's nought wi' me I wadna gie
To look thereon again.

On Keilder-side the wind blaws wide ;
There sounds nae hunting-horn
That rings sae sweet as the winds that beat
Round banks where Tyne is born.

The Wansbeck sings with all her springs,
The bents and braes give ear ;
But the wood that rings wi' the sang she sings
I may not see nor hear ;
For far and far thae blithe burns are,
And strange is a' thing near.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

The light there lightens, the day there brightens,
The loud wind there lives free :
Nae light comes nigh me or wind blaws by me
That I wad hear or see.

But O gin I were there again,
Afar ayont the faem,
Cauld and dead in the sweet saft bed
That haps my sires at hame !

We'll see nae mair the sea-banks fair,
And the sweet grey gleaming sky,
And the lordly strand of Northumberland,
And the goodly towers thereby :
And none shall know but the winds that blow
The graves wherein we lie.

437.

Child's Song

WHAT is gold worth, say,
Worth for work or play,
Worth to keep or pay,
Hide or throw away,
Hope about or fear ?
What is love worth, pray ?
Worth a tear ?

Golden on the mould
Lie the dead leaves roll'd
Of the wet woods old,
Yellow leaves and cold,
Woods without a dove ;
Gold is worth but gold ;
Love's worth love.