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# UNDERNEATH THE BOUGH





UNDERNEATH  
THE BOUGH  
*A BOOK OF VERSES*

By  
GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND



THE GRAFTON PRESS  
NEW YORK

Copyright, 1903. by  
GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND

This little book is offered to  
AGNES  
its inspirer, in this the tenth year  
of her reign.



I desire to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Titus Munson Coan, Mr. Justo Quintéro and Mr. A. B. Myrick for assistance rendered, and to acknowledge the kind permission to reprint certain of these verses given me by The Literary Digest, Harvard Illustrated Magazine, Vogue, Middletown Forum, Red Letter, Literary Review, Boston Transcript, Town Topics, Smart Set, The New York Herald and other periodicals.

G. A. E.



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# THE RACE OF THE MIGHTY



---

# The Race of the Mighty\*

---

## THE START

**T**HE appointed time at length the dials show.  
“Attention, both! . . . Now, are you  
ready? . . . Go!!”

The chauffeur grips his lever with a hand  
Of steel.—A leap!—A flash of wheels! A grand  
And supple beast-like spring!—A growl of gear!  
As, sweeping through the multitudinous sea  
Of men upraising full-voiced cheer on cheer,  
He whirls away to promised victory! . . .

## ON THE ROAD

The high road stretches straight and white  
Away  
To dreamy distance, on and on—  
The day  
Dawns sharp and foggy; nips the driver's  
Nose,  
Despite his costly furs. Zounds! How  
It blows!  
The motor purrs!—Our mobile seems  
To fly,

---

\* From Gaëtan de Méaulne's "Course des Grands Masqués." Here reprinted by courtesy of the New York "Herald." To this translation was awarded the Herald's First Prize of 500 francs.

Nor touch the ground . . . (Pneumatic  
Mystery!)

The motor purrs!—Farewell wood, field  
And stream!

Once on the road, we've scanty time  
To dream!

The motor purrs!—Look out! A sheer  
Decline.

Temptation whispers: Faster here!  
It's fine!

Faster? It's madness! Yes, I know!—  
But on!

Full speed down hill! Another record  
Gone! . . .

The driver plunges out of view . . .  
See, there

He climbs the distant slope again.  
I swear

He'd scale Olympus! Yet that course  
Is clear

From many mishaps that beset  
Us here!

We crush a curséd mongrel in  
The dust!

Slow down to miss an English spinster,  
Just  
Graze by her on her clumsy, ancient  
Wheel!—  
Rout ducks and chickens, set the pigs  
A-squeal!  
It's not *our* fault! We can't be kept  
All day  
To clear the road!... Speed on!—Away!  
Away!...

## THE STRUGGLE

But hark!... Behind, a trumpet-blast winds clear!  
Great God! Our dread competitor draws near;  
We'd half a minute start, and now, like Fate,  
He's rushing onward to annihilate  
Distance and time, whirled in a hurricane!  
Inexorably we see him gain and gain....

"Now!—speed her up!" the boy cries out.

"More speed!"

"The curséd motor's gone to sleep!—Indeed,

"We're hardly doing fifty miles an hour.

"But he won't pass us yet awhile! More  
power!" ...

The driver heeds ; he moves—the furious pace  
Grows frenzied ! Oh, the glory of a race  
Like this of modern days, with steady hand  
To steer a whirlwind through a startled land !

## THE WATCHERS

“The first is near !—Let no one cross !—

“Take care !

“See ! There they are !—Look out ! The  
horn ! Beware !

“Stand back !—They’re two ! . . . It’s Girardot !  
No, no ;

“It’s Charron No, it’s Levegh !—How they  
blow

“That horn !” . . . But who can hope to recognize  
Or name the shrilling bullet in its flight ?

And what are names when glory blinds the eyes ?  
The towns love sport, and cheer ; but, half in  
fright

The laboring peasants stop their ploughs to see  
This avalanche—this hurtling mystery !



## THE FINISH

Untiring, on their mounts of fire and steel,  
The shielded chauffeurs, watchful, hand on  
wheel,

Have flashed through many a league;—have  
breathed the dust

Of devious ways; have skirted wood and sea;  
Have traversed towns, crossed rivers, hills and  
dales;—

Nor halted once! To learn geography  
By such vast lessons, though it tire the flesh,  
Exalts the soul and makes the spirit free.

But now must end this vast, Titanic race!  
(It cannot last forever!)—See! The place  
Lies there!... A broad, white banner bars the way,  
Between two lofty poles with streamers gay.

The “FINISH” there we read. The end at last!  
All rest and glory, once that goal is passed!

A final burst!—The driver grips the bar!

The “FINISH!” In the road he sees afar

A judge with solemn air attentive stand,

Waving a crimson kerchief in his hand. . .

“Stop!” Harshly grinds the brake—“What  
number’s this?”

“Your name?”

Recorded!

Apotheosis!!



SONGS & SONNETS



---

## Love Beatified.

---

**L**OVE, slain by us and buried yesterday,  
Rose up again, nor in his grave would  
stay.

On his earth-stainèd brow and sightless eyes  
Still shone the splendours of our Paradise.

Hushed was each dissonance, every fault made  
clean,  
And joys alone I saw, that might have been.

It never seemed our Love could shew so fair  
As that dead Presence, shrined in glory there.

I would not have our Love to live again,  
And blend each pleasure with his greater pain.—

Oh better far this blessèd death, and rest!  
Dead Love I clasp, I cherish to my breast  
And ever shall, for this I know is best!

---

## Morning, Noon and Night.

---

**I** LOVE thee when the gates of eastern light  
Are opened by the Morning-star, aflame;  
I love thee when the rose-red heavens proclaim

The coming of their lord, to mortal sight,  
And cloudless, when from his imperial height  
He looks in glory down. I breathe thy name  
With thoughts of love, when drowsy Noon the  
same

Poised, equal distance holds, twixt dawn and  
night.

I love thee when the West begins to glow,  
And when the restless winds lie still in heaven;  
I love thee when the deep'ning shadows fall,  
As comes with Tyrian dye, soft, purple even;  
But when, from out the waters, rises slow  
The noiseless Night, I love thee best of all.

---

## Dante.

---

THOU'RT but a pensive, dreaming Boy,  
when first

To thy sad eyne the sight of Love  
appears

With blessèd Beatrice. Nine circling years  
Name thee the wounded Lover, whose sweet  
thirst

Is never sated, nor whose fever less.

At Campaldino thou'rt the mailèd Knight ;

Savage to spur thy City on toward right

Thou'rt driven, its scape-goat, to the wilderness.

There, in the stranger's house whose stairs are  
pain

To mount, whose bread is bitter to thy mouth,  
Dawns thy Great Vision, mid thy soul's last  
drouth ;

And, past Hell's flame and Purgatory's round,

Greets thee thy love most gentle, once again,

Thou frowning Florentine with laurels crowned !

---

## Love's Blindness.

---

“O LOVE, my Love, thou canst not  
know how sweet,

How dear thou art!”—“Naught  
would I know, save this

That thou wilt ever yearn to share my kiss!

So being, I reck not whether years be fleet

Or endless!”—“But thou canst not see thy  
face

As others see thee! Thy deep eyes that greet

Their lucent-mirrored glimmerings, melt and  
meet

In glory there, to blind themselves a space!”

“Hush, O my heart! Thy vain hyperbole

Means naught; but take in both thy hands and  
turn

To thee this face of mine, and kiss my brow,

And after that mine eyes which cannot see

But only feel thy lips that thrill, and now

My mouth, and now—O God! thy kisses burn!”



---

## Hesperides.

---

### I

**N**OW once again the angry sun  
Wheels up the heaven his tireless way ;  
Once more we strangling herds of men  
Wake to our labours never-done,  
Rise up to toil another day.  
Down flares the heat on town and street,  
Wide-warping pillar, span and plinth ;  
Once more my burning, wearied eyes  
Within this monstrous labyrinth  
Meet the mad heat that stifles me,  
And O, my baffled spirit flies  
In dreams to thy green wood and thee,  
To thee!... To thee !...

## II

My pavement-wearied feet again  
Tread the rough streets whose ways are pain,  
Hot with the sun's last sullen beam,  
And yet—I dream !  
Dream when I wake, and at high, blinding Noon,  
Or when the moon  
Mocks the sad City in her sullen night  
That burns too bright !  
So sweet my visions seem  
That from this sordid smoke and dust I turn,  
Turn where the dim Wood-world calls out to me  
And where the forest-virgins I half see  
With green mysterious fingers beckoning !

Where vine-wreathed woodland altars sunlit  
burn,

Or Dryads weave their mystic ~~rounds~~ and sing,  
Sing high, sing low, with magic cadences  
That once the wild oaks of Dodona heard ;  
And every wood-note bids me burst asunder  
The bonds that hold me from the leaf-hid bird!  
I quaff thee, O Nepenthe ! Ah, the wonder  
Grows that there be who scorn not wealth and  
ease,

Who still will choose the street-life, rough and  
blurred,

Who will not quest you, O Hesperides ! . . .

### III

And now, and now. . . I feel the forest-moss !  
O, on these moss-beds let me lie with Pan,  
Twined with the ivy-vine in tendrilled curls !  
And I will hold all gold that hampers man  
But the base ashes of a barren dross !  
On with the love-dance of the pagan girls !  
The pagan girls with lips all rosy-red,  
With breasts up-girt and foreheads garlanded !  
With fair white foreheads nobly garlanded !  
With sandalled feet that weave the magic ring  
Now . . . let them sing,  
And I will pipe a song that all may hear,  
To bid them mind the time of my wild rhyme !  
Away ! Away ! Beware our mystic trees !  
Who will not quest you, O Hesperides ? . . .

#### IV

Great men of song, what-sing ye? Woodland  
meadows?

Rocks, trees and rills where sunlight glints to  
gold?

Sing ye the hills adown whose sides blue shadows  
Creep when the westering day is growing old?

Sing ye the brooks where in the purling shallows  
The small fish dart and gleam?

Sing ye the pale green tresses of the willows  
That stoop to kiss the stream?

Or sing ye burning streets and sweating toil  
Where we spawned swarms of men, unendingly,  
Above, below, in mart and workshop's moil  
Have quite forgot thee, O mine Arcady? . . .

---

# My Garden.

---

With a copy of "Sonnets of this Century."

---

**T**HIS little book, a Garden where the  
bloom  
And fragrance of an hundred years are  
pent,  
To thee, dear girl, at Christmas-tide is sent  
By one who breathes with love the sweet  
perfume  
Of such frail flowers. Let aye the world  
consume  
Itself with toil and labour—such are all  
Without the bounds of this my garden-wall,  
And I, in light, feel not nor heed their gloom.

Come thou into my Garden! Let me show  
Thee all the treasures that do lend it grace,  
These goodly Sonnets, standing in a row  
To tell of joy, tears, love,—life's madrigal;  
And, mistress of the pure enchanted place,  
Be thou the fairest Flower among them all! . . .

---

## Erinnerungen.

---

**S**CHWER ist mein Herz, und heute kann  
ich nicht

Mehr lesen—kann nicht denken, leiden  
mehr.

Aus jeder Ecke kommt ein Schatten her,  
Wie aus dem toten Himmel geht das Licht.  
Ich sinn' und sinn'—ich sehe ihn noch, wie er  
Vor langen Jahren zärtlich schaut' mich an  
Eh' unsere reine Liebe erst begann  
Langsam zu sterben, ich zu trauern sehr. . .

Schwer ist mein Herz. Aus seinen Ecken auch  
Kriechen die Schatten, schnell und  
schneller. Jetzt

Vernimmt mein müdes Ohr den ersten Hauch  
Der Winternacht . . . Es glimmert Strom und  
Wald

In dunkler Ferne . . . Dies vergeht zuletzt,  
Und alles endlich finster ist und kalt. . .

---

## The Battle Royal.

---

**T**HOU Battle-Royal ! Kings and gentlemen  
At arms, and lords have fought thee  
since the mists

Of time, back-rolling, show'd thy mimic lists  
And pigmy warriors, mazed and harried then  
As now in meshes of thy checkered strife—  
Unshielded Pawns, trim Knights and frowning  
Rooks

Stolid yet quick, and Bishops smug, with looks  
A-squint, and King with lame yet endless life.

Thou Battle Royal ! Years unnumbered soil  
Cards, draughts and dice with myrid grime-worn  
hands.

Thou, lov'd by dames and lords in all the lands  
Of this broad world art still the world's best  
play ;

Where, as in life, whilst others struggle, toil,  
And die, the imperious Queen controls the day !



---

# España.

---

“Que era, decidme, la nación que un día  
Reina del mundo proclamó el destino? . . .

*Quintana—Oda à España.*

---

WHERE now that Nation proud which  
Destiny

Once did proclaim this world's  
all conquering queen?

Where now that sceptre, that bright blazon seen  
That mark'd her mistress over land and sea?

A lost emprise, a shattered galleon she,  
Sails rent and hull agape that once have been  
World-powerful; her rotting masts careen  
With each dark surge of long-pent enmity.

On through sea's salty wastes the tempests  
spurn,

The waves rebuff her; lights no more there  
gleam

Nor vergies wave on her high carven beam.

Stilled is the sailor's jest, the skipper's song;

In swirling fogs of night she drives along

With Helmsman Death stark-frozen at the  
stern!....

---

## Love's Fear.

---

VIRGIN art thou and pure, amid a throng  
Of such sweet hallowed names as all  
men praise.

(Grown all too scant in these our latter days !)  
To holy hours of old dost thou belong ;  
Saint Agnès then had heard thine even-song,  
Nor left thee, darkling, in Earth's devious ways.  
Thou'rt one with that sweet sisterhood which  
raise

To "untouched Dian," all clear streams  
along,  
Their full-voiced anthem. Thou a Vestal  
art

At true-love's altar. Atala, and the Maid,  
And Mary all are sisters of thy blood !  
Thy very name is virgin ! . . . I, afraid,  
How shall I press my kisses on thy heart,  
Or loose the girdle of thy maidenhood ? . . .

---

## Longings.

---

" . . . Nessun maggior dolore  
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice  
Nella miseria. . ."

*Inferno, V, 121.*

FAR from the sea-girt City that I love,  
My wandering ways by care attended  
lie ;

Cold is the azure of this foreign sky,  
And strange these clustered stars that burn  
above.

Out from this loveless land would I remove  
To seek thy spring Pierian, never-dry,  
Thou thrice-crowned City ! Hear my fainting  
cry.

Let not my passionate longing fruitless prove !  
Would I once more might see the dome of  
gold

Burning aloft, beneath my native sky !  
The river, winding near my home of old,  
And once again to breathe before I die,  
The evening breeze, may it be granted me,  
In that fair city by the distant sea ! . . .

---

## The Eighth Ode of the Fourth Book of Horace.

---

TO C. MARTIUS CENSORINUS.

“Donarem pateras grataque commodus. . .”

**F**REELY to my companions would I give  
Beautiful bronzes, Censorinus, bowls  
And tripods, once a guerdon to the souls  
Of hardy Greeks; nor should'st thou bear  
away

The meanest of my gifts, could I but live  
Possessed of arts like those Parrhasius plied,  
Or Skopas, now depicting human clay  
And now a god, in liquid colors one  
In solid stone the other. But denied  
To me are equal powers; need hast thou none  
In mind or state for treasures like to these.  
Thou dost delight in songs, and such are mine  
To give, and fix a value to each song.  
Not marbles carved with public elegies,  
Whence to illustrious leaders still belong  
In dreamless death their praises half divine,  
Not the precipitate flights of Hannibal

Nor those retorted threats that wrought him  
shame,

Not impious Carthage and her flaming fall  
More highly show, than the Calabrian Muse,  
Glories of him who, having gained a name  
From prostrate conquered Africa, returned.  
Neither if writings should perchance refuse  
To herald forth what thou so well hast earned  
Wouldst thou have fitting praise. What were  
the son

Of Mars and Ilia, if in jealousy  
Silence had drowned those lofty merits won  
By Romulus? Through eloquence, through  
strength

And favor of all poets loved of fame,  
Aeacus hallowed is, from Stygian floods,  
To the fair Islands of the Blest at length.

The Muse forbids the worthy man to die ;  
She blesseth him with Heaven. Thus Hercules,  
Untiring victor, finds a place on high  
At Jove's desired feasts. Tyndareus' sons,  
Clear-shining stars, thus from the deepest seas  
Rescue the shattered ships. Thus Bacchus fair,  
Twining his temples with fresh vine-leaves  
green,

To fruitful issue brings the votaries' prayer.

---

## Ricordatevi Di Me !

---

(*Terza Rima.*)

**I**F ever thou shouldst cease to think of me  
With love, and turn thy soul's sweet  
warmth to ice—

(Stop not my mouth with kisses ! Change  
may be,

As all do know who take for their device  
A bleeding heart !)—If any change should seal  
To me the gates of uttermost Paradise,

And I should darkling fare, with no repeal,  
In company of them, that, love forsaken,  
Before cold shrines and at dead altars kneel,

Remember this—I bade thy heart awaken ;  
Here in this hand it lay a prisoner !

Thy first wild love-kiss from my lips was  
taken,

And with my breath thy first sighs mingled  
were !

Remember this—I loved thee well and long,  
Thou haven to me, a time-worn wanderer !

Then, though my voice be drowned in that  
clear song  
Of thy new love, and I forgotten be  
Or all-despised, think thou in my wrong  
Some good there was, some truth akin with  
thee,  
Some light half-seen, since I could tune a soul  
Virgin as thine to perfect harmony,  
And crown thy brow with Love's pure  
aureole !

---

## The Tower.

---

### I

**T**HERE lies a City of Unnumbered Dead  
Where paths entwine, where hills and  
valleys be,  
And still, black pools; the cypress mystically  
Shrouds those dark ways. There living souls  
may tread  
With but slow steps and rare. With slow  
steps, led  
By Love two lovers passed; they spake, and she  
Cast down her mystic eyes lest he might see  
In their vague depths the image of her dread.

A great round-tower of granite crowns that land.  
Thither they came, and now her starry eyes  
Were raised to his; that dread which wrought  
them ill  
Behind them with the frozen dead lay chill.  
Up the enchanted stairway hand in hand  
They passed, and issued forth to see the skies.



## II

And yet their sweetest moment did not seem  
That dizzying issue into tenuous light,  
Where the keen salt-sea wind that lashed their  
    height  
Drowned their love-quickenèd breath as in a  
    stream  
Of chill, on-rushing æther; not the gleam  
Of multitudinous Ocean, nor the bright  
Expanse of Earth could draw their dazzled  
    sight  
From the new glory of their passionate dream.

It was upon the tower's midmost stair  
At one dim diamond-window; both beguiled  
Paused in the gloom; she trembled like a child;  
His hot mouth found her mouth, her gold-twined  
    hair,  
And in her milk-white breast her heart beat  
    wild  
Beneath one burning kiss he printed there.

---

## Love's Prayer.

---

**W**HEN thy ripe lips in kisses mould to  
meet

Mine eager mouth—when thy full  
pulsing throat

Throbs with thy quickening life-breath—when  
the float

And tangle of thine ungirt hair, oh Sweet,  
Entwines us, breast to breast, the perfumed heat  
Of each wild sigh fans all my face aflame,  
And beat to beat our passionate hearts the same  
Responses cry, as we Love's creed repeat.

When in each other's arms, love-wearied, we  
Both nested safe in silken cushions warm

At Winter-evenfall entrancèd lie,  
Kissing but closer as we list the storm,  
Then pray we, midst our sweet antiphony  
But this—that love like ours may never die ! . . .

---

“ Combien J’ai Douce Sou-  
venance. . . ! ”

---

*(After Chateaubriand)*

OH sweet, how sweet old memories be  
Of one most lovely place, to me—  
My birthplace ! Sister, fair those days  
And free !

Oh France, be thou my love, my praise  
Always !

Our mother—hath thy memory flown ?—  
Beside our humble chimney-stone  
Pressed us against her heart, whilst you,  
Dear one,  
And I her white hair kissed anew,  
We two.

Sweet little sister, dost recall  
The stream that bathed the castle-wall ?  
The old round-tower whence came alway  
The call  
Of bells to banish night away  
At day ?

Dost thou recall the lake—how still !—  
Where swallows skimmed at their sweet will ?  
The reeds, swayed by the gentle air  
    Until  
The sun set on the waters there,  
    So fair ?

Oh, who will give me my Helène ?  
My mountains, my great oak again ?  
Their memory brings with all my days  
    Fresh pain ;  
My land shall be my love, my praise  
    Always !

---

## My Little Red Devil and I.

---

“The Prince of Darkness is a gentleman.”

*Twelfth Night.*

**M**Y little Red Devil upon my desk  
With a smile sardonic stands.  
He holds my pen with a patient air  
In his crooked, outstretched hands;  
The paint is worn from his hoof and horn  
And scratched is his curving tail,  
Yet he still holds on with a right good grace,  
A knowing look on his crafty face,  
And spirits that never fail.

So, what if his fingers are some of them gone,  
And twisted the horns on his head?  
His cheek still glows, and his aquiline nose  
Is a genuine devilish red;  
And his tail, beside, is a thing of pride,  
For it swings in a glorious sweep,  
With a graceful bend and a fork in the end  
That would cause a sinner his ways to mend,  
Or a saint, his vows to keep !

Though only a single eye has he  
The world and the flesh to view,  
(For the right is gone,) yet the other one  
Has fire enough for two.  
So his eyes ill-mated an air jocund  
To his wrinkled features lend,  
And to see his look you would almost think  
That he was tipping a devilish wink  
To his old, familiar friend.

Oh, he is a jolly good fellow, in truth,  
With a wit that is ever new,  
And a heart like which, in this world of ours,  
There are only, I fear, too few.  
And he doesn't complain when I come in late  
Or keep him awake o' nights,  
So I have respect for his comfort, too,  
By giving the Devil his utmost due,  
And the whole of his royal rights.

To everyone else but myself his smile  
Is fixed as the solid stone ;  
He changes the curve of his parted lips  
For me, and for me alone.  
So when I'm in luck he wishes me joy  
With his whole Satanic heart,  
But when I've the blues, it seems he would say  
"Brace up, for the luck will be better some  
day !"

And my cares like the wind depart.

So my Devil and I are the best of friends  
In a sort of a cynical way,  
For he watches me out of his only eye  
As I work at my desk each day,  
And the idle verses I write in hope,  
He quietly smiles to see,  
For he knows full well that at first or last,  
Like Biblical bread on the waters cast,  
They will surely come back to me. . .

And at night, as I sit by the ruddy hearth,  
With my pipe and my book, alone,  
Or lazily muse by the embers red  
When the light of the fire is gone,  
I think of him sometimes, and hope in my  
heart

I never shall see the day  
That sets me adrift from my little friend  
And puts to our sociable life an end,  
By taking my Devil away! . . .



---

## The College Pump.

---

**I**N Summertime, beneath high-vaulted shade,  
In Winter, frosted all with glistening rime,  
In chanting Spring, or Autumn's sullen time  
When sodden leaves their tawny beds have  
made—

Alike when spendthrift Sun his gold afar  
Downthrows, or earth lies shrouded all in cold,  
By evil men and good, by young, by old,  
In every season blessed thy waters are.

Grandsires and children drink with solaced  
eyes.

Dazed revellers early come with thirsty shame  
Beneath gray glimmering of the sober skies.  
All day men pause; and some, at eventide,  
Poets, have hallowed with their touch thy name,  
And with their lips thy waters sanctified.

---

## I Disputanti.

---

**L**A MIA RAGIONE sento disputare  
Col Core sempre—"Dopo crudel Morte,"  
L'una dice, "con la sua man sì forte  
Il lume della vita spegni, io andare  
Nel Buio credo..." L'altro poi; "Amare  
È non morir. Il mio alto Fattore  
Non puo voler che questo dolce fiore  
Del mio affetto muoia..." "Io parlare  
Del 'Credo' tuo non so; ma non c'è vita  
Futura non c'è Dio. La Cagione  
È l'Caso, solamente..." "È l'Amore,  
L'Amore, quella via giammai smarrita,  
Perduta mai..." Sempre così col Core  
Io sento disputar la mia Ragione...

---

“Quand Vous Serez Bien  
Vieille...”

---

Ronsard.

**T**HOU (being sometime old), by candle-  
light

Close crouched by the fire, spinning and  
mumbling o'er

The past, shalt croon my verses, marvelling  
more

That Ronsard sang thy praise, what time thy  
bright

First beauty was. Then, hearing thee recite  
Such thing, thy drowsy maid, though weary-sore  
And nodding off to sleep, shall wake before  
My name and thine, with blessings infinite.

I under earth shall be, a soul in vain  
Seeking its rest where myrtle shadows play ;  
Thou by the hearthstone cringe, outworn and  
blear,

My love regretting and thy cold disdain.  
Live ! an thou hear'st me ! Wait no other day !  
Gather life's roses ere thy night be near !

---

# One Summer Night.

---

The Fens, June, 1897.

**F**AR in the west the crescent moon hung  
low,

A filmy haze about it faintly spread,  
And one bright star, a point of silver light  
Seem'd comrade to it. Whispering Zephyrus  
Tender as love, stole through the list'ning leaves,  
Making a pleasant murmur in the night,  
And touched the glimmering waters with his  
breath.

The ripples came unnumbered to the shore,  
Soft-murmuring through the sedge and fenny  
reeds

With that same whisp'ring voice that Pan once  
heard

What time he first made pipes to sound the  
praise

Of her whom he had lost. The water's breast  
Was banded with a path of shimmering light  
Broken by the ever-restless waves, which made  
A thousand points of liquid brilliancy.

And in the beauty of still, hallowed night  
Beside the plashing sandy shore, we met  
In happiness. Each whispering of the wind,  
Each tremulous leaf, and even the sleeping  
flowers

Seem'd breathing "Love" in tender unison,  
And the sphered star in Heaven sang that word.

Dost thou remember how from out the grass,  
I plucked a gentle flow'ret by that shore,  
—Anemone some call it, wind-flower some,  
Sprung from the crimson of Adonis' blood  
Where he was slain,—and how I softly said,  
"O thou belovèd, beauty is a rose  
Growing in Life's fair garden, by the spring  
Of deathless Purity, and that clear dew  
Which lies within its sweetness hid, is Love."

Dost thou recall? And so it chance, I pray  
Though we be parted, now and evermore,  
Think sometimes of that night, and fancy still  
We see the summer landscape, glimmering,  
Lit by the steady-burning lights of heaven,  
We scent the sweetness of the warm young  
night,

We hold the tender wind-flower, and still hear  
The murmuring ripples on the sounding shore.

---

## A Une Fleurette

---

**F**LEURETTE! Sur sa poitrine si blanche  
et belle

Combien sens-tu de joie! Quel insensé bon  
heur

Que de t'y prélasser doucement toute une heure!  
Sur ses seins arrondis, là, serrée tout contre elle,  
Tu respires son être. Une volupté telle  
Que moi j'en sentirais, là, si près de son coeur,  
Sur ces deux petits monts de neige, heureuse  
fleur

Tu ressens . . . Ta mort, même, ô fleurette,  
est un ciel !

Dieu ! Que je suis las de tout ce monde de  
peine

Et de ses vanités et de ses maux ! Toujours  
Te veut mon âme inquiète. Donne-moi ô  
Reine

Du royaume désert de mon coeur, mes amours,  
Comme à cette fleurette ta poitrine aimée  
Pour y dormir toujours, à toute éternité ! . . .

---

# Blest Be the Day.

---

THE XXXIX<sup>TH</sup> SONNET  
OF PETRARCH  
TO HIS LADY LAURA.

He blesseth all the divers causes and effects of his love toward her.

**B**LEST be the day, the season and the year  
The hour and moment, and the countrie  
fair,

Ay, even that very spot and instant where  
Those two sweet eyne did first to me appear  
Which since have left me—yet that sorrow  
dear

Of Love still blessèd be, like as the bow  
And shafts wherewith sweet Love did work  
me woe

With wounds most deep in this my bosom  
here.

Blest be the many voices wherewithal  
I on my Lady's well-belovèd name  
Have called, and blest the sighs, the tears, the  
flame

Of my desire, and all my screeds designed  
To praise her—yet most blest my thoughts I  
call,

So hers that none but she may entrance find...

---

# “Mignonne Allons Voir Si La Rose....”

---

After Ronsard.

COME, sweet, away ! Come see the rose,  
Now that the day draws near its close,  
See whether it be faded grown—  
Whether at evening fall away  
Those leaves that opened to the day,  
Or dies their blush, so like thine own.

Thou seest, dear love, its beauties pass,  
Its wasted petals fall, alas !,  
In one short hour. It may not bide.  
Unkind in truth is Mother Earth  
Since dawn gives such a flower its birth  
And Death draws nigh at eventide.

So, sweet my darling, hear my voice,  
I bid thee, in thy youth, rejoice !  
Before thy fragile petals close  
Gather thy blossoms whilst thou may,  
With time they fall and fade away  
As droops at night the withered rose.



---

## Religion.

---

**F**ROM that crude savage who, on Libyan  
sands,

Graves his barbaric god, and kneels thereto ;  
From those mysterious, matriarchal bands,  
Eating strange flesh their spirit to renew  
With fabled ancestors ; from Austral lands  
To Hyperborean solitudes, each age  
Hath sought to fend its head from God's dull  
rage

And stay the cosmic circling with clasped  
hands.

Yea, we no less ! Doth man dare look away  
Bravely as fits a man ? With fear-sealed eyes,  
Filling the spheres with vast, vague mysteries,  
Man still must hearken some great angel's  
wing,

Still bow to man-made God, still seek to stay  
With clasped hands the cosmic circling . . .

---

## The Great Woods Were Awakening.

---

“ Les grands bois s'éveillaient ; il faisait jour à peine. . . ”

*Pradel.*

**T**HE great woods were awakening. A new  
day  
Was freshly born; enchanted birds  
among

The clear green foliage raised their matin song  
To praise the morning-glow. Thought-sad I  
lay

Beneath a gnarlèd oak; despite that gay  
Fresh springtide, all my soul was suffering.  
I waited her, and lo! the rapid wing  
Of fluttering footsteps brushed the dew away.

Drunken with pleasure in a long-locked kiss  
Our breath enmingled. Tightening in my arms  
That beautiful, supple form, her heart's alarms  
I stifled on my heart. The thicket drew  
Close over us, the sun grew dark, I wis,  
Earth faded, Heaven opened to our view. . .

---

## I-N-R-I.

---

WITH bleeding brows beneath a thorn-  
meshed crown,

With swollen hands fast bound in leathern  
thong,

I saw One stand amid a surging throng  
That spat on Him and strove to drag Him down.  
On His bowed back the ridg'd welts scarlet lay  
Traced long with bloody dew. His haggard face  
Was streaked with sweat and blood, as in that  
place

He silent stood and silent gazed away.

Once more that One I saw, still garlanded  
With mocking thorns. Through either bleed-  
ing hand

And through both patient feet a mangling nail  
Was driven deep. Some cursed, some laughed,  
cried "Hail,

God crucified! . . ." And some crouched low in  
dread

And wept, and thunderous darkness filled the  
land . . .

---

## Fayre Robyn.\*

---

FAYRE ROBYN he rad owre the brae,  
Hys steede he was a wighty browne ;  
The countrie a' lay at hys back,  
Hys eyen were to the tounne.

Bauld Robyn owre the brae did ride,  
Nor yet a llorde nor yerle was he,  
But mae than ony nobleman  
Hys fayreiness was to see.

And Robyn rad adoun the brae,  
And cam yth High Strete ;  
A gentil pace hys horse hadde  
Whych was baith goode and meete.

The Shyreff's dauter sate yth wane  
And luikt out o' the window round,  
Therebye Robyn rad and sang,  
A braw and pleasant sound.

---

\*This North Country ballad probably dates from about 1525. It was found in a fragmentary condition in a copy of the 1684 edition of Abraham Cowley's *Poetical Works*, and is here for the first time completed and made public.

She luikt upon hys goodely forme  
He luikt a' in hir deepe blue yee;  
Robyn doft hys bonnet; a rose to hym  
She dropit for reple.

Leeve may o meete me bye the yett,  
And a' taegither we will flie.  
I'll meete thee when the nyghte be com,  
So ryde again soone bye.

She's met hym when the nyghte was com,  
And a' taegither they hae fled,  
Now gin the Shyreff com, most sure  
They maun baith be dead.

The hae na gane a league, a league,  
A league nor barely ane,  
When Robyn saith now by my bloode  
They're reasin a' the toon.

They hae na gane anither league,  
A league nor barely twa,  
When they do heare a not ffar off  
Some bernies that them pursue.

The be com unto a great roke;  
Ye faith it was baith deepe and wide.  
The Shyreff's bernies byn sonygh  
The maun plunge them in the tyde.

They've plunged them in the cauld water,  
The spait was ful swift bye;  
Now byr Ladye, quoth the may,  
Methinks we baith maun dee.

They've plunged them into the cauld roke;  
The hors they rade sank down.  
A' yth black water then  
The baith were neere to droune.

He bare hir firme in hys left arme  
And swam a' wi' his right:  
When the cam to yearth againe  
The bernies byn in sight.

The bernies rad the roke along  
And saw Robyn's bonnet on the tide.  
Now be the baith to bottom gane,  
Ther may the bide!

The Shyreff turned him home again,  
Turned back and went awaie,  
But Robyn and His Ladye ffayre  
Were wed the nextin daye.

---

## Coeur de Femme.

---

I CANNOT think that woman love as we  
Love them, with soul and body, breath and  
blood,

And spent soul tortured in the strangling flood  
Of passion's tense oblivious agony ;

I cannot think the kiss She gives to me  
Thrills her white body as it pulses mine,  
Or in Love's chalice of ambrosial wine  
She drowns all things which were or are to be.

We please them with our smile, for they are  
vain

And Love a flatterer is ; they joy to fling  
A rose-entwinèd leash about their slave ;  
Purple and gold they take, and winnowed grain  
Of gems from Hesperus' isle,—all men will  
bring ;

But *Love*—lies bleeding by a woman's grave!





BALLADES & RONDEAUX

---

## Ballade of the Sick.

---

CAN these be men, that lie so still, so  
white?

Whose hopeless eyes yearn things they  
cannot say?

Who scarce can part the daytime from the night  
Save that the night drags heavier than the day?  
Have these a listening God, to whom they pray?  
God hears not such, nor cares, right well know I,  
For nameless things I learn through long delay,  
On this strait bed where I perforce must lie.

I learn of life-in-death; I learn the blight  
Of seeing my soul and body slow decay,  
Hemmed in with white-walled nothingness. The  
flight

Of vagrant flies, the sunlight's sluggish way  
Of crawling on—yes, even the shadows gray  
Help tease the laggard moments loathly by.  
Since great are none, small things my pain allay  
On this strait bed where I perforce must lie.

I learn to see, nor shrink from any sight.  
That deathmask yonder—carrion mass of clay—  
Hath but a bleeding scrap of lung, to fight  
The ghastly death that knows nor truce nor stay.  
The Polack, old through pains that tear and flay,  
Will go next sennight—how these swart folk  
die!

Last week they found one, waxen-cold for aye,  
On this strait bed where I perforce must lie.

ENVOY

“This too will pass!” my comfort be alway.  
Hell is forgot of them that chant on high;  
Yet have I seen such things no man should say,  
On this strait bed where I perforce must lie . . .

---

## Three Rondeaux from Charles d'Orléans.

---

### I.

LE TEMPS A LAISSIÉ SON MANTEAU.

**Y**E TIME hath lefte his mantle fall  
Of biting windes and cold and rain,  
And well hath dight himself again  
In sunlight shining cleare on all ;  
Creatures be none, nor birds, but call  
One to another their own refrain :  
Ye time hath lefte his mantle fall  
Of biting windes and cold and rain.  
Fountaines and brooks moste musical  
Their fayrest dress to wear be fain ;  
With silvern drops and golde, amain,  
Each newlie decks hymself withall ;  
Ye time hath lefte his mantle fall.

## II.

DIEU! QU'IL LA FAIT BON RE-  
GARDER!

Ye Gods! How good on her to gaze,  
All-gracious, fayre and sweet of mien;  
Such virtues be in her y-seen  
All men stand ready with their praise.

Who then could weary of her ways?  
Her beautie flowereth ever green;  
Ye Gods! How good on her to gaze,  
All-gracious, fayre and sweet of mien.

This side or yon of Ocean's maze  
Nor dame nor damozel, I ween  
So wholly parfaict yet hath been—  
A dream, to think on her always:  
Ye Gods! How good on her to gaze! . . .

### III.

#### LES FOURRIERS D'ESTE SONT VENUS.

Ye maides in waiting all be here  
Of Summertide, to deck her hall,  
To hang her arras, woven all  
With golden flowers and verdure clear;  
To stretch her carpet far and near  
Of soft green moss o'er stone and wall;  
Ye maides in waiting all be here  
Of Summertide, to deck her hall.

Hearts that but late were cold and drear  
Now (prais'd be God!), their joy recall;  
Come, come away, with snow-wrapped pall!  
Out on thee, Winter, old and blear!  
Ye maides in waiting all be here . . .

---

# The Song of the Poor.

---

“O Rois qui serez jugés à votre tour.”

*Banville.*

---

**O** KINGS, who must yourselves be judged  
one day,  
Think of the wretched poor that ever  
stand  
On Famine's edge, and pity them! They  
pray  
For you and love you; drudging till your land,  
And, toiling, fill your coffers—they withstand  
Your enemies; yet damned on earth they fare,  
Woe infinite and endless pain they bear;  
Not one there is but knows the keen distress  
Of cold, of heat, and rain and ceaseless care,  
For to the poor all things are bitterness.

Even as a beast of burden, scourged amain,  
The wretched peasant lives his hopeless life.

Does he but pluck his grapes, or dare refrain  
An hour from drudging toil, and choose a wife  
To share the sorrow of his unequal strife,—  
His lord, a savage bird of prey, draws nigh ;

Relentless comes, and, saying “ Here am I ! ”  
Seizes what little he may chance possess.  
Nothing avails the vassal’s pleading cry,  
For to the poor all things are bitterness.

Pity the wretched jester in your halls !  
Think on the fisher when the black waves curl  
Their frothing tongues, and crackling light-  
ning falls  
On his frail boat ! Pity the blue-eyed girl,



Lowly and dreaming, as her young hands whirl  
The droning wheel! Think of a mother's  
pain  
And torment, as she weeps and seeks in vain,  
Holding her fair dead child in blind distress,  
To warm its cold heart back to life again.  
O, to the poor all things are bitterness.

ENVOI.

Mercy for these thine own, oh Prince, I cry!  
Peace to thy vassal 'neath his darkened sky,  
Peace to the pale nun, praying passionless,  
And to all such as lowly live and die—  
For to the poor all things are bitterness.

---

## Kyrielle.

---

**N**AY, not for me the toil and strife  
Of 'Change, of war, of public life—  
Than go with Fame, I'd rather stay  
With books, and pipe and dear Edmée.

A little garden? . . . Well, perchance,  
If weedless flowers, self-raising plants  
Would grow therein, where I might stray  
With books, and pipe and dear Edmée.

Horses and dogs? . . . Yes, I'd not mind  
Were I but ever sure to find  
An hour of peace, at close of day  
With books, and pipe and dear Edmée.

Travel? . . . Of course! The Frank might stare,  
The Russian rave, the Turk despair;  
I none the less would them survey  
With books, and pipe and dear Edmée.

But homeward-longing ever, I  
Still for our low-built house would sign,  
Where I might peaceful be for aye  
With books, and pipe and dear Edmée.

Old books and many, pipe not new,  
Edmée all mine, forever, too,  
I'd love them all till I were grey,  
But best and dearest, dear Edmée! . . .

---

## Rondeau.

---

**T**HY breast, dear Doris, ever be  
All-hallowed, consecrate to me,  
A rest where this my heart may go  
Whatever tempests beat and blow ;  
A shelter that my soul may see  
Though all the world speak grievously.  
Warmed in its softness, dear, by thee,  
My love shall sometime come to know  
Thy breast.

And sometime, too, so reverently  
Thou couldst not, Sweet, refuse my plea.  
I'll kiss the dimple that I know  
Betwixt those little hills of snow  
Waits, till my lips press passionately  
Thy breast ! . . .

---

## When I First Saw Edmée.

---

(Villanelle.)

**W**HEN I first saw Edmée  
She was clad all in blue.  
A cold colour, you say?

Yes, I thought so, that day,  
And my hopes were but few  
When I first saw Edmée;  
Now, of azure array

I've quite altered my view—  
A cold colour, you say?

Is the sky cold in May?

How little I knew,  
When I first saw Edmée.

All the sweetness there lay

In the shade that means "true!"...  
A cold colour, you say?

Ah, my heart's quite away.

The sad moment I rue  
When I first saw Edmée.

A *cold* colour, you say?...

---

## My Old Coat.

---

“ Sois-moi fidèle, ô pauvre habit que j'aime.”

*Béranger.*

---

**B**E ever true to me, thou well-loved coat,  
For we are growing old together now,  
These ten long years I've brushed thee  
every day

Myself; great Socrates the Sage, I trow  
Had not done better ! And if remorseless Fate  
Gnaw with sharp tooth that poor, thin cloth of  
thine,

Resist, say I, with calm philosophy,  
Let us not part, thou dear old friend of mine !

How I recall—(for even now I'm bless'd  
With a good memory!), that glad day of days  
When first I wore thee ! It was at my feast ;  
My friends to crown my glory, sang thy praise.  
Thy poverty and age that honor me  
Have not yet made their early love decline—  
They're ready still to feast us once again.  
Let us not part, thou dear old friend of mine !

Have I perfumed thee with those floods of  
musk,  
Which the vain fop exhales before his glass?  
Have I exposed thee, waiting audience,  
To scorn and laughter of the great who pass?  
Just for a paltry ribbon, all fair wide France  
Was rent apart, but simply I combine  
A few sweet wild-flowers for thine ornament.  
Let us not part, thou dear old friend of mine! . . .

Fear nevermore those days of struggling vain,  
When the same lowly destiny was ours;  
Those days of pleasure intermix'd with pain,  
Of sunny sky o'ercast by April showers.  
Soon comes the night, for evening shadows fall,  
And soon forever must I my coat resign.  
Wait yet a little, together we'll end it all,  
And never part, thou dear old friend of mine! . . .

---

## A Pantoum.

---

**H**ERE I must lie on my bed,  
Longing for health again.  
Crazy thoughts whirl in my head,  
Mix with that endless pain.

Longing for health again—  
Dreams of walking once more  
Mix with that endless pain.  
Lying in bed is a bore!

Dreams of walking once more,  
After these months of repression,  
Lying in bed is a bore  
Past any means of expression!

After these months of repression,  
To wander, and study, and revel . . .  
Past any means of expression,  
Pain, you're a villainous devil!

To wander, and study, and revel,  
To eat, drink, and live like a man . . .  
(Pain, you're a villainous devil! . . .)  
With never a doctor to ban—



To eat, drink, and live like a man,  
To wander in meadow and wood,  
With never a doctor to ban  
Those things that I know to be good . . .

To wander in meadow and wood,  
With Someone, enjoying October,  
Those things that I know to be good,  
The sky, be it sunny or sober.

With Someone, enjoying October,  
To see the gay trees and the hills,  
The sky, be it sunny or sober,  
With a curse on all doctors and pills . . .

To see the gay trees and the hills,  
Hope is quick faded and fled.  
With a curse on all doctors and pills,  
Here I must lie on my bed ! . . .

---

## When Doris Deigns.

---

**W**HEN Doris deigns to gaze on me  
All happy thoughts be mine ;  
Her eyes are two twin stars, I wis,  
Bright in my soul they shine ;  
No earth-born flower one half so fair  
As she, no joy can aught compare  
With my sweet fire of love, perdie,  
When Doris deigns to gaze on me !

When Doris deigns to smile on me  
The whole world brighter grows ;  
A clearer azure takes the sky,  
A deeper blush the rose ;  
The circling lark upon the wing  
A sweeter, purer song doth sing,  
And just a bit of Heav'n I see,  
When Doris deigns to smile on me !

# THE YEAR

---

# Spring.

---

## MAY EVENING.

**S**ILENCE and peace. The warm, love-  
bringing Night

From the pure zenith soft and slow descend-  
ing

Lulls the sweet air to rest, with the day's ending,  
Save where the dark bat wheels his fickle flight.  
Deep glows the rosy-golden West, still bright,  
Beyond the plummy toss of elms down-bending,  
Whilst on the close-cut lawns, blurring and  
bending,

Tall chapel-windows cast their ruddy light.

Now the clear blue of the mid dome of heaven  
Darkens, immeasurably deep and still.

That one full star which ushers in the even  
Burns in rapt glory o'er the steadfast spire;  
And the Night-angel strews at his sweet will  
The silvern star-dust of the heavenly choir.

---

## Summer.

---

### AUGUST RAIN.

**D**EAD is the day, and through the list'ning  
leaves

The wind-dirge sighs. Sad at my dim-  
lit pane

I darkling sit to hear the pattering rain  
And pebbly drip that plashes from the eaves.  
Far in the misty fields loll sodden sheaves,  
Whilst every wheel-mark in the ruddy lane  
Leads down its trickling rivulet to drain  
Marsh-meadows where the knotted willow  
grieves.

Gray afternoon to dusk hath given place,  
And dusk to silent darkness falls again.

Listless, to see the sad earth veil her face,  
I watch the miry fields, the swollen rills,  
And, farther, through my glimmering window-  
pane,

The rain-swept valley and the fading hills . . .

---

## Autumn.

---

### NOVEMBER IN CAMBRIDGE.

**E**VEN in her mourning is the College fair,  
With burial robes of scarlet leaves and  
gold

That flicker down in misty morning cold  
Or fall reluctant through gray evening air.  
The Gothic elms rise desolately bare ;  
A clinging flame the twisted ivy crawls  
Its blood-red course athwart the time-worn walls  
And spreads its crimson arras everywhere.

High noon brings some wan ghost of summer,  
still ;

Fresh stand the rose-trees yet, the lawns show  
green

With leaves inlaid, and still the pigeons fly  
Round sun-warm gables where they court and  
preen ;

But evenfall comes shuddering down, a-chill,  
And bare black branches fret the leaden sky.

---

## Winter.

---

### HAMPTON HOLIDAYS.

**L**AST comes December with his ruffian  
wind

Whirled from the maelstrom of the polar  
sea

To sweep our mighty hill in mockery  
Of such enshrouding snows as would be kind  
And wrap their frozen mother. Stiffly lined  
Through thin and crackling ice the leaves lie  
stark

As hoar Caina's ice-locked souls, and dark  
In the dark air the branches toss and grind.

Then dawns another day when winds are still ;  
From our frost-flashing village on the hill  
We greet the laggard sun, and far below  
All down the valley see the silver spread,  
Save where the dim fir-forest's pungent bed  
Lies thatched by tufted pine-plumes bright with  
snow.





MORS OMNIUM VICTOR

---

## Gunga Din in Hell.

---

"An' I'll get a swig in Hell from Gunga Din!"

*Kipling.*

**G**REEN crawling slime, that bubbles clotted  
blood;  
White wraiths of fetid steam that rise  
and curl,  
And blood-red mist, convolving in a swirl  
Of lurid heat, o'er that putrescent flood;  
And under all, a seething, rotting mud—  
Torn souls that once were men—flayed, bleed-  
ing souls,  
Souls drenched with gore from gangrenous  
bullet-holes,  
Green, sightless eyes—and blood, and blood,  
and blood!

Lo! Gunga Din! He cometh smeared with  
gore  
That dribbles from cleft forehead to the skin  
Of putrid drink, one black foot on Hell's shore,  
One in the slime. A flayed hand toward him  
grasps,  
And one blind, shattered head that bleeds for sin  
Bloats forth its purple tongue in strangling gasps.

---

## Cui Bono?

---

**N**AY, vex me not with dead theologies,  
With creeds outworn and vain polemic  
strife ;

To solve the riddles of some future life  
Why chill my soul with stark philosophies ?  
What then to me is Aristoteles,  
Plato, or he who had the shrewish wife  
(Small blame to her !), or Pyrrho's doubtings, rife  
With contradiction's maziest subtleties ?

Only one thing is sure—they all are dead ;  
Sere theologians, wranglers of the schools,  
Philosophers and creedsmen have surcease  
From war, their dust no better than the fools'  
Wherewith 'tis mingled undistinguishèd.

So, vex me not, but go your ways in peace . . .

---

## The Bride-Bed.

---

SHE died and by her bed I sat all night.  
I had no tears ; it was o'er soon to weep  
In those first hours ; my heart was cleft  
too deep

For pain to harbor there. A waning light  
From the old moon englorified her bright  
And unadornèd hair, a heavy braid  
Across her breast. I watched her, unafraid  
To warm that leaden hand so waxen-white.

This was her Bride-bed—Death her lover was  
As she had promised I sometime should be.  
She lay entwined in his arms, and I  
Kept watch, and a great cold came over us . . .  
At last the untroubled stars that gazed on me  
Waxed pale and faded in the morning sky.

---

## Dead Loves.

---

**L**ONG summer nights with moon that yearn-  
eth down —

On endless passion, through uncouth  
years,

On flames of love more hot than all those tears  
Of ardent pain it worketh aye can drown ;  
Long summer nights in vast Assyria's town,  
At white-walled Athens, in imperial Rome,  
Or midst dim Northern forests, by the foam  
Of seas unsailed ere Arthur won renown.

Moonlight and leafshade—nights full sweet and  
long :

“ O Love, my love, how white thy breast ! Thy  
kiss

Upon my mouth, how mad ! ” — “ And thou, how  
strong

Thine arms ! I fear thy passion ! ” — “ Tell me,  
must

Not Time and Death bow down to love like  
this ? . . . ”

Now, even their graves are crumbled into dust.

---

## Death, the Friend.

---

**F**ULL long these dreary weeks of dule I  
spend

On this my narrow bed of bitter pain.  
Alike to me are sunshine, cloud or rain,  
The day's beginning or its sombre end ;  
Even sleep itself doth little comfort lend,  
For in vast dreams the torment comes again  
Vague and distorted by my feverish brain  
Until I wake and long for Death the Friend.

Death ! I do fear that empty, breathless Night  
Thou bringest, not the sweat and agony,  
The struggling breath, the terror or the sight  
Of Earth and all my being leaving me ;  
For couldst thou promise an awakening—  
Then, Death, enfold me with thy shadowy  
wing ! . . .

---

## La Jeune Fille.

---

“ Elle était bien belle, le matin,  
sans atours !

**H**OW fair, at dawn, how simply did she go,  
Watching her new-born garden flowrets  
thrive,

Spying her bees in their ambrosial hive,  
Ling'ring beside each hedge and hawthorn row !

How fair at eventide lead on the maze  
Of the mad dance, whilst in her massy hair  
Sapphires and roses woven crowned more fair  
That face illumined by the torches' blaze !

How fair was she beneath her pure soft veil,  
Outfloating wide upon the listening night ;  
Silent we stood and far, to watch that sight,  
Happy to glimpse her in the starlight pale.

How fair was she ! Each day some sweetness  
gave,  
Some vague dear hope, pure thoughts and free  
from care.

Love, love was all she lacked, to grow more fair.  
Peace ! . . . Through the fields they bear her to  
the grave ! . . .

---

## Lucie.

---

Mes chers amis, quand je mourrai,  
Plantez un saule au cimetière.  
J'aime son feuillage éploré,  
La paleur m'en est douce et chère,  
Et son ombre sera légère  
A la terre où je dormirai.

*Alfred de Musset*

**D**EAR friends belovèd, when I die,  
Plant near my grave a willow-tree.  
I love its pale, down-drooping leaves,  
Its grace is sweet and dear to me,  
And light its tender shade will be  
Upon the green earth where I lie. . .

One night we were alone and by her side  
I sat, she drooped her head and as a-dream  
Over the spinet let her fair hand glide.  
So soft the murmur was it scarce could seem  
More than a zephyr whispering in the reeds,  
Soft moving lest the birds, warm-nested there  
Should hear and wake. The soft, voluptuous  
air

Of that sweet summer night breathed forth to us  
From flowery chalices beside the glimmering  
stream.



Far in the silent grove the chestnut-trees  
And ancient oaks swayed their sad branches  
slow ;

We sat and, listening to the amorous breeze,  
Through the half-opened casement let the low  
Sweet breath of Spring float in. The winds  
were still,

The plain deserted. All alone we were  
And very young... Lucie was blonde and pale  
And pensive. As I musing gazed on her  
No sweeter eyes than hers e'er pierced the deep  
Of purest heaven, or mirrored back its blue.  
I with her beauty drunken was ; in all  
The world I loved but her, and yet so true  
So pure she was I loved her as one loves  
A sister, in all innocence. We two  
Sat silent and alone ; my hand touched hers,  
I watched the dreams upon her face and knew  
In my own soul how strong to heal distress  
Are those twin signs of peace and happiness,  
Youth in the heart, youth mirrored on the brow.  
The moon, uprising in the cloudless skies,  
With silver fret-work flooded her, and now  
Her smile became an angel's smile ; she sang,  
Seeing her image shining in mine eyes.

. . . . .

Daughter of sorrow, Harmony ! Harmony !  
Sweet speech for love by Nature set apart !  
To us thou camest from Italy—to her  
From Heaven. Sweet language of the heart,  
In thee alone that maiden, Thought, afraid  
And hurt by even a passing cloud, may speak,  
Yet keep her modest veil, and sheltered be.  
Who knows the mysteries that a child may hear  
And utter in thy sighs divine, like thee  
Born of the air he breathes, sweet as his voice,  
And sad as his sad heart ? A glance, a tear  
Is seen, yet all the rest is mystery  
Unknown to the careless world, like that of  
    waves,  
Of night, or of the unfathomed wilderness...  
We were alone and sad ; I looked on her.  
The dying echo of her song seemed still  
To vibrate in our souls. All passionless  
Drooping upon my heart, she leaned her head.  
The cry of Desdemona didst thou hear  
In thee, dear girl ? I know not—only this,  
That thou didst weep, and on thine all-adored  
Sweet mouth in sadness let me press mine own ;  
Thy sorrow was it that received my kiss...

So kissed I thee, all cold and colourless ;  
So, two short months being sped, wert thou  
Laid in the grave ; so didst thou fade in death  
Oh my chaste flower ! And thy dying was  
A smile as sweet as thy fair life had been.  
God took thee pure as when He gave thee breath.

. . . . .

Sweet mystery of the home of innocence,  
Songs, dreams of love, laughter and childish  
words,  
And thou, all-conquering charm, unknown and  
mild,

Yet strong to make even Faustus pause before  
The sill of Marguerite at thy command,  
Where are you all? Peace to thy soul, oh child!  
Profoundest peace be to thy memories !  
Farewell ! On summer nights thy fair white  
hand  
Will rest no more upon the ivory keys...

. . . . .

Dear friends belovèd, when I die,  
Plant near my grave a willow-tree.  
I love its pale, down-drooping leaves,  
Its grace is sweet and dear to me,  
And light its tender shade will be.  
Upon the green earth where I lie. . . .

---

## Luctus in Morte Passeris.

---

“Lugete, O Veneres Cupidenesque, et quantum est hominum  
venustiorum.”

*C. Valerius Catullus.*

**I** BID you all, ye Loves and Cupids, mourn,  
With what of pitying kindness men may  
know.

The sparrow of my little maid forlorn  
Ay, even my sweetheart's sparrow, cherished so,  
(Loved like her very eyes, ah heavy woe !)  
Is dead. Full sweet was he, and knew her well  
As she her mother knew, nor long would stray  
From her fair breast, save here to hop, or there ;  
His pretty pipings were for her alway.  
Yet now he wings the shadowy gloom of Hell,  
Whence none return to breathe Earth's pleasant  
air.

But curses on thee, dark and evil shade  
So to engulf all things that lovely be !  
Thou'st robbed her sparrow from my little maid ;  
(Alas the crime, the sparrow stark and dead !)  
And now with swollen eyes, because of thee  
She weeps, alack, nor will be comforted.

---

## Death in December.

---

### I.

WITH roses will I strew our bed  
Where all thine own thou madest me ;  
With rose-weaths I entwine thy head  
So dear, so dead.

This is Love's inmost place, where we  
Learned and with madness learned again  
And knew Love's passionate agony  
That wasteth me.

Now is thy room and mine Death's room,  
And this our bed (O burning kiss !)  
Is made Death's icy bed. The tomb  
Shrouds it in gloom.

. . . . .

### II.

The snow beats up about the pane  
Where once we watched the August night,  
And wild mad winds drive on amain  
Across the plain.

. . . . .

### III.

Alone! . . . Alone? Beneath my heart  
Fainting I feel our new life beat,  
Where our lives, joined, though dead thou art,  
Share each a part.

On thy clear temples, bleeding-red  
The rose-wreaths twine, the flowers die.  
With roses do I deck our bed  
Where thou liest dead.

---

## The Royal Council.

---

(To the Peruvian Mummies in the Peabody Museum at  
Cambridge.)

**B**OWED be three time-gnawed heads in  
thoughts profound

On crackling breast, on fleshless hands, on  
knees,

Sunk in the depths of endless reveries

Whilst foolish sun and fretful earth spin round.

By night they counsel, argue, plan, expound  
And hold high court as once by tropic seas ;

By day they rightly take their royal ease

As fitteth those whom Death no more can  
hound.

Sage King, and ye two Councillors of State,  
We look on you with ignorant, living eyes.

Ye fear no death who be already dead—

Time pricks you not, nor haste. Ye sit and  
wait,

Each thoughtful, passionless and very wise,

With shrivelled bones and parchment-cov-  
ered head . . .



---

## Carmen Mortis.

---

**T**HIS is the Song of Death,  
This is the burial-note  
After the end of breath  
Gasped by corrupted throat ;  
After the passing-breath  
Heard from the grave remote ;  
This is the Song of Death,  
This is the burial-note . . .

O, sweet it is to be long since dead  
And buried in earth so cold ;  
To feel on the roof of thy narrow bed  
The weight of the sodden mould,  
To lie in the dark of an endless night  
And the lees of an oozing slime—  
I know these joys, for I have been dead  
And buried, a long, long time . . .

My lips they are drawn in a ghastly smile  
But through them there goes no breath ;  
And my eyes they are dead and sunk in my  
head,  
Yet forever they stare, in death,  
For I look at the rotting burial-boards  
Close sagging above my head ;

Yea, I have been buried a long, long time,  
For I have been long since dead . . .

My corpse is a-cold, for the chilling mould  
Is about me on every side.

I lie like a stone, with my Terror, alone,  
For here in the grave I died . . .

Yea, I screamed full loud in my ghastly shroud  
When I woke in the noisome gloom,  
And the sweat of my agony froze like ice  
As I fought with my fearful doom . . .

But now—I am dead, though my lips still  
laugh  
In the motionless black of night,  
Though my bleared eyes stare in the grave,  
for they see

Not even the glow-worm's light ;  
Yet still I can see that to buried be  
Is a sweet and a happy thing,  
For I sing my Song in the House of Death,  
And this is the Song I sing :

Welcome - slimy - worm - with - sightless -  
head -  
Blindly - burrowing - in - the - fearful - night -  
Happy - shouldst - thou - be - for - lack - of -  
sight -

Since - thou - canst - not - see - that - I - am  
- dead -  
When - thou - comest - from - thy - secret -  
place -  
Eating - through - the - earth - with - silent -  
care -  
Boldly - come - I - bid - and - boldly - dare -  
Down - to - drop - upon - my - leaden - face -  
Drag - thy - sluggish - slime - across - my -  
eyes -  
They - will - never - close - to - touch - of -  
thine -  
Coil - within - these - hideous - lips - of - mine -  
Where - a - Maid - breathed - long - ago -  
her - sighs -  
Welcome - slimy - worm - with - creeping -  
head -  
Meet - it - is - that - thou - my - friend - shouldst  
- be -  
Happy - art - thou - since - thou - canst - not -  
see -  
I - am - buried - deep - and - I - am - dead

Then these be the words of the Song of Death  
That I sing in my prison-cell.

It charms the worms with the hooded heads,  
And the worms I love full well.

It charms the worms, though my singing is

But a mouthing, mumbling groan,  
For I have no breath in this House of Death  
And I mutter with lips alone . . .

So, my tale it is told of the dread and cold  
In the depths of this livid gloom ;

And I motionless lie, as I strive to die,  
As I rot in my narrow room,

For I am not dead whilst my fearful head

The foul, fat worms forsake ;  
But, when that is gone, then my dream it is done,  
And I sleep at last, never to wake . . .

. . .  
This is the Song of Death,  
This is the burial-note  
After the end of breath  
Gasp'd by corrupted throat ;  
After the passing breath  
Heard from the grave remote ;  
This is the burial-note,  
This is the Song of Death . . .







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