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THE POET'S PROGRESS

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An Anthology of English Lyrical Verse

CHOSEN BY

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To
JOHN MASEFIELD
Poet Laureate

PREFACE

My purpose in selecting and arranging the poems in this anthology is twofold. My first desire has been to bring all who read it into contact with the finest work of the finest minds that have made lyric poetry their mode of self-expression. But this is far from being my sole aim. Though not subsidiary, it has been qualified by the endeavour to gather together pieces that, as far as material limitations permit, illustrate the historical development of English poetry; the changing attitude of English poets to nature, to society, and to themselves; the types of imagery employed by them, and the modes of their employment; the successive modifications of poetic form and of poetic diction; the whole poetic tradition, in short. For this reason the poems have been placed in approximately chronological sequence by taking each poet in the order of his year of birth, known or conjectured, and by printing his poems in a single group.

Material limitations have a bearing upon both these aims. It is not only that it is impossible to include in a single volume of this size every English lyrical poem that is worthy of immortality, but that, of necessity, a book of short poems fails to do justice to poets whose main achievements lie in other forms of their art. Even as it is, the net has had to be stretched to admit *The Hunting of the Cheviot*, Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner*, Shelley's *Adonais*, and several other poems of nearly similar length.

Anthologies are frequently classified as those which represent the personal choice of the anthologist and

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those intended to contain only poems that common consent has approved. But even the most diffident and conventional compiler of an academic, or impersonal, anthology is obliged to rely to some extent upon his own taste. In the early reaches his opportunities of straying from the beaten path, and the temptations to stray from it, are comparatively few, but they multiply as he advances; and in an anthology that comes down to the present time, as this does, his private judgment ultimately becomes the sole criterion of selection. This was never more so than now, because there is in English poetry, near the end, a parting of the ways. Whether the sharp divergence from the poetic tradition that occurred about 1930 was a disaster or a blessing, and whether those who drew away after Mr. T. S. Eliot are of light or of darkness, is strenuously disputed by the poets and by their public, and Time has not yet announced his answer.

These are relatively minor cares. Of greater moment is the general canon of selection, with respect to which I think that too rigid an application of the logical distinction between lyrical and other poems is undesirable, since it must often be a matter of opinion whether in a poem the emotional quality is supreme, or whether the substantive element, be it narrative, descriptive, or abstract; and because to different readers (and the same reader in different moods) different features will make the strongest appeal. In this I have followed the example of numerous predecessors; and I have bowed gladly to custom by admitting the ballads and some modern ballad poems; and I have stepped over convention a little way in the case of the dozen or so light poems that will be found among the rest.

* * *

With the exceptions of the break mentioned above and the beginning and end of the classical age the

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development of English poetic art has been continuous. Nevertheless, its various phases have come to be so opposed that a distinctive character attaches to each period. Therefore, in order to illuminate the contrasts, the poems have been divided into Books. Book One concludes with the sixteenth century; Book Two covers the first half of the seventeenth century; Book Three contains the ballads, placed here because the shape in which they have come down to us suggests the seventeenth or the preceding century, although the original forms of many of them must have been older; Book Four extends over the Neo-classic age; and Book Five represents the Romantic period, which I have separated from the larger part of the nineteenth century (Book Six) about the year 1830. Arbitrarily, but on practical grounds, I have fixed the commencement of contemporary poetry (Book Seven) at 1900. The small group of Middle English and Middle Scots poems that are printed in the appendix will, I hope, enhance the interest and utility of the book.

Brief explanations of three textual matters are needed. (1) Except in details, few of the poems composed after the middle of the seventeenth century present serious textual problems, seeing that for most of them authority exists in an edition supervised by the author, or in a final and collected edition of his works published during his lifetime. But many of the poems anterior to that date, and all the ballads, are extant in a number of contemporary versions. In dealing with these it has been necessary to vary the method according to circumstances; as a rule, the text that in my opinion is the poetically best has been adopted; for a few poems, e.g. *Hierusalem* and *The Two Sisters*, a text has been formed by taking the best passages in several versions. (2) Spelling and punctuation have been modernized, except in Spenser's *Prologue to the Legend of the Knight of the Red Cross*

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and, of course, the Middle English poems. Deliberate departures from the conventional spelling by contemporary poets have been retained unaltered. (3) The earlier poets did not habitually ascribe titles to their lyrical poems, and some of the moderns, Wordsworth in particular, have, less consistently, followed the same custom; and many sonnets have no titles. If the poet did not furnish a title for his poem, I have not presumed to interfere with his intentions by foisting upon it one manufactured by myself; but, in order to supply the reader with the means of reference indispensable in an anthology, I have attached a label, usually by quoting the whole or part of the first line of the poem.

J. H. JAGGER.

Norbury, August, 1948.

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BOOK ONE

1. *Forget not yet*

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent
Forget not yet.

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since whan
The suit, the service none tell can:
Forget not yet.

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways;
The painful patience in delays
Forget not yet.

Forget not—O, forget not this—
How long ago hath been, and is,
The mind that never meant amiss:
Forget not yet.

Forget not yet thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved:
Forget not yet.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

THE POET'S PROGRESS

2. *A description of such a one as he would love*

A face that should content me wondrous well
Should not be fair, but lovely to behold;
With gladsome cheer all grief for to expel;
With sober looks so would I that it should
Speak, without word, such words as none can tell;
The tress also should be of crisped gold.
With wit, and thus, might chance I might be tied
And knit again with knot that should not slide.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

3. *I loathe that I did love*

I loathe that I did love, in youth that I thought sweet;
As time requires for my behove, methinks they are not
meet,
My lusts they do me leave, my fancies all be fled,
And tract of time begins to weave gray hairs upon my
head.
For age with stealing steps hath clawed me with his
couch
And lusty life away she leaps as there had been none such.
My muse doth not delight me as she did before;
My hand and pen are not in plight as they have been of
yore.
For reason me denies this idle youthly rhyme:
And day by day to me she cries "Leave off these toys
in time."
The wrinkles in my brow, the furrows in my face,
Say "Limping age will hedge him now where youth
must give him place."

couch: snare.

BOOK ONE

The harbinger of death to me I see him ride;
The cough, the cold, the gasping breath bid me to
 provide
A pickaxe and a spade, and eke a shrouding sheet,
A house of clay for to be made for such a guest most meet.
Methinks I hear the clerk that knolls the careful knell,
And bids me leave my woeful work ere nature me compel.
My keepers knit the knot that youth did laugh to scorn,
Of me that clean shall be forgot as I had not been born.
Thus must I youth give up, whose badge I long did wear;
To them I yield the wanton cup that better may it bear.
Lo, here the barèd skull, by whose bald sign I know
That stooping age away shall pull which youthful years
 did sow.
For beauty with her band these crooked cares hath
 wrought,
And shippèd me into the land from whence I first was
 brought.
And ye that hide behind, have ye none other trust;
As ye of clay were cast by kind, so shall ye waste to dust.

Lord Vaux

4. *Description of Spring*

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale;
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
The turtle to her mate hath told her tale.
Summer is come, for every spray now springs:
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale;
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings;
The fishes float with new repaired scale;
The adder all her slough away she slings:
The swift swallow pursueth the flies small:

soote : sweet.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The busy bee her honey now she mings;
Winter is worn, that was the flowers' bale.
And thus I see among these pleasant things
Each care decays: and yet my sorrow springs.

Earl of Surrey

5. *Having no age is content with his own estate*

Laid in my quiet bed, in study as I were,
I saw within my troubled head a heap of thoughts appear.
And every thought did show so lively in mine eyes,
That now I sighed, and then I smiled, as cause of thought
doth rise.

I saw the little boy in thought, how oft that he
Did wish of God, to scape the rod, a tall young man to be.
The young man eke that feels his bones with pains
oppressed,
How he would be a rich old man, to live and lie at rest.
The rich old man that sees his end draw on so sore,
How he would be a boy again, to live so much the more.
Whereat full oft I smiled, to see how all these three,
From boy to man, from man to boy, would chop and
change degree.

Earl of Surrey

6. *Importune me no more*

When I was fair and young, and favour gracèd me,
Of many was I sought, their mistress for to be:
And I did scorn them all, and answered them therefore:
"Go, go: go seek some otherwhere;
Importune me no more."

mings: mixes.

BOOK ONE

How many weeping eyes I made to pine with woe,
How many sighing hearts, I have no skill to show:
Yet I the prouder grew, and answered them therefore:
“ Go, go; go seek some otherwhere;
Importune me no more.”

Then spake fair Venus' son, that proud victorious boy,
And said “ Fine dame, since that you be so coy,
I will so pluck your plumes that you shall say no more:
' Go, go; go seek some otherwhere;
Importune me no more.' ”

When he had spake these words, such change grew in
my breast
That neither night nor day since that I could take any rest.
Then, lo, I did repent that I had said before:
“ Go, go; go seek some otherwhere;
Importune me no more.”

Queen Elizabeth

7. My mind to me a kingdom is

My mind to me a kingdom is;
Such perfect joy therein I find
As far exceeds all earthly bliss
That world affords or grows by kind:
Though much I want what most men have
Yet doth my mind forbid me crave.

No princely pomp, no wealthy store,
No force to win the victory,
No wily wit to salve a sore,
No shape to feed a loving eye:
To none of these I yield as thrall,
For why my mind doth serve for all.

For why: because.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I see how plenty surfeits oft,
And hasty climbers soon do fall:
I see that those which are aloft
Mishap doth threaten most of all:
They get with toil, they keep with fear;
Such cares my mind could never bear.

Content I live; this is my stay.
I seek no more than may suffice.
I press to bear no haughty sway;
Look, what I lack my mind supplies.
Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
Content with what my mind doth bring.

Some have too much, yet still do crave;
I little have, and seek no more;
They are but poor, though much they have,
And I am rich with little store.
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I lend; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at another's loss;
I grudge not at another's gain:
No worldly waves my mind can toss:
My state at one doth still remain.
I fear no foe; I fawn no friend:
I loathe not life, nor dread my end.

Some weigh their pleasure by their lust,
'Their wisdom by their rage of will;
Their treasure is their only trust,
A cloak'd craft their store of skill:
But all the pleasure that I find
Is to maintain a quiet mind.

BOOK ONE

My wealth is health and perfect ease,
My conscience clear my choice defence;
I neither seek by bribes to please
Nor by deceit to breed offence;
Thus do I live; thus will I die;
Would all did so as well as I.

Attributed to Sir Edward Dyer

8. *Lines from "The Passionate Shepherd"*

Who can live in heart so glad
As the merry country lad?
Who upon a fair green balk
May at pleasures sit and walk?
And amid the azure skies
See the morning sun arise?
While he hears in every spring
How the birds do chirp and sing:
Or before the hounds in cry
See the hare go stealing by:
Or along the shallow brook,
Angling with a baited hook,
See the fishes leap and play
In a blessed sunny day:
Or to hear the partridge call
Till she have her covey all:
Or to see the subtle fox,
How the villain plies the box;
After feeding on his prey,
How he closely sneaks away,
Through the hedge and down the furrow
Till he gets into his burrow.
Then the bee to gather honey;
And the little black-haired coney,
On a bank for sunny place
With her forefeet wash her face,—

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Are not these, with thousands moe
Than the courts of kings do know,
The true pleasing spirit's sights
That may breed true love's delights?
Had I got a kingly grace,
I would leave my kingly place,
And in heart be truly glad
To become a country lad.

Nicholas Breton

9. *What pleasure have great princes?*

What pleasure have great princes
More dainty to their choice
Than herdsmen wild, who careless
In quiet life rejoice;
And fortune's fate not fearing
Sing sweet in summer morning?

Their dealings, plain and rightful,
Are void of all deceit;
They never know how spiteful
It is to kneel and wait
On favourite presumptuous
Whose pride is vain and sumptuous.

All day their flock each tendeth;
All night they take their rest;
More quiet than who guideth
His ship into the East,
Where gold and pearl are plenty,
But getting, very dainty.

BOOK ONE

For lawyers and their pleading
They esteem it not a straw;
They think that honest meaning
Is of itself a law;
Where conscience judgeth plainly
They spend no money vainly.

O, happy thus who liveth,
Not caring much for gold;
With clothing which sufficeth
To keep him from the cold;
Though poor and plain his diet,
Yet merry it is, and quiet.

Anonymous

10. *A vision upon the conceit of the Faery Queene*

Methought I saw the grave where Laura lay
Within that temple where the vestal flame
Was wont to burn; and passing by that way
To see that buried dust of living fame,
Whose tomb fair love and fairer virtue kept,
All suddenly I saw the Faery Queene;
At whose approach the soul of Petrarch wept.
And from thenceforth those graces were not seen;
For they this Queen attended, in whose stead
Oblivion laid him down on Laura's hearse.
Hereat the hardest stones were seen to bleed
And groans of buried ghosts the heavens did pierce;
Where Homer's spright did tremble all for grief
And cursed the access of that celestial thief.

Sir Walter Raleigh

THE POET'S PROGRESS

11. *Even such is Time*

Even such is Time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days;
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

*

Sir Walter Raleigh

12. *Stanza from " Epithalamion "*

Wake now, my love, awake; for it is time.
The rosy morn long since left Tithon's bed,
All ready to her silver coach to climb;
And Phœbus gins to show his glorious head.
Hark, how the cheerful birds do chant their lays
And carol of love's praise;
The merry lark her matins sings aloft;
The thrush replies: the mavis descant plays;
The ousel shrills; the ruddock warbles soft;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this day's merriment.
Ah, my dear love, why do ye sleep so long?
When meeter were that ye should now awake
To await the coming of your joyous make
And hearken to the birds' love-learned song,
The dewy leaves among,
Now they of joy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

Edmund Spenser

BOOK ONE

13. *Prothalamion*

Calm was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
When I (whom sullen care,
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In princes' court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain)
Walked forth to ease my pain
Along the shore of silver-streaming Thames;
Whose ruddy bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorned with dainty gems
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

There in a meadow by the river's side
A flock of nymphs I chanced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks all loose untied
As each had been a bride;
And each one had a little wicker basket
Made of fine twigs, entrail'd curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
The tender stalks on high.
Of every sort which in that meadow grew
They gathered some; the violet, pallid blue,
The little daisy that at evening closes,
The virgin lily and the primrose true,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegrooms' posies
Against the bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two swans of goodly hue
Come softly swimming down along the lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
The snow which doth the top of Pindus strow
Did never whiter show,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was (they say) as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
Seemed foul to them, and bade his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair,
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as Heaven's light
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoons the nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood
As they came floating on the crystal flood;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still
Their wondering eyes to fill;
Them seemed they never saw a sight so fair
Of fowls, so lovely, that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather angels, or of angels' breed;

BOOK ONE

Yet were they bred of summer's heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array;
So fresh they seemed as day,
Even as their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus' waters they did seem
When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
Scattered with flowers, through Thessaly they stream,
That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber-floor.
Two of those nymphs meanwhile two garlands bound
Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crowned;
Whilst one did sing this lay
Prepared against that day,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

“ Ye gentle birds, the world's fair ornament,
And Heaven's glory, whom this happy hour
Doth lead unto your lovers' blissful bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle heart's content
Of your love's complement;
And let fair Venus, that is queen of love,
With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
For ever to assoil.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Let endless peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plenty wait upon your board;
And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
That fruitful issue may to you afford
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song."

So ended she; and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said their bridal day should not be long:
And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.

So forth those joyous birds did pass along
Adown the lee that to them murmured low,
As he would speak but that he lacked a tongue,
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
Making his stream run slow.

And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enrang'd well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame:
There when they came whereas those bricky towers
The which on Thames' broad aged back do ride,

shend: put to shame, excel.

BOOK ONE

Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride;
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gainèd gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case;
But ah, here fits not well
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear:
Fair branch of honour, flower of chivalry!
'That fillest England with thy triumphs' fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowess and victorious arms
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms,
And great Eliza's glorious name may ring
Through all the world, filled with thy wide alarms,
Which some brave muse may sing
To ages following,
Upon the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing
Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
In the ocean billows he hath bathèd fair,
Descended to the river's open viewing
With a great train ensuing.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Above the rest were goodly to be seen
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature,
Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
With gifts of wit and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Jove they seemed in sight
Which deck the baldric of the heavens bright;
They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
Received those two fair brides, their love's delight;
Which, at the appointed tide,
Each one did make his bride
Against their bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

Edmund Spenser

14. *Prologue to the Legend of the Knight of the Red Cross*

Lo I, the man whose muse whylome did maske,
As time her taught, in lowly shephard's weeds,
Am now enforst, a farre unfitter taske,
For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine oaten reeds,
And sing of knights' and ladies' gentle deeds;
Whose praises having slept in silence long,
Me, all too meane, the sacred muse areeds
To blazon broade emongst her learnèd throng;
Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song.

Help then, O holy virgin, chief of nyne,
Thy weaker novice to performe thy will;
Lay forth out of thine everlasting scryne
The antique rolles, which there lye hidden still,
Of faerie knights, and fayrest Tanaquill,
Whom that most noble Briton Prince so long
Sought through the world, and suffered so much ill,
That I must rue his undeservèd wrong:
O, helpe thou my weake wit, and sharpen my dull tong.

BOOK ONE

And thou, most dreaded impe of highest Jove,
Faire Venus' sonne, that with thy cruell dart
At that good knight so cunningly didst rove,
That glorious fire it kindled in his hart;
Lay now thy deadly heben bowe apart
And with thy mother milde come to mine ayde;
Come both; and with you bring triumphant Mart,
In loves and gentle jollities arrait,
After his murtherous spoyles and bloudie rage allayd.

And with them eke, O Goddess, heavenly bright,
Mirrour of grace and majestie divine,
Great Ladie of the greatest isle, whose light
Like Phœbus' lampe throughout the world doth shine,
Shed thy faerie beames into my feeble eyne,
And raise my thoughts, too humble and too vile,
To think of that true glorious type of thine,
The argument of mine afflicted stile;
The which to hear vouchsafe, O dearest dread, awhile.

Edmund Spenser

15. *Trico's Song*

What bird so sings, yet so does wail?
O 'tis the ravished nightingale.
Jug, jug, jug, jug, tereu! she cries,
And still her woes at midnight rise.
Brave prick-song! Who is't now we hear?
None but the lark so shrill and clear;
Now at heaven's gate she claps her wings,
The morn not waking till she sings.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Hark, hark, with what a pretty throat
Poor robin redbreast tunes his note.
Hark how the jolly cuckoos sing
Cuckoo! to welcome in the spring;
Cuckoo! to welcome in the spring.

John Lyly

16. *Come, Sleep, O Sleep*

Come, Sleep, O Sleep! the certain knot of peace,
The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the press
Of those fierce darts despair at me doth throw;
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine in right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney

17. *Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content*

Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content;
The quiet mind is richer than a crown;
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent;
The poor estate scorns fortune's angry frown:
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss,
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.

BOOK ONE

The homely house that harbours quiet rest;
The cottage that affords no pride nor care;
The mean that 'grees with country music best;
The sweet consort of mirth and music's fare;
Obscurèd life sets down a type of bliss;
A mind content both crown and kingdom is.

Robert Greene

18. *Care-charmer Sleep*

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable night,
Brother to death, in silent darkness born,
Relieve my languish, and restore the light;
With dark forgetting of my care return.
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth:
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow;
Never let rising sun approve you liars
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow:
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

Samuel Daniel

THE POET'S PROGRESS

19. *Ballad of Agincourt*

Fair stood the wind for France
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
 Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train
 Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth towards Agincourt
 In happy hour;
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French general lay
 With all his power.

Which, in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
 Unto him sending;
Which he neglects the while
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
 Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
" Though they to one be ten
 Be not amazèd:
Yet have we well begun;
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
 By fame been raisèd.

BOOK ONE

“ And for myself (quoth he)
This my full rest shall be:
England ne'er mourn for me
Nor more esteem me:
Victor I will remain
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me.

“ Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell:
No less our skill is
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
Lopped the French lilies.”

The Duke of York so dread
The eager vaward led;
With the main Henry sped
Among his henchmen.
Excester had the rear,
A braver man not there;
O Lord, how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
To hear was wonder;
That with the cries they make
The very earth did shake:
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
Thunder to thunder.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signal aim
 To our hid forces!
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly
The English archery
 Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long
That like to serpents stung,
 Piercing the weather;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts
 Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilboes drew,
And on the French they flew,
 Not one was tardy;
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went;
 Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broadsword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding
 As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
 Bruisèd his helmet.

BOOK ONE

Gloster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood
 With his brave brother;
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
 Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made
 Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply;
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
 Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's Day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
 To England to carry.
O when shall English men
With such acts fill a pen?
Or England breed again
 Such a King Harry?

Michael Drayton

20. *Clear had the day been from the dawn*

Clear had the day been from the dawn;
 All chequered was the sky;
Thin clouds, like scarfs of cobweb lawn,
 Veiled heaven's most glorious eye.
The wind had no more strength than this,
 That leisurely it blew,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

To make one leaf the next to kiss
That closely by it grew.
The rills, that on the pebbles played,
Might now be heard at will;
This world they only music made;
Else, everything was still.
The flowers, like brave embroidered girls,
Looked as they much desired
To see whose head with orient pearls
Most curiously was tired.
And to itself the subtle air
Such sovereignty assumes
That it received too large a share
From nature's rich perfumes.

Michael Drayton

21. Since there's no help

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part;
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,
Now if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

Michael Drayton

BOOK ONE

22. Were I as base as is the lowly plain

Were I as base as is the lowly plain,
And you, my love, as high as heaven above,
Yet should the thoughts of me, your humble swain,
Ascend to heaven in honour of my love.
Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
And you, my love, as humble and as low
As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
Wheresoe'er you were, with you my love should go.
Were you the earth, dear love, and I the skies,
My love should shine on you like to the sun,
And look upon you with ten thousand eyes,
Till heaven waxed blind, and till the world were done.
Wheresoe'er I am, below, or else above you,
Wheresoe'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

Joshua Sylvester

23. The passionate shepherd to his love

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That groves and valleys, hills and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold,

A belt of straw and ivy buds
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

Christopher Marlowe

24. *Sonnet XVIII*

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed:
And every fair from fair sometime declines
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed.
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare

BOOK ONE

25. *Sonnet XXIX*

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

William Shakespeare

26. *Sonnet XXXIII*

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
But, out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
Yet him for this no whit my love disdaineth:
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

William Shakespeare

THE POET'S PROGRESS

27. *Sonnet LX*

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow;
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

William Shakespeare

28. *Sonnet CVI*

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead, and lovely knights,
Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have expressed
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
And, for they looked but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

William Shakespeare

BOOK ONE

29. *Sonnet CXVI*

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no; it is an ever-fixèd mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare

30. *O mistress mine*

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O stay and hear, your true-love's coming,
That can sing both high and low;
Trip no further, pretty sweeting,
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure;
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet-and-twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

William Shakespeare

THE POET'S PROGRESS

31. *When icicles hang by the wall*

When icicles hang by the wall
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail;
When blood is nipt, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl
 Tuwhoo!
Tuwhit! tuwhoo! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw;
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl
 Tuwhoo!
Tuwhit! tuwhoo! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

William Shakespeare

32. *Under the greenwood tree*

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
 Here shall he see
 No enemy
But winter and rough weather.
 keel: cool.

BOOK ONE

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

William Shakespeare

3. *Blow, blow, thou winter wind*

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
'Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho, sing heigh ho, unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh ho the holly,
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh ho, sing heigh ho, unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh ho the holly,
This life is most jolly.

William Shakespeare

THE POET'S PROGRESS

34. *Come away, come away, Death*

Come away, come away, Death,
 And in sad cypress let me be laid;
 Fly away, fly away, breath;
 I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
 My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
 O prepare it.
 My part of death, no one so true
 Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet
 On my black coffin let there be strown;
 Not a friend, not a friend greet
 My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown:
 A thousand thousand sighs to save,
 Lay me, O where
 Sad true lover never find my grave,
 To weep there.

William Shakespeare

35. *Fear no more the heat o' the sun*

Fear no more the heat o' the sun
 Nor the furious winter's rages;
 Thou thy worldly task hast done,
 Home art gone and ta'en thy wages:
 Golden lads and girls all must,
 As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great;
 Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
 Care no more to clothe and eat;
 To thee the reed is as the oak:
 The sceptre, learning, physic, must
 All follow this, and come to dust.

where (*line 12*): wherever.

BOOK ONE

Fear no more the lightning-flash
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finished joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

William Shakespeare

36. *Take, O take those lips away*

Take, O take those lips away
That so sweetly were forsworn,
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again—
Seals of love, but sealed in vain,
Sealed in vain.

William Shakespeare

37. *Crabbèd Age and Youth*

Crabbèd Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather,
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare;
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short,
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold,
Youth is wild, and Age is tame:
Age, I do abhor thee:
Youth, I do adore thee:
O! my love, my love is young;
Age, I do defy thee:
O sweet shepherd, hie thee,
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

? *William Shakespeare*

38. *Ver's Song*

Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear ay birds tune this merry lay,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!
Spring! the sweet Spring!

Thomas Nash

39. *The man of life upright*

The man of life upright,
Whose guiltless heart is free
From all dishonest deeds,
Or thought of vanity;

BOOK ONE

The man whose silent days
In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude,
Nor sorrow discontent;

That man needs neither towers
Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
From thunder's violence.

He only can behold
With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
And terrors of the skies.

Thus, scorning all the cares
That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book,
His wisdom heavenly things;

Good thoughts his only friends,
His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober inn
And quiet pilgrimage.

Thomas Campion

40. *Jack and Joan*

Jack and Joan they think no ill,
But loving live, and merry still:
Do their week-days' work, and pray
Devoutly on the holy day.
Skip and trip it on the green,
And help to choose the Summer Queen;
Lash out at a country feast
Their silver penny with the best.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Well can they judge of nappy ale,
And tell at large a winter tale;
Climb up to the apple loft,
And turn the crabs till they be soft.
Tib is all the father's joy,
And little Tom the mother's boy.
And all their pleasure is content;
And care, to pay their yearly rent.

Joan can call by name her cows,
And deck her windows with green boughs;
She can wreaths and tutties make,
And trim with plums a bridal cake.
Jack knows what brings gain and loss;
And his long flail can stoutly toss:
Makes the hedge, which others break;
And ever thinks what he doth speak.

Now, you courtly dames and knights,
That study only strange delights,
Though you scorn the homespun gray,
And revel in your rich array,
Though your tongues dissemble deep,
And can your heads from danger keep,
Yet, for all your pomp and train,
Securer lives the silly swain.

Thomas Campion

41. *A hymn in praise of Neptune*

Of Neptune's empire let us sing,
At whose command the waves obey;
To whom the rivers tribute pay,
Down the high mountains sliding:

tutties : bunches of flowers.

BOOK ONE

To whom the scaly nation yields
Homage for the crystal fields
 Wherein they dwell:
And every sea-god pays a gem
Yearly out of his watery cell
To deck great Neptune's diadem.

The Tritons dancing in a ring
Before his palace gates do make
The water with their echoes quake,
Like the great thunder sounding:
'The sea-nymphs chant their accents shrill,
And the sirens, taught to kill
 With their sweet voice,
Make every echoing rock reply
Unto their gentle murmuring noise
The praise of Neptune's empery.

Thomas Campion

42. *In praise of the sun*

The golden sun that brings the day,
 And lends men light to see withal,
In vain doth cast his beams away,
 Where they are blind on whom they fall:
There is no force in all his might
To give the mole a perfect light.

But thou, my sun, more bright than he
 That shines at noon in summer tide,
Hast given me light and power to see,
 With perfect skill my sight to guide.
Till now I lived as blind as mole,
That hides her head in earthly hole.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I heard the praise of beauty's grace,
Yet deemed it nought but poet's skill;
I gazed on many a lovely face,
Yet found I none to bind my will:
Which made me think that beauty bright
Was nothing else but red and white.

But now thy beams have cleared my sight,
I blush to think I was so blind:
Thy flaming eyes afford me light,
That beauty's blaze each where I find:
And yet these dames that shine so bright
Are but the shadow of thy light.

A. W.

43. *There is a Lady sweet and kind*

There is a Lady sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind;
I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.

Her gesture, motion, and her smiles,
Her wit, her voice my heart beguiles,
Beguiles my heart, I know not why,
And yet I love her till I die.

Cupid is winged and doth range;
Her country so my love doth change:
But change she earth, or change she sky,
Yet will I love her till I die.

Anonymous

BOOK ONE

44. *Since first I saw your face*

Since first I saw your face I resolved to honour and
renown ye;

If now I be disdained I wish my heart had never known
ye.

What? I that loved and you that liked, shall we begin
to wrangle?

No, no, no, my heart is fast, and cannot disentangle.

If I admire or praise you too much, that fault you may
forgive me;

Or if my hands had strayed but a touch, then justly
might you leave me.

I asked you leave, you bade me love; is't now a time to
chide me?

No, no, no, I'll love you still, what fortune e'er betide
me.

The sun, whose beams most glorious are, rejecteth no
beholder,

And your sweet beauty past compare made my poor eyes
the bolder:

Where beauty moves and wit delights and signs of
kindness bind me,

There, O there! where'er I go I'll leave my heart behind
me.

Anonymous

THE POET'S PROGRESS

45. *Hierusalem, my happy home*

Hierusalem, my happy home,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end,
Thy joys when shall I see?

O happy harbour of the saints,
O sweet and pleasant soil,
In thee no sorrow may be found,
No grief, no care, no toil.

There lust and lucre cannot dwell.
There envy bears no sway;
There is no hunger, heat, nor cold,
But pleasure every way.

Thy walls are made of precious stones,
Thy bulwarks diamonds square;
Thy gates are of right orient pearl,
Exceeding rich and rare.

Thy turrets and thy pinnacles
With carbuncles do shine;
Thy very streets are paved with gold,
Surpassing clear and fine.

Ah, my sweet home, Hierusalem,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!

Thy vineyards and thy orchards are
Most beautiful and fair,
Full furnishèd with trees and fruits
Most wonderful and rare.

BOOK ONE

Thy gardens and thy gallant walks
Continually are green;
There grows such sweet and pleasant flowers
As nowhere else are seen.

Quite through the streets, with silver sound,
The flood of Life doth flow;
Upon whose banks on every side
The wood of Life doth grow.

There trees for evermore bear fruit,
And evermore do spring;
There evermore the angels sit,
And evermore do sing.

Hierusalem, my happy home,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!

F. B. P.

BOOK TWO

46. *The character of a happy life*

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill.

Whose passions not his masters are;
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath.

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice; hath ever understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state but rules of good.

Who hath his life from rumours freed;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed
Nor ruin make accusers great.

Who God doth late and early pray
More of his grace than gifts to lend;
Who entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend.

This man is free from servile bands,
Of hope to rise or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And, having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir Henry Wotton

THE POET'S PROGRESS

47. *On his mistress, the Queen of Bohemia*

You meaner beauties of the night,
That poorly satisfy our eyes
More by your number than your light,
You common people of the skies,
What are you, when the moon shall rise?

You curious chanters of the wood
That warble forth dame Nature's lays,
Thinking your passions understood
By your weak accents; what's your praise
When Philomel her voice shall raise?

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own,—
What are you, when the rose is blown?

So, when my mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty of her mind,
By virtue first, then choice, a queen,
Tell me, if she were not designed
The eclipse and glory of her kind?

Sir Henry Wotton

BOOK TWO

48. *Art thou poor, yet hast thou
golden slumbers?*

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?

O sweet content!

Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed?

O punishment!

Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers?

O sweet content! O sweet content!

Work apace, apace, apace, apace;

Honest labour bears a lovely face;

Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring?

O sweet content!

Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?

O punishment!

Then he that patiently want's burden bears

No burden bears, but is a king, a king!

O sweet content! O sweet content!

Work apace, apace, apace, apace;

Honest labour bears a lovely face;

Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Thomas Dekker

49. *Song*

Sweetest love, I do not go

For weariness of thee,

Nor in hope the world can show

A fitter love for me;

But since that I

At the last must part, 'tis best

Thus to use myself in jest,—

By feignèd deaths to die.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Yesternight the sun went hence,
And yet is here to-day:
He hath no desire nor sense
Nor half so short a way:
Then fear not me,
But believe that I shall make
Speedier journeys, since I take
More wings and spurs than he.

O how feeble is man's power,
That if good fortune fall
Cannot add another hour,
Nor a lost hour recall;
But come bad chance,
And we join to it our strength,
And we teach it art and length
Itself o'er us to advance.

When thou sigh'st, thou sigh'st not wind,
But sigh'st my soul away;
When thou weep'st, unkindly kind,
My life's blood doth decay.
It cannot be
That thou lovest me as thou say'st
If in thine my life thou waste,
That art the best of me.

Let not thy divining heart
Forethink me any ill;
Destiny may take thy part,
And may thy tears fulfil.
But think that we
Are but turned aside to sleep.
They who one another keep
Alive ne'er parted be.

John Donne

BOOK TWO

50. *Hesperus sings*

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair
State in wonted manner keep:
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close:
Bless us then with wished sight,
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart
And thy crystal-shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever:
'Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright!

Ben Jonson

51. *To Celia*

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee.

Ben Jonson

52. *The unknown shepherd's complaint*

As it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made;
Beasts did leap and birds did sing,
Trees did grow and plants did spring,
Every thing did banish moan
Save the nightingale alone;
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Leaned her breast up-till a thorn,
And there sung the dolefull'st ditty
That to hear it was great pity.
Fie, fie, fie, now would she cry;
Teru, teru, by and by;
That to hear her so complain
Scarce I could from tears refrain;
For her griefs so lively shown
Made me think upon mine own.
—Ah, thought I, thou mourn'st in vain,
None takes pity on thy pain:
Senseless trees, they cannot hear thee,
Ruthless beasts, they will not cheer thee;

BOOK TWO

King Pandion, he is dead,
All thy friends are lapped in leád:
All thy fellow birds do sing
Careless of thy sorrowing:
Even so, poor bird, like thee
None alive will pity me.

Richard Barnfield

53. *Pack, clouds, away*

Pack, clouds, away, and welcome day,
With night we banish sorrow;
Sweet air blow soft; mount lark aloft,
To give my love good-morrow.
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
Notes from the lark I'll borrow;
Bird prune thy wing; nightingale sing,
To give my love good-morrow;
To give my love good-morrow
Notes from them all I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, robin-red-breast;
Sing birds in every furrow;
And from each bill, let music shrill
Give my fair love good-morrow;
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow,
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves
Sing my fair love good-morrow.
To give my love good-morrow
Sing birds in every furrow!

Thomas Heywood

THE POET'S PROGRESS

54. *Shepherds all, and maidens fair*

Shepherds all, and maidens fair,
Fold your flocks up, for the air
Gins to thicken, and the sun
Already his great course hath run.
See the dewdrops, how they kiss
Every little flower that is,
Hanging on their velvet heads
Like a rope of crystal beads;
See the heavy clouds low falling,
And bright Hesperus down calling
The dead night from underground;
At whose rising mists unsound,
Damps, and vapours fly apace,
Hovering o'er the wanton face
Of these pastures, where they come
Striking dead both bud and bloom;
Therefore from such danger lock
Every one his lovèd flock;
And let your dogs lie loose without
Lest the wolf come as a scout
From the mountain, and ere day
Bear a lamb or kid away;
Or the crafty thievish fox
Break upon your simple flocks.
To secure yourselves from these
Be not too secure in case;
Let one eye his watches keep
Whilst the t'other eye doth sleep.
So you shall good shepherds prove,
And forever hold the love
Of our great god. Sweetest slumbers
And soft silence fall in numbers
On your eyelids. So farewell.
Thus I end my evening's knell. *John Fletcher*

BOOK TWO

55. *Weep no more*

Weep no more, nor sigh, nor groan;
Sorrow calls no time that's gone;
Violets plucked the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again;
Trim thy locks, look cheerfully;
Fate's hidden ends eyes cannot see.
Joys as wingèd dreams fly fast;
Why should sadness longer last?
Grief is but a wound to woe;
Gentlest fair, mourn, mourn no mo.

John Fletcher

56. *A memento of mortality*

(On the tombs in Westminster Abbey)

Mortality, behold and fear,
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within these heaps of stones;
Here they lie had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands,
Where from their pulpits sealed with dust
They preach "In greatness is no trust."
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royallest seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first man died for sin:
Here the bones of birth have cried
"Though gods they were, as men they died."
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropped from the ruined sides of kings:
Here's a world of pomp and state
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

? Francis Beaumont

THE POET'S PROGRESS

57. *The Book of the World*

Of this fair volume which we World do name
If we the sheets and leaves could turn with care,
Of Him who it corrects, and did it frame,
We clear might read the art and wisdom rare:
Find out His power which wildest powers doth tame,
His providence extending everywhere,
His justice which proud rebels doth not spare,
In every page, no period of the same.
But silly we, like foolish children, rest
Well pleased with coloured vellum, leaves of gold,
Fair dangling ribbands, leaving what is best,
On the great writer's sense ne'er taking hold;
Or if by chance we stay our minds on aught,
It is some picture on the margin wrought.

William Drummond

58. *The author's resolution in a sonnet*

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day
Or the flowery meads in May,
If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be?

Shall my silly heart be pined
'Cause I see a woman kind;
Or a well dispos'd nature
Join'd to a lovely feature?

BOOK TWO

Be she meeker, kinder, than
Turtle-dove or pelican,
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love?
Or her well-deservings known
Make me quite forget mine own?
Be she with that goodness blest
Which may gain her name of Best;
 If she be not such to me,
 What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortunes seem too high,
Shall I play the fool and die?
'Those that bear a noble mind
Where they want of riches find
Think what with them they would do
That without them dare to woo;
 And unless that mind I see,
 What care I how great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair;
If she love me, this believe,
I will die ere she shall grieve;
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn and let her go;
 For if she be not for me,
 What care I for whom she be?

George Wither

THE POET'S PROGRESS

59. *On Marie, Countess of Pembroke*

Underneath this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother:
Death, ere thou hast slain another,
Fair, and learn'd, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

Marble piles let no man raise
To her name; in after days
Some kind woman born as she,
Reading this, like Niobe
Shall turn marble, and become
Both her mourner and her tomb.

? *William Browne*

60. *To the virgins, to make much of Time*

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

BOOK TWO

Then be not coy, but use your time;
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry. *Robert Herrick*

61. *To Anthea, who may command him any thing*

Bid me to live, and I will live
Thy protestant to be:
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay,
'To honour thy decree:
Or bid it languish quite away,
And 't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep
While I have eyes to see:
And, having none, yet I will keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair
Under that cypress tree:
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death, to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me,
And hast command of every part,
'To live and die for thee. *Robert Herrick*

THE POET'S PROGRESS

62. *To Daffodils*

Fair daffodils, we weep to see
 You haste away so soon:
As yet the early-rising sun
 Has not attained his noon.
 Stay, stay,
 Until the hasting day
 Has run
 But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
 Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you;
 We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay
 As you, or any thing.
 We die,
 As your hours do, and dry
 Away
 Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
 Ne'er to be found again.

Robert Herrick

63. *Delight in disorder*

A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness.
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction:
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthral's the crimson stomacher:
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbands to flow confusedly:

BOOK TWO

A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat:
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility:
Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

Robert Herrick

64. *Like to the falling of a star*

Like to the falling of a star;
Or as the flights of eagles are;
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue;
Or silver drops of morning dew;
Or like a wind that chafes the flood;
Or bubbles that on water stood—
Even such is man, whose borrowed light
Is straight called in, and paid to-night.
The wind blows out; the bubble dies;
The spring entombed in autumn lies;
The dew dries up; the star is shot;
The flight is past—and man forgot.

Henry King

65. *Over the mountains*

Over the mountains
And under the caves;
Over the fountains
And under the waves;
Under waters that are deepest
Which Neptune shall obey;
Over rocks that are the steepest
Love will find out his way.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Some may esteem him
A child by his force;
Or some may deem him
A coward;—that's worse;
But if she whom he doth honour
Be consenting to play,
Set twenty guards about her,
Love will find out his way.

Many do lose him
By proving unkind;
And some do suppose him,
Poor heart, to be blind;
But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
Do the best that ye may,
Blind love, if ye do call him,
He will grope out his way.

Well may the eagle
Stoop down to the fist,
Or nets inveigle
The phœnix of the east;
With tears ye may move the tiger
To give over his prey,
But never stop a lover.
Love will find out his way.

If the earth do part them,
He'll soon course it o'er;
If seas do thwart them,
He'll swim to the shore;
If his love become a swallow
In the air for to stay,
Love will find wings to follow,
And swift flee out his way.

BOOK TWO

Where there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie,
Where is no trace
For the feet of a fly,
Where a gnat dare not venture
Lest herself fast she lay,
But if love come, he'll enter,
And will find out his way.

There is no striving
To cross his intent
There is no contriving
His plots to prevent.
But if once the message greet him
That his true love doth stay,
Though demons come and meet him,
He will go on his way.

Anonymous

66. *Virtue*

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

George Herbert

67. *The Pulley*

When God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by;
“ Let us ” said He “ pour on him all we can:
Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
Contract into a span.”

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone, of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

“ For if I should ” said He
“ Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
So both should losers be.

“ Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness:
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast.”

George Herbert

BOOK TWO

68. *The glories of our blood and state*

The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings:
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill:
But their strong nerves at last must yield;
They tame but one another still:
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds:
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.

John Shirley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

69. *A song*

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For in pure love did heaven prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars light
That downwards fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fix'd become, as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The phœnix builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

Thomas Carew

70. *Disdain returned*

He that loves a rosy cheek,
Or a coral lip admires,
Or from star-like eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires;
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

BOOK TWO

But a smooth and steadfast mind,
Gentle thoughts, and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires.
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks or lips or eyes.

No tears, Celia, now shall win
My resolvèd heart to turn;
I have searched thy soul within
And find nought but pride and scorn.
I have learned thy arts, and now
Can disdain as much as thou.
Some power, in my revenge, convey
That love to her I cast away.

Thomas Carew

71. *Love in thy youth, fair maid*

Love in thy youth, fair maid. Be wise.
Old Time will make thee colder;
And though each morning new arise,
Yet we each day grow older.

Thou as heaven art fair, and young,
Thine eyes like twin stars shining;
But ere another day be sprung
All these will be declining.

Then winter comes with all his fears,
And all thy sweets shall borrow;
Too late, then, wilt thou shower thy tears,
And I too late shall sorrow.

Anonymous

THE POET'S PROGRESS

72. *Nox nocti indicat scientiam*

When I survey the bright
 Celestial sphere,
So rich with jewels hung that night
 Doth like an Ethiop bride appear,

My soul her wings doth spread
 And heavenward flies,
The Almighty's mysteries to read
 In the large volumes of the skies.

For the bright firmament
 Shoots forth no flame
So silent but is eloquent
 In speaking the Creator's name.

No unregarded star
 Contracts its light
Into so small a character,
 Removed far from our human sight,

But if we steadfast look
 We shall discern
In it, as in some holy book,
 How man may heavenly knowledge learn.

It tells the conqueror
 That far-stretched power,
Which his proud dangers traffic for,
 Is but the triumph of an hour:

That from the farthest North
 Some nation may,
Yet undiscovered, issue forth,
 And o'er his new-got conquest sway:

BOOK TWO

Some nation yet shut in
 With hills of ice
May be let out to scourge his sin,
 'Till they shall equal him in vice.

And then they likewise shall
 'Their ruin have;
For as yourselves your empires fall,
 And every kingdom hath a grave.

'Thus those celestial fires,
 'Though seeming mute,
The fallacy of our desires
 And all the pride of life confute.

For they have watched since first
 'The world had birth:
And found sin in itself accurst,
 And nothing permanent on earth.

William Habington

73. *Song*

The lark now leaves his watery nest
 And climbing shakes his dewy wings;
He takes this window for the east,
 And to implore your light he sings.
Awake, awake! the morn will never rise
 'Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes.

The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,
 The ploughman from the sun his season takes;
And still the lover wonders what they are
 Who look for day before his mistress wakes.
Awake, awake! break through your veils of lawn;
 'Then draw the curtains, and begin the dawn.

Sir William Davenant

THE POET'S PROGRESS

74. *Go, lovely rose*

Go, lovely rose,
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die, that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

Edmund Waller

75. *On a girdle*

That which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind:
No monarch but would give his crown,
His arms might do what this has done.

BOOK TWO

It is my heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held the lovely deer:
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Do all within this circle move.

A narrow compass; and yet there
Dwells all that's good, and all that's fair:
Give me but what this ribbon tied,
Take all the sun goes round beside.

Edmund Waller

76. Of the last verses in the book

When we for age could neither read nor write,
The subject made us able to indite;
The soul, with nobler resolutions decked,
The body stooping, does herself erect.
No mortal parts are requisite to raise
Her that unbodied can her Maker praise.

The seas are quiet when the winds give o'er;
So calm are we when passions are no more.
For then we know how vain it was to boast
Of fleeting things, so certain to be lost.
Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness which age descries.

The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made:
Stronger by weakness, wiser, men become
As they draw near to their eternal home.
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

Edmund Waller

THE POET'S PROGRESS

77. *Song*

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame; this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

Sir John Suckling

78. *On his being arrived at the age of twenty-three*

How soon hath time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year.
My hasting days fly on in full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom showeth.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
That I to manhood am arrived so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear
Than some more timely happy spirits endueth.
Yet be it less or more or soon or slow
It shall be still in strictest measure even

BOOK TWO

To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which time leads me, and the will of heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great taskmaster's eye.

John Milton

79. Ode on the morning of Christ's nativity

This is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the son of heaven's eternal king,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing
That He our deadly forfeit should release,
And with His Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty
Wherewith He wont at heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome Him to this His new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

See how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode
And lay it lowly at His blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel choir
From out His secret altar touched with hallowed fire.

THE HYMN

It was the winter wild
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapped in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to Him
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But He, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

BOOK TWO

No war, or battle's sound
Was heard the world around;
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;
The hookèd chariot stood
Unstained with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kissed,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new-enlightened world no more should need:
He saw a greater sun appear
Than his bright throne or burning axletree could bear.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The shepherds on the lawn
Or ere the point of dawn
Sate simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they than
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves or else their sheep
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep,

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet
As never was by mortal finger strook;
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringèd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature that heard such sound
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all heaven and earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamefaced night arrayed;
The helmèd cherubim
And sworded seraphim
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
Harping in loud and solemn choir
With unexpressive notes, to heaven's new-born heir.

BOOK TWO

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres;
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould;
And hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, truth and justice then
Will down return to men,
Orbed in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But wisest fate says No;
This must not yet be so;
The babe yet lies in smiling infancy
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss,
So both Himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychained in sleep
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the
deep,

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:
The aged earth aghast
With terror of that blast
Shall from the surface to the centre shake,
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful judge in middle air shall spread His
throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is.
But now begins; for from this happy day
The old dragon under ground,
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurp'd sway;
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving:
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving:
No nightly trance or breathèd spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

BOOK TWO

The lonely mountains o'er
And the resounding shore
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale
Edged with poplar pale
The parting genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth
And on the holy hearth
The Lars and Lemurs moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar power forgoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-battered god of Palestine;
And moonèd Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shrine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn;
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz
mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove, or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud;
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrelled anthems dark
The sable-stolèd sorcerers bear his worshipped ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded infant's hand;
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our babe, to show His godhead true,
Can in His swaddling bands control the damnèd crew.

So, when the sun in bed
Curtained with cloudy red
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave,
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved
maze.

But see, the Virgin blest
Hath laid her babe to rest;
Time is, our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest-teemèd star
Hath fixed her polished car,
Her sleeping Lord with hand-maid lamp attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnessed angels sit in order serviceable.

John Milton

BOOK TWO

80. *An epitaph on Shakespeare*

What needs my Shakespeare for his honoured bones?
The labour of an age in pilèd stones?
Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What needst thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
For whilst to the shame of slow-endeavouring art
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
Those delphic lines with deep impression took,
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
And so sepulchred in such pomp dost lie
That kings for such a tomb might wish to die.

John Milton

81. *Songs from "Comus"*

i. Sabrina fair

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen and save.

Listen and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus,
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of sirens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
Sleeking her soft alluring locks,
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have.
Listen and save.

ii. Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well.
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That liketh thy Narcissus are?
O if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!
So mayst thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heaven's harmonies.

BOOK TWO

iii. To the ocean now I fly

To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky:
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree:
Along the crispèd shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund spring,
The graces, and the rosy-bosomed hours,
Thither all their bounties bring.
There eternal summer dwells,
And west winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard, and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purpled scarf can show,
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth, and roses
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits the Assyrian queen;
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid her famed son, advanced,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet intranced,
After her wandering labours long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride.
And from her fair unspotted side

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.

Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue. She alone is free;
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

John Milton

82. *Lycidas*

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.

BOOK TWO

Hence with denial vain and coy excuse.
So may some gentle muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn;
And, as he passes, turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove afield; and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star, that rose at evening bright,
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten flute;
Rough satyrs danced, and fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return.
Thee, shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn:
The willows and the hazel copses green
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers that their gay wardrobe wear
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:
Ay me! I fondly dream
"Had ye been there?" for what could that have done?
What could the muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade
And strictly meditate the thankless muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Nææra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies:
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As He pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea

BOOK TWO

That came in Neptune's plea;
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
"What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?"
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beak'd promontory:
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe:
"Ah! who hath reft" quoth he "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go
The pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain);
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep and intrude and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
'Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs.
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped.
And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But swollen with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparsely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise;
Ay me, whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount

BOOK TWO

Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.
Look homeward, angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.

There entertain him all the saints above
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropped into the western bay:
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

John Milton

THE POET'S PROGRESS

83. *L'Allegro*

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born.
In Stygian cave forlorn
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings
And the night-raven sings.
There, under ebon shades and low-browed rocks
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.

But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In heaven ycleped Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth
With two sister Graces more
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying—
There on beds of violets blue
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathèd smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled care derides,
And laughter holding both his sides.

BOOK TWO

Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unprovèd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight
And singing startle the dull night
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow
Through the sweetbriar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill
Through the high wood echoing shrill.
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great sun begins his state
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the landscape round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows gray
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.

Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.

Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat:
How Faery Mab the junkets ate;
She was pinched and pulled, she said;
And he, by Friar's lantern led,

BOOK TWO

Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.

Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With masque, and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber, on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.

These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

John Milton

84. *Il Penseroso*

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred;
How little you bestead
Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys;
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.

But hail, thou goddess sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue;

BOOK TWO

Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain:
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.

Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the muses in a ring
Ay round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retirèd Leisure
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The cherub Contemplation:
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er the accustomed oak.
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.

Oft on a plat of rising ground
I hear the far-off curfew sound
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.

Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere

BOOK TWO

The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshy nook:
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.

But, O sad virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower;
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek
And made hell grant what love did seek;
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canacé to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride:
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung
Of tourneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.

Thus, night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited morn appear,
Not tricked and frownced as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But kerchieft in a comely cloud
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heavèd stroke,
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There in close covert by some brook
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honeyed thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid:
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen genius of the wood.

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy-proof,
And storied windows richly dight
Casting a dim religious light:

BOOK TWO

There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced choir below
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth show,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.

These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

John Milton

85. *When I consider*

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide;
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work, or His own gifts: who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
'They also serve who only stand and wait.

John Milton

THE POET'S PROGRESS

86. *On the late massacre in Piedmont*

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not; in thy book record their groans,
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant, that from these may grow
A hundredfold who, having learned thy way,
May early fly the Babylonian woe.

John Milton

87. *My dear and only love*

My dear and only love, I pray
That little world of thee
Be governed by no other sway
Than purest monarchy;
For if confusion have a part
(Which virtuous souls abhor),
And hold a synod in thine heart,
I'll never love thee more.

Like Alexander I will reign,
And I will reign alone;
My thoughts did evermore disdain
A rival on my throne.

BOOK TWO

He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That dares not put it to the touch,
To gain or lose it all.

But I will reign and govern still,
And always give the law,
And have each subject at my will,
And all to stand in awe;
But 'gainst my batteries if I find
Thou kick, or vex me sore,
As that thou set me up a blind,
I'll never love thee more.

And in the empire of thine heart,
Where I should solely be,
If others do pretend a part
Or dare to vie with me,
Or if committees thou erect,
And go on such a score,
I'll laugh and sing at thy neglect,
And never love thee more.

But if thou wilt prove faithful, then,
And constant of thy word,
I'll make thee glorious by my pen
And famous by my sword;
I'll serve thee in such noble ways
Was never heard before;
I'll crown and deck thee all with bays,
And love thee more and more.

Marquis of Montrose

THE POET'S PROGRESS

88. *The Wish*

Well then! I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree.
The very honey of all earthly joy
Does, of all meats, the soonest cloy;
And they, methinks, deserve my pity
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd, the buzz, the murmurings
Of this great hive, the city.

Ah yet, ere I descend to the grave,
May I a small house and a large garden have;
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too.
And since love ne'er will from me flee,
A mistress moderately fair,
And good as guardian angels are,
Only beloved, and loving me.

O fountains, when in you shall I
Myself eased of unpeaceful thoughts espy?
O fields, O woods, when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade?
Here's the springhead of pleasure's flood;
Here's wealthy Nature's treasury,
Where all the riches lie that she
Has coined and stamped for good.

Pride and ambition here
Only in far-fetched metaphors appear;
Here nought but winds can hurtful murmurs scatter,
And nought but echo flatter.
The gods, when they descended, hither
From heaven did always choose their way;
And therefore may we boldly say
That 'tis the way too thither.

BOOK TWO

How happy here should I
And one dear she live, and embracing die!
She who is all the world, and can exclude
In deserts solitude.

I should have then this only fear:
Lest men, when they my pleasures see,
Should hither throng to live like me,
And so make a city here.

Abraham Cowley

89. *To Lucasta, going to the wars*

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

Richard Lovelace

THE POET'S PROGRESS

90. *To Althea, from prison*

When love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fettered to her eye,
The gods that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlarged winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage:
If I have freedom in my love
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

Richard Lovelace

BOOK TWO

91. *An Horatian ode upon Cromwell's
return from Ireland*

The forward youth that would appear,
Must now forsake his muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing.

'Tis time to leave the books in dust,
And oil the unused armour's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corslet of the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urgèd his active star:

And like the three-forked lightning, first
Breaking the clouds where it was nursed,
Did thorough his own side
His fiery way divide:

(For 'tis all one to courage high
The emulous, or enemy;
And with such, to enclose
Is more than to oppos)

Then burning through the air he went
And palaces and temples rent
And Cæsar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.

'Tis madness to resist or blame
The face of angry heaven's flame;
And, if we would speak true,
Much to the man is due

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Who, from his private gardens, where
He lived reserved and austere
(As if his highest plot
To plant the bergamot),

Could by industrious valour climb
To ruin the great work of Time,
And cast the kingdoms old
Into another mould;

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain;
(But those do hold or break
As men are strong or weak).

Nature, that hateth emptiness,
Allows of penetration less,
And therefore must make room
Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the Civil War
Where his were not the deepest scar?
And Hampton shows what part
He had of wiser art;

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope
That Charles himself might chase
To Carisbrook's narrow case;

That thence the royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn:
While round the armed bands
Did clap their bloody hands.

BOOK TWO

He nothing common did, or mean,
Upon that memorable scene,
 But with his keener eye
 The axe's edge did try;

Nor called the gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
 But bowed his comely head
 Down, as upon a bed.

This was that memorable hour
Which first assured the forcèd power;
 So when they did design
 The Capitol's first line,

A bleeding head, where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run;
 And yet in that the state
 Foresaw its happy fate.

And now the Irish are ashamed
To see themselves in one year tamed:
 So much one man can do
 That does both act and know.

They can affirm his praises best,
And have, though overcome, confessed
 How good he is, how just,
 And fit for highest trust.

Nor yet grown stiffer with command,
But still in the Republic's hand;
 How fit he is to sway
 That can so well obey.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He to the Commons' feet presents
A kingdom for his first year's rents,
And (what he may) forbears
His fame, to make it theirs :

And has his sword and spoils ungit
To lay them at the public's skirt ;
So, when the falcon high
Falls heavy from the sky,

She, having killed, no more doth search
But on the next green bough to perch,
Where, when he first does lure,
The falconer has her sure.

What may not then our isle presume
While victory his crest does plume ?
What may not others fear
If thus he crowns each year ?

As Cæsar he, ere long, to Gaul,
To Italy an Hannibal,
And to all states not free
Shall climacteric be.

The Pict no shelter now shall find
Within his parti-coloured mind,
But, from this valour, sad
Shrink underneath the plaid ;

Happy, if in the tufted brake
The English hunter him mistake,
Nor lay his hounds in near
The Caledonian deer.

BOOK TWO

But thou, the war's and fortune's son,
March indefatigably on;
And for the last effect
Still keep the sword erect;

Besides the force it has to fright
The spirits of the shady night,
The same arts that did gain
A power must it maintain.

Andrew Marvell

92. *Bermudas*

Where the remote Bermudas ride
In the ocean's bosom unespied,
From a small boat that rowed along
The listening winds received this song:

“ What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?
Where He the huge sea-monsters wracks,
That lift the deep upon their backs,
He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms and prelates' rage.
He gave us this eternal spring
Which here enamels everything,
And sends the fowls to us in care
On daily visits through the air;
He hangs in shades the orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night,
And does in the pomegranates close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows:

where (*line 9*): whereas.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He makes the figs our mouths to meet,
And throws the melons at our feet;
But apples plants of such a price,
No tree could ever bear them twice.
With cedars chosen by His hand
From Lebanon He stores the land;
And makes the hollow seas, that roar,
Proclaim the ambergris on shore.
He cast (of which we rather boast)
The gospel's pearl upon our coast;
And in these rocks for us did frame
A temple where to sound His name.
Oh! let our voice His praise exalt
Till it arrive at heaven's vault,
Which thence (perhaps) rebounding may
Echo beyond the Mexique bay!"

Thus sung they in the English boat
An holy and a cheerful note:
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time.

Andrew Marvell

93. *The Garden*

How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
And their uncessant labours see
Crowned from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow-veggèd shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all the flowers and trees do close
To weave the garlands of repose.

BOOK TWO

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men:
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow:
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name:
Little, alas, they know or heed
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees, wheres'e'er your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passions' heat
Love hither makes his best retreat.
The gods, that mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race: ✓
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow:
And Pan did after Syrinx speed
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall *H* grass.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness;
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find:
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide;
There, like a bird, it sits and sings;
Then whets and combs its silver wings;
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state
While man there walked without a mate:
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet?
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises 'twere in one,
To live in paradise alone.

How well the skilful gardener drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new!
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run:
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned, but with herbs and flowers?

v v

Andrew Marvell

BOOK TWO

94. *Peace*

My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry
All skilful in the wars:
There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious friend,
And--O my soul, awake!--
Did in pure love descend
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of peace,
The rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges;
For none can thee secure
But One who never changes,
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

Henry Vaughan

95. *Lines from "The World"*

I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm as it was bright;
And round beneath it Time, in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres
Like a vast shadow moved; in which the world
And all her train were hurled.

Henry Vaughan

THE POET'S PROGRESS

96. *He that is down needs fear no fall*

He that is down needs fear no fall,
He that is low, no pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little be it or much:
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,
Because Thou savest such.

Fullness to such a burden is
That go on pilgrimage:
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.

John Bunyan

BOOK THREE

97. *Thomas the Rhymer*

True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank;
A ferlie he spied wi' his e'e;
And there he saw a lady bright
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her skirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne;
At ilka tect o' her horse's mane,
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas he pu'd aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knee:
"All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven;
For thy peer on earth I never did see."

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said
"That name does not belang to me;
I am but the queen o' fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee.

"Harp and carp, Thomas," she said
"Harp and carp along wi' me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be."

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never daunton me."
Sync he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

ferlie: fairy sight. carp: sing. weird: fate. daunton: frighten.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ Now, ye maun go wi' me ” she said ;
“ True 'Thomas, ye maun go wi' me ;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Through weal or woe, as may chance to be.”

She mounted on her milk-white steed,
She's ta'en true 'Thomas up behind ;
And ay, whene'er her bridle rang,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on ;
The steed gaed swifter than the wind,
Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

“ Light down, light down now, true 'Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee ;
Abide and rest a little space,
And I will show you ferlies three.

“ Oh see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset wi' thorns and briers ?
That is the path of righteousness,
'Though after it but few inquires.

“ And see not ye that braid, braid road,
'That lies across the lily leven ?
That is the path of wickedness,
'Though some call it the road to heaven.

“ And see not ye that bonny road
That winds about the fernie brae ?
That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

leven: meadow.

BOOK THREE

“ But, Thomas, ye maun haud your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see;
For if ye speak word in Elfyn-land,
Ye'll ne'er get back to your ain countrie.”

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers aboon the knee;
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk mirk night, and there was nae sternlight,
And they waded through red blude to the knee;
For a' the blude that's shed on the earth
Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came to a garden green,
And she pu'd an apple frac a tree:
“ Take this for thy wages, true 'Thomas;
It will give thee the tongue that can never lie.”

“ My tongue is mine ain ” true Thomas said;
“ A gudely gift ye wad gie to me.
I neither dought to buy or sell
At fair or tryst where I may be.

“ I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladye:”
“ Now hold thy peace, Thomas,” she said
“ For as I say, so must it be.”

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair of shocs of velvet green;
And till seven years were gane and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

stern: star. dought: could.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

98. *The Hunting of the Cheviot*

The Percy out of Northumberland,
And a vow to God made he
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot within days three,
In the maugre of doughty Douglas,
And all that ever with him be.

The fattest harts in all Cheviot
He said he would kill, and carry them away.
“By my faith,” said the doughty Douglas again
“I will let that hunting if that I may.”

Then the Percy out of Bamborough came;
With him a mighty meyney—
With fifteen hundred archers bold of blood and bone;
They were out of shirès three.

This began on a Monday at morn,
In Cheviot the hills so high;
The child may rue that is unborn;
It was the more pity.

The drivers through the woodès went,
For to raise the deer;
Bowmen bickered upon the bent
With their broad arrows clear.

Then the wild through the woodès went
On every sidè sheer;
Greyhounds through the grovès glent
For to kill their deer.

out: came out. in the maugre of: in spite of. let: prevent.
bickered: skirmished. bent: grass. wild: wild animals. glent:
dashed.

BOOK THREE

This began in Cheviot the hills aboon
Early on a Monanday.
By that it drew to the hour of noon
A hundred fat harts dead there lay.

They blew a mort upon the bent ;
They assembled on sidès sheer ;
To the quarry then the Percy went,
To see the brittling of the deer.

He said " It was the Douglas' promise
'This day to meet me here ;
But I wist he would fail, verament."
A great oath the Percy sware.

At the last a squire of Northumberland
Looked at his hand full nigh ;
He was ware a the doughty Douglas coming ;
With him a mighty meyne.

Both with spear, bill, and brand ;
It was a mighty sight to see ;
Hardier men, both of heart and hand,
Were not in christianty.

They were twenty hundred spearmen good,
Withouten any fail ;
They were borne along by the water a Tweed
In the bounds of T'ividale.

" Leave off the brittling of the deer " he said
" And to your bows look ye take good heed ;
For since ye were on your mothers born
Had ye never so mickle need."

mort: death blast. brittling: dismemberment.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The doughty Douglas on a steed
He rode all his men before;
His armour glittered as did a gleeed;
A bolder barn was never born.

"Tell me whose men ye are" he says
"Or whose men that ye be;
Who gave you leave to hunt on this Cheviot chase
In the spite of mine and of me?"

The first man that ever him an answer made
It was the good Lord Percy.
"We will not tell thee whose men we are," he says
"Nor whose men that we be;
But we will hunt here in this chase
In the spite of thine and of thee.

"The fattest harts in all Cheviot
We have killed and cast to carry them away."
"By my troth," said the doughty Douglas again
"Therefore the one of us shall die this day."

Then said the doughty Douglas
Unto the Lord Percy
"To kill all these guiltless men,
Alas, it were great pity.

"But, Percy, thou art a lord of land;
I am an earl called within my country;
Let all our men upon a party stand
And do the battle of thee and of me."

"Now, Christ's curse on his crown" said the Lord Percy
"Whosoever thereto says nay;
By my troth, doughty Douglas," he says
"Thou shalt never see that day.

gleed: flame. barn: man. cast: intend. do: let us do.

BOOK THREE

“ Neither in England, Scotland, nor France,
Nor for no man of a woman born
But, and fortune be my chance,
I dare meet him, one man for one.”

Then bespoke a squire of Northumberland,
Richard Witherington was his name;
“ It shall never be told in South England ” he says
“ To King Harry the Fourth for shame.

“ I wot ye be great lordès two;
I am a poor squire of land;
I will never see my captain fight on a field
And stand myself and look on;
But while I may my weapon wield
I will not fal both heart and hand.”

That day, that day, that dreadful day! . . .
The first fit here I find:
And you will hear any more of the hunting of the Cheviot,
Yet is there more behind.



The Englishmen had their bows bent;
Their hearts were good enough;
The first of arrows that they shot off
Seven score spearmen they slew.

Yet bides the Earl Douglas upon the bent,
A captain good enough,
And that was seen verament,
For he wrought them both woe and wouche.

The Douglas parted his host in three,
Like a chief chieftain of pride;
With sure spears of mighty tree
They come in on every side;

fit: canto. wouche: harm.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Through our English archery
Gave many a wound full wide;
Many a doughty they garred to die,
Which gainèd them no pride.

The Englishmen let their bowès be
And pulled out brands that were bright;
It was heavy sight to see
Bright swords on basnets light.

Through rich mail and maniple
Many stern they struck down straight;
Many a freak that was full free
There under foot did light.

At last the Douglas and the Percy met,
Like to captains of might and of main:
They swapte together till they both sweat
With swords that were of fine Milan.

These worthy freakès for to fight
Thereto they were full fain,
Till the blood out of their basnets spread
As ever did hail or rain.

“Yield thee, Percy,” said the Douglas
“And, in faith, I shall thee bring
Where thou shalt have an earl's wages
Of Jamie our Scottish King.

“Thou shalt have thy ransom free;
I hight thee here this thing:
For the manfullest man yet art thou
That ever I conquered in field fighting.”

doughty: strong man. garred: caused. basnets: helmets.
maniple: gauntlet. stern: fierce soldiers. freak: man. free:
noble. swapte: exchanged. hight: promise.

BOOK THREE

“ Nay,” said the Lord Percy
“ I told it thee beforne
That I would never yielded be
To no man of a woman borne.”

With that there came an arrow hastily
Forth of a mighty wane;
It hath stricken the earl Douglas
In at the breast-bane.

Through liver and lungs both
The sharp arrow is gone
That never in all his life days
He spoke no words but one:
That was “ Fight ye, my merry men, whilst ye may,
For my life days be gone.”

The Percy leaned on his brand
And saw the Douglas die,
He took the dead man by the hand
And said “ Woe is me for thee.

“ To have saved thy life, I would have parted with
My lands for years three;
For a better man, of heart nor of hand,
Was not in all the north country.”

Of all that saw a Scottish knight—
Was called Sir Hugh the Montgomery—
He saw the Douglas to the death was dight.
He spended a spear, a trusty tree.

He rode upon a courser
Through a hundred archery;
He never stinted, nor never blane
Till he came to the good lord Percy.

wane: bend of a bow? spended: placed in rest.
blane: stopped.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He set upon the lord Percy
A dint that was full sore;
With a sure spear of a mighty tree
Clean through the body he the Percy bore

A the tother side that a man might see
A large clothyard and more;
Two better captains were not in christianty
Than that day slain were there.

An archer of Northumberland
Saw slain was the lord Percy;
He bore a bent bow in his hand
Was made of trusty tree.

An arrow that a cloth-yard was long
To the hard steel hailèd he;
A dint that was both sad and sore
He set on Sir Hugh the Montgomery.

The dint it was both sad and sore
That he of Montgomery set;
The swan-feathers that his arrow bore
With his heart-blood they were wet.

There was never a freak one foot would flee,
But still in stour did stand,
Hewing on each other, while they might dree,
With many a baleful brand.

This battle began in Cheviot,
An hour before the noon,
And when evensong bell was rang,
The battle was not half done.

stour: battle. dree: endure.

BOOK THREE

They took [strokes] on either hand
By the light of the moon:
Many had no strength for to stand
In Cheviot the hills aboon.

Of fifteen hundred archers of England
Went away but seventy and three;
Of twenty hundred spearmen of Scotland
But even five and fifty.

But all were slain Cheviot within;
They had no strength to stand on high;
The child may rue that is unborn;
It was the more pity.

There was slain with the lord Percy
Sir John of Agerston,
Sir Roger, the hend Hartley,
Sir William the bold Heron.

Sir George, the worthy Lumley,
A knight of great renown,
Sir Ralph, the rich Rugby,
With dints were beaten down.

For Withrington my heart was woe
That ever he slain should be;
For when both his legs were hewn in two
He kneeled, and fought on his knee.

There was slain with the lord Douglas
Sir Hugh the Montgomery;
Sir Davy Liddale, that worthy was;
His sister's son was he;

took: gave. hend: courteous.

THE PGET'S PROGRESS

Sir Charles a Murray in that place,
That never a foot would flee;
Sir Hugh Maxwell, a lord he was,
With the Douglas did he die.

So on the morrow they made them biers
Of birch and hazel so gray;
Many widows, with weeping tears,
Came to fetch their makes away.

Tivydale may carp of care,
Northumberland may make great moan,
For two such captains as slain were there
On the marchparty shall never be none.

Word is come to Edinburgh
To Jamie, the Scottish King,
That doughty Douglas, lieutenant of the Marches,
He lay slain Cheviot within.

His handès did he weal and wring;
He said " Alas, and woe is me!
Such another captain Scotland within,"
He said " I' faith, should never be."

Word is come to lovely London,
Till the fourth Harry our King,
That lord Percy, lieutenant of the Marches,
He lay slain Cheviot within.

" God have mercy on his soul," said King Harry;
" Good Lord, if thy will it be.
I have a hundred captains in England " he said
" As good as ever was he.
But, Percy, and I brook my life
I hy death well quit shall be."

makes: mates. carp: sing. marchparty: Border. weal: twist.
and I brook my life: if I live.

BOOK THREE

As our noble king made his avow,
Like a noble prince of renown,
For the death of the lord Percy,
He did the battle of Humbledown.

Where six and thirty Scottish knights
On a day were beaten down,
Glendale glittered in their armour bright
Over castle, tower, and town.

This was the Hunting of the Cheviot,
That here began this spurn.
Old men that know the ground well enough
Call it the battle of Otterburn.

At Otterburn began this spurn
Upon a Monanday;
There was the doughty Douglas slain;
The Percy never went away.

There was never a time on the marchparts
Since the Douglas and Percy met
But it is marvel and the red blood run not
As the roan does in the street.

Jesu Christ, our balès bet,
And to the bliss us bring!
Thus was the Hunting of the Cheviot.
God send us all good ending!

began this spurn: occurred this fight. **roan:** gutter.
bales: ills. **bet:** cure.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

99. *Sir Patrick Spens*

The king sits in Dunfermline town
Drinking the blude-red wine;
“ O whare will I get a skeely skipper
To sail this new ship o’ mine ?”

O up and spak an eldern knight,
Sat at the king’s right knee;
“ Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That ever sailed the sea.”

Our king has written a braid letter,
And sealed it with his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.

“ To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o’er the faem;
The king’s daughter o’ Noroway,
’Tis thou must bring her hame.”

The first word that Sir Patrick read
So loud, loud laughèd he;
The neist word that Sir Patrick read
The tear blinded his ee.

“ O wha is this has done this deed
And tauld the king o’ me,
To send us out, at this time of the year,
To sail upon the sea ?

“ Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet,
Our ship must sail the faem;
The king’s daughter o’ Noroway,
’Tis we must fetch her hame.”

skeely: skilful.

BOOK THREE

They hoysed their sails on Monenday morn
Wi' a' the speed they may;
They hae landed in Noroway
Upon a Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week
In Noroway but twae
When that the lords o' Noroway
Began aloud to say:

“ Ye Scottishmen spend a' our king's goud,
And a' our queenis fee.”

“ Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud;
Fu' loud I hear ye lie.

“ For I brought as much white monie
As gane my men and me,
And I brought a half-fou o' gude red goud
Out o'er the sea wi' me.

“ Mak ready, mak ready, my merry men a'!
Our gude ship sails the morn.”

“ Now ever alack, my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm.

“ I saw the new moon late yestreen
Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And if we gang to sea, master,
I fear we'll come to harm.”

They hadna sailed a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

half-fou: half-bushel full. lift: sky. gurly: dreadful.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The ankers brak, and the topmast lap,
It was sic a deadly storm:
And the waves cam o'er the broken ship
Till a' her sides were torn.

"O where will I get a gude sailor
To take my helm in hand,
Till I get up to the tall topmast
To see if I can spy land?"

"O here am I, a sailor gude,
To take the helm in hand,
Till you go up to the tall topmast;
But I fear you'll ne'er spy land."

He hadna gane a step, a step,
A step but barely ane,
When a bout flew out of our goodly ship,
And the salt sea it came in.

"Go fetch a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And wap them into our ship's side,
And let na the sea come in."

They fetched a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And they wapped them roun that gude ship's side,
But still the sea came in.

O laith, laith were our gude Scots lords
To wet their cork-heeled shoon;
But lang or a' the play was played
They wat their hats aboon.

lap: leaped (from its socket). bout: bolt.

BOOK THREE

And mony was the feather bed
That flattered on the faem;
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair cam hame.

The ladies wrang their fingers white,
The maidens tore their hair,
A' for the sake of their true loves,
For them they'll see nae mair.

O lang, lang may the ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand.

And lang, lang may the maidens sit
Wi' their goud kames in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear loves,
For them they'll see nae mair.

O forty miles off Aberdeen,
'Tis fifty fathoms deep;
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

100. *Fair Helen of Kirconnell*

I wish I were where Helen lies;
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies
On fair Kirconnell lea!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropped,
And died to succour me!

flattered: floated. burd: lovely.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

O think na ye my heart was sair
When my love dropped down and spak nae mair?
There did she swoon wi' meikle care
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water-side,¹
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll make a garland of thy hair
Shall bind my heart for evermair
Until the day I die.

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says "Haste and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low and takes thy rest
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn ower my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies;
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

BOOK THREE

101. *The Wife of Usher's Well*

There lived a wife at Usher's well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o'er the sea.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
When word came to the carline wife
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
When word came to the carline wife
That her sons she'd never see.

"I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me
In earthly flesh and blood."



It fell about the Martinmas,
When nights are lang and mirk,
The carline wife's three sons came hame,
And their hats were o' the birk.

It neither grew in syke nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh;
But at the gates o' Paradise
That birk grew fair enough.

carline wife: old woman. fashes in the flood: waves in the sea. syke: marsh. sheugh: furrow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ Blow up the fire, my maidens;
Bring water from the well;
For a' my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well.”

And she has made to them a bed,
She's made it large and wide;
And she's ta'en her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bedside.



Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said
“ 'Tis time we were away.”

The cock he hadna crawled but once,
And clapped his wings at a',
When the youngest to the eldest said
“ Brother, we must awa'.

“ The cock doth crawl, the day doth daw,
The channerin' worm doth chide;
Gin we be missed out o' our place,
A sair pain we maun bide.

“ Fare ye weel, my mother dear;
Fareweel to barn and byre;
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
'That kindles my mother's fire.”

channerin': grumbling.

BOOK THREE

102. *The Two Sisters*

There were two sisters sat in a bour;
Binnórie, O Binnórie.

There cam a knight to be their wooer,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnórie.

He courted the eldest with glove and ring;
Binnorie, O Binnorie.

But he lo'ed the youngest aboon a' thing,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

He courted the eldest with brooch and knife;
Binnorie, O Binnorie.

But he lo'ed the youngest aboon his life,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

The eldest she was vexèd sair,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
And sair envied her sister fair,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

Upon a morning bright and clear,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
She cried upon her sister dear,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie:

"O sister, sister, tak my hand,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
And let's go down to the river-strand
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie."

She's ta'en her by the lily hand,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
And led her down to the river-strand
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The youngest stood upon a stane;
Binnorie, O Binnorie.

The eldest cam and pushed her in
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

" O sister, sister, reach your hand!
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
And ye sall be heir o' half my land
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie."

" O sister, I'll not reach my hand,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
And I'll be heir of all your land
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

" Foul fa' the hand that I should take,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
It's twined me and my worldis make
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie."

" O sister, reach me but your glove,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
And sweet William sall be your love
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie."

" Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
And William sall better be my love
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie."

• • •

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
Until she cam to the miller's dam,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

twined: separated. make: mate.

BOOK THREE

Out then cam the miller's son,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
And saw the fair maid soummin' in,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

"O father, father, draw your dam,
Binnorie, O Binnorie.
There's either a mermaid or a swan
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie."

The miller hasted and drew his dam,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
And there he found a drowned woman
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

You couldna see her middle sma',
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
Her gowden girdle was sae braw,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

You couldna see her lily feet,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
Her gowden fringes were sae deep,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

All amang her yellow hair,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
A string o' pearls was twisted rare,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

You couldna see her fingers sma',
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
Wi' diamond rings they were covered a',
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

* * *

soummin': floating.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And by there cam a harper fine,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
That harpit to the king at dine,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

And when he looked that lady on,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
He sighed and made a heavy moan
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

He's made a harp of her breast-bane,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
Whose sound wad melt a heart of stane,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

He's ta'en three locks o' her yellow hair,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
And wi' them strung his harp sae rare,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

He's brought it to her father's hall,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
And there was the court assembled all,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

He laid his harp upon a stane,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
And straight it began to play by lane,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

“ O yonder sits my father, the king,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
And yonder sits my mother, the queen,
By the bonnie mill dams o' Binnorie.

by lane: of itself.

BOOK THREE

“ And yonder stands my brother Hugh,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
And by him my William, sweet and true,
By the bonnie mill dams o’ Binnorie.”

But the last tune that the harp played then,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
Was “ Woe to my sister, false Helèn!”
By the bonnie mill dams o’ Binnorie.

103. *The Lament of the Border Widow*

My love he built me a bonny bower,
And clad it a’ wi’ lily flower;
A brawer bower ye ne’er did see
Than my true love he built for me.

There came a man by middle day,
He spied his sport and went away;
And brought the king that very night,
Who brake my bower and slew my knight.

He slew my knight to me sae dear;
He slew my knight, and pained his gear;
My servants all for life did flee,
And left me in extremity.

I sewed his sheet, making my mane;
I watched the corpse, myself alane;
I watched his body night and day;
No living creature came that way.

I took his body on my back,
And whiles I gaed, and whiles I sat;
I digged a grave, and laid him in,
And happed him wi’ the sod sae green.

pained: confiscated.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But think na ye my heart was sair
When I laid the moul' on his yellow hair?
O think na ye my heart was wae
When I turned about, away to gae?
Nae living man I'll love again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain;
Wi' ae lock of his yellow hair
I'll chain my heart for evermair.

104. *Young Beichan*

In London city was Beichan born.
He longed strange countries for to see,
But he was ta'en by a savage Moor,
Who handled him right cruelly.
For through his shoulder he put a bore,
And through the bore has pitten a tree,
And he's garred him draw the carts o' wine,
Where horse and oxen had wont to be.
He's casten him in a dungeon deep,
Where he could neither hear nor see;
He's shut him up in a prison strong,
And he's handled him right cruelly.
The savage Moor had but ae daughter,
And her name was Shusy Pye,
And ilka day as she took the air
The prison door she passèd by.
But it fell ance upon a day
She heard young Beichan sadly sing,
" My hounds they all go masterless,
My hawks they flee frae tree to tree,
My youngest brother will heir my lands,
My native land I'll never see."

ae: one. ilka: each.

BOOK THREE

“ O were I but the prison keeper,
As I'm a lady o' high degree,
I soon wad set this youth at large,
And send him to his ain country.”

She went away into her chamber;
All night she never closed her ee;
And when the morning begoud to dawn,
At the prison door alone was she.

“ O hae ye ony lands or rents,
Or cities in your ain country,
Could free you out of prison strong,
And could maintain a lady free?”

“ O, London city is my own,
And other cities two or three
Could loose me out of prison strong
And could maintain a lady free.”

O, she has bribed her father's men
Wi' meikle goud and white money;
She's gotten the key o' the prison doors,
And she has set young Beichan free.

She's gi'en him a loaf o' good white bread,
But an a flask o' Spanish wine,
And she bade him mind on the lady's love
That sae kindly freed him out o' pine.

“ Go set your foot on good ship board,
And haste you back to your ain country,
And before that seven years has an end,
Come back again, love, and marry me.”

begoud: began.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

It was long or seven years had an end
She longed fu' sair her love to see;
She's set her foot on good ship board,
And turned her back on her ain country.

She's sailed up, so has she down,
Till she came to the other side;
She's landed at young Beichan's gates
(And I hope this day she shall be his bride).

"Is this young Beichan's gates?" says she;
"Or is that noble prince within?"
"He's up the stairs wi' his bonny bride,
And mony a lord and lady wi' him."

"O, has he ta'en a bonny bride?
And has he clean forgotten me?"
And sighing said that gay lady
"I wish I were in my ain country."

But she's pittin her han' in her pocket,
And gi'en the porter guineas three;
Says "Take ye that, ye proud porter,
And bid the bridegroom speak to me."

O, whan the porter come up the stair,
He's fa'en low down upon his knee;
"Won up, won up, ye proud porter,
And what makes a' this courtesy?"

"O, I've been porter at your gates
This mair nor seven years and three,
But there is a lady at them now
The like of whom I never did see.

BOOK THREE

“ For on every finger she has a ring,
And on the mid finger she has three,
And there’s as meikle goud aboon her brow
As would buy an earldom o’ land to me.”

Then up it started young Beichan,
And sware so loud by our Lady
“ It can be none but Shusy Pye,
That has come o’er the sea for me.”

O, quickly ran he down the stair,
O’ fifteen steps he has made but three;
He’s ta’en his bonny love in his arms,
And I wot he kissed her tenderly.

“ O, hae you ta’en a bonny bride?
And hae you quite forsaken me?
And hae ye quite forgotten her
That gae you life and liberty?”

She’s looked o’er her left shoulder,
To hide the tears stood in her ee;
“ Now fare thee well, young Beichan,” she says
“ I’ll strive to think nae mair on thee.”

“ Take back your daughter, madam,” he says
“ And a double dowry I’ll gi’ her wi’;
For I maun marry my first true love,
That’s done and suffered so much for me.”

He’s taken his bonny love by the han’,
And led her to yon fountain stane;
He’s changed her name frae Shusy Pye,
And he’s called her his bonny love, Lady Jane.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

105. *The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington*

There was a youth and a well beloved youth,
And he was a squire's son;
He loved the bailiff's daughter dear
That lived in Islington.

Yet she was coy, and would not believe
That he did love her so;
No, nor at any time would she
Any countenance to him show.

But when his friends did understand
His fond and foolish mind,
They sent him up to fair London
An apprentice for to bind.

And when he had been seven long years,
And never his love did see:
"Many a tear have I shed for her sake,
When she little thought of me."

Then all the maids of Islington
Went forth to sport and play,
All but the bailiff's daughter dear—
She secretly stole away.

She pulled off her gown of green
And put on her ragged attire,
And to fair London she would go
Her true love to enquire.

And as she went along the road,
The weather being hot and dry,
She sat her down upon a green bank
And her true love came riding by.

BOOK THREE

- She started up, with a colour so red,
Catching hold of his bridle-rein;
"One penny, one penny, kind sir," she said
"Will ease me of much pain."
- "Before I give you one penny, sweetheart,
Pray tell me where you were born."
"At Islington, kind sir," she said
"Where I have had many a scorn."
- "I prithee, sweetheart, then tell to me,
O tell me whether you know
The bailiff's daughter of Islington."
"She is dead, sir, long ago."
- "If she be dead, then take my horse,
My saddle and bridle also,
For I will into some far country
Where no man shall me know."
- "O stay, O stay, thou goodly youth;
She standeth by thy side;
She is here alive; she is not dead,
And ready to be thy bride."
- "O farewell grief and welcome joy,
Ten thousand times therefore;
For now I have found mine own true love,
Whom I thought I should never see more."

106. *The Goulden Vanitie*

There was a gallant ship, and a gallant ship was she,
And she went by the name of *The Goulden Vanitie*,
As she sailed to the Lowlands low.

She had not sailed a league, a league but only three,
When up she came with a Spanish gallalee,
As she sailed to the Lowlands low.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Then up stood the cabin boy, and out spoke he:
"What will you give me if I sink that gallalee,
As ye sail to the Lowlands low?"

"I'll give you gold, and I'll give you fee,
And my youngest daughter your own true wife shall be,
If you sink her off the Lowlands low."

Then the boy bared his breast, and straightway leaped in,
And he swam till he came to the Spanish galleon,
As she lay by the Lowlands low.

He bored with his augur; he bored once and twice;
And the water flowed in and dazzled in their eyes,
And she sank by the Lowlands low.

About, and about, and about went he,
Until he came back to *The Goulden Vanitie*,
As she sailed to the Lowlands low.

"Captain, take me in; I am drifting with the tide."
"I will shoot you, I will kill you," the cruel captain
cried;
"You shall sink by the Lowlands low."

"You shall have gold, and you shall have fee,
But my youngest daughter your wife shall never be,
As we sail by the Lowlands low."

Then the boy swam round all by the starboard side,
And they pulled him up on board, but he closed his
eyes and died,
And they cast him from the deck to go down with the
tide,
And he sank by the Lowlands low.

fee: an estate.

BOOK FOUR

107. *Song for Saint Cecilia's Day, 1687*

From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began:
When nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
Arise, ye more than dead!
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry
In order to their stations leap,
And music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound.
Less than a god they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot music raise and quell?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.
The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries "Hark! the foes come;
Charge! charge! 'tis too late to retreat."

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.
Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion
For the fair disdainful dame.

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race,
And trees unrooted left their place
Sequacious of the lyre:
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared,
Mistaking earth for heaven.

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the blest above;

BOOK FOUR

So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And music shall untune the sky.

John Dryden

108. *Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music*

A song in honour of St. Cecilia's Day, 1697

'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son.
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound
(So should desert in arms be crowned);
The lovely Thais by his side
Sate like a blooming eastern bride
In flower of youth and beauty's pride:
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful choir,
With flying fingers touched the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above—
Such is the power of mighty love.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
Sublime on radiant spires he rode
When he to fair Olympia pressed
And while he sought her snowy breast;
Then round her slender waist he curled,
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the
world.

The listening crowd admire the lofty sound;
A present deity, they shout around:
A present deity, the vaulted roofs rebound:
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young:
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes.
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again,
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew
the slain.

The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;

BOOK FOUR

And while he heaven and earth defied
Changed his hand and checked his pride.

He chose a mournful muse
Soft pity to infuse:

He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted, at his utmost need,
By those his former bounty fed,
On the bare earth exposed he lies
With not a friend to close his eyes.
With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
War, he sung, is toil and trouble,
Honour but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying;
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee.
The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So love was crowned, but music won the cause.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again :
At length with love and wine at once oppressed
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

Now strike the golden lyre again :
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder
And rouse him like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head :
As awaked from the dead
And amazed he stares around.
Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,
See the Furies arise !
See the snakes that they rear
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes.
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand.
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain :
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
The princes applaud with a furious joy :
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy ;
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy. .

BOOK FOUR

Thus, long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down.

John Dryden

109. *Song*

Ladies, though to your conquering eyes
Love owes his chiefest victories,
And borrows those bright arms from you
With which he does the world subdue,
Yet you yourselves are not above
The empire nor the griefs of love.

Then rack not lovers with disdain,
Lest Love on you revenge their pain;
You are not free because you're fair;
The Boy did not his Mother spare.
Beauty's but an offensive dart;
It is no armour for the heart.

Sir George Etherege

THE POET'S PROGRESS

110. *Song*

Written at sea the night before an engagement

To all you ladies now at land
We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
How hard it is to write:
The muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

For though the muses should prove kind,
And fill our empty brain,
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,
Roll up and down our ships at sea.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost
By Dutchmen or by wind:
Our tears we'll send a speedier way,—
The tide shall bring them twice a day.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

The king with wonder and surprise
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
Than e'er they did of old:
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

BOOK FOUR

Should foggy Opdam chance to know
Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree :
For what resistance can they find
From men who've left their hearts behind?
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind ;
Let Dutchmen vapour, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find :
'Tis then no matter how things go,
Or who's our friend, or who's our foe.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

To pass our tedious hours away
We throw a merry main,
Or else at serious ombre play ;
But why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue ?
We were undone when we left you.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

But now our fears tempestuous grow
And cast our hopes away ;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play :
Perhaps permit some happier man
To kiss your hand, or flirt your fan.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

When any mournful tune you hear,
That dies in every note
As if it sighed with each man's care
For being so remote,
Think then how often love we've made
To you, when all those tunes were played,
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

In justice you cannot refuse
To think of our distress,
When we for hopes of honour lose
Our certain happiness:
All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

And now we've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears,
In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity from your tears:
Let's hear of no inconstancy—
We have too much of that at sea.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Earl of Dorset

III. *The Vicar of Bray*

In good King Charles's golden days,
When loyalty no harm meant,
A furious high-church man I was,
And so I gained preferment.
Unto my flock I daily preached
Kings are by God appointed,
And damned are those who dare resist
Or touch the Lord's anointed.

BOOK FOUR

And this is law I will maintain
Unto my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king shall reign,
I will be vicar of Bray, sir.

When royal James possessed the crown,
And popery grew in fashion,
The penal law I hooted down,
And read the Declaration:
The Church of Rome, I found, would fit
Full well my constitution,
And I had been a Jesuit
But for the Revolution.
And this is law I will maintain
Unto my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king shall reign,
I will be vicar of Bray, sir.

When William our deliverer came
To heal the nation's grievance,
I turned the cat-in-pan again,
And swore to him allegiance;
Old principles I did revoke,
Set conscience at a distance,
Passive obedience is a joke,
A jest is non-resistance.
And this is law I will maintain
Unto my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king shall reign,
I will be vicar of Bray, sir.

When glorious Anne became our queen,
The Church of England's glory,
Another face of things was seen,
And I became a Tory:

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Occasional conformists base
I damned, and moderation,
And thought the church in danger was
From such prevarication.
And this is law I will maintain
Unto my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king shall reign,
I will be vicar of Bray, sir.

When George in pudding time came o'er
And moderate men looked big, sir,
My principles I changed once more
And so became a Whig, sir:
And thus preferment I procured
From our faith's great defender,
And almost every day abjured
The pope and the pretender.
And this is law I will maintain
Unto my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king shall reign,
I will be vicar of Bray, sir.

Anonymous

112. *An Ode—The Spacious Firmament*

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
The unwearied sun from day to day
Does his Creator's power display;
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

BOOK FOUR

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth:
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets, in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing as they shine
"The hand that made us is divine".

Joseph Addison

113. *A translation of the twenty-third psalm*

The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
And feed me with a shepherd's care;
His presence shall my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye;
My noonday walks He shall attend,
And all my midnight hours defend.

When in the sultry glebe I faint,
Or on the thirsty mountain pant,
To fertile vales and dewy meads
My weary wandering steps He leads,
Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,
Amid the verdant landscape flow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Though in the paths of death I tread,
With gloomy horrors overspread,
My steadfast heart shall fear no ill,
For thou, O Lord, art with me still;
Thy friendly crook shall give me aid,
And guide me through the dreadful shade.

Though in a bare and rugged way
Through devious lonely wilds I stray,
Thy bounty shall my pains beguile;
The barren wilderness shall smile,
With sudden greens and herbage crowned,
And streams shall murmur all around.

Joseph Addison

114. *Man frail and God eternal*

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

Thy word commands our flesh to dust
"Return, ye sons of men";
All nations rose from earth at first,
And turn to earth again.

BOOK FOUR

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

The busy tribes of flesh and blood
With all their lives and cares
Are carried downward by Thy flood,
And lost in following years.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day:

Like flowery fields the nations stand
Pleased with the morning light;
The flowers, beneath the mower's hand,
Lie withering ere 'tis night.

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.

Isaac Watts

115. *The Heavenly Canaan*

There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers.
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea,
And linger shivering on the brink
And fear to launch away.

O could we make our doubts remove,
These gloomy thoughts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love
With unbeckoned eyes;

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore.

Isaac Watts

116. *The Universal Prayer*

Father of all, in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord:

Thou great first cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And, binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

BOOK FOUR

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heaven pursue.

What blessings Thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives;
To enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge Thy foe.

If I am right, Thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught Thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught Thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by Thy breath;
Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life and death.

This day, be bread and peace my lot;
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not;
And let Thy will be done.

To Thee whose temple is all space,
Whose altar earth, sea, skies,
One chorus let all being raise,
All nature's incense rise.

Alexander Pope

117. *The Rosebud*

Queen of fragrance, lovely rose,
The beauties of thy leaves disclose.
The winter's past, the tempests fly,
Soft gales breathe gently through the sky;
The lark, sweet warbling on the wing,
Salutes the gay return of spring;
The silver dews, the vernal showers,
Call forth a blooming waste of flowers;
The joyous fields, the shady woods,
Are clothed with green, or swell with buds;
Then haste thy branches to disclose,
Queen of fragrance, lovely rose.

Thou, beauteous flower, a welcome guest,
Shalt flourish in the fair one's breast,

BOOK FOUR

Shalt grace her hand, or deck her hair,
The flower most sweet, the nymph most fair.
Breathe soft, ye winds, be calm, ye skies;
Arise, ye flowery race, arise;
And haste thy beauties to disclose,
Queen of fragrance, lovely rose.

But thou, fair nymph, thyself survey
In this sweet offspring of a day.
That miracle of face must fail;
Thy charms are sweet, but charms are frail;
Swift as the short-lived flower they fly;
At morn they live, at evening die:
Though sickness yet awhile forbears,
Yet time destroys what sickness spares:
Now Helen lives alone in fame,
And Cleopatra's but a name:
Time must indent that heavenly brow,
And thou must be what they are now.

This moral to the fair disclose,
Queen of fragrance, lovely rose.

William Broome

118. *On the attributes of God*

O God, thou bottomless abyss,
Thee to perfection who can know?
O height immense, what words suffice
Thy countless attributes to show?
Unfathomable depths Thou art;
O plunge me in Thy mercy's sea.
Void of true wisdom is my heart;
With love embrace and cover me.
While thee, all infinite, I set

THE POET'S PROGRESS

By faith before my ravished eye,
My weakness bends beneath the weight;
O'erpowered I sink, I faint, I die.

Eternity Thy fountain was,
Which like Thee no beginning knew;
Thou wast ere time began his race,
Ere glowed with stars the ethereal blue.
Greatness unspeakable is Thine,
Greatness, whose undiminished ray,
When short-lived worlds are lost, shall shine
When earth and heaven are fled away.
Unchangeable, all-perfect Lord,
Essential life's unbounded sea,
What lives and moves lives by Thy word;
It lives and moves and is from Thee.

Thy parent hand, Thy forming skill,
Firm fixed this universal chain;
Else empty barren darkness still
Had held his unmolested reign.
Whate'er in earth, or sea, or sky
Or shuns or meets the wandering thought,
Escapes or strikes the searching eye,
By Thee was to perfection brought.
High is Thy power above all height;
Whate'er Thy will decrees is done;
Thy wisdom, equal to Thy might,
Only to thee, O God, is known.

Heaven's glory is Thy awful throne;
Yet earth partakes Thy gracious sway.
Vain man, thy wisdom folly own,
Lost in thy reason's feeble ray.
What our dim eye could never see
Is plain and naked to Thy sight;

BOOK FOUR

What thickest darkness veils, to Thee
Shines clearly as the morning light.
In light Thou dwell'st, light that no shade,
No variation, ever knew;
Heaven, earth, and hell stand all displayed
And open to Thy piercing view.

John Wesley

19. *Lines from the Prologue spoken by
Ar. Garrick at the opening of the Theatre
Royal, Drury Lane, 1747*

When Learning's triumph o'er her barbarous foes
First reared the stage, immortal Shakespeare rose;
Each change of many-coloured life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then invented new;
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toiled after him in vain.
His powerful strokes presiding truth impressed,
And unresisted passion stormed the breast.
Then Jonson came, instructed from the school,
To please in method and invent by rule;
His studious patience and laborious art
By regular approach essayed the heart.
Cold approbation gave the lingering bays,
For those who durst not censure scarce could praise;
A mortal born, he met the general doom,
And left, like Egypt's kings, a lasting tomb.
The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,
Nor wished for Jonson's art, or Shakespeare's flame;
Themselves they studied: as they felt they writ;
Intrigue was plot; obscenity was wit.
Vice always found a sympathetic friend;
They pleased their age, and did not aim to mend.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

How hard his lot that, here by fortune placed,
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of taste;
With every meteor of caprice must play,
And chase the newborn bubbles of the day.
Ah, let not censure term our fate our choice;
The stage but echoes back the public voice;
The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
For we who live to please must please to live.

Samuel Johnson

120. *Elegy written in a country churchyard*

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

BOOK FOUR

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre:

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes

Their lot forbad: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

BOOK FOUR

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Even from the tomb the voice of nature cries;
Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonoured dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate,
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn;

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fanciés he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

“ One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

“ The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.”

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair science frowned not on his humble birth,
And melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send;
He gave to misery all he had, a tear;
He gained from heaven, 'twas all he wished, a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),
The bosom of his Father and his God.

Thomas Gray

BOOK FOUR

121. *Ode on a distant prospect of
Eton College*

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers
That crown the watery glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way:

Ah happy hills, ah pleasing shade,
Ah fields beloved in vain,
Where once my careless childhood strayed,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green
The paths of pleasure trace;
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthral?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed
Or urge the flying ball?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

While some on earnest business bent
Their murmuring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty,
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign
And unknown regions dare descry:
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possessed;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light
That fly the approach of morn.

Alas, regardless of their doom
The little victims play;
No sense have they of ills to come
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around them wait
The ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train;
Ah, show them where in ambush stand
To seize their prey, the murderous band;
Ah, tell them they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that skulks behind;

BOOK FOUR

Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy with rankling tooth
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' altered eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath
A grisly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their Queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every labouring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his sufferings: all are men,
Condemned alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
The unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah, why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more; where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

Thomas Gray

122. *Hymn to Adversity*

Daughter of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thy adamantine chain
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth
Virtue, his darling child, designed,
To thee he gave the heavenly birth
And bade to form her infant mind.
Stern, rugged nurse, thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore:
What sorrow was thou bad'st her know,
And from her own she learned to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse, and with them go
The summer friend, the flattering foe;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

BOOK FOUR

Wisdom in sable garb arrayed,
Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend:
Warm Charity, the general friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

O, gently on thy suppliant's head,
Dread goddess, lay thy chastening hand.
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Nor circled with the vengeful band
(As by the impious thou art seen),
With thundering voice, and threatening mien,
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty.

Thy form benign, O goddess, wear,
Thy milder influence impart,
Thy philosophic train be there
To soften, not to wound my heart;
The generous spark extinct revive,
Teach me to love and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a man.

Thomas Gray

THE POET'S PROGRESS

123. *The Bard*

A Pindaric Ode

“Ruin seize thee, ruthless king;
Confusion on thy banners wait!
Though fanned by Conquest's crimson wing
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor even thy virtues, tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears.”

Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scattered wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Gloster stood aghast in speechless trance;
“To arms!” cried Mortimer, and couched his quivering
lance.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the Poet stood;
(Loose his beard and hoary hair
Streamed like a meteor to the troubled air;)
And with a master's hand and prophet's fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre:
“Hark, how each giant oak and desert cave
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, O king, their hundred arms they wave;
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

BOOK FOUR

“ Cold is Cadwallo’s tongue,
That hushed the stormy main:
Brave Uricn sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topped head.
On dreary Arvon’s shore they lie
Smeared with gore and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail;
The famished eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country’s cries.—
No more I weep. They do not sleep;
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit; they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

“ ‘ Weave the warp and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward’s race:
Give ample room and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year and mark the night
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death through Berkley’s roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing king.
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs
That tear’st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o’er thy country hangs
The scourge of heaven. What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow’s faded form, and Solitude behind.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ ‘Mighty victor, mighty lord,
Low on his funeral couch he lies.
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm that in thy noon-tide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes:
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm:
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hushed in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

“ ‘Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare;
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head!
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread;
The bristled boar in infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

BOOK FOUR

“ ‘ Edward, lo! to sudden fate
 (Weave we the woof; The thread is spun)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
 (The web is wove; The work is done.)’ .
Stay, O stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblessed, unpitied, here to mourn:
In yon bright track that fires the western skies
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But O, what solemn scenes on Snowdon’s height
 Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight;
 Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail:
All hail, ye genuine kings! Britannia’s issue, hail!

“ Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
 And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine;
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line;
Her lion port, her awe-commanding face
Attempered sweet to virgin grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
 What strains of vocal transport round her play?
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
 They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heaven her many-coloured wings.

“ The verse adorn again
 Fierce War, and faithful Love,
And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction dressed.
 In buskined measures move
Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

A voice as of the cherub-choir
Gales from blooming Eden bear,
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud
Raised by thy breath, has quenched the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me: with joy I see
The different doom our fates assign.
Be thine Despair and sceptred Care;
To triumph and to die are mine."

He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

Thomas Gray

124. *The Progress of Poesy*

A Pindaric Ode

Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:
The laughing flowers that round them blow
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

O Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft control,

BOOK FOUR

On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curbed the fury of his car,
And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing:
Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

Thee the voice, the dance obey,
Tempered to thy warbled lay;
 O'er Idalia's velvet-green
 The rosy-crownèd Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day
 With antic Sports, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
 Frisking light in frolic measures;

Now pursuing, now retreating,
 Now in circling troops they meet:
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
 Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their queen's approach declare:
 Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
 In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

Man's feeble race what ills await!
Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
 And Death, sad refuge from the storms of fate.
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Say, has he given in vain the heavenly muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky:
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat
In loose numbers wildly sweet
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue and generous Shame,
The unconquerable mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

Woods that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles that crown the Ægean deep,
Fields that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of anguish?
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around:
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, O Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

BOOK FOUR

Far from the sun and summer gale,
In thy green lap was nature's darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed,
 'To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless child
Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.
This pencil take (she said), whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year:
Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy;
This can unlock the gates of Joy;
Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears.
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears.

Nor second he, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,
The secrets of the abyss to spy.

He passed the flaming bounds of place and time:
The living throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er
 Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.

But ah! 'tis heard no more——
O lyre divine! what daring spirit
Wakes thee now? Though he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban eagle bare,
Sailing with supreme dominion
 Through the azure deep of air:

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the muse's ray,
With orient hues, unborrowed of the sun:
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the good how far—but far above the great.

Thomas Gray

125. *On the death of a favourite cat*

Drowned in a tub of goldfishes

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared:
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw; and purred applause.

Still had she gazed; but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The genii of the stream:
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
Betrayed a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish
She stretched, in vain, to reach the prize.
What female heart can gold despise?
What cat's averse to fish?

BOOK FOUR

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretched, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between.
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled.)
The slippery verge her feet beguiled;
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mewed to every watery god
Some speedy aid to send.
No dolphin came, no nereid stirred,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard.
A favourite has no friend.

From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold:
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts is lawful prize,
Nor all that glisters, gold.

Thomas Gray

126. *Ode to Evening*

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thine ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales;
O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed;
Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum :
 Now teach me, maid composed,
 To breathe some softened strain,
Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit ;
 As musing slow I hail
 Thy genial loved return.
For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
 The fragrant hours, and elves
 Who slept in buds the day,
And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
 The pensive pleasures sweet,
 Prepare thy shadowy car.
Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile,
 Or upland fallows gray,
 Reflect its last cool gleam.
But when chill blustering winds or driving rain
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut
 That, from the mountain's side,
 Views wilds, and swelling floods,
And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires ;
And hears their simple bell ; and marks o'er all
 Thy dewy fingers draw
 The gradual dusky veil.
While spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve ;
 While summer loves to sport
 Beneath thy lingering light ;
While sallow autumn fills thy lap with leaves ;
Or winter, yelling through the troublous air,
 Affrights thy shrinking train
 And rudely rends thy robes ;

BOOK FOUR

So long, sure-found beneath thy sylvan shed,
Shall fancy, friendship, science, rose-lipped health,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy favourite name.

William Collins

127. *Ode*

Written in 1746

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest?
When spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung:
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there.

William Collins

THE POET'S PROGRESS

128. *Stanzas from "A Song to David"*

O thou that sit'st upon a throne,
With harp of high majestic tone,
 To praise the King of Kings;
And voice of heaven-ascending swell,
Which, while its deeper notes excel,
 Clear as a clarion rings:

To bless each valley, grove, and coast,
And charm the cherubs to the post
 Of gratitude in throngs;
To keep the days on Zion's mount,
And send the year to his account,
 With dances and with songs;

O servant of God's holiest charge,
The minister of praise at large,
 Which thou may'st now receive,
From thy blest mansion hail and hear;
From topmost eminence appear
 To this, the wreath I weave.

• • •

He sung of God, the mighty source
Of all things, the stupendous force
 On which all strength depends;
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes,
All period, power, and enterprise
 Commences, reigns, and ends.

The world, the clustering spheres, He made;
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
 Dale, champaign, grove, and hill;
The multitudinous abyss,
Where secrecy remains in bliss,
 And wisdom hides her skill.

• • •

BOOK FOUR

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes;
Sweet, Hermon's fragrant air:
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers' smell
That watch for early prayer.

Sweet the young nurse, with love intense,
Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence;
Sweet, when the lost arrive:
Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
The choicest flowers to hive.

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
Which makes at once his game:
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong through the turbulent profound
Shoots xiphias to his aim.

Strong is the lion; like a coal
His eyeball; like a bastion's mole
His chest against the foes:
Strong the gier-eagle on his sail;
Strong against tide the enormous whale
Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still, in earth and air,
And in the sea, the man of prayer,
And far beneath the tide:
And in the seat to faith assigned,
Where ask is have, where seek is find,
Where knock is open wide.

glede: hawk. xiphias: swordfish.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Glorious the sun in mid career;
Glorious the assembled fires appear;
 Glorious the comet's train:
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious the Almighty's stretched-out arm;
 Glorious the enraptured main:

Glorious the northern lights astream;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
 Glorious the thunder's roar:
Glorious hosanna from the den;
Glorious the catholic amen;
 Glorious the martyr's gore:

Glorious, more glorious, is the crown
Of Him that brought salvation down,
 By meekness called thy Son:
Thou that stupendous truth believed;
And now the matchless deed's achieved,
 Determined, dared, and done.

Christopher Smart

129. *The Flowers of the Forest*

I've heard them liting at the ewe-milking,
 Lasses a' liting before dawn of day;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning;
 The flowers of the forest are a' wede away.

At bughts, in the morning, nae blythe lads are scorning,
 Lasses are lonely and dowie and wae;
Nae daffing, nae gabbing, but sighing and sabbing,
 Ilk ane lifts her leglin and hies her away.

loaning: lane. bughts: sheep pens. leglin: pail.

BOOK FOUR

In har'st, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
Bandsters are runkled, and lyart, or gray;
At fair or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching;
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, in the gloaming, nae younkers are roaming
'Bout stacks with the lasses at bogle to play;
But ilk maid sits dreary, lamenting her deary;
The flowers of the forest are weded away.

Dool and wae for the order sent our lads to the Border!
The English for ance, by guile, wan the day;
The flowers of the forest, that fought aye the foremost,
The prime of our land, are cauld in the clay.

We'll hear nae mair liling at the ewe-milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away.

Jane Elliot

130. *Elegy on the death of a mad dog*

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And, if you find it wondrous short—
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man
Of whom the world might say
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

runkled: wrinkled. lyart: grizzled. dool: sorrow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wondering neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light
That showed the rogues they lied;
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

Oliver Goldsmith

131. *Boadicea: An Ode*

When the British warrior queen
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods,

Sage beneath a spreading oak
Sat the Druid, hoary chief;
Every burning word he spoke
Full of rage, and full of grief. .

BOOK FOUR

“ Princess, if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
’Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

“ Rome shall perish. Write that word
In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish, hopeless and abhorred,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

“ Rome, for empire far renowned,
Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground;
Hark! The Gaul is at her gates.

“ Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier’s name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
Harmony the path to fame.

“ Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

“ Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway,
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.”

Such the bard’s prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow;
Rushed to battle, fought, and died;
Dying, hurled them at the foe.

" Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestowed;
Shame and ruin wait for you."

William Cowper

132. *On the loss of the Royal George*

Toll for the brave,
The brave that are no more:
All sunk beneath the wave
Fast by their native shore.

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel
And laid her on her side.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds
And she was overset;
Down went the Royal George,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave.
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought;
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

BOOK FOUR

His sword was in the sheath,
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up
Once dreaded by our foes,
And mingle with your cup
The tears that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone;
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

William Cowper

*133. Verses supposed to be written by
Alexander Selkirk during his solitary
abode in the island of Juan Fernandez*

I am monarch of all I survey;
My right there is none to dispute;
From the centre all round to the sea
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O solitude, where are the charms
'That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms
'Than reign in this horrible place.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I am out of humanity's reach;
I must finish my journey alone;
Never hear the sweet music of speech:
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain
My form with indifference see;
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestowed upon man,
O had I the wings of a dove
How soon would I taste you again!
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheered by the sallies of youth.

Ye winds that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more:
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-wingèd arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land
In a moment I seem to be there;
But, alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

BOOK FOUR

But the seafowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair;
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There's mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought,
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

William Cowper

134. *Light shining out of darkness*

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines,
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

William Cowper

135. *Ode: To the Cuckoo*

Hail, beauteous stranger of the wood,
Attendant on the spring;
Now heaven repairs thy rural seat
And woods thy welcome ring.

Soon as the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear;
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant, with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
When heaven is filled with music sweet
Of birds among the bowers.

The schoolboy, wandering through the wood
To pull the flowers so gay,
Starts, thy curious voice to hear,
And imitates thy lay.

Soon as the pea puts on the bloom
Thou fly'st thy vocal vail,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another spring to hail.

Sweet bird, thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year.

BOOK FOUR

Alas, sweet bird, not so my fate;
Dark scowling skies I see
Fast gathering round, and fraught with woe
And wintry years to me.

O could I fly, I'd fly with thee;
We'd make, with social wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Companions of the spring.

? *Michael Bruce*

136. *The Tiger*

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake

137. *And did those feet in ancient time?*

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pasture seen?

And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold,
Bring me my arrows of desire,
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

William Blake

138. *Song: How sweet I roamed*

How sweet I roamed from field to field,
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the prince of love beheld,
Who in the sunny beams did glide.

BOOK FOUR

He showed me lilies for my hair
And blushing roses for my brow;
He led me through his gardens fair,
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet,
And Phœbus fired my vocal rage.
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing;
'Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

William Blake

139. *Song: Memory, hither come*

Memory, hither come,
And tune your merry notes;
And, while upon the wind
Your music floats,
I'll pore upon the stream
Where sighing lovers dream,
And fish for fancies as they pass
Within the watery glass.

I'll drink of the clear stream,
And hear the linnets' song;
And there I'll lie and dream
The day along;
And, when night comes, I'll go
To places fit for woe,
Walking along the darkened valley
With silent melancholy.

William Blake

THE POET'S PROGRESS

140. *To the Muses*

Whether on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the east,
The chambers of the sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air,
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove,
Fair Nine, forsaking poetry;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoyed in you.
The languid strings do scarcely move;
The sound is forced; the notes are few.

William Blake

141. *Green grow the rashes*

Green grow the rashes, O;
Green grow the rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend
Are spent among the lasses, O!

There's naught but care on every han',
In every hour that passes, O;
What signifies the life of man,
An 'twere na for the lasses, O?

rashes: rushes.

BOOK FOUR

The warly race may riches chase,
An' riches still may fly them, O;
An' though at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.

But gie me a canny hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie, O;
An' warly cares, an' warly men,
May a' gae tapsalteeie, O.

For you sae douce ye sneer at this,
Ye're nought but senseless asses, O;
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw
He dearly loved the lasses, O.

Auld nature swears the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O;
Her prentice han' she tried on man—
An' then she made the lasses, O.

Robert Burns

142. *My love is like a red, red rose*

My love is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June:
My love is like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I:
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry:

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

warly: worldly.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

144. *The Birks of Aberfeldy*

Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
Will ye go, will ye go,
Bonnie lassie, will ye go
 To the Birks of Aberfeldy?

Now simmer blinks on flowery braes,
And o'er the crystal streamlet plays,
Come let us spend the lightsome days
 In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

While o'er their heads the hazels hing,
The little birdies blithely sing,
Or lightly flit on wanton wing,
 In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

The braes ascend like lofty wa's,
The foaming stream deep-roaring fa's,
O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws—
 The Birks of Aberfeldy.

The hoary cliffs are crowned wi' flowers,
While o'er the linns the burnie pours,
And rising, weets wi' misty showers
 The Birks of Aberfeldy.

Let fortune's gifts at random flee,
They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me,
Supremely blest wi' love and thee
 In the Birks of Aberfeldy.

Robert Burns

shaws: woods. linns: falls.

BOOK FOUR

145. *O, were I on Parnassus' hill*

O, were I on Parnassus' hill
Or had of Helicon my fill,
That I might catch poetic skill
 To sing how dear I love thee!
But Nith maun be my muse's well,
My muse maun be thy bonnie sel';
On Corsincon I'll glower and spell
 And write how dear I love thee.

Then come, sweet muse, inspire my lay;
For a' the lie-lang simmer's day
I couldna sing, I couldna say,
 How much, how dear, I love thee.
I see thee dancing o'er the green,
Thy waist sae jump, thy limbs sae clean,
Thy tempting looks, thy roguish een—
 By heaven and earth I love thee.

By night, by day, afield, at hame,
The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame,
And aye I muse and sing thy name;
 I only live to love thee.
Though I were doomed to wander on
Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,
Till my last weary sand was run,
 'Till then—and then I'd love thee.

Robert Burns

Corsincon: the Ayrshire mountain where the Nith rises.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

146. *My heart's in the Highlands*

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe;
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.
Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birthplace of valour, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Farewell to the mountains, high-covered with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe;
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.

Robert Burns

147. *John Anderson*

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquaint
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was Brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snow;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo.

BOOK FOUR

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.

Robert Burns

148. *Ye banks and braes*

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary fu' o' care?
Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons through the flowering thorn:
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed never to return.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my fause lover stole my rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

Robert Burns

canty: cheerful.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

149. *Duncan Gray*

Duncan Gray cam here to woo,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't:
On blithe Yule night when we were fou,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Maggie coost her head fu' heigh,
Looked asklent and unco skeigh,
Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Duncan fleeched, and Duncan prayed;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't:
Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Duncan sighed baith out and in,
Grat his een baith bleer't and blin',
Spak o' lowpin ower a linn;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Time and chance are but a tide,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't:
Slighted love is sair to bide;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,
For a haughty hizzie dee?
She may gae to—France for me!
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
How it comes let doctors tell,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't:
Meg grew sick—as he grew hail;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Something in her bosom wrings,
For relief a sigh she brings;
And O, her een, they spak sic things!
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

skeigh: skittish. gart: made. abeigh: aside.
fleeched: begged. grat: cried. linn: waterfall.

BOOK FOUR

Duncan was a lad o' grace,
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't:
Maggie's was a pitcous case,
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't:
Duncan couldna be her death,
Swelling pity smooored his wrath;
Now they're crouse and canty baith:
 Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Robert Burns

150. *Address to the Toothache*

My curse upon your venomed stang
That shoots my tortured gums along,
And through my lugs gies mony a twang,
 Wi' gnawing vengeance:
Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,
 Like racking engines.

When fevers burn, or ague freezes,
Rheumatics gnaw, or colic squeezes,
Our neighbours' sympathy may ease us,
 Wi' pitying moan;
But thee—thou hell o' a' diseases—
 Aye mocks our groan.

Adown my beard the slavers trickle;
I throw the wee stools o'er the mickle,
As round the fire the giglets keckle
 To see me loup;
While, raving mad, I wish a heckle
 Were in their doup.

smooored: smothered. **crouse:** brisk. **giglets:** children.
keckle: titter. **loup:** jump. **heckle:** burr. **doup:** clothes.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

O' a' the numerous human dools,
Ill hairsts, daft bargains, cutty stools,
Or worthy friends raked i' the mools,—
Sad sight to see—

The tricks o' knaves, or fash o' fools,
Thou bear'st the gree.

Where'er that place be priests ca' hell,
Whence a' the tones o' misery yell,
And rankèd plagues their numbers tell
In dreadful raw,
Thou, toothache, surely bear'st the bell,
Among them a'.

O thou grim mischief-making chiel,
That gars the notes of discord squeal
Till daft mankind aft dance a reel
In gore shoe-thick,

Gie a' the faes o' Scotland's weal
A towmont's toothache.

Robert Burns

151. *Bonnie Lesley*

O saw ye bonnie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the Border?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For nature made her what she is,
And ne'er made sic anither.

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley;
Thy subjects we, before thee:
Thou art divine, fair Lesley;
The hearts o' men adore thee.

dools: ills. hairsts: harvests. mools: mould.
fash: annoyance. gree: prize. towmont's: twelvemonth's.

BOOK FOUR

The deil he couldna scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonnie face
And say " I canna wrang thee ".

The powers aboon will tent thee,
Misfortune sha'na steer thee:
Thou'rt like themsel' sae lovely,
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie!
That we may brag we hae a lass
There's nane again sae bonnie.

Robert Burns

152. *Highland Mary*

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

scaith: hurt. tent: heed, protect. steer: stir.
drumlie: muddy.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Wi' mony a vow and locked embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But, oh, fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary.

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips
I aft hae kissed sae fondly;
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly;
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

Robert Burns

153. *Scots wha hae*

*Robert Bruce's address to his army, before the
battle of Bannockburn*

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled;
Scots, wham Bruce has often led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory!

Now's the day, and now's the hour:
See the front of battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's power,
Chains and slavery!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

BOOK FOUR

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa',
Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains,
By your sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free.

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe.
Liberty's in every blow,
Let us do or die!

Robert Burns

154. *For a' that and a' that*

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that?
The coward slave, we pass him by;
We dare be poor for a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that;
The rank is but the guinea stamp;
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on homely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-gray, and a' that?
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that:
For a' that and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er so poor,
Is king of men for a' that.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that;
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can make a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might:
Guid faith, he mauna fa' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that;
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, and a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be for a' that.

Robert Burns

birkie: stripling. fa': obtain. gree: prize.

BOOK FOUR

155. *MacPherson's Farewell*

"Farewell, ye dungeons dark and strong,
The wretch's destiny:
MacPherson's time will not be long
On yonder gallows tree."

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he:
He played a spring, and danc'd it round,
Below the gallows tree.

"Oh, what is death but parting breath?
On many a bloody plain
I've dared his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again.

"Untie these bands from off my hands,
And bring to me my sword,
And there's no a man in all Scotland,
But I'll brave him at a word.

"I've lived a life of sturt and strife;
I die by treachery;
It burns my heart I must depart
And not avengèd be.

"Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,
And all beneath the sky!
May coward shame distain his name,
The wretch that dares not die!"

Robert Burns

THE POET'S PROGRESS

156. *It was a' for our rightfu' king*

“ It was a' for our rightfu' king
 We left fair Scotland's strand;
It was a' for our rightfu' king
 We e'er saw Irish land,
 My dear,
 We e'er saw Irish land.

“ Now a' is done that men can do,
 And a' is done in vain;
My love and native land, farewell,
 For I maun cross the main,
 My dear,
 For I maun cross the main.”

“ He turned him right and round about
 Upon the Irish shore;
And gae his bridle-reins a shake,
 With, Adieu for evermore,
 My dear,
 With, Adieu for evermore.

“ The sodger frae the wars returns,
 The sailor frae the main;
But I hae parted frae my love,
 Never to meet again,
 My dear,
 Never to meet again.

“ When day is gane, and night is come,
 And a' folk bounè to sleep,
I think on him that's far awa',
 The lee-lang night, and weep,
 My dear,
 The lee-lang night, and weep.”

Robert Burns

BOOK FOUR

157. *Auld Lang Syne*

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min' ?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne ?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae rin about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine;
But we've wandered mony a weary foot
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidled i' the burn,
Frae mornin' sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roared
Sin' auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o' thine;
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine;
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

Robert Burns

gowans: flowers. fiere: companion.
guid-willie waught: goodwill drink.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

158. *The Land o' the Leal*

I'm wearin' awa', John,
Like snaw wreaths in thaw, John;
I'm wearin' awa'
 To the land o' the leal.
There's nae sorrow there, John,
There's neither cauld nor care, John;
The day is aye fair
 In the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairn's there, John;
She was baith guid and fair, John;
And O we grudged her sair
 To the land o' the leal.
But sorrow's sel' wears past, John,
And joy's a-comin' fast, John,
'The joy that's aye to last
 In the land o' the leal.

Sae dear that joy was bought, John;
Sae free the battle fought, John,
That sinfu' man e'er brought
 To the land o' the leal.
O dry your glistenin' e'e, John,
My soul langs to be free, John,
And angels beckon me
 To the land o' the leal.

O, haud ye leal and true, John;
Your day it's wearin' through, John,
And I'll welcome you
 To the land o' the leal.
Now fare ye well, my ain John;
This world's care is vain, John;
We'll meet and we'll be fain
 In the land o' the leal.

Lady Nairne

BOOK FOUR

159. *The Laird o' Cockpen*

The laird o' Cockpen he's proud and he's great;
His mind is ta'en wi' things o' the state;
He wanted a wife his braw house to keep,
But favour wi' woin' was fashious to seek.

Down by the dykeside a lady did dwell;
At his table head he thought she'd look well;
M'Clish's ae daughter o' Claverse-ha' Lee,
A penniless lass wi' a lang pedigree.

His wig was well pouthered and as gude as new;
His waistcoat was white, his coat it was blue;
He put on a ring, a sword, and cocked hat;
And wha could refuse the laird wi' a' that?

He took the gray mare and rode cannily,
An' rapped at the yett o' Claverse-ha' Lee.
"Gae tell Mistress Jean to come speedily ben;
She's wanted to speak to the laird o' Cockpen."

Mistress Jean she was makin' the elder-flower wine;
"An' what brings the laird at sic a like time?"
She put off her apron and on her silk gown,
Her mutch wi' red ribbons, and gaed awa' down.

An' when she cam ben he bowèd fu' low,
An' what was his errand he soon let her know.
Amazed was the laird when the lady said "Na",
And wi' a laigh curtsie she turnèd awa'.

Dumbfounded he was; nae sigh did he gie;
He mounted his mare; he rode cannily;
An' often he thought, as he gaed through the glen,
"She's daft to refuse the laird o' Cockpen".

Lady Nairne

ben: into the parlour.



BOOK FIVE

160. *I wandered lonely as a cloud*

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company;
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

161. *To the Cuckoo*

O blithe new-comer, I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo, shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the spring.
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

BOOK FIVE

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessèd bird, the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place,
That is fit home for thee.

William Wordsworth

162. *The Solitary Reaper*

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland lass,
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass.
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen, for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

William Wordsworth

163. *My heart leaps up when I behold*

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die.
The child is father of the man:
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

164. *Lines written in early spring*

I heard a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played;
Their thoughts I cannot measure;
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

165. *She was a phantom of delight*

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too.
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death:
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill:
A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

166. *Yarrow unvisited*

1803

From Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled,
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my winsome marrow
“Whate’er betide, we’ll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow.”

“Let Yarrow folk, frae Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, ’tis their own;
Each maiden to her dwelling.
On Yarrow’s banks let heroes feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow,
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

“There’s Gala Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us;
And Dryburgh, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus;
There’s pleasant Tiviotdale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow:
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow?

“What’s Yarrow but a river bare
That glides the dark hills under?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder.”

Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn;
My true love sighed for sorrow,
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ O green ” said I “ are Yarrow’s holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing!
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,
But we will leave it growing.
O’er hilly path and open strath
We’ll wander Scotland thorough;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

“ Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;
The swan on still St. Mary’s Lake
Float double, swan and shadow.
We will not see them; will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There’s such a place as Yarrow.

“ Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown;
It must, or we shall rue it: .
We have a vision of our own,
Ah! why should we undo it?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We’ll keep them, winsome marrow;
For when we’re there, although ’tis fair,
’Twill be another Yarrow.

“ If care with freezing years should come,
And wandering seem but folly,
Should we be loth to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy;
Should life be dull, and spirits low,
’Twill soothe us in our sorrow
That earth has something yet to show,
The bonny holms of Yarrow ”.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

167. *Yarrow visited*

September 1814

And is this—Yarrow?—*This* the stream

Of which my fancy cherished

So faithfully, a waking dream,

An image that hath perished?

O that some minstrel's harp were near

To utter notes of gladness

And chase this silence from the air,

That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows

With uncontrolled meanderings;

Nor have these eyes by greener hills

Been soothed, in all my wanderings.

And, through her depths, St. Mary's Lake

Is visibly delighted;

For not a feature of those hills

Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow Vale,

Save where that pearly whiteness

Is round the rising sun diffused,

A tender hazy brightness;

Mild dawn of promise! that excludes

All profitless dejection,

Though not unwilling here to admit

A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous flower

Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?

His bed perchance was yon smooth mound

On which the herd is feeding:

And haply from this crystal pool,

Now peaceful as the morning,

The water-wraith ascended thrice,

And gave his doleful warning.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Delicious is the lay that sings
The haunts of happy lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers:
And pity sanctifies the verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation:
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy:
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature;
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary,
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in,
For manhood to enjoy his strength,
And age to wear away in;
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—
The brood of chaste affection.

BOOK FIVE

How sweet on this autumnal day
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my true love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather!
And what if I enwreathed my own?
'Twere no offence to reason;
The sober hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see; but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;
A ray of fancy still survives;
Her sunshine plays upon thee.
Thy ever youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought, which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow,
Will dwell with me to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

168. *Ode on intimations of immortality from
recollections of early childhood*

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong.

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng.
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,

BOOK FIVE

And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday;
 Thou child of joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
 shepherd boy!

Ye blessèd creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal;
The fulness of your bliss I feel—I feel it all.
 O evil day, if I were sullen
 While earth herself is adorning
 This sweet May morning;
 And the children are culling
 On every side
 In a thousand valleys far and wide
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm:
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear.
 But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have looked upon;
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
 The pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?
Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar;
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Heaven lies about us in our infancy.
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy.
The youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended.
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate, man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' darling of a pigmy size;
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes;
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly learned art,—
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;
 And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
 Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,

BOOK FIVE

And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the persons, down to palsied age,
That life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
'That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,
Mighty prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life.

O joy, that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive.
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise ;

But for those obstinate questionings

Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings,

Blank misgivings of a creature

Moving about in worlds not realized,

High instincts, before which our mortal nature

Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised :

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,

Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make

Our noisy years seem moments in the being

Of the eternal silence: truths that wake,

To perish never ;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,

Nor man nor boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,

Can utterly abolish or destroy.

Hence in a season of calm weather

Though inland far we be,

Our souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither ;

Can in a moment travel thither,

And see the children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song.

And let the young lambs bound

As to the tabor's sound.

BOOK FIVE

We, in thought, will join your throng
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May.

What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;

We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;

In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;

In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;

In the faith that looks through death,

In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,
Forbode not any severing of our loves.

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;

I only have relinquished one delight

To live beneath your more habitual sway;

I love the brooks which down their channels fret,

Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;

The innocent brightness of a new-born day

Is lovely yet;

The clouds that gather round the setting sun

Do take a sober colouring from an eye

That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;

Another race hath been, and other palms are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,

To me the meanest flower that blows can give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

169. *Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room*

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
And hermits are contented with their cells,
And students with their pensive citadels;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest peak of Furness fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
In truth the prison unto which we doom
Ourselves no prison is: and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

William Wordsworth

170. *Scorn not the sonnet*

Scorn not the sonnet; critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honours; with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief;
The sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from faery-land,
To struggle through dark ways; and when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

171. *Composed upon Westminster Bridge.*

September 3rd, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep;
The river glideth at his own sweet will;
Dear God, the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still.

William Wordsworth

172. *The world is too much with us*

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon.
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;—
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn,
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

173. *Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour*

Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
O raise us up, return to us again,
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free.
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

William Wordsworth

174. *Written in London September, 1802*

O friend, I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, oppressed
To think that now our life is only dressed
For show. Mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
Or groom. We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense—
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

175. *It is not to be thought of that the flood*

It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,—
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
Should perish, and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armoury of the invincible knights of old:
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

William Wordsworth

176. *Thought of a Briton on the subjugation
of Switzerland*

Two voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains, each a mighty voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice;
They were thy chosen music, Liberty.
There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him, but hast vainly striven:
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft;
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left;
For, high-souled maid, what sorrow would it be
That mountain floods should thunder as before,
And ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful voice be heard by thee!

William Wordsworth

THE POET'S PROGRESS

177. *November, 1806*

Another year! Another deadly blow!
Another mighty empire overthrown!
And we are left, or shall be left, alone,
The last that dare to struggle with the foe.
'Tis well. From this day forward we shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be sought;
That by our own right hands it must be wrought;
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer!
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

William Wordsworth

178. *On the extinction of the Venetian
Republic*

Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay?
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.

William Wordsworth

BOOK FIVE

179. *Inside of King's College Chapel,
Cambridge*

Tax not the royal saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the architect who planned,
Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed scholars only, this immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence.
Give all thou canst; high heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more:
So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof,
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

William Wordsworth

180. *Song*

“ A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine;
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine.
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green—
No more of me you knew,
My love,
No more of me you knew.
“ This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow
Ere we two meet again.”

BOOK FIVE

“ I read you by your bugle-horn
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king’s greenwood.”
“ A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And ’tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night.”
Yet sung she “ Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there
To reign his Queen of May!

“ With burnished brand and musketoön
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum.”
“ I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And O, though Brignall banks be fair
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May.

“ Maiden, a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I’ll die;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I.
And when I’m with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.”

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen.

Sir Walter Scott

182. *Jock of Hazeldean*

“ Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen ”—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

“ Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington
And lord of Langleydale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen ”—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

“ A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o' them a',
Shall ride our forest queen ”—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

BOOK FIVE

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The ladie was not seen;
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean.

Sir Walter Scott

183. *Hunting Song*

Waken, lords and ladies gay.
On the mountain dawns the day.
All the jolly chase is here
With hawk and horse and hunting-spear;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily mingle they;
“Waken, lords and ladies gay”.

Waken, lords and ladies gay.
The mist has left the mountain gray;
Springlets in the dawn are steaming.
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay;
“Waken, lords and ladies gay”.

Waken, lords and ladies gay.
To the greenwood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

We can show the marks he made
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay;
" Waken, lords and ladies gay ".

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay.
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman, who can balk,
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk?
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

Sir Walter Scott

184. *Coronach*

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow.

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are serest,
But our flower was in flushing
When blighting was nearest.

BOOK FIVE

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever.

Sir Walter Scott

185. *Lochinvar*

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Esk river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby Gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late;
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of young Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

correi: hillside.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

" I long wooed your daughter; my suit you denied;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide;
And now I am come, with this lost love of mine
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet, the knight took it up;
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup;
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar;
" Now tread we a measure " said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and
plume,
And the bride-maidens whispered " 'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar".

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door and the charger stood
near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung.
" She is won! We are gone! Over bank, bush, and scaur!
They'll have fleet steeds that follow " quoth young
Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby
clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they
ran;

BOOK FIVE

There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Sir Walter Scott

186. *Harold's Song*

O listen, listen, ladies gay!

No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

“ Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew;
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay;
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

“ The blackening wave is edged with white;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the water-sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

“ Last night the gifted seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay;
Then stay thee, fair, in Ravensheuch;
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?”

“ 'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the hall,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

“ 'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide
If 'tis not filled by Rosabelle.”

THE POET'S PROGRESS

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from caverned Hawthornden.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined lie,
Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seemed all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmered all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair.
So they still blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapel;
Each one the holy vault doth hold,
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle.

And each St. Clair was buried there
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

Sir Walter Scott

BOOK FIVE

The mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward
with a good
wind and fair
weather, till
it reached the
Line.

The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he;
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon——”
The wedding-guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The wedding-
guest heareth
the bridal
music; but
the mariner
continueth
his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The wedding-guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed mariner.

The ship
drawn by a
storm toward
the South
Pole.

“ And now the storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where no living thing was to be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound.

Till a great sea-bird, called the albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

At length did cross an albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through.

And lo! the albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo.

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moonshine."

The ancient mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

" God save thee, ancient mariner,
From the fiends that plague thee thus!
Why look'st thou so?"—" With my crossbow
I shot the albatross.

BOOK FIVE

PART II

"The sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo.

His ship-
mates cry out
against the
ancient
mariner for
killing the
bird of good
luck

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch, said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow.

But when the
fog cleared
off, they
justify the
same, and
thus make
themselves
accomplices
in the
crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious sun uprist:
Then all averred I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair
breeze con-
tinues; the
ship enters
the Pacific
Ocean, and
sails north-
ward, even
till it reaches
the Line.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The ship hath
been sudden-
ly becalmed.

Down dropped the breeze, the sails dropped
down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the albatross begins
to be
avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ,
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

A spirit had
followed
them; one
of the in-
visible in-
habitants of
this planet,
neither depar-
ted souls nor

And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

BOOK FIVE

The ship-
mates in
their sore
distress
would fain
throw the
whole guilt
on the
ancient
mariner: in
sign whereof
they hang
the dead sea-
bird round
his neck.

Ah well a-day, what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

The ancient
mariner be-
holdeth a
sign in the
element afar
off.

“ There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time, a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye!
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist.
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged, and tacked, and veered.

At its nearer
approach, it
seemeth him
to be a ship;
and at a dear
ransom he
freeth his
speech from
the bonds of
thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood.
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail, a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
A flash of joy; Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And horror follows. For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

See, see! (I cried) she tacks no more
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel.

The western wave was all aflame,
The day was wellnigh done.
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad, bright sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the sun.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

And straight the sun was flecked with bars
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!),
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

Alas (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting sun. The Spectre-woman and her Death-mate, and no other, on board the skeleton ship. Like vessel, like crew!

Are those her ribs through which the sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

BOOK FIVE

Death and
Life-in-
Death have
diced for the
ship's crew,
and she (the
latter) win-
neth the
ancient
mariner.

No twilight
within the
courts of the
sun.

At the rising
of the moon,

One after
another,

His ship-
mates drop
down dead.

But Life-in-
Death begins
her work on
the ancient
mariner.

The naked hulk alongside came
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won; I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up.
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip.
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed
white;

From the sails the dew did drip,
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogged moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan),
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly;
They fled to bliss or woe.
And every soul, it passed me by
Like the whizz of my crossbow."

THE POET'S PROGRESS

PART IV

The wedding-guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him.

“ I fear thee, ancient mariner;
I fear thy skinny hand.
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown.”

But the ancient mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

“ Fear not, fear not, thou wedding-guest;
This body dropped not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gushed,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the
sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

BOOK FIVE

But the curse
liveth for him
in the eye of
the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh, more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye.
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneli-
ness and
fixedness he
yearneth
towards the
journeying
moon, and
the stars that
still sojourn,

The moving moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide;
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside;

yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them and is their appointed rest and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light
of the moon
he beholdeth
God's crea-
tures of the
great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Their beauty
and their
happiness.

He blesseth
them in his
heart.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The spell
begins to
break.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

“ O sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole.
To Mary Queen the praise be given;
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of
the holy
Mother, the
ancient
mariner is
refreshed
with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

BOOK FIVE

He heareth
sounds and
seeth strange
sights and
commotions
in the sky and
the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life;
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about;
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black
cloud;
The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The moon was at its side;
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of
the ship's
crew are in-
spired, and
the ship
moves on;

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on.
Beneath the lightning and the moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up-blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools.
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said naught to me."

But not by
the souls of
the men, nor
by demons of
earth or
middle air,
but by a
blessed troop
of angelic
spirits, sent
down by the
invocation of
the guardian
saint.

" I fear thee, ancient mariner."
" Be calm, thou wedding-guest:
"Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned they dropped their
arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

BOOK FIVE

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome
spirit from
the South
Pole carries
on the ship
as far as the
Line, in
obedience to
the angelic
troop, but
still requireth
vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion:
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then, like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The polar spirit's fellow-demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient mariner hath been accorded to the polar spirit, who returneth southward.

How long in that same fit I lay
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one. 'Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

First Voice:

'But tell me; tell me; speak again,
Thy soft response renewing;
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

Second Voice:

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the moon is cast—

BOOK FIVE

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

First Voice:

The mariner
hath been cast
into a trance;
for the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

Second Voice:

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly, more high, more high,
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the mariner's trance is abated.'

The super-
natural
motion is re-
tarded; the
mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night; the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is
finally ex-
piated.

And now this spell was snapped: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring;
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze;
On me alone it blew.

And the an-
cient mariner
beholdeth his
native
country.

O dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God;
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn.
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the moon.

BOOK FIVE

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

The angelic
spirits leave
the dead
bodies,

And the bay was white with silent light
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

And appear in
their own
forms of
light.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck;
O Christ, what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight.
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand;
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but O, the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The pilot and the pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven, it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I saw a third; I heard his voice:
It is the hermit good;
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The albatross's blood.

PART VII

**The hermit of
the wood.** " This hermit good lives in that wood

Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve;
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk;
' Why, this is strange, I trow
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

**Approacheth
the ship with
wonder.**

' Strange, by my faith!' the hermit said;
' And they answered not our cheer.
The planks look warped; and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere;
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

BOOK FIVE

' Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look
(The pilot made reply);
I am a-feared.' ' Push on, push on!'
Said the hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

**The ship sud-
denly sanketh.**

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

**The ancient
mariner is
saved in the
pilot's boat.**

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips; the pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
' Ha, ha!' quoth he ' full plain I see
The devil knows how to row.'

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land.
The hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient
mariner
earnestly en-
treateth the
hermit to
shrive him;
and the pen-
ance of life
falls on him.

' O shrive me, shrive me, holy man!'
The hermit crossed his brow.
' Say quick ' quoth he; ' I bid thee say
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever
and anon
throughout
his future life
an agony
constraineth
him to travel
from land to
land;

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door?
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark, the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer.

O wedding-guest, this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

BOOK FIVE

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company.

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay.

And to teach,
by his own
example,
love and
reverence to
all things
that God
made and
loveth.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou wedding-guest;
He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the wedding-guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.

S. T. Coleridge

THE POET'S PROGRESS

191. *My days among the dead are passed*

My days among the dead are passed;
 Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
 The mighty minds of old:
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal
 And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
 How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedewed
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the dead; with them
 I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
 Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the dead; anon
 My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
 Through all futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

Robert Southey

BOOK FIVE

192. *Many may yet recall the hours*

Many may yet recall the hours
That saw thy lover's chosen flowers
Nodding and dancing in the shade
Thy dark and wavy tresses made.
On many a brain is pictured yet
Thy languid eye's dim violet.
But who among them all foresaw
How the sad snows that never thaw
Upon that head one day should lie
And love but glimmer from that eye?

Walter Savage Landor

193. *Past ruined Iliion Helen lives*

Past ruined Iliion Helen lives;
Alcestis rises from the shades;
Verse calls them forth; 'tis verse that gives
Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall oblivion's deepening veil
Hide all the peopled hills you see,
The gay, the proud—while lovers hail
These many summers you and me.

Walter Savage Landor

194. *Hohenlinden*

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
 The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed
Each horseman drew his battle blade
And furious every charger neighed
 To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed, to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven
 Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
 Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
 Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich, all thy banners wave,
 And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part where many meet;
The snow shall be their winding-sheet;
And every turf beneath their feet
 Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

Thomas Campbell

BOOK FIVE

195. *The Mariners of England*

Ye mariners of England,
That guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze,
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe:
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave;
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave.
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below,
As they roar on the shore
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Utawa's tide! this trembling moon
Shall see us float over thy surges soon.
Saint of this green isle! hear our prayers,
Oh, grant us cool heavens and favouring airs.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near, and the daylight's past.

Thomas Moore

198. *The harp that once through Tara's halls*

The harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of beauty shed
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts that once beat high for praise
Now feel that pulse no more.

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells;
The chord alone that breaks at night
Its tale of ruin tells.
Thus freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives
Is when some heart indignant breaks
To show that still she lives.

Thomas Moore

BOOK FIVE

199. *The Minstrel Boy*

The minstrel boy to the wars is gone;
In the ranks of death you'll find him;
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him.
"Land of song," said the warrior bard
"Though all the world betrays thee,
One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard;
One faithful harp shall praise thee."

The minstrel fell; but the foeman's chain
Could not bring his proud soul under;
The harp he loved ne'er spoke again,
For he tore its chords asunder;
And said "No chains shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery;
Thy songs were made for the brave and free;
They shall never sound in slavery."

Thomas Moore

200. *She is far from the land*

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps
And lovers are round her sighing:
But coldly she turns from their gaze and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awaking:
Ah, little they think who delight in her strains
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He had lived for his love, for his country he died;
They were all that to life had entwined him;
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his love stay behind him.

Oh, make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the west,
From her own lovèd island of sorrow.

Thomas Moore

201. *A wet sheet and a flowing sea*

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind!
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornèd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
And hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;

BOOK FIVE

The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

Allan Cunningham

202. *Battle Song*

Day, like our souls, is fiercely dark;
What then? 'Tis day.
We sleep no more; the cock crows—hark!
To arms! away!
They come! they come! the knell is rung
Of us or them;
Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
Of gold and gem.
What collared hound of lawless sway,
To famine dear,
What pensioned slave of Attila,
Leads in the rear?
Come they from Scythian wilds afar,
Our blood to spill?
Wear they the livery of the Czar?
They do his will.
Nor tasselled silk, nor epaulette,
Nor plume, nor torse—
No splendour gilds, all sternly met,
Our foot and horse;
But, dark and still, we inly glow,
Condensed in ire.
Strike, tawdry slaves, and ye shall know
Our gloom is fire.
In vain your pomp, ye evil powers,
Insults the land;
Wrongs, vengeance, and the cause are ours,
And God's right hand.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Madmen! they trample into snakes
The wormy clod;
Like fire, beneath their feet awakes
The sword of God;
Behind, before, above, below,
They rouse the brave;
Where'er they go, they make a foe,
Or find a grave.

Ebenezer Elliot

203. *The Destruction of Sennacherib*

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of his spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest, when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest, when autumn hath
blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew
still.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his
pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

BOOK FIVE

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

Lord Byron

204. *She walks in beauty* ←

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes,
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face,
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek and o'er that brow
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

Lo

THE POET'S PROGRESS

205. *The Isles of Greece*

The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung.
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse:
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' Islands of the Blest.

The mountains look on Marathon;
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations;—all were his.
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now,
The heroic bosom beats no more.
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

BOOK FIVE

'Tis something in the dearth of fame,
Though linked among a fettered race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush, for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?
Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.
Earth, render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead;
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ.

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no; the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer "Let one living head,
But one, arise; we come, we come".
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain; in vain: strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine.
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine.
Hark, rising to the ignoble call,
How answers each bold Bacchanal.

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet;
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave;
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine.
We will not think of themes like these;
It made Anacreon's song divine;
He served—but served Polycrates;
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades.
O that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind;
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine;
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks;
They have a king who buys and sells.
In native swords and native ranks
The only hope of courage dwells.
But Turkish force and Latin fraud
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine.
Our virgins dance beneath the shade;
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But, gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

BOOK FIVE

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine;
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

Lord Byron

206. *Lines from "The Bride of Abydos"*

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime;
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with per-
fume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the sun;
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?
Oh, wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they
tell.

Lord Byron

THE POET'S PROGRESS

207. *Maid of Athens, ere we part*

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart;
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest;
Hear my vow before I go;
Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
Wooed by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste,
By that zone-encircled waist,
By all the token flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens, I am gone;
Think of me, sweet, when alone;
Though I fly to Istanboul,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No.
Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Lord Byron

Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ: My soul, I love you.

BOOK FIVE

208. *Chorus in "Hellas"*

The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn:
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves screener far;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning star;
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies;
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

O write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be;
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free,
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or heaven can give.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Then all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued:
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

O cease! must hate and death return?
Cease! must men kill and die?
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past;
O might it die or rest at last.

P. B. Shelley

209. *To Night*

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of night.
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear
Which make thee terrible and dear.
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought.
Blind with thine hair the eyes of day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand.
Come, long-sought!

BOOK FIVE

When I arose and saw the dawn,
 I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary day turned to her rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
 I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
 “ Wouldst thou me ? ”
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
 Murmured like a noontide bee,
“ Shall I nestle near thy side ?
Wouldst thou me ? ” And I replied,
 “ No, not thee ”.

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon;
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
 Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night;
Swift be thine approaching flight;
 Come soon, soon!

P. B. Shelley

210. *To* —

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory.
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.
Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

P. B. Shelley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

211. *The Cloud*

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits.
Over earth and ocean with gentle motion
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The spirit he loves remains:
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

BOOK FIVE

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack
When the morning star shines dead;
As on the jag of a mountain crag
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest on mine aëry nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden
Whom mortals call the moon
Glides glimmering o'er my fiece-like floor
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

' bind the sun's throne in a burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banners unfurl.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof:
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-coloured bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colours wove
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain, when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the
tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

P. B. Shelley

212. *Arethusa*

Arethusa arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains,
From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.
She leapt down the rocks
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;

BOOK FIVE

Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine
Which slopes to the western gleams.
And gliding and springing
She went, ever singing
In murmurs as soft as sleep.
The earth seemed to love her,
And heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered toward the deep.

Then Alpheus bold
On his glacier cold
With his trident the mountains strook,
And opened a chasm
In the rocks; with the spasm
All Erymanthus shook.
And the black south wind
It concealed behind
The urns of the silent snow,
And earthquake and thunder
Did rend in sunder
The bars of the springs below.
The beard and the hair
Of the river-god were
Seen through the torrent's sweep,
As he followed the light
Of the fleet nymph's flight
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

" O, save me; oh, guide me;
And bid the deep hide me;
For he grasps me now by the hair."
The loud ocean heard,
To its blue depth stirred,
And divided at her prayer;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And under the water
The earth's white daughter
Fled like a sunny beam.
Behind her descended
Her billows, unblended
With the brackish Dorian stream.
Like a gloomy stain
On the emerald main
Alpheus rushed behind,
As an eagle pursuing
A dove to its ruin
Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers
Where the ocean powers
Sit on their pearlèd thrones;
Through the coral woods
Of the weltering floods,
Over heaps of unvalued stones;
Through the dim beams
Which amid the streams
Weave a network of coloured light;
And under the caves
Where the shadowy waves
Are as green as the forest's night;
Outspeeding the shark
And the swordfish dark,
Under the ocean foam,
And up through the rifts
Of the mountain cliffs
They passed to their Dorian home.

And now, from their fountains
In Enna's mountains,
Down one vale where the morning basks,

BOOK FIVE

Like friends once parted,
Grown single-hearted,
They ply their watery tasks.
At sunrise they leap
From their cradles steep
In the cave of the shelving hill;
At noontide they flow
Through the woods below
And the meadows of asphodel;
And at night they sleep
In the rocking deep
Beneath the Ortygian shore,
Like spirits that lie
In the azure sky,
When they love but live no more.

P. B. Shelley

213. *To a Skylark*

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!—
Bird thou never wert—
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is over-
flowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

BOOK FIVE

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering un beholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the
view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingèd
thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the 'ountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground.

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

P. B. Shelley

BOOK FIVE

214. *Ode to the West Wind*

O wild west wind, thou breath of autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:
Wild spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,
Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: oh, hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet the sense faints picturing them; thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, hear!

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable; if even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyeey speed
Scarce seemed a vision, I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud.
I fall upon the thorns of life. I bleed.
A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own?
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one;
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth

BOOK FIVE

Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind;
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy. O wind,
If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

P. B. Shelley

215. *Adonais*

An elegy on the death of John Keats

I weep for Adonais—he is dead.
O, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head.
And thou, sad hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow. Say “ With me
Died Adonais; till the future dares
Forget the past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity ”.

Where wert thou, mighty mother, when he lay,
When thy son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? Where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,
'Mid listening echoes, in her paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

O, weep for Adonais—he is dead.
Wake, melancholy mother, wake and weep.
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep,
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone where all things wise and fair
Descend. Oh, dream not that the amorous deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Most musical of mourners, weep again.
Lament anew, Urania. He died
Who was the sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
Trampled and mocked with many a loathed rite
Of lust and blood; he went unterrified
Into the gulf of death; but his clear sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third among the sons of light.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew.
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road
Which leads, through toil and hate, to fame's serene
abode.

But now thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished
And fed with true love tears, instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew.
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals, nipped before they blew,
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies; the storm is overpast.

To that high capital where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay
He came, and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal. Come away;
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day.

BOOK FIVE

Is yet his fitting charnel-roof; while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay.
Awake him not; surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

He will awake no more, oh, never more.
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white death, and at the door
Invisible corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place.
The eternal hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

O, weep for Adonais. The quick dreams,
The passion-wingèd ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not,—
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,—
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn
 their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries:
“ Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some dream has loosened from his brain.”
Lost angel of a ruined paradise,
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

Another splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music; the damp death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its
eclipse.

And others came . . . desires and adorations,
Wingèd persuasions and veiled destinies,
Splendours, and glooms, and glimmering incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight phantasies;
And sorrow, with her family of sighs,
And pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp; the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watchtower, and, her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground.

BOOK FIVE

Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

Lost echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds; a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

Grief made the young spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou, Adonais; wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain.
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee. The curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest.

T , POET'S PROGRESS

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows, reappear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead seasons' bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
And the green lizard and the golden snake
Like unimprisoned flames out of their trance awake.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and ocean
A quickening life from the earth's heart has burst
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on chaos; in its stream immersed
The lamps of heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's delight
The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath;
Naught we know dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning? The intense atom glows
A moment; then is quenched in a most cold repose.

Alas that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal. Woe is me!
Whence are we? And why are we? Of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean

BOOK FIVE

Meet massed in death, who lends what life must
borrow.

As long as skies are blue and fields are green
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to
sorrow.

He will awake no more, oh, never more.
"Wake thou," cried misery "childless mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs."
And all the dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried "Arise!"
Swift as a thought by the snake memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading splendour sprung.

She rose like an autumnal night, that springs
Out of the east, and follows wild and drear
The golden day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so wrapped Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

Out of her secret paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than
they
Rent the soft form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

In the death chamber for a moment death,
Shamed by the presence of that living might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress
Roused death: death rose and smiled, and met her vain
caress.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais. I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art.
But I am chained to time, and cannot thence depart.

"Oh gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures, to the conqueror's banner true,
Who feed where desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,

BOOK FIVE

When like Apollo, from his golden bow,
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled! The spoilers tempt no second blow;
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

“ The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;
So is it in the world of living men.
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven; and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night.”

Thus ceased she; and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The pilgrim of eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

Midst others of less note came one frail form,
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness;
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

A pardlike spirit beautiful and swift;
A love in desolation masked; a power
Girt round with weakness;—it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow; even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may
break.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noontday dew
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart,—
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own;
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who art
thou?"

He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's: oh, that it should
be so.

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?

BOOK FIVE

If it be he, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one
Let me not vex with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

Our Adonais has drunk poison. Oh,
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown:
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame;
Live; fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name.
But be thyself, and know thyself to be.
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow.
Remorse and self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Peace, peace! He is not dead; he doth not sleep;
He hath awakened from the dream of life.
'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings; we decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight
Can touch him not and torture not again.
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

He lives; he wakes. 'Tis death is dead, not he.
Mourn not for Adonais. Thou young dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone.
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan.
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair.

He is made one with nature. There is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,

BOOK FIVE

Spreading itself where'er that power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never wearied love;
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely; he doth bear
His part, while the one spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing the unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the heaven's light.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reprov'd.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And many more, whose names on earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us" they cry;
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an heaven of song.
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou vesper of our throng".

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh come forth,
Fond wretch, and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth;
As from a centre dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiates the void circumference; then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the
brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
O, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend; they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey.
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Go thou to Rome, at once the paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And, where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds and fragrant copses dress
The bones of desolation's nakedness,

BOOK FIVE

Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou. Too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

The one remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Until death tramples it to fragments. Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek;
Follow where all is fled. Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my heart?
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart.
A light is passed from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles; the low wind whispers near—
'Tis Adonais calls; oh, hasten thither;
No more let life divide what death can join together.

That light whose smile kindles the universe,
That beauty in which all things work and move,
That benediction which the eclipsing curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven;
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the eternal are.

P. B. Shelley

BOOK FIVE

216. *Ozymandias* .

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: " Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
' My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair '.
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away".

P. B. Shelley

217. *Ode on a Grecian Urn*

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair.

Ah, happy, happy boughs, that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love, more happy, happy love,
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands dressed?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul, to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

BOOK FIVE

O Attic shape! fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity. Cold pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know".

John Keats

218. *Ode to Autumn*

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease;
For summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing, and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

John Keats

219. *Ode to a Nightingale*

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm south,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,

BOOK FIVE

With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth!
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry fays;
But here there is no light,
What from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

 I see what flowers are at my feet,
 What soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 And in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
 Aerewith the seasonable month endows
 Sweet grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
 Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
 And mid-May's eldest child
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy.
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain,
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird;
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self.
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fumed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music; do I wake or sleep?

John Keats

BOOK FIVE

220. *On first looking into Chapman's Homer*

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

John Keats

221. *When I have fears that I may cease to be*

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,
Before high-pilèd books, in charact'ry
Hold like rich garners the full-ripened grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love, then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think,
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

John Keats

THE POET'S PROGRESS

222. *La Belle Dame sans Merci*

“ O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

“ O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woebegone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

“ I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.”

“ I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful, a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild;

“ I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan;

“ I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song;

“ She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said
' I love thee true ';

BOOK FIVE

“ She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept, and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

“ And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dreamed—Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.

“ I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death pale were they all;
They cried ‘ La belle dame sans merci
Thee hath in thrall.’

“ I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill’s side.

“ And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake
And no birds sing. . . .”

John Keats

THE POET'S PROGRESS

223. *Wherefore, unlaurelled boy*

Wherefore, unlaurelled boy,
Whom the contemptuous muse will not inspire,
With a sad kind of joy
Still sing'st thou to thy solitary lyre?

The melancholy winds
Pour through unnumbered reeds their idle woes;
And every naiad finds
A stream to weep her sorrow as it flows.

Her sighs unto the air
The wood-maid's native oak doth broadly tell,
And Echo's fond despair
Intelligible rocks resyllable.

Wherefore, then, should not I,
Albeit no haughty muse my heart inspire,
Fated of grief to die,
Impart it to a solitary lyre?

George Darley

224. *Lines from "Nepenthe"*

O blest unfabled incense tree
That burns in glorious Araby,
With red scent chaliceing the air,
Till earth-life grow Elysian there.

Half buried to her flaming breast
In this bright tree she makes her nest,
Hundred-sunned Phœnix, when she must
Crumble at length to hoary dust:

Her gorgeous deathbed; her rich pyre
Burnt up with aromatic fire;
Her urn, sight high from spoiler men;
Her birthplace when self-born again!

BOOK FIVE

The mountainless green wilds among
Here ends she her unechoing song;
With amber tears and odorous sighs
Mourned by the desert where she lies.

George Darley

225. *To a Waterfowl*

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and smile
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,
The desert and illimitable air
Lone wandering; but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned
At that far height the cold thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not weary to the welcome land
Though the dark night is near.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone; the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who from zone to zone
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright.

W. C. Bryant

226. *The Indian Girl's Lament*

An Indian girl was sitting where
Her lover, slain in battle, slept;
Her maiden veil (her own black hair)
Came down o'er eyes that wept;
And wildly in her woodland tongue
This sad and simple lay she sung:—

“ I've pulled away the shrubs that grew
Too close above thy sleeping head,
And broke the forest boughs that threw
Their shadows o'er thy bed,
That, shining from the sweet southwest,
The sunbeams might rejoice thy rest.

BOOK FIVE

“ It was a weary, weary road
That led thee to the pleasant coast,
Where thou, in his serene abode,
Hast met thy father’s ghost;
Where everlasting autumn lies
On yellow woods and sunny skies.

“ ’Twas I the broidered mocsen made
That shod thee for that distant land;
’Twas I thy bow and arrows laid
Beside thy still cold hand,
Thy bow in many a battle bent,
Thy arrows never vainly spent.

“ With wampum belts I crossed thy breast,
And wrapped thee in the bison’s hide,
And laid the food that pleased thee best
In plenty by thy side;
And decked thee bravely, as became
A warrior of illustrious name.

“ Thou’rt happy now, for thou hast passed
The long dark journey of the grave,
And in the land of light at last
Hast joined the good and brave,
Amid the flushed and balmy air
The bravest and the loveliest there.

“ Yet oft to thine own Indian maid,
Even there, thy thoughts will earthward stray,
To her who sits where thou wert laid,
And weeps the hours away,
Yet almost can her grief forget
To think that thou dost love her yet.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ And thou, by one of those still lakes,
That in a shining cluster lie,
On which the south wind scarcely breaks
The image of the sky,
A bower for thee and me hast made
Beneath the many-coloured shade.

“ And thou dost wait and watch to meet
My spirit sent to join the blest,
And, wondering what detains my feet
From the bright land of rest,
Dost seem in every sound to hear
The rustling of my footsteps near ”.

W. C. Bryant

227. *Silence*

There is a silence where hath been no sound;
There is a silence where no sound may be;
In the cold grave, under the deep, deep sea,
Or in wide desert where no life is found;
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound:
No voice is hushed, no life treads silently,
But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
That never spoke, over the idle ground.
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
Of antique palaces, where man hath been,
Though the dun fox or wild hyæna calls,
And owls, that flit continually between,
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,
There the true silence is, self-conscious and alone.

Thomas Hood

BOOK FIVE

228. *Ruth*

She stood breast-high amid the corn,
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripened; such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell;
Which were blackest none could tell;
But long lashes veiled a light
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure, I said, heaven did not mean
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
Lay thy sheaf adown and come;
Share my harvest and my home.

Thomas Hood

THE POET'S PROGRESS

229. *To Helen*

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicèan barks of yore
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo, in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand,
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are holy land.

Edgar Allan Poe

BOOK SIX

230. *The Armada*

A Fragment

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise;
I tell of the thrice-famous deeds she wrought in ancient
days,

When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day
There came a gallant merchant ship full sail to Plymouth
Bay;

Her crew had seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's
Isle,

At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a
mile.

At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace,
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in
chase.

Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the
wall;

The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty
hall;

Many a light fishing bark put out to pry along the coast;
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a
post.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With his white hair unbonneted the stout old sheriff
comes;

Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound
the drums;

His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample
space;

For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her
Grace.

And haughtily the trumpets peal and gaily dance the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells.
Look how the Lion of the Sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies
down.

So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed
Picard field,

Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's eagle
shield.

So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to
bay,

And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely
hunters lay.

Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho! scatter
flowers, fair maids;

Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute; ho! gallants, draw
your blades;

Thou sun, shine on her gloriously; ye breezes, waft her
wide;

Our glorious *Semper Eadem*, the banner of our pride.

The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's
massy fold;

The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll
of gold;

Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea;
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again
shall be.

BOOK SIX

From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to
Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame
spread;
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone; it shone on
Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern
shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
points of fire,
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering
waves;
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sun-
less caves;
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery
herald flew;
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of
Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out in
Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton
Down.
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the
night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of blood-
red light.
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike silence
broke,
And with one start and with one cry the royal city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice
of fear,
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder
cheer;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of
hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down
each roaring street,
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the
din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring
in;
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the warlike
errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of
Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright
couriers forth;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started
for the north;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded
still;
All night from tower to tower they sprang; they sprang
from hill to hill;
Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag on Darwin's rocky
dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of
Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest
of light,
Till broad and fierce the star come forth on Ely's stately
fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless
plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln
sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of
Trent;

BOOK SIX

Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

Lord Macaulay

231. *The Battle of Naseby*

By Obadiah Bind-their-kings-in-chains-and-their-nobles-with-links-of-iron, serjeant in Ireton's regiment

Oh! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essencèd hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into a shout,
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line.
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the
Laws!
For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravocs of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes,
close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark!—What means the trampling of horsemen
on our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God! 'tis he, boys.
Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

BOOK SIX

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the
dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the accursed,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple
Bar:

And he—he turns, he flies; shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on
war.

Ho! comrades, scour the plain; and, ere ye strip the
slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure;
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-
pieces and locketts,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts
were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans
to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the
rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and
hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your
blades,
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your
oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and
your spades?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the
crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the
Pope;
There is woe in Oxford Halls; there is wail in Durham's
Stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom; the Bishop rends his
cope.

And she of the seven hills shall mourn her children's
ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's
sword;
And the kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they
hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses
and the Word.

Lord Macaulay

232. *Are they not all ministering spirits?*

We see them not, we cannot hear
The music of their wing;
Yet know we that they sojourn near,
The angels of the spring.

They glide along this lovely ground
When the first violet grows;
Their graceful hands have just unbound
The zone of yonder rose.

I gather it for thy dear breast,
From stain and shadow free;
That which an angel's touch hath blest
Is meet, my love, for thee.

R. S. Hawker

BOOK SIX

233. *Dark Rosaleen*

O my dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep!
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the deep.
There's wine from the royal Pope,
Upon the ocean green;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
My dark Rosaleen!

Over hills, and through dales,
Have I roamed for your sake;
All yesterday I sailed with sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne, at its highest flood,
I dashed across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
O, there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lightened through my blood,
My dark Rosaleen!

All day long, in unrest,
To and fro, do I move.
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The heart in my bosom faints
To think of you, my queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen;
'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen!

Over dews, over sands,
Will I fly, for your weal:
Your holy delicate white hands
Shall girdle me with steel.
At home, in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till e'en,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen,
My fond Rosaleen,
You'll think of me through daylight hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen!

BOOK SIX

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
O, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills.
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My dark Rosaleen,
My fond Rosaleen,
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My dark Rosaleen.

O, the Erne shall run red,
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal and slogan-cry
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen,
The judgment hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My dark Rosaleen.

J. C. Mangan

THE POET'S PROGRESS

234. *School and Schoolfellows*

Floreat Etona

Twelve years ago I made a mock
Of filthy trades and traffics;
I wondered what they meant by stock;
I wrote delightful sapphics;
I knew the streets of Rome and Troy,
I supped with Fates and Furies,—
Twelve years ago I was a boy,
A happy boy, at Drury's.

Twelve years ago!—how many a thought
Of faded pains and pleasures
Those whispered syllables have brought
From memory's hoarded treasures;
The fields, the farms, the bats, the books,
The glories and disgraces,
The voices of dear friends, the looks
Of old familiar faces.

Kind *Mater* smiles again to me,
As bright as when we parted;
I scan again the frank, the free,
Stout-limbed, and simple-hearted;
Pursuing every idle dream,
And shunning every warning;
With no hard work but Bovney stream,
No chill except Long Merning;

Now stopping Harry Vernon's ball,
That rattled like a rocket;
Now hearing Wentworth's "Fourteen all",
And striking for the pocket;
Now feasting on a cheese and fitch,
Now drinking from the pewter,
Now leaping over Chalvey ditch,
Now laughing at my tutor.

BOOK SIX

Where are my friends? I am alone;
No playmate shares my beaker:
Some lie beneath the churchyard stone,
And some—before the Speaker;
And some compose a tragedy,
And some compose a rondo;
And some draw sword for liberty,
And some draw pleas for John Doe.

Tom Mill was used to blacken eyes
Without the fear of sessions;
Charles Medlar loathed false quantities
As much as false professions.
Now Mill keeps order in the land,
A magistrate pedantic,
And Medlar's feet repose unscanned
Beneath the wide Atlantic.

Wild Nick, whose oaths made such a din,
Does Dr. Martext's duty;
And Mullion, with that monstrous chin,
Is married to a beauty;
And Darrell studies, week by week,
His Mant, and not his Manton;
And Ball, who was but poor in Greek,
Is very rich at Canton.

And I am eight-and-twenty now;
The world's cold chains have bound me;
And darker shades are on my brow,
And darker scenes around me;
In Parliament I fill my seat,
With many other noodles;
And lay my head in Jermyn Street,
And sip my hock at Boodle's.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But often when the cares of life
Have sent my temples aching,
When visions haunt me of a wife,
When duns await my waking,
When Lady Jane is in a pet,
Or Hoby in a hurry,
When Captain Hazard wins a bet,
Or Beaulieu spoils a curry,

For hours and hours I think and talk
Of each remembered hobby;
I long to lounge in Poet's Walk,
To shiver in the Lobby;
I wish that I could run away
From House, and Court, and Levee,
Where bearded men appear to-day
Just Eton boys grown heavy;

That I could bask in childhood's sun,
And dance o'er childhood's roses,
And find huge wealth in one pound one,
Vast wit in broken noses,
And play Sir Giles in Datchet Lane,
And call the milk-maids houris;
That I could be a boy again,
A happy boy, at Drury's.

W. M. Praed

BOOK SIX

235. *The Shandon Bells*

With deep affection,
And recollection,
I often think of
 Those Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
 Their magic spell.
On this I ponder
Where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder,
 Sweet Cork, of thee;
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

I've heard bells chiming
Full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in
 Cathedral shrine,
While at a glibe rate
Brass tongues would vibrate;
But all their music
 Spoke naught like thine;
For memory, dwelling
On each proud swelling
Of thy belfry knelling
 Its bold notes free,
Made the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I've heard bells tolling
Old Adrian's Mole in,
Their thunder rolling
 From the Vatican,
And cymbals glorious
Swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets
 Of Notre Dame;
But thy sounds were sweeter
Than the dome of Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber,
 Pealing solemnly;
O! the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

There's a bell in Moscow,
While on tower and kiosk O
In Saint Sophia
 The Turkman gets;
And loud in air
Calls men to prayer
From the tapering summit
 Of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom
I freely grant them;
But there is an anthem
 More dear to me;
'Tis the bells of Shandon
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

Francis Mahony

BOOK SIX

236. *A Musical Instrument*

What was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sate the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river;
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan
(How tall it stood in the river!),
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sate by the river.

“This is the way,” laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sate by the river)
“The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed.”
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

E. B. Browning

237. *The Slave's Dream*

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his native land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand.
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.

BOOK SIX

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty;
And the blast of the desert cried aloud
With a voice so wild and free
That he started in his sleep and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day;
For death had illumined the land of sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away.

H. W. Longfellow

THE POET'S PROGRESS

238. *Sir Humphrey Gilbert*

Southward with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast;
And the east wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
Glistened in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea mist
Dripped with silver rain;
But where he passed there were cast
Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed;
Three days or more seaward he bore;
Then, alas, the land-wind failed.

Alas, the land-wind failed,
And ice-cold grew the night,
And nevermore on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck;
The Book was in his hand;
"Do not fear; heaven is as near"
He said "by water as by land."

In the first watch of the night,
Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously
The fleet of Death rose all around.

BOOK SIX

The moon and the evening star
Were hanging in the shrouds;
Every mast, as it passed,
Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize
At midnight black and cold;
As of a rock was the shock;
Heavily the ground swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain o'er the open main;
Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, for ever southward,
They drift through dark and day;
And like a dream, in the Gulf Stream
Sinking, vanish all away.

H. W. Longfellow

239. *The Chambered Nautilus*

This is the ship of pearl which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main;
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming
hair.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl.
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed.

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no
more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap forlorn.
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn.
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that
sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll;
Leave thy low-vaulted past;
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outworn shell by life's unresting sea.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

BOOK SIX

240. *Dedication poem*

Say not the poet dies.
Though in the dust he lies,
He cannot forfeit his melodious breath,
Unsphered by envious death.
Life drops the voiceless myriads from its roll;
Their fate he cannot share
Who in the enchanted air,
Sweet with the lingering strains that Echo stole,
Has left his dearer self, the music of his soul.

We o'er his turf may raise
Our notes of feeble praise,
And carve with pious care for after days
The stone with "Here he lies".
He for himself has built a nobler shrine,
Whose walls of stately rhyme
Roll back the tides of time,
While o'er their gates the gleaming tablets shine
That wear his name inwrought with many a gleaming line.

Call not our poet dead,
Though on his turf we tread.
Green is the wreath their brows so long have worn,
The minstrels of the morn,
Who, while the orient burned with newborn flame,
Caught that celestial fire,
And struck a nation's lyre.
These taught the western winds the poet's name;
Theirs the first opening buds, the maiden flowers of fame.

Count not our poet dead.
The stars shall watch his bed;
The rose of June its fragrant life renew
His blushing mould to strew;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And all the tuneful throats of summer swell
With trills as crystal-clear
As when he wooed the ear
Of the young muse that haunts each wooded dell
With songs of that rough land he loved so well.

He sleeps; he cannot die.
As evening's long-drawn sigh,
Lifting the rose-leaves on his peaceful mound,
Spreads all their sweets around,
So, laden with his song, the breezes blow
From where the rustling sedge
Frets our rude ocean's edge
To the smooth sea beyond the peaks of snow.
His soul the air enshrines, and leaves but dust below

Oliver Wendell Holmes

241. *Stanzas from "The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám"*

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

"How sweet is mortal Sovranty!" think some:
Others, "How blest the Paradise to come!"
Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;
Oh, the brave Music of a *distant* Drum!

* * *

Think, in this battered Caravanserai
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

BOOK SIX

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahrám, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
'That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropped in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

Ah, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future Fears.
'To-morrow? Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Seven Thousand Years.

Lo! some we loved, the loveliest and best
'That Time and Fate of all their Vintage pressed,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to Rest.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust unto Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End.

* * *

Oh, come with old Khayyám, and leave the Wise
To talk: one thing is certain, that Life flies;
One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies;
'The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand laboured it to grow:
And this was all the Harvest that I reaped—
“ I came like Water, and like Wind I go.”

Into this Universe, and *why* not knowing,
Nor *whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

But leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me
The Quarrel of the Universe let be:
And in some corner of the Hubbub couched,
Make Game of that which makes as much of Thee.

* * *

The Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes;
And He that tossed Thee down into the Field,
He knows about it all—HE knows—HE knows!

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

And that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die,
Lift not thy hands to *It* for help—for It
Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.

* * *

Oh, Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestination round
Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

BOOK SIX

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of man
Is blackened, Man's Forgiveness give—and take!



Ah, Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

Edward Fitzgerald

242. *The Men of Old*

I know not that the men of old
Were better than men now,
Of heart more kind, of hand more bold,
Of more ingenuous brow:
I heed not those who pine for force
A ghost of 'Time to raise,
As if they thus could check the course
Of these appointed days.

Still it is true, and over true,
That I delight to close
This book of life self-wise and new,
And let my thoughts repose
On all that humble happiness
The world has since forgone,
'The daylight of contentedness
That on those faces shone.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

With rights, though not too closely scanned,
 Enjoyed, as far as known,
With will by no reverse unmanned,
 With pulse of even tone,
They from to-day and from to-night
 Expected nothing more,
Than yesterday and yesternight
 Had proffered them before.

To them was life a simple art
 Of duties to be done,
A game where each man took his part,
 A race where all must run;
A battle whose great scheme and scope
 'They little cared to know,
Content, as men at arms, to cope
 Each with his fronting foe.

Man now his virtue's diadem
 Puts on and proudly wears;
Great thoughts, great feelings, came to them,
 Like instincts, unawares:
Blending their souls' sublimest needs
 With tasks of every day,
They went about their gravest deeds
 As noble boys at play.

And what if nature's fearful wound
 They did not probe and bare?
For that their spirits never swooned
 To watch the misery there,
For that their love but flowed more fast,
 Their charities more free,
Not conscious what mere drops they cast
 Into the evil sea.

BOOK SIX

A man's best things are nearest him,
Lie close about his feet;
It is the distant and the dim
That we are sick to greet:
For flowers that grow our hands beneath
We struggle and aspire;
Our hearts must die, except they breathe
The air of fresh desire.

Yet, brothers, who up reason's hill
Advance with hopeful cheer,
O loiter not; those heights are chill,
As chill as they are clear;
And still restrain your haughty gaze,
The loftier that ye go,
Remembering distance leaves a haze
On all that lies below.

Lord Houghton

243. *The Lady of Shalott*

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And through the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Through the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river

Flowing down to Camelot.

Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers

The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
Slide the heavy barges trailed
By slow horses; and unhailed
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed

Skimming down to Camelot:

But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,

The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly

Down to towered Camelot:

And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.

BOOK SIX

She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often through the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights,
 And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
" I am half sick of shadows " said
 The Lady of Shalott.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves;
The sun came dazzling through the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather;
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often through the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed;
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.

BOOK SIX

From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror;
" Tirra lirra " by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces through the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side;
" The curse is come upon me " cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse,
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance
With a glassy countenance,
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right,
The leaves upon her falling light,
Through the noises of the night
 She floated down to Camelot:
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
 Turned to towered Camelot;
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:

BOOK SIX

But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said " She has a lovely face;
God in His mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott".

Lord Tennyson

244. *Choric Song from "The Lotos- Eaters"*

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful
skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings—
" There is no joy but calm ";
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Lo, in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steeped at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo, sweetened with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence; ripen, fall, and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death or dreamful ease.

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream;
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;

BOOK SIX

To hear each other's whispered speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
To muse and brood, and live again in memory
With those old faces of our infancy
Heaped over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears: but all hath suffered change;
For surely now our household hearths are cold:
Our sons inherit us: our looks are strange:
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile:
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out with many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

But, propped on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropped eyelids still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly

THE POET'S PROGRESS

His waters from the purple hill,
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave through the thick-twinèd vine,
To watch the emerald-coloured water falling
Through many a woven acanthus-wreath divine.
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretched out beneath the pine.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone:
Through every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust
is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard, when the surge
was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains
in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurled
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly
curled

Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
world:

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps
and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
and praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful
song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning though the words are strong;

BOOK SIX

Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whispered,—
 down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and
 oar;

O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

Lord Tennyson

245. *You ask me why*

You ask me why, though ill at ease,
 Within this region I subsist,
 Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,
 That sober-suited Freedom chose,
 The land where, girt with friends or foes,
A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,
 A land of old and just renown,
 Where Freedom slowly broadens down,
From precedent to precedent;

Where faction seldom gathers head,
 But, by degrees to fullness wrought,
 The strength of some diffusive thought
Hath time and space to work and spread.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Should banded unions persecute
Opinion, and induce a time
When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute;

Though Power should make from land to land
The name of Britain trebly great—
Though every channel of the State
Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,
Wild wind. I seek a warmer sky,
And I will see before I die
The palms and temples of the South.

Lord Tennyson

246. *Lines from "Locksley Hall"*

For I dipped into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world, and the wonders that would
be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic
sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly
bales;

Heard the heavens filled with shouting, and there rained
a ghastly dew,
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central
blue;

BOOK SIX

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south wind
rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging through the
thunderstorm;

Till the war drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle
flags were furled,
In the Parliament of Man, the federation of the world.

Lord Tennyson

247. *A Farewell*

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver;
No more by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

Flow, swiftly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river;
No where by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
And here thine aspen shiver;
And here by thee will hum the bee
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver;
But not by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

Lord Tennyson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

248. *Break, break, break*

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O sea.
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play.
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay.

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still.

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O sea.
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Lord Tennyson

249. *Sir Galahad*

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splintered spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:

BOOK SIX

They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall.
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall:
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bowed in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair through faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision; blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Through dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn.
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touched, are turned to finest air.

BOOK SIX

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And through the mountain walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on; the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

Lord Tennyson

250. *Songs from "The Princess"*

i. The splendour falls on castle walls

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear, how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going;
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of elfland faintly blowing;
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying;
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

ii. Now sleeps the crimson petal

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:
The fire-fly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the earth all Danaë to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

iii. Come down, O maid

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height:
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang),
In height and cold, the splendour of the hills?
But cease to move so near the heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;

BOOK SIX

And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with plenty in the maize,
Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With death and morning on the silver horns;
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropped upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors:
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air:
So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound;
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Lord Tennyson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

251. *Stanzas from "In Memoriam"*

i. The wish that, of the living whole

The wish that, of the living whole,
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?
Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life;
That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,
I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God,
I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

ii. Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

BOOK SIX

Ring out the grief, that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Lord Tennyson

252. *Come into the garden, Maud*

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown;
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clashed in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

BOOK SIX

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake,
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries "She is near, she is near";
And the white rose weeps "She is late";
The larkspur listens "I hear, I hear";
And the lily whispers "I wait".

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead ;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

Lord Tennyson

253. *The Brook*

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddyng bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

BOOK SIX

I wind about, and in and out,
 With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
 And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
 Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
 Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
 To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots;
 I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
 That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
 Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
 Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
 In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
 I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
 To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

Lord Tennyson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

254. *The Revenge*

A Ballad of the Fleet

I

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a fluttered bird, came flying from
far away:

“ Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-
three!”

Then swore Sir Thomas Howard “ ’Fore God, I am
no coward;

But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half of my men are sick. I must fly, but follow
quick.

We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-
three?”

II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville “ I know you are no
coward;

You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.

But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord
Howard,

To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain”.

III

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships of war that
day,

Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;

But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land

Very carefully and slow,

Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down below;

BOOK SIX

For we brought them all aboard,
And they blessed him in their pain that they were not
left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the
Lord.

IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to
fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came
in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather
bow.
“ Shall we fight, or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die.
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be
set.”
And Sir Richard said again “ We be all good English
men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the
devil,
For I never turned my back upon Don or devil yet ”.

V

Sir Richard spoke and he laughed, and we roared a
hurrah, and so
The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart of the
foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick
below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left
were seen,
And the little *Revenge* ran on through the long sea-lane
between.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

VI

Thousands of their soldiers looked down from their
decks and laughed,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little
craft
Running on and on, till delayed
By their mountain-like *San Philip*, that, of fifteen
hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning
tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stayed.

VII

And while now the great *San Philip* hung above us like
a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard
lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII

But anon the great *San Philip*, she bethought herself and
went,
Having that within her womb that had left her ill
content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us
hand to hand;
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and mus-
queteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes
his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

BOOK SIX

IX

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over
the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the
fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built
galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-
thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with
her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk, and many were shattered, and so
could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever battle like this in the world
before?

X

For he said " Fight on. Fight on ".
Though his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer
night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the
head;
And he said " Fight on. Fight on ".

XI

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far
over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us
all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they feared that
we still could sting,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

So they watched what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maimed for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them
stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder
was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side.
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride
“ We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again.
We have won great glory, my men.
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner; sink her; split her
in twain.
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain ”.

XII

And the Gunner said “ Ay, ay ”. But the seamen made
reply
“ We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let
us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow ”.
And the lion lay there dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him
then,

BOOK SIX

Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught
at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly
foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried
" I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man
and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do;
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die ".
And he fell upon their decks and he died.

XIV

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant
and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English
few.
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew.
But they sank his body with honour down into the deep,
And they manned the *Revenge* with a swarthier alien crew,
And away she sailed with her loss and longed for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruined awoke
from sleep,
And the water began to heave, and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake
grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their
masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shattered
navy of Spain,
And the little *Revenge* herself went down by the island
crag,
To be lost evermore in the main.

Lord Tennyson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

255. *Pippa's Song*

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

Robert Browning

256. *Home-thoughts, from abroad*

Oh, to be in England now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England sees, some morning,
unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge;
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture.
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower,
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

Robert Browning

BOOK SIX

257. *Home-thoughts, from the sea*

Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the north-west
died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz
Bay;
Bluish mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest north-east distance dawned Gibraltar
grand and gray;
“Here and here did England help me: how can I help
England?” say
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise
and pray,
While Jove’s planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

Robert Browning

258. *The Laboratory*

Ancien Régime

Now that I, tying thy glass mask tightly,
May gaze through these faint smokes curling whitely,
As thou pliest thy trade in this devil’s smithy,
Which is the poison to poison her, prithee?

He is with her, and they know that I know
Where they are, what they do; they believe my tears
flow,

While they laugh, laugh at me, at me fled to the drear
Empty church, to pray God in, for them! I am here.

Grind away; moisten and mash up thy paste;
Pound at thy powder. I am not in haste.
Better sit thus and observe thy strange things,
Than go where men wait me, and dance at the King’s.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

That in the mortar—you call it a gum?
Ah, the brave tree whence such gold oozings come!
And yonder soft phial, the exquisite blue,
Sure to taste sweetly—is that poison too?

Had I but all of them, thee and thy treasures,
What a wild crowd of invisible pleasures!
To carry pure death in an earring, a casket,
A signet, a fan mount, a filigree basket!

Soon, at the King's, a mere lozenge to give,
And Pauline should have just thirty minutes to live;
But to light a pastille, and Elise, with her head
And her breast and her arms and her hands, should drop
dead.

Quick—is it finished? The colour's too grim.
Why not soft like the phial's, enticing and dim?
Let it brighten her drink, let her turn it and stir,
And try it and taste, ere she fix and prefer.

What a drop! She's not little, no minion like me.
That's why she ensnared him. This never will free
The soul from those masculine eyes, say "No"
To that pulse's magnificent come-and-go.

For only last night, as they whispered, I brought
My own eyes to bear on her so, that I thought
Could I keep them one half minute fixed, she would fall
Shrivelled. She fell not. Yet this does it all.

Not that I bid you spare her the pain;
Let death be felt, and the proof remain;
Brand, burn up, bite into its grace—
He is sure to remember her dying face.

BOOK SIX

Is it done? Take my mask off. Nay, be not morose.
It kills her, and this prevents seeing it close,
The delicate droplet, my whole fortune's fee,
If it hurts her, beside, can it ever hurt me?

Now, take all my jewels; gorge gold to your fill;
You may kiss me, old man, on my mouth if you will.
But brush this dust off me, lest horror it brings
Ere I know it. Next moment I dance at the King's!

Robert Browning

259. *The Patriot*

An old story

It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad;
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway;
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells;
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries;
Had I said " Good folk, mere noise repels;
But give me your sun from yonder skies!"
They had answered " And afterward, what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun,
To give it my loving friends to keep;
Nought man could do have I left undone;
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
Just a palsied few at the windows set:
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles' Gate; or better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go.
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead;
"Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
Me?" God might question. Now, instead,
'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.

Robert Browning

260. Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came

My first thought was, he lied in every word,
That hoary cripple, with malicious eye
Askance to watch the working of his lie
On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford
Suppression of the glee that pursed and scored
Its edge, at one more victim gained thereby.

What else should he be set for with his staff?
What, save to waylay with his lies, ensnare
All travellers who might find him posted there,
And ask the road? I guessed what skull-like laugh
Would break, what crutch 'gin write my epitaph
For pastime in the dusty thoroughfare,

BOOK SIX

If at his counsel I should turn aside
 Into that ominous tract which, all agree,
 Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquiescingly
I did turn as he pointed: neither pride
Nor hope rekindling at the end descried,
 So much as gladness that some end might be.

For, what with my whole world-wide wandering,
 What with my search drawn out through years, my
 hope
 Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope
With that obstreperous joy success would bring,
I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring
 My heart made, finding failure in its scope.

As when a sick man very near to death
 Seems dead indeed, and feels begin and end
 The tears, and takes the farewell of each friend,
And hears one bid the other go, draw breath
Freelier outside ("since all is o'er" he saith
 " And the blow fallen no grieving can amend "),

While some discuss if near the other graves
 Be room enough for this, and when a day
 Suits best for carrying the corpse away,
With care about the banners, scarves, and staves;
And still the man hears all, and only craves
 He may not shame such tender love and stay:

Thus, I had so long suffered in the quest,
 Heard failure prophesied so often, been writ
 So many times among "The Band",—to wit
The knights who to the Dark Tower's search addressed
Their steps—that just to fail as they seemed best,
 And all the doubt was now, should I be fit?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,
That hateful cripple, out of his highway
Into the path he pointed. All the day
Had been a dreary one at best, and dim
Was settling to its close, yet shot one grim
Red leer to see the plain catch its estray.

For mark, no sooner was I fairly found
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or two,
Than, pausing to throw backward a last view
O'er the safe road, 'twas gone; gray plain all round,
Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.
I might go on: nought else remained to do.

So, on I went. I think I never saw
Such starved ignoble nature; nothing throve:
For flowers—as well expect a cedar grove.
But cockle, spurge, according to their law
Might propagate their kind, with none to awe,
You'd think; a burr had been a treasure-trove.

No! penury, inertness, and grimace,
In some strange sort, were the land's portion. "See
Or shut your eyes" said Nature peevishly.
"It nothing skills: I cannot help my case;
'Tis the Last Judgment's fire must cure this place,
Calcine its clods, and set my prisoners free."

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk
Above its mates, the head was chopped: the bents
Were jealous else. What made those holes and rents
In the dock's harsh swarth leaves, bruised as to baulk
All hope of greenness? 'Tis a brute must walk
Pashing their life out, with a brute's intents.

BOOK SIX

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair
In leprosy: thin dry blades pricked the mud
Which underneath looked kneaded up with blood.
One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-stare,
Stood stupefied, however he came there:
Thrust out past service from the devil's stud!

Alive? He might be dead for all I know,
With that red, gaunt, and colloped neck a-strain,
And shut eyes underneath the rusty mane;
Seldom went such grotesqueness with such woe;
I never saw a brute I hated so;
He must be wicked to deserve such pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my heart.
As a man calls for wine before he fights
I asked one draught of earlier, happier sights,
Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.
Think first, fight afterwards—the soldier's art:
One taste of the old time sets all to rights.

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening face
Beneath its garniture of curly gold,
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold
An arm in mine to fix me to the place,
That way he used. Alas, one night's disgrace!
Out went my heart's new fire and left it cold.

Giles then, the soul of honour. There he stands
Frank as ten years ago when knighted first.
What honest man should dare (he said) he durst.
Good. But the scene shifts. Faugh! what hangman
hands
Pin to his breast a parchment? His own bands
Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and curst!

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Better the present than a past like that;
Back therefore to my darkening path again.
No sound; no sight as far as eye could strain.
Will the night send a howlet or a bat?
I asked, when something on the dismal flat
Came to arrest my thoughts and change their train.

A sudden little river crossed my path
As unexpected as a serpent comes;
No sluggish tide congenial to the glooms,
This, as it frothed by, might have been a bath
For the fiend's glowing hoof, to see the wrath
Of its black eddy bespate with flakes and spumes.

So petty, yet so spiteful! All along
Low scrubby alders kneeled down over it;
Drenched willows flung them headlong in a fit
Of mute despair, a suicidal throng.
The river which had done them all the wrong,
Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred no whit.

Which, while I forded—good saints, how I feared
To set my foot upon a dead man's cheek,
Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to seek
For hollows, tangled in his hair or beard!
It may have been a water-rat I speared,
But, ugh, it sounded like a baby's shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other bank.
Now for a better country. Vain presage!
Who were the strugglers, what war did they wage,
Whose savage trample thus could pad the dank
Soil to a splash! Toads in a poisoned tank,
Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage—

BOOK SIX

The fight must so have seemed in that fell cirque.
What penned them there, with all the plain to choose?
No footprint leading to that horrid mews,
None out of it. Mad brewage set to work
Their brains, no doubt, like galley-slaves the Turk
Pits for his pastime, Christians against Jews.

And more than that—a furlong on—why, there!
What bad use was that engine for, that wheel,
Or brake, not wheel—that harrow fit to reel
Men's bodies out like silk? With all the air
Of Tophet's tool, on earth left unaware,
Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth of steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground, once a wood,
Next a marsh, it would seem, and now mere earth
Desperate and done with (so a fool finds mirth,
Makes a thing and then mars it, till his mood
Changes and off he goes); within a rood
Bog, clay, and rubble, sand and stark black dearth.

Now blotches rankling, coloured gay and grim;
Now patches where some leanness of the soil's
Broke into moss or substances like boils;
Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in him
Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim
Gaping at death, and dies while it recoils.

And just as far as ever from the end;
Nought in the distance but the evening; nought
To point my footsteps farther. At the thought
A great black bird, Apollyon's bosom friend,
Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing dragon-penned
That brushed my cap—perchance the guide I sought.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
'Spite of the dusk, the plain had given place
All round to mountains—with such name to grace
Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen in view.
How thus they had surprised me, solve it you.
How to get from them was no clearer case.

Yet half I seemed to recognize some trick
Of mischief happened to me, God knows when—
In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended, then,
Progress this way; when, in the very nick
Of giving up, one time more, came a click
As when a trap shuts—you're inside the den!

Burningly it came on me all at once;
This was the place; those two hills on the right,
Crouched like two bulls locked horn in horn in fight;
While to the left a tall scalped mountain . . . Dunce,
Dotard, a-dozing at the very nonce,
After a life spent training for the sight!

What in the midst lay but the Tower itself?
The round squat turret, blind as the fool's heart;
Built of brown stone; without a counterpart
In the whole world. The tempest's mocking elf
Points to the shipman thus the unseen shelf
He strikes on, only when the timbers start.

Not see? Because of night, perhaps? Why, day
Came back again for that. Before it left,
The dying sunset kindled through a cleft;
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay
Chin upon hand to see the game at bay;
“Now stab and end the creature, to the heft.”

BOOK SIX

Not hear? When noise was everywhere; it tolled
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears
Of all the lost adventurers my peers;
How such a one was strong, and such was bold,
And such was fortunate; yet each of old
Lost, lost. One moment knelled the woe of years.

There they stood, ranged along the hillsides, met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture. In a sheet of flame
I saw them, and I knew them all. And yet
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower
came".

Robert Browning

261. *A Grammarian's Funeral*

Shortly after the Revival of Learning in Europe

Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together.
Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes,
Each in its tether
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,
Cared-for till cock-crow:
Look out if yonder be not day again
Rimming the rock-row.
That's the appropriate country; there, man's thought,
Rarer, intenser,
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
Chafes in the censer.
Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop;
Seek we sepulture
On a tall mountain, citted to the top,
Crowded with culture!

THE POET'S PROGRESS

All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;
 Clouds overcome it;
No, yonder sparkle is the citadel's
 Circling its summit.
Thither our path lies; wind we up the heights:
 Wait ye the warning?
Our low life was the level's and the night's;
 He's for the morning.
Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,
 'Ware the beholders!
This is our master, famous, calm, and dead,
 Borne on our shoulders.

Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling thorpe and
 croft,
 Safe from the weather.
He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
 Singing together,
He was a man born with thy face and throat,
 Lyric Apollo.
Long he lived nameless: how should spring take
 note
 Winter would follow?
Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone.
 Cramped and diminished,
Moaned he " New measures, other feet anon;
 My dance is finished " ?
No, that's the world's way: (keep the mountain-side,
 Make for the city.)
He knew the signal, and stepped on with pride
 Over men's pity;
Left play for work, and grappled with the world
 Bent on escaping:
" What's in the scroll " quoth he " thou keepest
 furled?
 Show me their shaping,

BOOK SIX

Theirs, who most studied man, the bard and sage;
Give!"—So, he gowned him,
Straight got by heart that book to its last page:
Learned, we found him.
Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like lead,
Accents uncertain:
"Time to taste life," another would have said
"Up with the curtain".
This man said rather "Actual life comes next?
Patience a moment.
Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed text;
Still, there's the comment.
Let me know all. Prate not of most or least,
Painful or easy.
Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
Ay, nor feel queasy".
Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,
When he had learned it,
When he had gathered all books had to give;
Sooner, he spurned it.
Image the whole, then execute the parts;
Fancy the fabric
Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from quartz,
Ere mortar dab brick!

(Here's the town-gate reached: there's the market-
place
Gaping before us.)
Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace
(Hearten our chorus!)
That before living he'd learn how to live—
No end to learning:
Earn the means first; God surely will contrive
Use for our earning.
Others mistrust and say "But time escapes:
Live now or never".

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He said "What's time? leave Now for dogs and apes;
Man has Forever".

Back to his book then: deeper drooped his head:

Calculus racked him:

Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:

Tussis attacked him.

"Now, master, take a little rest!" Not he.

(Caution redoubled,

Step two a-breast, the way winds narrowly.)

Not a whit troubled,

Back to his studies, fresher than at first,

Fierce as a dragon

He (soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst)

Sucked at the flagon.

Oh, if we draw a circle premature,

Heedless of far gain,

Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure,

Bad is our bargain.

Was it not great? did not he throw on God,

(He loves the burthen)—

God's task to make the heavenly period

Perfect the earthen?

Did not he magnify the mind, show clear

Just what it all meant?

He would not discount life, as fools do here,

Paid by instalment.

He ventured neck or nothing; heaven's success

Found, or earth's failure:

"Wilt thou trust death or not?" He answered

"Yes.

Hence with life's pale lure!"

That low man seeks a little thing to do,

Sees it and does it:

This high man, with a great thing to pursue,

Dies ere he knows it.

BOOK SIX

That low man goes on adding one to one,
His hundred's soon hit:
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit.
That, has the world here; should he need the next,
Let the world mind him!
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find him.
So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
Ground he at grammar;
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife:
While he could stammer
He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be!
Properly based *Oun*;
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,
Dead from the waist down.
Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place:
Hail to your purlicus,
All ye highfliers of the feathered race,
Swallows and curlews.
Here's the top-peak; the multitude below
Live, for they can, there:
This man decided not to Live but Know.
Bury this man there?
Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go. Let joy break with the storm,
Peace let the dew send.
Lofty designs must close in like effects:
Loftily lying,
Leave him, still loftier than the world suspects,
Living and dying.

Robert Browning

THE POET'S PROGRESS

262. *Prospice*

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe,
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form?
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness, and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

Robert Browning

BOOK SIX

263. *The old Stoic*

Riches I hold in light esteem,
And love I laugh to scorn;
And lust of fame was but a dream
That vanished with the morn:

And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me
Is "Leave the heart that now I bear,
And give me liberty".

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
'Tis all that I implore;
In life and death a chainless soul
With courage to endure.

Emily Brontë

264. *Say not, The struggle naught availeth*

Say not, The struggle naught availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

A. H. Clough

265. *Young and old*

When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down;
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among:
God grant you find one face there,
You loved when all was young.

Charles Kingsley

BOOK SIX

266. *Ode to the North-east Wind*

Welcome, wild north-easter!
Shame it is to see
Odes to every zephyr;
Ne'er a verse to thee.
Welcome, black north-caster!
O'er the German foam;
O'er the Danish moorlands,
From thy frozen home.
Tired we are of summer,
Tired of gaudy glare,
Showers soft and steaming,
Hot and breathless air.
Tired of listless dreaming,
'Through the lazy day:
Jovial wind of winter,
'Turn us out to play.
Sweep the golden reed-beds;
Crisp the lazy dyke;
Hunger into madness
Every plunging pike.
Fill the lake with wild-fowl;
Fill the marsh with snipe;
While on dreary moorlands
Lonely curlew pipe.
Through the black fir-forest
Thunder harsh and dry,
Shattering down the snow-flakes
Off the curdled sky.
Hark! The brave north-easter!
Breast-high lies the scent,
On by holt and headland,
Over heath and bent.
Chime, ye dappled darlings,
'Through the sleet and snow.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Who can over-ride you?
Let the horses go.
Chime, ye dappled darlings,
Down the roaring blast;
You shall see a fox die
Ere an hour be past.
Go; and rest to-morrow,
Hunting in your dreams,
While our skates are ringing
O'er the frozen streams.
Let the luscious south wind
Breathe in lovers' sighs,
While the lazy gallants
Bask in ladies' eyes.
What does he but soften
Heart alike and pen?
'Tis the hard gray weather
Breeds hard English men.
What's the soft south-wester?
'Tis the ladies' breeze,
Bringing home their true loves
Out of all the seas:
But the black north-easter,
Through the snow-storm hurled,
Drives our English hearts of oak
Seaward round the world.
Come, as came our fathers,
Heralded by thee,
Conquering from the eastward,
Lords by land and sea.
Come; and strong within us
Stir the Vikings' blood;
Bracing brain and sinew,
Blow, thou wind of God!

Charles Kingsley

BOOK SIX

267. *O Captain, my Captain*

O Captain, my Captain, our fearful trip is done;
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought
is won,

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and
daring,

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red!

Where on the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain, my Captain, rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up; for you the flag is flung; for you the bugle
trills;

For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths; for you the
shores a-crowding;

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces
turning,

Here, Captain! dear father!

This arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck

You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;
'The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed
and done;

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object
won;

Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!

But I, with mournful tread,

Walk the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

Walt Whitman

THE POET'S PROGRESS

268. *Quiet Work*

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,
One lesson which in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties kept at one
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—
Of toil unsevered from tranquillity;
Of labour that in lasting fruit outgrows
Far noisier schemes; accomplished in repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.
Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's fitful uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
Still working; blaming still our vain turmoil;
Labourers that shall not fail when man is gone.

Matthew Arnold

269. *Shakespeare*

Others abide our question—thou art free.
We ask and ask—thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spare but the cloudy border of his base
To the foiled searching of mortality;
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honoured, self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguessed at.—Better so.
All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Matthew Arnold

BOOK SIX

270. *Callicles' last song on Etna*

Through the black rushing smoke-bursts
Thick breaks the red flame;
All Etna heaves fiercely
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo,
Are haunts meet for thee;
But where Helicon breaks down
In cliffs to the sea.

Where the moon-silvered inlets
Send far their light voice
Up the still vale of Thisbe,
O speed, and rejoice.

On the sward at the cliff top
Lie strewn the white flocks;
On the cliff side the pigeons
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,
Soft lulled by the rills,
Lie wrapped in their blankets
Asleep in the hills. . . .

What forms are these coming
So white through the gloom?
What garments out-glistening
The gold-flowered broom?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

What sweet-breathing presence
Out-perfumes the thyme?
What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime?

'Tis Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine,
The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows . . .
They stream up again.
What seeks on this mountain
The glorified train?

They bathe on this mountain
In the spring by their road,
Then on to Olympus,
Their endless abode.

Whose praise do they mention?
Of what is it told?
What will be for ever;
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father
Of all things; and then,
The rest of immortals,
The action of men;

The day in his hotness,
The strife, with the palm;
The night in her silence;
The stars in their calm.

Matthew Arnold

BOOK SIX

271. *To Marguerite*

Yes: in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live alone.
The islands feel the encircling flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

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

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

Who ordered that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire?—
A God, a God their severance ruled;
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

Matthew Arnold

THE POET'S PROGRESS

272. *The Forsaken Merman*

Come, dear children, let us away:
Down and away below.
Now my brothers call from the bay;
Now the great winds shoreward blow;
Now the salt tides seaward flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away.
This way, this way.

Call her once before you go.
Call once yet,
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mothers' ear:
Children's voices, wild with pain—
Surely she will come again.
Call her once and come away;
This way, this way.
"Mother dear, we cannot stay.
The wild white horses foam and fret.
Margaret! Margaret!"

Come, dear children, come away down.
Call no more.
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little gray church on the windy shore.
Then come down.
She will not come though you call all day.
Come away, come away.

BOOK SIX

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
Where the salt weed sways in the stream;
Where the sea-beasts ranged all round
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little gray church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, merman, here with thee."
I said " Go up, dear heart, through the waves,
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves;"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers" I said "in the world they say.
Come" I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town.
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little gray church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small-leaded
panes.

She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist; come quick, we are here.
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone.
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book.
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more.
Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down,
Down to the depths of the sea.
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy;
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun."
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
'Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.

BOOK SIX

She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there drops a tear
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden;
 A long, long sigh
For the cold strange eyes of a little mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children;
Come children, come down;
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing " Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she;
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea ".

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down;
Singing " There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she;
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea ".

Matthew Arnold

273. *Requiescat*

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew.
In quiet she reposes;
Ah, would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath;
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

Matthew Arnold

BOOK SIX

274. *The Scholar-Gipsy*

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill;
Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes:
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropped grasses shoot another head.
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanchèd green;
Come, shepherd, and again begin the quest.

Here, where the reaper was at work of late,
In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruse,
And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,
Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use—
Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
With distant cries of reapers in the corn—
All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screened is this nook o'er the high, half-reaped field,
And here till sundown, shepherd, will I be.
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,
And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep:
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showers
Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book.
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again:
The story of that Oxford scholar poor,
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy lore,
And roamed the world with that wild brother-
hood,
And came, as most men deemed, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,
Met him, and of his way of life inquired.
Whereat he answered that the gipsy crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains;
And they can bind them to what thoughts they
will:
"And I" he said "the secret of their art,
When fully learned, will to the world impart:
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill".

This said, he left them, and returned no more.
But rumours hung about the country-side,
That the lost scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of gray,
The same the gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench the smock-frocked
boors
Had found him seated at their entering,

BOOK SIX

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would fly:
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer, on thy trace;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks
I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;
Or in my boat I lie
Moored to the cool bank in the summer heats,
'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm green-muffled Cumnor hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retirèd ground.
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the slow punt swings round:
And leaning backwards in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Plucked in shy fields and distant Wychwood
bowers,
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream;

And then they land, and thou art seen no more.
Maidens who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee
roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers—the frail-leafed, white anemone,
Dark bluebells drenched with dews of summer
eves,
And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none hath words she can report of thee.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
Men who through those wide fields of breezy
grass,
Where black-winged swallows haunt the glittering
Thames,
To bathe in the abandoned lasher pass,
Have often passed thee near
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown:
Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air;
But, when they came from bathing, thou wert gone.

At some lone homestead in the Cumnor hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee watching, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine;
And marked thee, when the stars come out and
shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,—
Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
With scarlet patches tagged and shreds of gray,
Above the forest-ground called Thessaly—
The blackbird picking food
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all;
So often has he known thee past him stray
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered spray,
And waiting for the spark from heaven to fall.

BOOK SIX

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go,
Have I not passed thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapped in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face towards Hinksey and its wintry ridge?
And thou hast climbed the hill
And gained the white brow of the Cumnor range;
Turned once to watch, while thick the snowflakes
fall,
The line of festal light in Christ Church hall;
Then sought thy straw in some sequestered grange.

But what—I dream. Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wandered from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy tribe:
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid;
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown
grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave,
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours.
For what wears out the life of mortal men?
'Tis that from change to change their being
rolls:
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers.
Till, having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and arc—what we have been.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Thou hast not lived, why shouldst thou perish, so?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire:
Else wert thou long since numbered with the
 dead;
Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire.
 The generations of thy peers are fled,
 And we ourselves shall go;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
 And we imagine thee exempt from age
 And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
Because thou hadst what we, alas, have not.

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
 Firm to their mark, not spent on other things;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
 Which much to have tried, in much been baffled,
 brings.
 O life unlike to ours,
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
 Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he
 strives,
 And each half-lives a hundred different lives;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven: and we,
Vague half-believers of our casual creeds,
 Who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
 Whose weak resolves never have been fulfilled;
 For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;
 Who hesitate and falter life away,
 And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day—
Ah, do not we, wanderer, await it too?

BOOK SIX

Yes, we await it, but it still delays,
And then we suffer; and amongst us one,
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the
head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest: and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear,
With close-lipped patience for our only friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbour to despair:
But none has hope like thine.
Thou through the fields and through the woods dost
stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its head o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife—
Fly hence, our contact fear.
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood.
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
 With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silvered branches of the glade,
 Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
 On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales,
 Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
 With dew; or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales.

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly;
For strong the infection of our mental strife,
 Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for
 rest;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
 Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
 Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfixed thy powers,
 And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made:
 And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles;
—As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
 Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,
 The fringes of a southward-facing brow
 Among the Ægean isles;
And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
 Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
 Green bursting figs, and tunnies steeped in
 brine;
And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

BOOK SIX

The young light-hearted masters of the waves;
And snatched his rudder, and shook out more sail,
And day and night held on indignantly
O'er the blue midland waters with the gale,
Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves
Outside the western straits, and unbent sails
There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of
foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come;
And on the beach undid his corded bales.

Matthew Arnold

275. *A song*

Oh, earlier shall the rosebuds blow
In after years, those happier years;
And children weep, when we lie low,
Far fewer tears, far softer tears.

Oh, true shall boyish laughter ring,
Like kindling chimes, in after times;
And merrier shall the maiden sing:
And I not there, and I not there.

Like lightning in the summer night
Their mirth shall be, so quick and free;
And oh, the flash of their delight
I shall not see, I may not see.

In deeper dream, with wider range,
Those eyes shall shine, but not on mine:
Unmoved, unblest, by worldly change,
The dead must rest, the dead must rest.

William Cory

THE POET'S PROGRESS

276. *Mimnermus in church*

You promise heavens free from strife,
Pure truth, and perfect change of will;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
So sweet, I fain would breathe it still.
Your chilly stars I can forgo;
This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,
One great reality above:
Back from that void I shrink in fear,
And childlike hide myself in love.
Show me what angels feel; till then,
I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires
From faltering lips and fitful veins
To sexless souls, ideal choirs,
Unwearied voices, wordless strains.
My mind with fonder welcome owns
One dear dead friend's remembered tones.

Forsooth the present we must give
To that which cannot pass away;
All beauteous things for which we live
By laws of time and space decay.
But oh, the very reason why
I clasp them is because they die.

William Cory

BOOK SIX

277. *Keith of Ravelston*

The murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine,
“ Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!”

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill,
And through the silver meads;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she!

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn,
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode through the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine.
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps the shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

I lay my hand upon the stile,
The stile is lone and cold;
The burnie that goes babbling by
Says naught that can be told.

Yet, stranger, here, from year to year,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Step out three steps, where Andrew stood—
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear?
The ancient stile is not alone,
'Tis not the burn I hear.

She makes her immemorial moan,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Sydney Dobell

278. *A country song, A chanted calendar*

First came the primrose,
On the bank high;
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower
When the battle rolls below,
So looked she,
And saw the storms go by.

BOOK SIX

Then came the wind-flower
In the valley left behind;
As a wounded maiden, pale
With purple streaks of woe,
When the battle has rolled by
Wanders to and fro,
So tottered she,
Dishevelled in the wind.

Then came the daisies,
On the first of May;
Like a bannered show's advance
While the crowd runs by the way,
With ten thousand flowers about them they came trooping
through the fields.

As a happy people come,
So came they,
As a happy people come
When the war has rolled away,
With dance and tabor, pipe and drum,
And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip,
Like a dancer in the fair;
She spread her little mat of green,
And on it danced she,
With a fillet bound about her brow,
A fillet round her happy brow,
A golden fillet round her brow,
And rubies in her hair.

Sydney Dobell

THE POET'S PROGRESS

279. *America*

Nor force nor fraud shall sunder us, O ye
Who north or south, on east or western land,
Native to noble sounds, say truth for truth,
Freedom for freedom, love for love, and God
For God; O ye who in eternal youth
Speak with a living and creative flood
This universal English, and do stand
Its breathing book. Live worthy of that grand
Heroic utterance; parted, yet a whole;
Far, yet unsevered; children brave and free
Of the great mother-tongue: and ye shall be
Lords of an empire wide as Shakespeare's soul,
Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's
dream.

Sydney Dobell

280. *The Blessed Damozel*

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

BOOK SIX

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembering names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

“ I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come ” she said.
“ Have I not prayed in heaven?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

BOOK SIX

“ When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
We will step down as to a stream,
And bathe there in God's sight.

“ We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrød,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

“ We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree,
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His name audibly.

“ And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.”

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st.
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ We two ” she said “ will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosalys.

“ Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-ropes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

“ He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

“ Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

“ There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
With love; only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he ”.

BOOK SIX

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less of sad speech than mild,
"All this is when he comes". She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

D. G. Rossetti

281. *A Birthday*

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves, and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves, and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

Christina Rossetti

THE POET'S PROGRESS

282. *Song*

When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain;
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

Christina Rossetti

283. *Lines on hearing the organ*

Grinder, who serenely grindest
At my door the Hundredth Psalm,
Till thou ultimately findest
Pence in thy unwashen palm;

Grinder, jocund-hearted grinder,
Near whom Barbary's nimble son,
Poised with skill upon his hinder
Paws, accepts my proffered bun;

BOOK SIX

Dearly do I love thy grinding,
Joy to meet thee on the road,
Where thou prowlest through the blinding
Dust with that stupendous load,

'Neath the baleful star of Sirius,
When the postmen slower jog,
And the ox becomes delirious,
And the muzzle decks the dog.

Tell me by what art thou bindest
On thy feet those ancient shoon;
Tell me, grinder, if thou grindest
Always, always, out of tune.

Tell me if, as thou art buckling
On thy straps with eager claws,
Thou forecastest, inly chuckling,
All the rage that thou wilt cause.

Tell me if at all thou mindest
When folk flee as if on wings
From thee as at ease thou grindest:
Tell me fifty thousand things.

Grinder, gentle-hearted grinder,
Ruffians who lead evil lives,
Soothed by thy sweet strains are kinder
To their bullocks and their wives:

Children, when they see thy supple
Form approach, are out like shots;
Half a bar sets several couple
Waltzing in convenient spots;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Not with clumsy Jacks or Georges;
Unprofaned by grasp of man,
Maidens speed those simple orgies,
Betsey Jane with Betsey Ann.

As they love thee in St. Giles's
Thou art loved in Grosvenor Square;
None of those engaging smiles is
Unreciprocated there.

Often, ere thou yet hast hammered
Through thy four delicious airs,
Coins are flung thee by enamoured
Housemaids upon area stairs;

E'en the ambrosial-whiskered flunkey
Eyes thy boots and thine unkempt
Beard and melancholy monkey
More in pity than contempt.

Far from England, in the sunny
South, where Anio leaps in foam,
Thou wast reared, till lack of money
Drew thee from thy vineclad home.

And thy mate, the sinewy Jocko,
From Brazil or Afric came,
Land of simoom and sirocco—
And he seems extremely tame.

There he quaffed the undefiled
Spring, or hung with apeline glee
By his tail, or teeth, or eyelid,
To the slippery mango tree:

There he wooed and won a dusky
Bride, of instincts like his own;
Talked of love till he was husky
In a tongue to us unknown.

BOOK SIX

Side by side 'twas theirs to ravage
The potato ground, or cut
Down the unsuspecting savage
With a well-aimed cocoanut;

Till the miscreant stranger tore him
Screaming from his blue-faced fair;
And they flung strange raiment o'er him,
Raiment which he could not bear.

Severed from the pure embraces
Of his children and his spouse,
He must ride fantastic races
Mounted on reluctant sows.

But the heart of wistful Jocko
Still was with his ancient flame
In the nutgroves of Morocco—
Or if not it's all the same.

Grinder, winsome, grinsome grinder,
They who see thee and whose soul
Melts not at thy charms are blinder
Than a treble-bandaged mole;

They to whom thy curt (yet clever)
Talk, thy music, and thine ape
Seem not to be joys for ever
Are but brutes in human shape.

'Tis not that thy mien is stately;
'Tis not that thy tones are soft;
'Tis not that I care so greatly
For the same thing played so oft:

But I've heard mankind abuse thee;
And perhaps it's rather strange,
But I thought that I would choose thee
For encomium, as a change.

C. S. Calverley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

284. *A Garden by the Sea*

I know a little garden-close
Set thick with lily and red rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy dawn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.

And though within it no birds sing,
And though no pillared house is there,
And though the apple boughs are bare
Of fruit and blossom, would to God
Her feet upon the green grass trod,
And I beheld them as before!

There comes a murmur from the shore,
And in the place two fair streams are,
Drawn from the purple hills afar,
Drawn down unto the restless sea;
The hills whose flowers ne'er fed the bee,
The shore no ship has ever seen,
Still beaten by the billows green,
Whose murmur comes unceasingly
Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,
For which I let slip all delight,
That maketh me both deaf and blind,
Careless to win, unskilled to find,
And quick to lose what all men seek.

BOOK SIX

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,
Still have I left a little breath
To seek within the jaws of death
An entrance to that happy place;
To seek the unforgotten face
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from me
Anigh the murmuring of the sea.

William Morris

285. *The Garden of Proserpine*

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

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

Here life has death for neighbour,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labour,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

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

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

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

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

BOOK SIX

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

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

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

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

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

A. C. Swinburne

286. *A Forsaken Garden*

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

Now lie dead.

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

BOOK SIX

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

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that falls not;
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry;
From the thicket of thorns whence the 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?"
And the same wind sang and the same waves whitened,
And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,
Love was dead.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

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,
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
Death lies dead.

A. C. Swinburne

BOOK SIX

287. *The Ladies of St. James's*

The ladies of St. James's
Go swinging to the play;
Their footmen run before them
With a "Stand by; clear the way."
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,
She takes her buckled shoon,
When we go out a-courting
Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's
Wear satin on their backs;
They sit all night at ombre,
With candles all of wax;
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,
She dons her russet gown,
And runs to gather May dew
Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's
They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essences
Was broken in the air;
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,—
The breath of heath and furze,
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's
They're painted to the eyes;
Their white it stays for ever;
Their red it never dies:

THE POET'S PROGRESS

But Phyllida, my Phyllida,—
Her colour comes and goes;
It trembles to a lily,
It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's—
You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
Their phrases are so grand:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,—
Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's
They have their fits and freaks;
They smile on you—for seconds;
They frown on you—for weeks:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida,
Come either storm or shine,
From Shrovetide unto Shrovetide
Is always true—and mine.

My Phyllida, my Phyllida,—
I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
And give me all to keep;
I care not whose the beauties
Of all the world may be,
For Phyllida, for Phyllida,
Is all the world to me.

Austin Dobson

BOOK SIX

288. *Ode*

We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation;
A wondrous thing of our dreaming,
Unearthly, impossible seeming.
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present,
And their work in the world be done.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising;
They had no divine foreshowing
Of the land to which they are going:
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
A light that doth not depart;
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore to-day is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling;
And the multitudes are enlisted
In the faith that their fathers resisted,
And, scorning the dream of to-morrow,
Are bringing to pass, as they may,
In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
Ceaseless and sorrowless we,
The glory about us clinging
Of the glorious futures we see,
Our souls with high music ringing:
O men, it must ever be
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,
A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning
And the suns that are not yet high,
And out of the infinite morning
Intrepid you hear us cry
How, spite of your human scorning,
Once more God's future draws nigh,
And already goes forth the warning
That ye of the past must die.

BOOK SIX

Great hail! we cry to the comers
From the dazzling unknown shore;
Bring us hither your sun and your summers,
And renew our world as of yore;
You shall teach us your song's new numbers,
And things that we dreamed not before:
Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers,
And a singer who sings no more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy

289. *The loss of the Eurydice*

Foundered March 24, 1878

The Eurydice—it concerned Thee, O Lord!
Three hundred souls, O alas! on board,
Some asleep, unawakened, all un-
Warned, eleven fathoms fallen

Where she foundered. One stroke
Felled and furled them, the hearts of oak.
And flockbells off the aerial
Downs' forefalls beat to the burial.

For did she pride her, freighted fully, on
Bounden bales or a hoard of bullion?
Precious beyond measure
Lads and men her lade and treasure.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

She had come from a cruise, training seamen—
Men, bold boys soon to be men:
Must it, worst weather,
Blast bole and bloom together?

No Atlantic squall overwrought her
Or rearing billow of the Biscay water:
Home was hard at hand
And the blow bore from land.

And you were a liar, O blue March day.
Bright sun lanced fire in the heavenly bay;
But what black Boreas wrecked her? he
Came equipped, deadly-electric,

A beetling bold bright cloud through England
Riding; there did showers not mingle? and
Hailropes hustle and grind their
Heavengravel? wolfsnow, worlds of it, wind there?

Now Carisbrook Keep goes under in gloom;
Now it overvaults Appledurcombe;
Now near by Ventnor town
It hurls, hurls off Boniface Down.

Too proud, too proud, what a press she bore.
Royal, and all her royals wore.
Sharp with her, shorten sail!
Too late; lost; gone with the gale.

This was that fell capsized,
As half she had righted and hoped to rise,
Death teeming in by her portholes
Raced down decks, round messes of mortals.

BOOK SIX

Then a lurch forward, frigate and men;
" All hands for themselves " the cry ran then.
But she who had housed them thither
Was around them, bound them or wound them with her.

Marcus Hare, high her captain,
Kept to her, care-drowned and wrapped in
Cheer's death, would follow
His charge through the champ-white water-in-a-wallow,

All under channel to bury in a beach her
Checks: right, rude of feature,
He thought he heard her say,
" Her commander! and thou too, and thou this way ".

It is even seen, time's something server,
In mankind's medley a duty-swerver,
At downright " No or Yes?"
Doffs all, drives full for righteousness.

Sydney Fletcher, Bristol-bred
(Low lie his mates now on watery bed)
Takes to the seas and snows
As sheer down the ship goes.

Now her after-draught gullies him down too;
Now he wrings for life with the deathgush brown;
Till a life-belt and God's will
Lend him a lift from the sea-swirl.

Now he shoots up short to the round air;
Now he gasps, now he gazes everywhere;
But his eye no cliff, no coast or
Mark makes in the rivelling snowstorm.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Him, after an hour of wintery waves,
A schooner sights, with another, and saves,
And he boards in oh! such joy
He has lost count what came next, poor boy.

They say who saw one sea-corpse cold
He was all of lovely manly mould,
Every inch a tar,
Of the best we boast our sailors are.

Look, foot to forelock, how all things suit: he
Is strung by duty, is strained to beauty,
And brown-as-dawning-skinned
With brine and shine and whirling wind.

O his nimble finger, his gnarled grip!
Leagues, leagues of seamanship
Slumber in these forsaken
Bones, this sinew, and will not waken.

He was but one like thousands more.
Day and night I deplore
My people and born own nation,
Fast foundering own generation.

I might let by-gones be—our curse
Of ruinous shrine no hand (or, worse,
Robbery's hand) is busy to
Dress, hoar-hallowed shrines unvisited;

Only the breathing temple and fleet
Life, this wildworth blown so sweet,
These daredeaths, ay this crew, in
Unchrist, all rolled in ruin—

BOOK SIX

Deeply surely I need to deplore it,
Wondering why my master bore it,
'The riving off that race
So at home, time was, to his truth and grace

That a starlight wender of ours would say
The marvellous Milk was Walsingham Way
And one—but let be, let be:
More, more than was will yet be.

O well wept, mother have lost son;
Wept, wife; wept, sweetheart would be one:
Though grief yield them no good,
Yet shed what tears sad truelove should.

But to Christ lord of thunder
Crouch; lay knee by earth low under,
“ Holiest, loveliest, bravest,
Save my hero, O Hero savest.”

And the prayer thou hear'st me making
Have, at the awful overtaking,
Heard; have heard and granted
Grace that day grace was wanted?

Not that hell knows redeeming,
But for souls sunk in seeming
Fresh, till doomfire burn all,
Prayer shall fetch pity eternal.

G. M. Hopkins

THE POET'S PROGRESS

290. *Pro rege nostro*

What have I done for you,
 England, my England?
What is there I would not do,
 England, my own?
With your glorious eyes austere,
As the Lord were walking near,
Whispering terrible things and dear
 As the song on your bugles blown, England,
 Round the world on your bugles blown.

Where shall the watchful sun,
 England, my England,
Match the master-work you've done,
 England, my own?
When shall he rejoice again
Such a breed of mighty men
As come forward, one to ten,
 To the song on your bugles blown, England,
 Down the years on your bugles blown?

Ever the faith endures,
 England, my England:—
“Take and break us: we are yours,
 England, my own.
Life is good, and joy runs high
Between English earth and sky:
Death is death; but we shall die
 To the song on your bugles blown, England,
 To the stars on your bugles blown.”

They call you proud and hard,
 England, my England:
You with worlds to watch and ward,
 England, my own.
You whose mailed hand keeps the keys
Of such teeming destinies,

BOOK SIX

You could know nor dread nor ease
Were the song on your bugles blown, England,
Round the pit on your bugles blown.

Mother of ships whose might,
England, my England,
Is the fierce old sea's delight,
England, my own,
Chosen daughter of the Lord,
Spouse-in-chief of the ancient Sword,
There's the menace of the Word
In the song on your bugles blown, England,
Out of heaven on your bugles blown.

W. E. Henley

291. *Out of the night that covers me*

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

W. E. Henley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

292. *O gather me the rose*

O gather me the rose, the rose,
While yet in flower we find it;
For summer comes, but summer goes,
And winter waits behind it.

For with the dream foregone, foregone,
The deed forborne for ever,
The worm Regret will canker on,
And Time will turn him never.

So well it were to love, my love,
And cheat of any laughter
The fate beneath us and above,
The dark before and after.

The myrtle and the rose, the rose!
The sunshine and the swallow!
The dream that comes, the wish that goes!
The memories that follow!

W. E. Henley

293. *Requiem*

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie:
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. Stevenson

BOOK SIX

294. *The Vagabond*

Give to me the life I love,
Let the lave go by me,
Give the jolly heaven above
And the byway nigh me.
Bed in the bush with stars to see,
Bread I dip in the river—
There's the life for a man like me,
There's the life for ever.

Let the blow fall soon or late,
Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
And the road before me.
Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,
Nor a friend to know me;
All I seek, the heaven above,
And the road below me.

Or let autumn fall on me
Where afield I linger,
Silencing the bird on tree,
Biting the blue finger.
White as meal the frosty field,
Warm the fireside haven,—
Not to autumn will I yield,
Not to winter even.

Let the blow fall soon or late,
Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around,
And the road before me.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Wealth I ask not, hope nor love,
Nor a friend to know me;
All I ask, the heaven above,
And the road below me.

R. L. Stevenson

295. *The House Beautiful*

*A naked house, a naked moor,
A shivering pool before the door,
A garden bare of flowers and fruit
And poplars at the garden foot;
Such is the place that I live in,
Black without and bare within.*

Yet shall your ragged moor receive
The incomparable pomp of eve,
And the cold glories of the dawn
Behind your shivering trees be drawn;
And when the wind from place to place
Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase,
Your garden gloom and gleam again
With leaping sun, with glancing rain.
Here shall the wizard moon ascend
The heavens, in the crimson end
Of day's declining splendour; here
The army of the stars appear.
The neighbour hollows, dry or wet,
Spring shall with tender flowers beset;
And oft the morning musser see
Larks rising from the broomy lea,
And every fairy wheel and thread
Of cobweb dew-bediamonded.
When daisies go, shall winter-time
Silver the simple grass with rime;

BOOK SIX

Autumnal frosts enchant the pool
And make the cart ruts beautiful;
And when snow-bright the moor expands
How shall your children clap their hands!
To make this earth our hermitage
A cheerful and a changeful page
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

R. L. Stevenson

296. I will make you brooches

I will make you brooches and toys for your delight
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
I will make a palace fit for you and me,
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom,
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near,
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear,
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

R. L. Stevenson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

297. *Ode in May*

Let me go forth, and share
The overflowing sun
With one wise friend, or one
Better than wise, being fair,
Where the pewit wheels and dips
On heights of bracken and ling,
And earth, unto her leaflet tips,
Tingles with the spring.

What is so sweet and dear
As a prosperous morn in May,
The confident prime of the day,
And the dauntless youth of the year,
When nothing that asks for bliss,
Asking aright, is denied,
And half of the world a bridegroom is,
And half of the world a bride?

The song of mingling flows,
Grave, ceremonial, pure,
As once, from lips that endure,
The cosmic descant rose,
When the temporal lord of life,
Going his golden way,
Had taken a wondrous maid to wife
That long had said him nay.

For of old the sun, our sire,
Came wooing the mother of men,
Earth, that was virginal then,
Vestal fire to his fire.

BOOK SIX

Silent her bosom and coy,
But the strong god sued and pressed;
And born of their starry nuptial joy
Are all that drink of her breast.

And the triumph of him that begot,
And the travail of her that bore,
Behold they are evermore
As warp and weft in our lot.
We are children of splendour and flame,
Of shuddering, also, and tears.
Magnificent out of the dust we came,
And abject from the spheres.

O bright irresistible lord,
We are fruit of earth's womb, each one,
And fruit of thy loins, O sun,
Whence first was the seed outpoured.
To thee as our father we bow,
Forbidden thy Father to see,
Who is older and greater than thou, as thou
Art greater and older than we.

Thou art but as a word of his speech;
Thou art but as a wave of his hand;
Thou art brief as a glitter of sand
'Twixt tide and tide on his beach;
Thou art less than a spark of his fire,
Or a moment's mood of his soul:
Thou art lost in the notes on the lips of his choir
That chant the chant of the whole.

Sir William Watson

THE POET'S PROGRESS

298. *England my mother*

I

England my mother,
Wardress of waters,
Builder of peoples,
Maker of men,

Hast thou yet leisure
Left for the muses?
Heed'st thou the songsmith
Forging the rhyme?

Deafened with tumults,
How canst thou hearken?
Strident is faction,
Demos is loud.

Lazarus, hungry,
Menaces Dives;
Labour the giant
Chafes in his hold.

Yet do the songsmiths
Quit not their forges;
Still on life's anvil
Forge they the rhyme.

Still the rapt faces
Glow from the furnace;
Breath of the smithy
Scorches their brows.

BOOK SIX

Yea, and thou hear'st them?
So shall the hammers
Fashion not vainly
Verses of gold.

II

Lo, with the ancient
Roots of man's nature
Twines the eternal
Passion of song.

Ever love faces it;
Ever life feeds it;
Time cannot age it;
Death cannot slay.

Deep in the world-heart
Stand its foundations,
Tangled with all things
Twin-made with all.

Nay, what is nature's
Self, but an endless
Strife towards music,
Euphony, rhyme?

Trees in their blooming,
Tides in their flowing,
Stars in their circling,
Tremble with song.

God on his throne is
Eldest of poets:
Unto His measures
Moveth the whole.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

III

Therefore deride not
Speech of the muses,
England my mother,
Maker of men.

Nations are mortal;
Fragile is greatness;
Fortune may fly thee;
Song shall not fly.

Song the all-girdling,
Song cannot perish:
Men shall make music;
Man shall give ear.

Not while the choric
Chant of creation
Floweth from all things,
Poured without pause,

Cease we to echo
Faintly the descant
Whereto forever
Dances the world.

IV

So let the songsmith
Proffer his rhyme-gift,
England my mother,
Maker of men.

BOOK SIX

Gray grows thy countenance,
Full of the ages;
Time on thy forehead
Sits like a dream.

Song is the potion
All things renewing,
Youth's one elixir,
Fountain of morn.

Thou, at the world-loom
Weaving thy future,
Fitly may'st temper
Toil with delight.

Deemest thou labour
Only is earnest?
Grave is all beauty;
Solemn is joy.

Song is no bauble.
Slight not the songsmith,
England my mother,
Maker of men.

Sir William Watson

299. *The Darkling Thrush*

I leant upon a coppice gate
When frost was spectre-gray,
And winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken, hard, and dry.
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead,
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carollings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed hope, whereof he knew,
And I was unaware.

Thomas Hardy, December 1900

BOOK SEVEN

300. *There is a hill*

There is a hill beside the silver Thames
Shady with birch and beech and odorous pine;
And brilliant underfoot with thousand gems
Steeplly the thickets to his floods decline.

 Straight trees in every place
 Their thick tops interlace,
And pendent branches trail their foliage fine
 Upon his watery face.

Swift from the sweltering pasturage he flows:
His stream, alert to seek the pleasant shade,
Pictures his gentle purpose, as he goes
Straight to the caverned pool his toil has made.

 His winter floods lay bare
 The stout roots in the air;
His summer streams are cool, when they have played
 Among their fibrous hair.

A rushy island guards the sacred bower,
And hides it from the meadow, where in peace
The lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,
Robbing the golden market of the bees;

 And laden barges float
 By banks of myosote;
And scented flag and golden fleur-de-lys
 Delay the loitering boat.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And on this side the island, where the pool
Eddies away, are tangled mass on mass
The water-weeds, that net the fishes cool,
And scarce allow a narrow stream to pass;
 Where spreading crowfoot mars
 The drowning nenuphars,
Waving the tassels of her silken grass
 Below her silver stars.

But in the purple pool there nothing grows,
Not the white water-lily spoked with gold;
Though best she loves the hollows, and well knows
On quiet streams her broad shields to unfold;
 Yet should her roots but try
 Within these deeps to lie,
Not her long-reaching stalk could ever hold
 Her waxen head so high.

Sometimes an angler comes, and drops his hook
Within its hidden depths, and 'gainst a tree
Leaning his rod, reads in some pleasant book,
Forgetting soon his pride of fishery;
 And dreams, or falls asleep,
 While curious fishes peep
About his nibbled bait, or scornfully
 Dart off and rise and leap.

And sometimes a slow figure 'neath the trees,
In ancient-fashioned smock, with tottering care
Upon a staff propping his weary knees,
May by the pathway of the forest fare;—
 As from a buried day
 Across the mind will stray
Some perishing mute shadow—and unaware
 He passeth on his way.

BOOK SEVEN

Else, he that wishes solitude is safe,
Whether he bathe at morning in the stream
Or lead his love there when the hot hours chafe
The meadows, busy with a blurring steam;
Or watch, as fades the light,
The gibbous moon grow bright,
Until her magic rays dance in a dream,
And glorify the night.

Where is this bower beside the silver Thames?
O pool and flowery thickets, hear my vow!
O trees of freshest foliage and straight stems,
No sharer of my secret I allow;
Lest ere I come the while
Strange feet your shades defile;
Or lest the burly oarsman turn his prow
Within your guardian isle.

Robert Bridges

301. *I love all beauteous things*

I love all beauteous things,
I seek and adore them;
God hath no better praise,
And man in his hasty days
Is honourèd for them.

I too will something make
And joy in the making;
Although to-morrow it seem
Like the empty words of a dream
Remembered on waking.

Robert Bridges

THE POET'S PROGRESS

302. *Nightingales*

Beautiful must be the mountains whence ye come,
And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams where-
from

Ye learn your song:
Where are those starry woods? O might I wander there,
Among the flowers, which in that heavenly air
Bloom the year long.

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the streams:
Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our dreams,
A throe of the heart,
Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes profound,
No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,
For all our art.

Alone, aloud in the raptured ear of men
We pour our dark nocturnal secret; and then,
As night is withdrawn
From these sweet-springing meads and bursting boughs
of May,
Dream, while the innumerable choir of day
Welcome the dawn.

Robert Bridges

BOOK SEVEN

303. *Verses from "A Shropshire Lad"*

i. Loveliest of trees

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten
Twenty will not come again;
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

ii. Into my heart an air that kills

Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways that I went
And cannot come again.

iii. Loitering with a vacant eye

Loitering with a vacant eye
Along the Grecian gallery,
And brooding on my heavy ill,
I met a statue standing still.
Still in marble stone stood he,
And stedfastly he looked at me.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

“ Well met ” I thought the look would say;
“ We were both fashioned far away;
We neither knew, when we were young,
These Londoners we live among.”
Still he stood and eyed me hard,
An earnest and a grave regard:
“ What, lad, drooping with your lot?
I too would be where I am not.
I too survey that endless line
Of men whose thoughts are not as mine.
Years, ere you stood up from rest,
On my neck the collar pressed;
Years, when you lay down your ill,
I shall stand and bear it still.
Courage, lad, 'tis not for long:
Stand, quit you like stone, be strong.”
So I thought his look would say;
And light on me my trouble lay,
And I stepped out in flesh and bone
Manful like the man of stone.

A. E. Housman

304. *He fell among thieves*

“ Ye have robbed,” said he “ ye have slaughtered and
made an end;
Take your ill-got plunder, and bury the dead:
What will ye more of your guest and sometime friend?”
“ Blood for our blood ” they said.

He laughed: “ If one may settle the score for five,
I am ready; but let the reckoning stand till day:
I have loved the sunlight as dearly as any alive.”
“ You shall die at dawn ” said they.

BOOK SEVEN

He flung his empty revolver down the slope;
He climbed alone to the eastward edge of the trees;
All night long in a dream untroubled of hope
He brooded, clasping his knees.

He did not hear the monotonous roar that fills
The ravine where the Yassín river sullenly flows;
He did not see the starlight on the Laspur hills,
Or the far Afghan snows.

He saw the April noon on his books aglow,
The wistaria trailing in at the window wide;
He heard his father's voice from the terrace below
Calling him down to ride.

He saw the gray little church across the park,
The mounds that hid the loved and honoured dead;
The Norman arch, the chancel softly dark,
The brasses black and red.

He saw the School Close, sunny and green,
The runner beside him, the stand by the parapet wall,
The distant tapc, and the crowd roaring between
His own name over all.

He saw the dark wainscot and timbered roof,
The long tables, and the faces merry and keen;
The College Eight and their trainer dining aloof,
The Dons on the dais serene.

He watched the liner's stem ploughing the foam;
He felt her tremblingspeed and the thrash of her screw;
He heard the passengers' voices talking of home;
He saw the flag she flew.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And now it was dawn. He rose strong on his feet,
And strode to his ruined camp below the wood;
He drank the breath of the morning cool and sweet:
His murderers round him stood.

Light on the Laspur hills was broadening fast,
The blood-red snow-peaks chilled to a dazzling white;
He turned, and saw the golden circle at last,
Cut by the eastern height.

“ O glorious Life, Who dwellest in earth and sun,
I have lived, I praise and adore Thee.”

A sword swept.

Over the pass the voices one by one
Faded, and the hill slept.

Sir Henry Newbolt

305. *Drake's Drum*

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor-lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin';
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Rovin' though his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
“ Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them
long ago.”

BOOK SEVEN

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
Call him when ye sail to meet the foe:
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin'
They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they found
him long ago.

Sir Henry Newbolt

306. *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes
dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the
cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

W. B. Yeats

THE POET'S PROGRESS

307. *Into the twilight*

Outworn heart in a time outworn,
Come clear of the nets of wrong and right ;
Laugh, heart, again in the gray twilight ;
Sigh, heart, again in the dew of the morn.

Your mother Eire is always young,
Dew ever shining and twilight gray ;
Though hope fall from you and love decay,
Burning in fires of a slanderous tongue.

Come, heart, where hill is heaped upon hill :
For there the mystical brotherhood
Of sun and moon and hollow and wood
And river and stream work out their will ;

And God stands winding His lonely horn ;
And time and the world are ever in flight,
And love is less kind than the gray twilight,
And hope is less dear than the dew of the morn.

W. B. Yeats

308. *When you are old*

When you are old and gray and full of sleep
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep ;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true ;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face ;

BOOK SEVEN

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

W. B. Yeats

309. *Duncton Hill*

He does not die that can bequeath
Some influence to the land he knows,
Or dares, persistent, interwreath
Love permanent with the wild hedgerows.

He does not die, but still remains
Substantiate with his darling plains.

The spring's superb adventure calls
His dust athwart the woods to flame;
His boundary river's secret falls
Perpetuate and repeat his name.

He rides his loud October sky.
He does not die. He does not die.

The beeches know the accustomed head
Which loved them, and a peopled air
Beneath their benediction spread
Comforts the silence everywhere;

For native ghosts return, and these
Perfect the mystery in the trees.

So, therefore, though myself be crossed
The shuddering of that dreadful day
When friend and fire and home are lost,
And even children drawn away—

The passerby shall hear me still,
A boy that sings on Duncton Hill.

Hilaire Belloc

THE POET'S PROGRESS

310. *The South Country*

When I am living in the Midlands,
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening;
My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea,
And it's there, walking in the high woods,
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day;
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and gray;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the Rocks
And the oldest kind of song.

But the men who live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise;
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our sister the spring
When over the sea she flies;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet;
She blesses us with surprise.

BOOK SEVEN

I never get between the pines
 But I smell the Sussex air;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
 But my home is there.
And along the sky the line of the Downs
 So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
 Nor a broken thing mend:
And I fear I shall be all alone
 When I get towards the end.
Who will be there to comfort me,
 Or who will be my friend?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
 Of the men of the Sussex Weald;
They watch the stars from silent folds,
 They stiffly plough the field;
By them and the God of the South Country
 My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
 Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
 To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
 And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood,
 Within a walk of the sea.
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
 Shall sit and drink with me.

Hilaire Belloc

THE POET'S PROGRESS

311. *Leisure*

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?
No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows:
No time to see when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass;
No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night;
No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance;
No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began?
A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

W. H. Davies

312. *The Kingfisher*

It was the rainbow gave thee birth,
And left thee all her lovely hues;
And as her mother's name was Tears,
So runs it in thy blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep.

Go you and, with such glorious hues,
Live with proud peacocks in green parks;
On lawns as smooth as shining glass
Let every feather show its marks;
Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.

BOOK SEVEN

Nay, lovely bird, thou art not vain;
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind;
I also love a quiet place
That's green, away from all mankind;
A lonely pool; and let a tree
Sigh with its bosom over me.

W. H. Davies

313. *Arabia*

Far are the shades of Arabia,
Where the Princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
Under the ghost of the moon;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
In my heart, where out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gliding streams;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired musicians
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests;
No beauty on earth I see
But shadowed with that dream recalls
Her loveliness to me:
Still eyes look coldly on me,
Cold voices whisper and say
"He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia;
They have stolen his wits away".

Walter de la Mare

THE POET'S PROGRESS

314. *All that's past*

Very old are the woods;
And the buds that break
Out of the briar's boughs,
When March winds wake,
So old with their beauty are—
Oh, no man knows
Through what wild centuries
Roves back the rose.

Very old are the brooks;
And the rills that rise
Where snow sleeps cold beneath
The azure skies
Sing such a history
Of come and gone,
Their every drop is as wise
As Solomon.

Very old are we men;
Our dreams are tales
Told in dim Eden
By Eve's nightingales;
We wake and whisper awhile,
But, the day gone by,
Silence and sleep like fields
Of amaranth lie.

Walter de la Mare

BOOK SEVEN

315. *A riddle*

The mild noon air of spring again
Lapped shimmering on that sea-lulled lane.
Hazel was budding; wan as snow
The leafless blackthorn was a-blow.

A chaffinch clankt, a robin woke
An eerie stave in the leafless oak.
Green mocked at green; lichen and moss
'The rain-worn slate did softly emboss.

From out her winter lair, at sigh
Of the warm south wind, a butterfly
Stepped, quaffed her honey; on painted fan
Her labyrinthine flight began.

Wondrously solemn, golden and fair,
The high sun's rays beat everywhere;
Yea, touched my cheek and mouth, as if,
Equal with stone, to me 'twould give

Its light and life. O restless thought,
Contented not; with "why?" distraught!
Whom asked you then your riddle small?
"If hither came no man at all

Through this gray-green, sea-haunted lane,
Would it mere blackened nought remain?
Strives it this beauty and life to express
Only in human consciousness?

Or, rather, idle breaks he in
To an Eden innocent of sin;
And, prouder than to be afraid,
Forgets his Maker in the made?"

Walter de la Mare

THE POET'S PROGRESS

316. *An epitaph*

Here lies a most beautiful lady;
Light of step and heart was she;
I think she was the most beautiful lady
That ever was in the West Country.
But beauty vanishes; beauty passes;
However rare—rare it be;
And when I crumble, who will remember
This lady of the West Country?

Walter de la Mare

317. *In Memoriam, A. H.*

*Auberon Herbert, Captain Lord Lucas, R.F.C.,
killed November 3rd, 1916*

The wind had blown away the rain
That all day long had soaked the level plain.
Against the horizon's fiery wrack,
The sheds loomed black.
And higher, in their tumultuous concourse met,
The streaming clouds, shot-riddled banners, wet
With the flickering storm,
Drifted and smouldered, warm
With flashes sent
From the lower firmament.
And they concealed—
They only here and there through rifts revealed—
A hidden sanctuary of fire and light,
A city of chrysolite.

BOOK SEVEN

We looked and laughed and wondered, and I said:
That orange sea, those oriflammes outspread
Were like the fanciful imaginings
That the young painter flings
Upon the canvas bold,
Such as the sage and the old
Make mock at, saying it could never be;
And you assented also, laughingly.
I wondered what they meant,
That flaming firmament,
Those clouds so gray so gold, so wet so warm,
So much of glory and so much of storm,
The end of the world, or the end
Of the war—remoter still to me and you, my friend.

Alas! it meant not this, it meant not that:
It meant that now the last time you and I
Should look at the golden sky,
And the dark fields large and flat,
And smell the evening weather,
And laugh and talk and wonder both together.
The last, last time. We nevermore should meet
In France or London street,
Or fields of home. The desolated space
Of life shall nevermore
Be what it was before.
No one shall take your place.
No other face
Can fill that empty frame.
There is no answer when we call your name.
We cannot hear your shout upon the stair.
We turn to speak and find a vacant chair.
Something is broken which we cannot mend.
God has done more than take away a friend
In taking you; for all that we have left
Is bruised and irremediably bereft.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

There is none like you. Yet not that alone
Do we bemoan;
But this; that you were greater than the rest,
And better than the best.

O liberal heart fast-rooted to the soil,
O lover of ancient freedom and proud toil,
Friend of the gipsies and all wandering song,
The forest's nursling and the favoured child
Of woodlands wild—
O brother to the birds and all things free,
Captain of liberty!
Deep in your heart the restless seed was sown;
The vagrant spirit fretted in your feet;
We wondered could you tarry long,
And brook for long the cramping street,
Or would you one day sail for shores unknown,
And shake from you the dust of towns, and spurn
The crowded market-place—and not return?
You found a sterner guide;
You heard the guns. Then, to their distant fire,
Your dreams were laid aside;
And on that day, you cast your heart's desire
Upon a burning pyre;
You gave your service to the exalted need,
Until at last from bondage freed,
At liberty to serve as you loved best,
You chose the noblest way. God did the rest.

So when the spring of the world shall shrive our stain,
After the winter of war,
When the poor world awakes to peace once more,
After such night of ravage and of rain,
You shall not come again.
You shall not come to taste the old spring weather,
To gallop through the soft untrampled heather,

BOOK SEVEN

To bathe and bake your body on the grass.
We shall be there; alas,
But not with you. When spring shall wake the earth,
And quicken the scarred fields to the new birth,
Our grief shall grow. For what can spring renew
More fiercely for us than the need of you?

That night I dreamt they sent for me and said
That you were missing. "Missing, missing—dead":
I cried when in the morning I awoke,
And all the world seemed shrouded in a cloak;
But when I saw the sun,
And knew another day had just begun,
I brushed the dream away, and quite forgot
The nightmare's ugly blot.
So was the dream forgot. The dream came true.
Before the night I knew
That you had flown away into the air
For ever. Then I cheated my despair.
I said
That you were safe—or wounded—but not dead.
Alas! I knew
Which was the false and true.

And after days of watching, days of lead,
There came the certain news that you were dead.
You had died fighting, fighting against odds,
Such as in war the gods
Aethereal dared when all the world was young;
Such fighting as blind Homer never sung,
Nor Hector nor Achilles never knew,
High in the empty blue.
High, high, above the clouds, against the setting sun,
The fight was fought, and your great task was done.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Of all your brave adventures this the last
The bravest was and best;
Meet ending to a long embattled past,
This swift, triumphant, fatal quest,
Crowned with the wreath that never perisheth,
And diadem of honourable death;
Swift death aflame with offering supreme
And mighty sacrifice,
More than all mortal dream;
A soaring death, and near to heaven's gate;
Beneath the very walls of Paradise.
Surely with soul elate,
You heard the destined bullet as you flew,
And surely your prophetic spirit knew
That you had well deserved that shining fate.

Here is no waste,
No burning might-have-been,
No bitter after-taste,
None to censure, none to screen,
Nothing awry, nor anything misspent;
Only content, content beyond content,
Which hath not any room for betterment.

God, Who had made you valiant, strong, and swift,
And maimed you with a bullet long ago,
And cleft your riotous ardour with a rift,
And checked your youth's tumultuous overflow,
Gave back your youth to you,
And packed in moments rare and few
Achievements manifold
And happiness untold,
And bade you spring to death as to a bride,
In manhood's ripeness, power, and pride,
And on your sandals the strong wings of youth.
He let you leave a name

BOOK SEVEN

To shine on the entablatures of truth
For ever:
To sound for ever in answering halls of fame.

For you soared onwards to that world which rags
Of clouds, like tattered flags,
Concealed; you reached the walls of chrysolite,
The mansions white;
And losing all, you gained the civic crown
Of that eternal town,
Wherein you passed a rightful citizen
Of the bright commonwealth ablaze beyond our ken.

Surely you found companions meet for you
In that high place;
You met there face to face
Those you had never known, but whom you knew:
Knights of the Table Round,
And all the very brave, the very true,
With chivalry crowned;
The captains rare,
Courteous and brave beyond our human air;
Those who had loved and suffered overmuch,
Now free from the world's touch.
And with them were the friends of yesterday,
Who went before and pointed you the way;
And in that place of freshness, light, and rest,
Where Lancelot and Tristram vigil keep
Over their King's long sleep,
Surely they made a place for you,
'Their long-expected guest,
Among the chosen few,
And welcomed you, their brother and their friend,
'To that companionship which hath no end.

And in the portals of the sacred hall
You hear the trumpet's call

THE POET'S PROGRESS

At dawn upon the silvery battlement
Re-echo through the deep
And bid the sons of God to rise from sleep,
And with a shout to hail
The sunrise on the city of the Grail:
The music that proud Lucifer in hell
Missed more than all the joys that he forwent.
You hear the solemn bell
At vespers, when the oriflammes are furled;
And then you know that somewhere in the world,
That shines far-off beneath you like a gem,
They think of you, and when you think of them
You know that they will wipe away their tears,
And cast aside their fears;
That they will have it so,
And in no otherwise;
That it is well with them because they know,
With faithful eyes
Fixed forward and turned upwards to the skies,
That it is well with you,
Among the chosen few,
Among the very brave, the very true.

Maurice Baring

318. *To ironfounders and others*

When you destroy a blade of grass
You poison England at her roots:
Remember no man's foot can pass
Where evermore no green life shoots.

You force the birds to wing too high
Where your unnatural vapours creep:
Surely the living rocks shall die
When birds no rightful distance keep.

BOOK SEVEN

You have brought down the firmament
And yet no heaven is more near;
You shape huge deeds without event,
And half-made men believe and fear.

Your worship is your furnaces,
Which, like old idols, lost obscenes,
Have molten bowels; your vision is
Machines for making more machines.

O, you are busied in the night,
Preparing destinies of rust;
Iron misused must turn to blight
And dwindle to a tettered crust.

The grass, forerunner of life, has gone,
But plants that spring in ruins and shards
Attend until your dream is done:
I have seen hemlock in your yards.

The generations of the worm
Know not your loads piled on their soil;
Their knotted ganglions shall wax firm
Till your strong flagstones heave and toil.

When the old hollowed earth is cracked,
And when, to grasp more power and feasts,
Its ores are emptied, wasted, lacked,
The middens of your burning beasts

Shall be raked over till they yield
Last priceless slags for fashionings high,
Ploughs to wake grass in every field,
Chisels men's hands to magnify.

Gordon Bottomley

THE POET'S PROGRESS

319. *The Praise of Dust*

"What of vile dust?" the preacher said.
Methought the whole world woke;
The dead stone lived beneath my feet,
And my whole body spoke.

"You, that play tyrant to the dust
And stamp its wrinkled face,
This patient star that flings you not
Far into homeless space,

"Come down out of your dusty shrine
The living dust to see,
The flowers that at your sermon's end
Stand blazing silently,

"Rich white and blood-red blossom; stones
Lichens like fire encrust;
A gleam of blue, a glare of gold,
The vision of the dust.

"Pass them all by; till, as you come
Where, at a city's edge,
Under a tree,—I know it well—
Under a lattice ledge,

"The sunshine falls on one brown head.
You, too, O cold of clay,
Eater of stones, may haply hear
The trumpets of that day

"When God to all his paladins
By his own splendour swore
To make a fairer face than heaven
Of dust and nothing more."

G. K. Chesterton

BOOK SEVEN

320. *Flannan Isle*

“ Though three men dwell on Flannan Isle
To keep the lamp alight,
As we steered under the lee we caught
No glimmer through the night.”

A passing ship at dawn had brought
The news; and quickiy we set sail,
To find out what strange thing might ail
The keepers of the deep-sea light.

The winter day broke blue and bright,
With glancing sun and glancing spray,
While o'er the swell our boat made way,
As gallant as a gull in flight.

But, as we neared the lonely isle,
And looked up at the naked height,
And saw the lighthouse towering white,
With blinded lantern, that all night
Had never shot a spark
Of comfort through the dark,
So ghostly in the cold sunlight
It seemed, that we were struck the while
With wonder all too dread for words.
And, as into the tiny creek
We stole beneath the hanging crag,
We saw three queer, black, ugly birds—
'Too big by far in my belief
For cormorant or shag—
Like seamen sitting bolt-upright
Upon a half-tide reef:
But as we neared they plunged from sight
Without a sound, or spurt of white.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And, still too mazed to speak,
We landed; and made fast the boat;
And climbed the track in single file,
Each wishing he were safe afloat
On any sea, however far,
So it be far from Flannan Isle:
And still we seemed to climb, and climb,
As though we'd lost all count of time,
And so must climb for evermore.
Yet, all too soon, we reached the door—
The black sun-blistered lighthouse door—
That gaped for us ajar.

As on the threshold for a spell
We paused, we seemed to breathe the smell
Of limewash and of tar,
Familiar as our daily breath,
As though 'twere some strange scent of death:
And so, yet wondering, side by side
We stood a moment, still tongue-tied:
And each with black foreboding eyed
The door, ere we should fling it wide,
To leave the sunlight for the gloom:
Till, plucking courage up, at last,
Hard on each other's heels we passed
Into the living-room.

Yet as we crowded through the door
We only saw a table spread
For dinner, meat and cheese and bread;
But all untouched; and no one there;
As though, when they sat down to eat,
Ere they could even taste,
Alarm had come; and they in haste

BOOK SEVEN

Had risen and left the bread and meat;
For at the table-head a chair
Lay tumbled on the floor.

We listened; but we only heard
The feeble chirping of a bird
That starved upon its perch:
And listening still, without a word
We set about our hopeless search.
We hunted high, we hunted low,
And soon ransacked the empty house;
Then o'er the island to and fro
We ranged, to listen and to look
In every cranny, cleft, and nook
That might have hid a bird or mouse;
But, though we searched from shore to shore,
We found no sign in any place;
And soon again stood face to face
Before the gaping door;

And stole into the room once more
As frightened children steal.
Ay; though we hunted high and low,
And hunted everywhere,
Of the three men's fate we found no trace
Of any kind in any place,
But a door ajar, and an untouched meal,
And an overtoppled chair.

And as we listened in the gloom
Of that forsaken living-room,
A chill clutch on our breath,
We thought how ill-chance came to all
Who kept the Flannan light;
And how the rock had been the death
Of many a likely lad:

THE POET'S PROGRESS

How six had come to a sudden end
And three had gone stark mad:
And one whom we'd all known as friend
Had leapt from the lantern one still night,
And fallen dead by the lighthouse wall;
And long we thought
On the three we sought,
And on what might yet befall.

Like curs a glance has brought to heel
We listened, flinching there;
And looked, and looked, on the untouched meal
And the overtopped chair.

We seemed to stand an endless while,
Though still no word was said:
Three men alive on Flannan Isle
Who thought on three men dead.

W. W. Gibson

321. *Fragments*

Troy Town is covered up with weeds;
The rabbits and the pismires brood
On broken gold, and shards, and beads
Where Priam's ancient palace stood.

The floors of many a gallant house
Are matted with the roots of grass;
The glow-worm and the nimble mouse
Among her ruins flit and pass.

And there, in orts of blackened bone
The widowed Trojan beauties lie,
And Simois babbles over stone,
And waps and gurgles to the sky.

BOOK SEVEN

Once there were merry days in Troy,
Her chimneys smoked with cooking meals,
The passing chariots did annoy
The sunning housewives at their wheels.

And many a lovely Trojan maid
Set Trojan lads to lovely things;
The game of life was nobly played,
They played the game like queens and kings,

So that, when Troy had greatly passed
In one red roaring fiery coal,
The courts the Grecians overcast
Became a city of the soul.

* * *

In some green island of the sea,
Where now the shadowy coral grows,
In pride and pomp and empery
The courts of old Atlantis rose.

In many a glittering house of glass
The Atlanteans wandered there;
The paleness of their faces was
Like ivory, so pale they were.

And hushed they were; no noise of words
In those bright cities ever rang;
Only their thoughts, like golden birds,
About their chambers thrilled and sang.

They knew all wisdom; for they knew
The souls of those Egyptian kings
Who learned, in ancient Babilu,
The beauty of immortal things.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

They knew all beauty—when they thought
The air chimed like a stricken lyre,
The elemental birds were wrought,
The golden birds became a fire.

And straight to busy camps and marts
The singing flames were swiftly gone;
The trembling leaves of human hearts
Hid boughs for them to perch upon.

And men in desert places, men
Abandoned, broken, sick with fears,
Rose singing, swung their swords agen,
And laughed and died among the spears.

The green and greedy seas have drowned
That city's glittering walls and towers;
Her sunken minarets are crowned
With red and russet water-flowers;

In towers and rooms and golden courts
The shadowy coral lifts her sprays;
The scrawl hath gorged her broken orts;
The shark doth haunt her hidden ways.

But, at the falling of the tide,
The golden birds still sing and gleam,
The Atlanteans have not died,
Immortal things still give us dream—

The dream that fires man's heart to make,
To build, to do, to sing or say
A beauty death can never take,
An Adam from the crumbled clay.

John Masefield

BOOK SEVEN

322. *Sea Fever*

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and
the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white
sail's shaking,
And a gray mist on the sea's face, and a gray dawn
breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the run-
ning tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds
flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-
gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gipsy
life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way, where the wind's
like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-
rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's
over.

John Masefield

THE POET'S PROGRESS

323. *Laugh and be merry*

Laugh and be merry: remember, better the world with
a song,
Better the world with a blow in the teeth of a wrong.
Laugh, for the time is brief, a thread the length of a span.
Laugh, and be proud to belong to the old proud pageant
of man.

Laugh and be merry: remember, in olden time,
God made heaven and earth for joy He took in a rhyme,
Made them, and filled them full with the strong red wine
of His mirth;
The splendid joy of the stars, the joy of the earth.

So we must laugh and drink from the deep blue cup of
the sky,
Join the jubilant song of the great stars sweeping by,
Laugh, and battle, and work, and drink of the wine
outpoured
In the dear green earth, the sign of the joy of the Lord.

Laugh and be merry together, like brothers akin,
Guesting awhile in the rooms of a beautiful inn,
Glad till the dancing stops, and the lilt of the music
ends.
Laugh till the game is played; and be you merry, my
friends.

John Masefield

324. *Roundabouts and Swings*

It was early last September nigh to Framlin'am-on-Sea,
An' 'twas Fa'ir-day come to-morrow, an' the time was
after tea,

An' I met a painted caravan adown a dusty lane,
A Pharaoh with his waggons comin' jolt an' creak an'
strain;

A cheery cove an' sunburnt, bold o' eye and wrinkled up,
An' beside him on the splashboard sat a brindled tarrier
pup,

An' a lurcher wise as Solomon an' lean as fiddle-strings
Was joggin' in the dust along 'is roundabouts an' swings.

"Goo' day" said 'e; "Goo' day" said I; "an' 'ow
d'you find things go?"

An' what's the chance o' millions when you runs a
travellin' show?"

"I find" said 'e "things very much as 'ow I've always
found,

For mostly they goes up and down or else goes round
and round".

Said 'e "The job's the very spit o' what it always were;
It's bread and bacon mostly when the dog don't catch a
'are;

But lookin' at it broad, an' while it ain't no merchant
king's,

What's lost upon the roundabouts we pulls up on the
swings".

"Goo' luck" said 'e; "Goo' luck" said I; "you've
put it past a doubt;

An' keep that lurcher on the road, the gamekeepers is
out".

THE POET'S PROGRESS

'E thumped upon the footboard an' 'e lumbered on again
To meet a gold-dust sunset down the owl-light in the
lane;
An' the moon she climbed the 'azels, while a night-jar
seemed to spin
That Pharaoh's wisdom o'er again, 'is sooth of lose-and-
win;
For "up an' down an' round" said he "goes all
appointed things,
An' losses on the roundabouts means profits on the
swings".

Patrick Chalmers

325. *Milk for the Cat*

When the tea is brought at five o'clock,
And all the neat curtains are drawn with care,
The little black cat with bright green eyes
Is suddenly purring there.

At first she pretends, having nothing to do,
She has come in merely to blink by the grate,
But, though tea may be late or the milk may be sour,
She is never late.

And presently her agate eyes
Take a soft large milky haze,
And her independent casual glance
Becomes a stiff hard gaze.

Then she stamps her claws or lifts her ears,
Or twists her tail and begins to stir,
Till suddenly all her lithe body becomes
One breathing trembling purr.

BOOK SEVEN

The children eat and wriggle and laugh;
The two old ladies stroke their silk:
But the cat is grown small and thin with desire,
Transformed to a creeping lust for milk.

The white saucer like some full moon descends
At last from the clouds of the table above;
She sighs and dreams and thrills and glows,
Transfigured with love.

She nestles over the shining rim,
Buries her chin in the creamy sea;
Her tail hangs loose; each drowsy paw
Is doubled under each bending knee.

A long dim ecstasy holds her life;
Her world is an infinite shapeless white,
Till her tongue has curled the last holy drop;
Then she sinks back into the night,

Draws and dips her body to heap
Her sleepy nerves in the great arm-chair,
Lies defeated and buried deep
Three or four hours unconscious there.

Harold Monro

THE POET'S PROGRESS

326. *The Plougher*

Sunset and silence; a man; around him earth savage,
earth broken:

Beside him two horses, a plough.

Earth savage, earth broken, the brutes, the dawn man
there in the sunset;

And the plough that is twin to the sword, that is founder
of cities.

“ Brute-tamer, plough-maker, earth-breaker, canst hear?
There are ages between us.

Is it praying you are as you stand there, alone in the
sunset?

“ Surely our sky-born gods can be nought to you,
earth-child and earth-master;

Surely your thoughts are of Pan, or of Wotan, or Dana.

“ Yet why give thought to the gods? Has Pan led your
brutes where they stumble?

Has Dana numbed pain of the childbed, or Wotan put
hands to your plough?

“ What matter your foolish reply? O man, standing lone
and bowed earthward,

Your task is a day near its close. Give thanks to the night-
giving God.”

Slowly the darkness falls, the broken lands blend with
the savage;

The brute-tamer stands by the brutes, a head's breadth
only above them.

A head's breadth? Ay, but therein is hell's depth; and
the height up to heaven;

And the thrones of the gods, and their halls, their
chariots, purples, and splendours.

Padraic Colum

BOOK SEVEN

327. *The Buzzards*

When evening came and the warm glow grew deeper,
And every tree that bordered the green meadows,
And in the yellow cornfields every reaper
And every corn-shock stood above their shadows
Flung eastward from their feet in longer measure,
Serenely far there swam in the sunny height
A buzzard and his mate, who took their pleasure
Swirling and poising idly in golden light.
On great pied motionless moth-wings borne along,
So effortless and so strong,
Cutting each other's paths together they glided,
Then wheeled asunder till they soared divided
Two valleys' width (as though it were delight
To part like this, being sure they could unite
So swiftly in their empty free dominion),
Curved headlong downward, towered up the sunny steep,
Then, with a sudden lift of the one great pinion,
Swung proudly to a curve, and from its height
Took half a mile of sunlight in one long sweep.

And we, so small on the swift immense hillside,
Stood trance'd, until our souls arose uplifted
On those farsweeping, wide,
Strong curves of flight—swayed up and hugely drifted,
Were washed, made strong and beautiful in the tide
Of sun-bathed air. But far beneath, beholden
Through shining deeps of air, the fields were golden,
And rosy burned the heather where cornfields ended.

And still those buzzards whirled, while light withdrew
Out of the vales and to surging slopes ascended,
Till the loftiest-flaming summit died to blue.

Martin Armstrong

THE POET'S PROGRESS

328. *Clouds*

Because a million voices call
Across the earth distractedly,
Because the thrones of reason fall
And beautiful battalions die,
My mind is like a madrigal
Played on a lute long since put by.

In common use my mind is still
Eager for every lovely thing—
The solitudes of tarn and hill,
Bright birds with honesty to sing,
Bluebells and primroses that spill
Cascades of colour on the spring.

But now my mind that gave to these
Gesture and shape, colour and song,
Goes hesitant and ill at ease,
And the old touch is truant long,
Because the continents and seas
Are loud with lamentable wrong.

John Drinkwater

329. *To a poet a thousand years hence*

I who am dead a thousand years,
And wrote this sweet archaic song,
Send you my words for messengers
The way I shall not pass along.

BOOK SEVEN

I care not if you bridge the seas,
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still,
And statues and a bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
And prayers to them that sit above?

How shall we conquer? Like a wind
That falls at eve our fancies blow,
And old Mæonides the blind
Said it three thousand years ago.

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night, alone:
I was a poet, I was young.

Since I can never see your face,
And never shake you by the hand,
I send my soul through time and space
To greet you. You will understand.

J. E. Flecker

330. *Brumana*

• Oh shall I never be home again?
Meadows of England shining in the rain,
Spread wide your daisied lawns: your ramparts green
With briar fortify, with blossom screen
Till my far morning—and O streams that slow
And pure and deep through plains and playlands go,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

For me your love and all your kingcups store,
And—dark militia of the southern shore,
Old fragrant friends—preserve me the last lines
Of that long saga which you sang me, pines,
When, lonely boy, beneath the chosen tree
I listened, with my eyes upon the sea.

O traitor pines, you sang what life has found
The falsest of fair tales.
Earth blew a far-horn prelude all around,
That native music of her forest home,
While from the sea's blue fields and syren dales
Shadows and light noon spectres of the foam
Riding the summer gales
On aery viols plucked an idle sound.

Hearing you sing, O trees,
Hearing you murmur " There are older seas,
That beat on vaster sands,
Where the wise snailfish move their pearly towers
To carven rocks and sculptured promont'ries ",
Hearing you whisper " Lands
Where blaze the unimaginable flowers."

Beneath me in the valley waves the palm ;
Beneath, beyond the valley, breaks the sea ;
Beneath me sleep in mist and light and calm
Cities of Lebanon, dream-shadow-dim,
Where kings of Tyre and kings of Tyre did rule
In ancient days in endless dynasty,
And all around the snowy mountains swim
Like mighty swans afloat in heaven's pool.

BOOK SEVEN

But I will walk upon the wooded hill
Where stands a grove, O pines, of sister pines,
And when the downy twilight droops her wing
And no sea glimmers and no mountain shines
My heart shall listen still.
For pines are gossip pines the wide world through
And full of runic tales to sigh or sing.
'Tis ever sweet through pines to see the sky
Blushing a deeper gold or darker blue.
'Tis ever sweet to lie
On the dry carpet of the needles brown,
And though the fanciful green lizard stir
And windy odours light as thistledown
Breathe from the lavdanon and lavender,
Half to forget the wandering and pain,
Half to remember days that have gone by,
And dream and dream that I am home again.

J. E. Flecker

331. *The war song of the Saracens*

We are they who come faster than fate: we are they
who ride early or late:
We storm at your ivory gate: Pale Kings of the Sunset,
beware!
Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained solemnity die
Among women who chatter and cry, and children who
mumble a prayer.
But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we rise
with a shout, and we tramp
With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the spray
of the wind in our hair.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

From the lands where the elephants are to the forts of
Merou and Balghar,
Our steel we have brought and our star to shine on
the ruins of Rum.

We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and by God
we will go there again;

We have stood on the shore of the plain where the
Waters of Destiny boom.

A mart of destruction we made at Jalula where men
were afraid,

For death was a difficult trade, and the sword was a
broker of doom;

And the spear was a desert physician who cured not a
few of ambition,

And drave not a few to perdition with medicine bitter
and strong;

And the shield was a grief to the fool and as bright as
a desolate pool,

And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when their
cavalry thundered along:

For the coward was drowned with the brave when our
battle sheered up like a wave,

And the dead to the desert we gave, and the glory to
God in our song.

J. E. Flecker

BOOK SEVEN

332. *The Lily of Malud*

The lily of Malud is born in secret mud.
It is breathed like a word in a little dark ravine
Where no bird was ever heard and no beast was ever
seen,
And the leaves are never stirred by the panther's velvet
sheen.

It blooms once a year in summer moonlight,
In a valley of dark fear full of pale moonlight:
It blooms once a year, and dies in a night,
And its petals disappear with the dawn's first light;
And when that night has come, black small-breasted
maids,
With ecstatic terror dumb, steal fawn-like through the
shades
To watch, hour by hour, the unfolding of the flower.

When the world is full of night, and the moon reigns
alone,
And drowns in silver light the known and the unknown,
When each hut is a mound, half blue-silver and half
black,
And casts upon the ground the hard shadow of its back,
When the winds are out of hearing and the tree-tops never
shake,
When the grass in the clearing is silent but awake
'Neath a moon-paven sky; all the village is asleep
And the babes that nightly cry dream deep:
From the doors the maidens creep,
Tiptoe over dreaming curs, soft so soft, that no one stirs,
And stand curved and a-quiver, like bathers by a river,
Looking at the forest wall, groups of slender naked girls,
Whose black bodies shine like pearls where the moon-
beams fall.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

They have waked, they know not why, at a summons
from the night,
They have stolen fitfully from the dark to the light,
Stepping over sleeping men, who have moved and slept
again:
And they know not why they go to the forest, but they
know,
As their moth-feet pass to the shore of the grass,
And the forest's dreadful brink, that their tender spirits
shrink:
They would flee, but cannot turn, for their eyelids burn
With still frenzy; and each maid, as she leaves the moon-
lit space,
If she sees another's face is thrilled and afraid.

Now like little phantom fawns they tread the outer
lawns
Where the boles of giant trees stand about in twos and
threes,
Till the forest grows more dense and the darkness more
intense,
And they only sometimes see in a lone moon-ray
A dead and spongy trunk in the earth half-sunk,
Or the roots of a tree with fungus gray,
Or a drift of muddy leaves, or a banded snake that
heaves.
And the towering unseen roof grows more intricate, and
soon
It is featureless and proof to the lost forgotten moon.
But they could not look above as with blind-drawn feet
they move
Onwards on the scarce-felt path, with quick and des-
perate breath,
For their circling fingers dread to caress some slimy
head,
Or to touch the icy shape of a hunched and hairy ape,

BOOK SEVEN

And at every step they fear in their very midst to hear
A lion's rending roar or a tiger's snore. . . .
And when things swish or fall, they shiver but dare not
call.

O what is it leads the way that they do not stray?
What unimagined arm keeps their bodies from harm?
What presence concealed lifts their little feet that yield
Over dry ground and wet till their straining eyes are met
With a thinning in the darkness?
And the foremost faintly cries in awed surprise:
And they one by one emerge from the gloom to the verge
Of a small sunken vale full of moonlight pale.
And they hang along the bank, clinging to the branches
dank,
A shadowy festoon out of sight of the moon;
And they see in front of them, rising from the mud,
A single straight stem and a single pallid bud
In that little lake of light from the moon's calm height.

A stem, a ghostly bud, on the moon-swept mud
That shimmers like a pond; and over there beyond
The guardian forest high, menacing and strange,
Invades the empty sky with its wild black range.

And they watch hour by hour that small lonely flower
In that deep forest place that hunter never found.

It shines without sound, as a star in space.

And the silence all around that solitary place
Is like silence in a dream; till a sudden flashing gleam
Down their dark faces flies; and their lips fall apart,
And their glimmering great eyes without excitement dart;
And their fingers, clutching the branches they were
touching,
Shake and arouse hissing leaves on the boughs.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And they whisper aswoon: Did it move in the moon?

O it moved as it grew!

It is moving, opening, with calm and gradual will,
And their bodies where they cling are shadowed and
still,

And with marvel they mark that the mud now is dark;
For the unfolding flower, like a goddess in her power,
Challenges the moon with a light of her own,
That lovelily grows as the petals unclose,
Wider, more wide with an awful inward pride
Till the heart of it breaks and stilled is their breath;
For the radiance it makes is as wonderful as death.

The morning's last stain tinges their ashen brows
As they part the last boughs and slowly step again
On to the village grass, and chill and languid pass
Into the huts to sleep.

Brief slumber, yet so deep

That, when they wake to-day, darkness and splendour
seem

Broken and far-away, a faint miraculous dream;
And when those maidens rise they are as they ever
were

Save only for a rare shade of trouble in their eyes;
And the surly thick-lipped men, as they sit about their
huts

Making drums out of guts, grunting gruffly now and
then,

Carving sticks of ivory, stretching shields of wrinkled
skin,

Smoothing sinister and thin squatting gods of ebony,
Chip and grunt and do not see.

But each mother, silently,

Longer than her wont stays shut in the dimness of her
hut,

BOOK SEVEN

For she feels a brooding cloud of memory in the air,
A lingering thing there that makes her sit bowed
With hollow shining eyes, as the night-fire dies,
And stare softly at the ember, and try to remember,
Something sorrowful and far, something sweet and
vaguely seen

Like an early evening star when the sky is pale green:
A quiet silver tower that climbed in an hour,
Or a ghost like a flower, or a flower like a queen:
Something holy in the past that came and did not
last. . . .

But she knows not what it was.

Sir John Squire

333. *The Discovery*

There was an Indian, who had known no change,
Who strayed content along a sunlit beach
Gathering shells. He heard a strange
Commingled noise; looked up; and gasped for speech.
For in the bay, where nothing was before,
Moved on the sea, by magic, huge canoes
With bellying cloths on poles, and not one oar,
And fluttering coloured signs, and clambering crews.
And he, in fear, this naked man alone,
His fallen hands forgetting all their shells,
His lips gone pale, knelt low behind a stone,
And stared, and saw, and did not understand,
Columbus's doom-burdened caravels
Slant to the shore, and all their seamen land.

Sir John Squire

THE POET'S PROGRESS

334. *The Swans*

In the green light of water, like the day
Under green boughs, the spray
And air-pale petals of the foam seem flowers,—
Dark-leaved arbutus blooms with wax-pale bells
And their faint honey-smells,
The velvety syringa with smooth leaves,
Gloxinia with a green shade in the snow,
Jasmine and moon-clear orange-blossom and green
 blooms
Of the wild strawberries from the shade of woods.
Their showers
Pelt the white women under the trees,
Venusia, Cosmopolita, Pistillarine—
White solar statues, white rose-trees in snow
Flowering for ever, child-women, half stars
Half flowers, waves of the sea, born of a dream.

Their laughter flying through the trees like doves,
These angels come to watch their whiter ghosts
In the air-pale water, archipelagoes
Of stars and young thin moons from great wings falling
As ripples widen.
These are their ghosts, their own white angels these.
O great wings spreading—
Your bones are made of amber, smooth and thin
Grown from the amber dust that was a rose
Or nymph in swan-smooth waters.

 But Time's winter falls
With snows as soft, as soundless. . . . Then, who knows
Rose-footed swan from snow, or girl from rose?

Edith Sitwell

BOOK SEVEN

335. *How many heavens*

The emeralds are singing on the grasses
And in the trees the bells of the long cold are ringing.
My blood seems changed to emeralds like the spears
Of grass beneath the earth piercing and singing.

The flame of the first blade
Is an angel piercing through the earth to sing
"God is everything:—
'The grass within the grass, the angel in the angel, flame
Within the flame; and He is the green shade that came
To be the heart of shade."

The gray-beard angel of the stone,
Who has grown wise with age, cried "Not alone
Am I within my silence. God is the stone in the still
stone, the silence laid
In the heart of silence." . . . Then, above the glade

The yellow straws of light
Whereof the sun has built his nest, cry "Bright
Is the world, the yellow straw
My brother. God is the straw within the straw.
All things are Light."

He is the sea of ripeness and the sweet apple's emerald
lore.
O you, my hawthorn bough of the stars, bending low
'Through the day, for your flowers to kiss my lips, shall
know
He is the core of the heart of love, and He, beyond
labouring seas, our ultimate shore.

Edith Sitwell

THE POET'S PROGRESS

336. *Heart and Mind*

Said the Lion to the Lioness "When you are amber
dust,—
No more a raging fire like the heat of the sun
(No liking but all lust),—
Remember still the flowering of the amber blood and
bone,
The rippling of bright muscles like the sea;
Remember the rose-prickles of bright paws,
Though we shall mate no more
Till the fire of that sun the heart and the moon-cold
bone are one."

Said the Skeleton lying upon the sands of Time
"The great gold planet that is the morning heat of the
sun
Is greater than all gold, more powerful
Than the tawny body of a lion that fire consumes
Like all that grows or leaps. . . . So is the heart
More powerful than all dust. Once I was Hercules
Or Samson, strong as the pillars of the seas:
But the flames of the heart consumed me, and the mind
Is but a foolish wind."

Said the Sun to the Moon "When you are but a lonely
white crone,
And I a dark King in my golden armour somewhere in
a dark wood,
Remember only this of our hopeless love
That never till Time is done
Will the fire of the heart and the fire of the mind be
one."

Edith Sitwell

BOOK SEVEN

337. *Most lovely Shade*

Most lovely Dark, my Æthiopia born
Of the shade's richest splendour, leave not me
Where in the pomp and splendour of the shade
The dark air's leafy plumes no more a lulling music
made.

Dark is your fleece, and dark the airs that grew
Amid those weeping leaves.
Plantations of the East drop precious dew,
That, ripened by the light, rich leaves perspire.
Such are the drops that from the dark airs' feathers flew.

Most lovely Shade. . . . Syrix and Dryope
And that smooth nymph that changed into a tree
Are dead. . . . The shade, that Æthiopia, sees
Their beauty make more bright its treasures;
Their amber blood in porphyry veins still grows
Deep in the dark secret of the rose
And the smooth stem of many a weeping tree,
And in your beauty grows.

Come then, my pomp and splendour of the shade,
Most lovely cloud, that the hot sun made black
As dark-leaved airs,—

Come then, O precious cloud,
Lean to my heart: no shade of a rich tree
Shall pour such splendour as your heart to me.

Edith Sitwell

THE POET'S PROGRESS

338. *Egypt's might is tumbled down*

Egypt's might is tumbled down,
Down a-down the steeps of thought,
Greece is fallen and Troy town,
Glorious Rome hath lost her crown,
Venice' pride is nought.

But the dreams their children dreamed,
Fleeting, unsubstantial, vain,
Shadowy as the shadows seemed—
Airy nothing, so they deemed;—
These remain.

M. E. Coleridge

339. *Snake*

A snake came to my water trough
On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,
To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark
carob-tree

I came down the steps with my pitcher
And must wait, must stand and wait; for there he was
at the trough before me.

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in the
gloom

And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied down,
over the edge of the stone trough,

And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,
And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a
small clearness,

He sipped with his straight mouth,
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his long
slack body,
Silently.

BOOK SEVEN

Someone was before me at the water-trough,
And I, like a second comer, waiting.

He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do,
And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,
And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips, and
mused a moment,
And stooped and drank a little more,
Being earth brown, earth golden from the burning
burning bowels of the earth,
On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking.

The voice of my education said to me:
He must be killed,
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the
gold are venomous.

And voices in me said: If you were a man
You would take a stick and break him now, and finish
him off.

But I must confess how I liked him,
How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet, to
drink at my water trough
And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless,
Into the burning bowels of the earth.

Was it cowardice that I dared not kill him?
Was it perversity, that I longed to talk to him?
Was it humility, to feel so honoured?
I felt so honoured.

And yet those voices:
If you were not afraid, you would kill him.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And truly I was afraid, most afraid;
But even so, honoured still more
That he should seek my hospitality
From out the dark door of the secret earth.

He drank enough
And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken,
And flickered his tongue like a forked night on the air,
 so black,
Seeming to lick his lips,
And looked around like a god, unseeing, into the air,
And slowly turned his head,
And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice adream,
Proceeded to draw his slow length curving round
And climb again the broken bank of my wall face.
And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,
And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders,
 and entered farther,
A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his withdrawing
 into that horrid black hole,
Deliberately going into the blackness and slowly drawing
 himself after,
Overcame me now his back was turned.

I looked round, I put down my pitcher,
I picked up a clumsy log
And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter.

I think it did not hit him,
But suddenly that part of him that was left behind con-
 vulsed in undignified haste,
Writhed like lightning and was gone
Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the wall
 front,
At which, in the intense still noon, I stared with fascina-
 tion.

BOOK SEVEN

And immediately I regretted it.
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act!
I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human
education.

And I thought of the albatross,
And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the under-world,
Now due to be crowned again.

And so I missed my chance with one of the lords
Of life.
And I have something to expiate;
A pettiness.

D. H. Lawrence

340. *Everyone sang*

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark green fields; on; on; and out of
sight.
Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted,
And beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears, and horror
Drifted away. . . . O, but every one
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing
will never be done.

Siegfried Sassoon

THE POET'S PROGRESS

341. *The Old Vicarage, Grantchester*

Café des Westens, Berlin

Just now the lilac is in bloom,
All before my little room;
And in my flower-beds, I think,
Smile the carnation and the pink;
And down the borders, well I know,
The poppy and the pansy blow. . . .
Oh! there the chestnuts, summer through,
Beside the river make for you
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep
Deeply above; and green and deep
The stream mysterious glides beneath,
Green as a dream and deep as death.—
Oh, damn! I know it! and I know
How the May fields all golden show,
And when the day is young and sweet,
Gild gloriously the bare feet
That run to bathe . . .

Du lieber Gott!

Here am I, sweating, sick, and hot,
And there the shadowed waters fresh
Lean up to embrace the naked flesh.
Temperamentvoll German Jews
Drink beer around; and *there* the dews
Are soft beneath a morn of gold.
Here tulips bloom as they are told;
Unkempt about those hedges blows
An English unofficial rose;
And there the unregulated sun
Slopes down to rest when day is done,

BOOK SEVEN

And wakes a vague unpunctual star,
 A slippersed Hesper; and there are
 Meads towards Haslingfield and Coton
 Where *das Betreten's* not *verboten*. . . .

εἴθε γενοίμην . . . would I were
 In Grantchester, in Grantchester!—
 Some, it may be, can get in touch
 With nature there, or earth, or such.
 And clever modern men have seen
 A Faun a-peeping through the green,
 And felt the Classics were not dead,
 To glimpse a Naiad's reedy head,
 Or hear the Goat-foot piping low . . .
 But these are things I do not know.
 I only know that you may lie
 Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,
 And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,
 Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,
 Until the centuries blend and blur
 In Grantchester, in Grantchester. . . .
 Still in the dawnlit waters cool
 His ghostly lordship swims his pool,
 And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,
 Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx;
 Dan Chaucer hears his river still
 Chatter beneath a phantom mill;
 Tennyson notes, with studious eye,
 How Cambridge waters hurry by . . .
 And in that garden, black and white,
 Creep whispers through the grass all night;
 And spectral dance, before the dawn,
 A hundred Vicars down the lawn;
 Curates, long dust, will come and go
 On lissom, clerical, printless toe;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And oft between the boughs is seen
The sly shade of a Rural Dean . . .
Till, at a shiver in the skies,
Vanishing with Satanic cries,
The prim ecclesiastic rout
Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,
Gray heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,
The falling house that never falls.

God! I will pack, and take a train,
And get me to England once again!
For England's the one land, I know,
Where men with splendid hearts may go;
And Cambridgeshire, of all England,
The shire for men who understand;
And of *that* district I prefer
The lovely hamlet Grantchester.
For Cambridge people rarely smile,
Being urban, squat, and packed with guile;
And Royston men in the far south,
Are black and fierce and strange of mouth;
At Over they fling oaths at one,
And worse than oaths at Trumpington;
And Ditton girls are mean and dirty,
And there's none in Harston under thirty;
And folks in Shelford and those parts,
Have twisted lips and twisted hearts;
And Barton men make cockney rhymes,
And Coton's full of nameless crimes;
And things are done you'd not believe
At Madingley on Christmas Eve;
Strong men have run for miles and miles
When one from Cherry Hinton smiles;
Strong men have blanched and shot their wives
Rather than send them to St. Ives;

BOOK SEVEN

Strong men have cried like babes, bydam,
To hear what happened at Babraham.
But Grantchester! ah, Grantchester!
There's peace and holy quiet there,
Great clouds along pacific skies,
And men and women with straight eyes,
Lithe children lovelier than a dream,
A bosky wood, a slumbrous stream,
And little kindly winds that creep
Round twilight corners, half asleep.
In Grantchester their skins are white,
They bathe by day, they bathe by night;
The women there do all they ought;
The men observe the rules of thought.
They love the good; they worship truth;
They laugh uproariously in youth;
(And when they get to feeling old,
They up and shoot themselves, I'm told) . . .

Ah God! to see the branches stir
Across the moon at Grantchester!
To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten,
Unforgettable, unforgotten
River smell, and hear the breeze
Sobbing in the little trees.
Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand,
Still guardians of that holy land?
The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,
The yet unacademic stream?
Is dawn a secret shy and cold
Anadyomene, silver-gold?
And sunset still a golden sea
From Haslingfield to Madingley?
And after, ere the night is born,
Do hares come out about the corn?

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Oh, is the water sweet and cool,
Gentle and brown, above the pool?
And laughs the immortal river still
Under the mill, under the mill?
Say, is there Beauty yet to find?
And Certainty? and Quiet kind?
Deep meadows yet, for to forget
The lies, and truths, and pain? . . . oh! yet
Stands the church clock at ten to three?
And is there honey still for tea?

Rupert Brooke

342. *The Soldier*

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke

BOOK SEVEN

343. *The Fish*

In a cool curving world he lies
And ripples with dark ecstasies.
The kind luxurious lapse and steal
Shapes all his universe to feel
And know and be; the clinging stream
Closes his memory, glooms his dream,
Who lips the roots o' the shore, and glides
Superb on unreturning tides.
Those silent waters weave for him
A fluctuant mutable world and dim,
Where wavering masses bulge and gape
Mysterious, and shape to shape
Dies momentarily through whorl and hollow,
And form and line and solid follow
Solid and line and form to dream
Fantastic down the eternal stream;
An obscure world, a shifting world,
Bulbous, or pulled to thin, or curled,
Or serpentine, or driving arrows,
Or serene slidings, or March narrows.
There slipping wave and shore are one,
And weed and mud. No ray of sun,
But glow to glow fades down the deep
(As dream to unknown dream in sleep);
Shaken translucency illumines
The hyaline of shifting glooms;
The strange soft-handed depth subdues
Drowned colour there, but black to hues,
As death to living, decomposes—
Red darkness of the heart of roses,
Blue brilliant from dead starless skies,
And gold that lies behind the eyes,
The unknown unnameable sightless white
That is the essential flame of night,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Lustreless purple, hooded green,
The myriad hues that lie between
Darkness and darkness. . . .

And all's one,
Gentle, embracing, quiet, dun,
The world he rests in, world he knows,
Perpetual curving. Only—grows
An eddy in that ordered falling,
A knowledge from the gloom, a calling
Weed in the wave, gleam in the mud—
The dark fire leaps along his blood;
Dateless and deathless, blind and still,
The intricate impulse works its will;
His woven world drops back, and he,
Sans providence, sans memory,
Unconscious and directly driven,
Falls to some dank sufficient heaven.

O world of lips, O world of laughter,
Where hope is fleet and thought flies after,
Of lights in the clear night, of cries
That drift along the wave, and rise
Thin to the glittering stars above,
You know the hands, the eyes of love.
The strife of limbs, the sightless clinging,
The infinite distance, and the singing
Blown by the wind, a flame of sound,
The gleam, the flowers, and vast around
The horizon, and the heights above—
You know the sigh, the song of love.

But there the night is close, and there
Darkness is cold and strange and bare;
And the secret deeps are whisperless;
And rhythm is all deliciousness;
And joy is on the throbbing tide,
Whose intricate fingers beat and glide

BOOK SEVEN

In felt bewildering harmonies
Of trembling touch; and music is
The exquisite knocking of the blood;
Space is no more, under the mud;
His bliss is older than the sun;
Silent and straight the waters run;
The lights, the cries, the willows dim,
And the dark tide are one with him.

Rupert Brooke

344. *Preludes*

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steak in passage-ways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cabhorse steams and stamps.
And then the lighting of the lamps.

The morning comes to consciousness
Of faint stale smells of beer
From the sawdust-trampled street
With all its muddy feet that press
To early coffee-stands.
With the other masquerades
That time resumes,
One thinks of all the hands
That are raising dingy shades
In a thousand furnished rooms.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

You tossed a blanket on the bed,
You lay upon your back and waited;
You dozed, and watched the night revealing
The thousand sordid images
Of which your soul was constituted;
They flickered against the ceiling.
And when all the world came back
And the light crept up between the shutters,
And you heard the sparrows in the gutters,
You had such a vision of the street
As the street hardly understands;
Sitting along the bed's edge, where
You curled the papers from your hair,
Or clasped the soles of yellow feet
In the palms of both soiled hands.

His soul stretched tight across the skies
That fade behind a city block,
Or trampled by insistent feet
At four and five and six o'clock;
And short square fingers stuffing pipes,
And evening newspapers, and eyes
Assured of certain certainties,
The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world.

I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.

Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.

T. S. Eliot

BOOK SEVEN

345. *Chorus from "Murder in the
Cathedral"*

Does the bird sing in the south?
Only the sea-bird cries, driven inland by the storm.

What sign of the spring of the year?
Only the death of the old: not a stir, not a shoot; not
a breath.

Do the days begin to lengthen?
Longer and darker the day, shorter and colder the night.
Still and stifling the air; but a wind is stored up in
the east.
The starved crow sits in the field, attentive; and in the
wood
The owl rehearses the hollow note of death.

What signs of a bitter spring?
The wind stored up in the east.

What, at the time of the birth of our Lord, at Christmas-
tide,
Is there not peace upon earth, goodwill among men?
The peace of this world is always uncertain, unless men
keep the peace of God.
And war among men defiles the world, but death in the
Lord renews it;
And the world must be cleaned in winter, or we shall
have only
A sour spring, a parched summer, an empty harvest.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Between Christmas and Easter what work shall be done?
The ploughman shall go out in March and turn the same
earth
He has turned before, the bird shall sing the same song.

When the leaf is out on the tree, when the elder and may
Burst over the stream, and the air is clear and high,
And voices trill at windows, and children tumble in
front of the door,
What work shall have been done, what wrong
Shall the bird's song cover, the green tree cover, what
wrong
Shall the fresh earth cover? We wait, and the time is
short.
But waiting is long.

T. S. Eliot

346. *Macavity: the Mystery Cat*

Macavity's a Mystery Cat: he's called the Hidden Paw—
For he's the master criminal who can defy the Law.
He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad's
despair:
For when they reach the scene of crime—*Macavity's not
there!*

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity;
He's broken every human law; he breaks the law of
gravity,
His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare;
And when you reach the scene of crime—*Macavity's not
there!*

BOOK SEVEN

You may seek him in the basement, you may look up
in the air—

But I tell you once and once again, *Macavity's not there!*

Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin;
You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are
sunken in.

His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is highly
domed;

His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are un-
combed.

He sways his head from side to side, with movements
like a snake;

And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide
awake.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of de-
pravity.

You may meet him in a by-street, you may see him in
the square—

But when a crime's discovered, then *Macavity's not
there!*

He's outwardly respectable. (They say he cheats at
cards.)

And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland
Yard's.

And when the larder's looted, or the jewel-case is
rifled,

Or when the milk is missing, or another Peke's been
stifled,

Or the greenhouse glass is broken, and the trellis past
repair—

Ay, there's the wonder of the thing! *Macavity's not
there!*

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And when the Foreign Office find a Treaty's gone astray,
Or the Admiralty lose some plans and drawings by the
way,

There may be a scrap of paper in the hall or on the
stair—

But it's useless to investigate—*Macavity's not there!*

And when the loss has been disclosed, the Secret Service
say:

"It *must* have been Macavity"—but he's a mile away.

You'll be sure to find him resting, or a-licking of his
thumbs,

Or engaged in doing complicated long division sums.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity;

There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and suavity;

He always has an alibi, and one or two to spare:

At whatever time the deed took place—MACAVITY
WASN'T THERE!

And they say that all the Cats whose wicked deeds are
widely known

(I might mention Mungojerrie, I might mention Griddle-
bone)

Are nothing more than agents for the Cat who all the
time

Just controls their operations; the Napoleon of Crime!

T. S. Eliot

BOOK SEVEN

347. *Into Battle*

The naked earth is warm with spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze;
And life is colour and warmth and light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend;
They gently speak in the windy weather;
They guide to valley and ridge's end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The blackbird sings to him " Brother, brother,
If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another;
Brother, sing ".

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers;
O patient eyes, courageous hearts!

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only joy of battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Julian Grenfell

BOOK SEVEN

348. *In the caves of Auvergne*

He carved the red deer and the bull
Upon the smooth cave rock;
Returned from war with belly full,
And scarred with many a knock,
He carved the red deer and the bull
Upon the smooth cave rock.

The stars flew by the cave's wide door,
The clouds wild trumpets blew,
Trees rose in wild dreams from the floor,
Flowers with dream faces grew
Up to the sky, and softly hung
Golden and white and blue.

The woman ground her heap of corn,
Her heart a guarded fire;
The wind played in his trembling soul
Like a hand upon a lyre,
The wind drew faintly on the stone
Symbols of his desire:

The red deer of the forest dark,
Whose antlers cut the sky,
That vanishes into the mirk
And like a dream flits by,
And by an arrow slain at last
Is but the wind's dark body.

The bull that stands in marshy lakes
As motionless and still
As a dark rock jutting from a plain
Without a tree or hill;
The bull that is the sign of life,
Its sombre, phallic will.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And from the dead, white eyes of them
The wind springs up anew,
It blows upon the trembling heart,
And bull and deer renew
Their flitting life in the dim past
When that dead hunter drew.

I sit beside him in the night,
And, fingering his red stone,
I chase through endless forests dark
Seeking that thing unknown,
That which is not red deer or bull,
But which by them was shown:

By those stiff shapes in which he drew
His soul's exalted cry,
When flying down the forest dark
He slew and knew not why,
When he was filled with song, and strength
Flowed to him from the sky.

The wind blows from red deer and bull,
The clouds wild trumpets blare,
Trees rise in wild dreams from the earth,
Flowers with dream-faces stare;
*O hunter, your own shadow stands
Within your forest lair!*

W. J. Turner

BOOK SEVEN

349. *I have a rendezvous with Death*

1916

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When spring comes back with rustling shade,
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear. . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When spring trips north again this year;
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger

THE POET'S PROGRESS

350. *The Shell*

And then I pressed the shell
Close to my ear
And listened well.
And straightway like a bell
Came low and clear
The slow, sad murmur of far distant seas
Whipped by an icy breeze
Upon a shore
Wind-swept and desolate.
It was a sunless strand that never bore
The footprint of a man,
Nor felt the weight
Since time began
Of any human quality or stir
Save what the dreary winds and waves incur.
And in the hush of waters was the sound
Of pebbles rolling round;
For ever rolling with a hollow sound:
And bubbling sea-weeds as the waters go
Swish to and fro
Their long cold tentacles of shiny gray:
There was no day,
Nor ever came a night
Setting the stars alight
To wonder at the moon:
Was twilight only, and the frightened croon,
Smitten to whimpers, of the dreary wind
And waves that journeyed blind. . . .
And then I loosed my ear—O, it was sweet
To hear a cart go jolting down the street.

James Stephens

BOOK SEVEN

351. *The Uncommon Man*

The feathers in a fan
are not so frail as man;
the green embossèd leaf
than man is no more brief.
His life is not so loud
as the passing of a cloud;
his death is quieter
than harebells, when they stir.
The years that have no form
and substance are as warm,
and space has hardly less
supreme an emptiness.
And yet man being frail
does on himself prevail,
and with a single thought
can bring the world to nought,
as being brief he still
bends to his fleeting will
all time, and makes of it
the shadow of his wit.
Soundless in life and death
although he vanisheth
the echo of a song
makes all the stars a gong.
Cold, void, and yet the grim
darkness is hot with him,
and space is but the span
of that long love of man.

Humbert Wolfe

THE POET'S PROGRESS

352. *The Fiddle and the Bow*

This is what the fiddle said to the bow:

“ No! oh no!

You should have warned me before the touch
of music that it hurt too much.

“ You should have warned me, you should have told me,
before you let the music hold me,
how this poor world were fain to melt
into the beauty it has felt.

“ How for one breathless note it trembles
almost on the edge of flame, then tumbles,
wounded with the sense of mortal things,
down down down down with broken wings.

“ It was not right to wound and wake me.
Give me my silence back, or take me
wholly, and never let me go ”.
This is what the fiddle said to the bow.

But the bow said “ How shall I guess
what bids me answer ‘ Yes, oh yes ’,
since a greater thing than we are thus
for its blind purpose useth us?

“ We did not choose our way of making,
not sleeping ours to choose, or waking,
not ours the starry stroke of sound
to choose or fly, though ours the wound.

“ Though dead wood cry ‘ How shall I dare it?’
and wood reply ‘ I cannot bear it ’,
yet his alone to choose, whose fingers
take the dead wood, and make his singers.

BOOK SEVEN

“ And if of dust he shapes this brittle
life of the wings, this song’s one petal
that shines and dies, is it not just
to suffer for song, O singing dust?

“ His was the choice, and if he wake us
out of the wood, but will not slake us,
thus stirred with the stars, *at least we know
what pain the stars have ” says the bow.

Humbert Wolfe

353. *The Losers*

The soft dust on the by-roads
Is shaken and stirred
By the shuffling feet of a listless folk;
But no sound is heard,
For they slouch along a tired trail
With never a song or word.

The days they walked the high road,
With its sun, dust, and sweat,
Its hope and its pride, are a dim dream
That they will soon forget.
All for the fields of slumber
Their feet are set.

But, as they slouch on drowsily,
They shall quiet joys find—
Boots without heels, jars without jam,
And gnawed cheese-rind,
And pilchard-tins, with one or two
Fish-tails left behind.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And glad they are to have left climbing
The difficult way—
Glad no more to sweat and strive,
No more obey;
Yea, all but glad the goal was not
For such as they.

(Lost souls, they say, from Michael's gate
Turn back in such wise.
Forgetful of the ecstasy
Of the strange, steep skies,
Down popped paths to the silent lands
They slope, with blind eyes.)

Peace waits to take them utterly
For a little space;
They must go shambling down the hill
To the dim, still place,
Where, stretched at ease, they shall forget
They have run and lost a race.

* * *

The gray dust on the by-roads'
Is shuffled and blurred
By the dragging feet of beaten men,
And a quiet sound is heard—
A drawing of slow breath, as if
A thousand sleepers stirred.

Rose Macaulay

BOOK SEVEN

354. *The Greater Cats*

The greater cats with golden eyes
Stare out between the bars.
Deserts are there and different skies,
And night with different stars.
They prowl the aromatic hill,
And mate as fiercely as they kill,
And hold the freedom of their will
To roam, to live, to drink their fill;
But this beyond their wit know I:
Man loves a little, and for long shall die.

Their kind across the desert range
Where tulips spring from stones,
Not knowing they will suffer change
Or vultures pick their bones.
Their strength's eternal in their sight,
They rule the terror of the night,
They overtake the deer in flight,
And in their arrogance they smite;
But I am sage, if they are strong:
Man's love is transient, as his death is long.

Yet, oh what powers to deceive!
My wit is turned to faith,
And at this moment I believe
In love, and scout at death.
I came from nowhere, and shall be
Strong, steadfast, swift, eternally:
I am a lion, a stone, a tree,
And as the Polar Star in me
Is fixed my constant heart on thee.
Ah, may I stay for ever blind
With lions, tigers, leopards, and their kind.

V. Sackville-West

THE POET'S PROGRESS

355. *Winter Song*

Many have sung the summer's songs,
Many have sung the corn,
Many have sung white blossom too
That stars the naked thorn—
That stars the black and naked thorn
Against the chalky blue.

But I, crouched up beside the hearth,
Will sing the red and gray;
Red going-down of sun behind
Clubbed woods of winter's day;
Of winter's short and hodden day,
That seals the sober hind—

Seals him sagacious through the year,
Since winter comes again,
Since harvest's but another toil,
And sorrow through the grain
Mounts up, through swaths of ripest grain
The sorrow of the soil.

No lightness is there at their heart,
No joy in country folk;
Only a patience slow and grave
Beneath their labour's yoke,—
Beneath the earth's compelling yoke
That only serves its slave.

Since countryman forever holds
The winter's memory,
When he, before the planets' fires
Have faded from the sky,—
From black, resplendent winter sky,—
Must go about his byres;

BOOK SEVEN

And whether to the reaper's whirr
That scythes the falling crops,
He travels round the widening wake
Between the corn and copse,—
The stubble wake 'twixt corn and copse
Where gleaners ply the rake,—

Or whether in his granary left
He pours the winnowed sacks,
Or whether in his yard he routs
The vermin from the stacks,—
The vermin from the staddled stacks
With staves and stones and shouts,—

Still, still through all the molten eves
Whether he reaps or hones,
Or counts the guerdon of his sweat,
Still to his inmost bones,—
His ancient, sage, sardonic bones,—
The winter haunts him yet.

Winter and toil reward him still
While he his course shall go
According to his proven worth,
Until his faith shall know
The ultimate justice, and the slow
Compassion of the earth.

V. Sackville-West

THE POET'S PROGRESS

356. *From a twentieth-century psalter*

Aching with memory, I lie
In the late summer wood.
The guilty stream of history
Pulses in my blood.

Charm he never so wisely now,
The magician of the trees,
The gilder of the autumn bough,
The spider of fantasies,

Cannot by his panic spell
Lure me to forget
The burned house, the poisoned well,
The trap secretly set.

The wood-smell of September,
Mushroom and berry-tang,
Are what I would remember,
Like songs old England sang.

I should stare up into the green,
Regain a boy's desire
For the unknown, unseen,
The sweet, forbidden fire.

With fruit and lingering flower I'd feed
The ageless, hungry joy,
The all-consuming mental greed
That goads the dreaming boy.

Summer and autumn, every year,
Bring back that youthful flood,
Dark instincts from the past grown dear,
Legends half-understood.

BOOK SEVEN

That was my habit in days of peace
Before the wars began,
The madness of the human race,
The suicide of man.

Not man alone, but the universe
I see from where I lie,
Revolving on this ancient curse,
The death that all must die.

I see the insects at their wars,
I watch the wrestling trees,
The cold collision of the stars,
Night's timeless treacheries.

The wine of all ambitious youth
Is drugged by nature's hand.
To our own past we cry for truth;
None answers that demand.

Some other god than lying Pan
Of cloven thought and hoof,
Remote within the mind of man,
Secure there, and aloof,

Some god, for ever crucified
And risen from the dead,
Is born, like woman, from my side,
Like wisdom, from my head.

His word, my self-engendered mind,
Is whispered where I lie:
The tree-tops tremble in the wind;
The stars kneel in the sky.

Richard Church

THE POET'S PROGRESS

357. *Almswomen*

At Quincey's moat the squandering village ends,
And there in the almshouse dwell the dearest friends
Of all the village, two old dames that cling
As close as any true loves in the spring.
Long, long ago they passed threescore-and-ten,
And in this doll's house lived together then;
All things they have in common, being so poor,
And their one fear, death's shadow at the door.
Each sundown makes them mournful, each sunrise
Brings back the brightness in their failing eyes.

Now happy go the rich fair-weather days
When on the roadside folk stare in amaze
At such a honeycomb of fruit and flowers
As mellows round their threshold; what long hours
They gloat upon their steeping hollyhocks,
Bee's balsams, feathery southernwood, and stocks,
Fiery dragon's-mouths, great mallow leaves
For salves, and lemon-plants in bushy sheaves,
Shagged Esau's hands with five green finger-tips.
Such old sweet names are ever on their lips.
As pleased as little children where these grow
In cobbled pattens and worn gowns they go,
Proud of their wisdom when on gooseberry shoots
They stuck eggshells to fright from coming fruits
The brisk-billed rascals; pausing still to see
Their neighbour owls saunter from tree to tree,
Or in the hushing half-light mouse the lane
Long-winged and lordly.

But when those hours wane
Indoors they ponder, scared by the harsh storm

BOOK SEVEN

Whose pelting saracens on the window swarm,
And listen for the mail to clatter past
And church clock's deep bay withering on the blast;
They feed the fire that flings a freakish light
On pictured kings and queens grotesquely bright,
Platters and pitchers, faded calendars,
And graceful hour-glass trim with lavenders.

Many a time they kiss and cry, and pray
That both be summoned in the self-same day,
And wiseman linnet tinkling in his cage
End too with them the friendship of old age,
And all together leave their treasured room
Some bell-like evening when the may's in bloom.

Edmund Blunden

358. *A time to dance*

For those who had the power
of the forest fires that burn
Leaving their source in ashes
to flush the sky with fire:
Those whom a famous urn
could not contain, whose passion
Brimmed over the deep grave
and dazzled epitaphs:
For all that have won us wings
to clear the tops of grief,
My friend who within me laughs
bids you dance and sing.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Some set out to explore
earth's limit, and little they recked if
Never their feet came near it
outgrowing the need for glory:
Some aimed at a small objective
but the fierce updraught of their spirit
Forced them to the stars.
Are honoured in public who built
The dam that tamed a river;
or holding a salient for hours
Against odds, cut off and killed,
are remembered by one survivor.

All these. But most for those
whom accident made great,—
As a radiant chance encounter
of cloud and sunlight grows
Immortal on the heart;
whose gift was the sudden bounty
Of a passing moment; enriches
the fulfilled eye for ever.
Their spirits float serene
above time's roughest reaches,
But their seed is in us, and over
our lives they are evergreen.

C. Day Lewis

BOOK SEVEN

359. *Tempt me no more*

Tempt me no more; for I
Have known the lightning's hour,
The poet's inward pride,
The certainty of power.

Bayonets are closing round.
I shrink; yet I must wring
A living from despair
And out of steel a song.

Though song, though breath be short,
I'll share not the disgrace
Of those that ran away
Or never left the base.

Comrades, my tongue can speak
No comfortable words,
Calls to a forlorn hope,
Gives work and not rewards.

Oh keep the sickle sharp
And follow still the plough;
Others may reap, though some
See not the winter through.

Father, who endest all,
Pity our broken sleep;
For we lie down with tears
And waken but to weep.

And if our blood alone
Will melt this iron earth,
Take it. It is well spent
Easing a saviour's birth.

C. Day Lewis

THE POET'S PROGRESS

360. *Look, stranger*

Look, stranger, at this island now
The leaping light for your delight discovers;
Stand stable here
And silent be,
That through the channels of the ear
May wander like a river
The swaying sound of the sea.

Here at the small field's ending pause
Where the chalk wall falls to the foam, and its tall
 ledges
Oppose the pluck
And knock of the tide,
And the shingle scrambles after the suck-
ing surf, and the gull lodges
A moment on its sheer side.

Far off like floating seeds the ships
Diverge on urgent voluntary errands;
And the full view
Indeed may enter
And move in memory as now these clouds do,
That pass the harbour mirror
And all the summer through the water saunter.

W. H. Auden

BOOK SEVEN

361. *Fish in the unruffled lakes*

Fish in the unruffled lakes
The swarming colours wear,
Swans in the winter air
A white perfection have,
And the great lion walks
Through his innocent grove;
Lion, fish, and swan
Act, and are gone
Upon Time's toppling wave.

We till shadowed days are done,
We must weep and sing
Duty's conscious wrong,
The Devil in the clock,
The Goodness carefully worn
For atonement or for luck;
We must lose our loves,
On each beast and bird that moves
Turn an envious look.

Sighs for folly said and done
Twist our narrow days;
But I must bless, I must praise
That you, my swan, who have
All gifts that to the swan
Impulsive nature gave,
The majesty and pride,
Last night should add
Your voluntary love.

W. H. Auden

THE POET'S PROGRESS

362. *Morning Sun*

Shuttles of trains going north, going south, drawing
threads of blue,
The shining of the lines of trains like swords,
Thousands of posters asserting the monopoly of the
good, the beautiful, the true,
Crowds of people all in the vocative, you and you,
The haze of the morning shot with words.

Yellow sun comes white off the wet streets but bright
Chromium yellows in the gay sun's light,
Filletted sun streaks the purple mist,
Everything is kissed and reticulated with sun
Scooped-up and cupped in the open fronts of shops
And bouncing in the traffic which never stops.

And the street fountain blown across the square
Rainbow-trellises the air and sunlight blazons
The red butcher's and scrolls of fish on marble slabs,
Whistled bars of music crossing silver sprays,
And horns of cars, touché, touché, rapiers' retort, a
moving cage,
A turning page of shine and sound, the day's maze.

But when the sun goes out, the streets go cold, the
hanging meat
And tiers of fish are colourless and merely dead,
And the hoots of cars neurotically repeat and the tiptoed
feet
Of women hurry and falter whose faces are dead;
And I see in the air but not belonging there
The blown gray powder of the fountain gray as the ash
That forming on a cigarette covers the red.

Louis Macneice

APPENDIX

MIDDLE ENGLISH POEMS

(A dot above a vowel, e.g. *é*, indicates that it possesses syllabic value.)

i. Sumer is icumen in

Sumer is icumen in;
Lhudé sing cuccu.
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springth the wudé nu.
Sing cuccu.

Awè bleteth after lomb;
Lhouth after calvé cu;
Bulluc sterteth, buckè verteth;
Muriè sing cuccu.

Cuccu! cuccu!
Well singés thu, cuccu.
Ne swik thu naver nu;
Sing cuccu, nu, sing cuccu,
Sing cuccu, sing cuccu, nu.

Anonymous—13th century

swik: cease.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

ii. Bytwenè Mersh ant Averil

Bytwenè Mersh ant Averil

When spray biginneth to spring,

The lutel foul hath hirè wyl

On hyre lud to synge;

Ich libbe in lovè-longinge

For semlokest of allè thynges;

He may me blissè bringe;

Icham in hirè bandoun.

An hendy hap ichabbe y-hent,

Ichot from hevène it is me sent,

From allè wymmen mi love is lent,

Ant lyht on Alysoun.

On heu hire her is fayr ynoh,

Hire browè broune, hire eyè blake;

With lossum chere he on me loh;

With middel smal ant wel ymake;

Bote he me wollè to hire take

Fortè buen hire owen make,

Longe to lyven ichulle forsake

Ant feyè fallen adoun.

An hendy hap ichabbe y-hent, etc.

Nihtès when I wende ant wake,

Forthi myn wongès waxeth won;

Levedi, al for thinè sake

Longinge is ylent me on.

lud: voice. semlokest: seemliest. he: she. hendy: lucky.
y-hent: got. Ichot: I know. loh: laughed. feyè: uncon-
scious. wende: toss and turn. wongès: cheeks.

APPENDIX

In world his non so wyter mon
 That al hire bountè tellè con;
 Hire swyre is whittore than the swon.
 Ant fayrest may in tounè.
 An hendy hap ichabbe y-hent, etc.

Icham for wowyng al forwake,
 Wery so water in wore;
 Lest any revè me my make
 Ichabbe y-yernèd yore.
 Betere is tholien whylè sore
 Then mournen evermore.
 Geynest under gore,
 Herknè to my roun.
 An hendy hap ichabbe y-hent, etc.

Anonymous—13th century

iii. Were beth they biforen us weren?

Were beth they biforen us weren,
 Houndès ladden and hauekès beren,
 And hadden feld and wode?
 The richè levedies in hoere bour
 That wereden gold in hoere tresour
 With hoere brightè rode?

Eten and drounken and maden hem glad;
 Hoere lif was al with gamen ilad;
 Men kneleden hem biforen;
 They beren hem wel swithè heyè;
 And in a twincling of an eyè
 Hoere soulès weren ferloren.

wyter: wiser. swyre: neck. wore: weir. make: mate.
 tholien: suffer. geynest under gore: neatest under skirt.
 roun: song. hoere: their.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Were is that lawing and that song,
That trayling and that proudé yong,
 Tho hauekès and tho houndès?
Al that joye is went away,
That wele is comen to welaway
To manie hardè stoundès.

Hoere paradis they nomen here,
And nou they lien in hellè fere;
 The fuir hit brennès hevere.
Long is ay and long is ho,
Long is wy and long is wo;
 Thennès ne cometh they nevere.

Dreghy here, man, thenne, if thou wilt,
A luitel pinè; that me the bit;
 Withdraw thine eyses ofte.
They thi pinè be onredè
And thou thenke on thi medè,
 Hit sal the thinken softe.

If that fend, that foulè thing,
Thorou wikkè roun, thorou fals egging
 There ne there the haveth icast,
Oup; and be god champioun;
Stond; ne fal namoure adoun
 For a luytel blast.

Thou tak the rodè to thi staf,
And thenk on him that thereoune yaf
 His lif that wes so lef.
He hit yaf for the; thou yelde hit him.
Ayein his fo that staf thou nim,
 And wreke him of that thef.

lawing: laughing. stoundès: blows. nomen: received.
ay: eternity. wy: sorrow. dreghy: endure. bit: biddeth
eyses: ease. they: though. onredè: atrocious. the thinken:
seem to thee. roun: advice. egging: persuasion. nim: take.

APPENDIX

Of rightte bileve thou nim that sheld,
The wiles that thou best in that feld,
Thin hand to strenkthen fonde.
And kep thy fo with stavès ord,
And do that traytrè seien that word;
Biget that murie londe.

Thereinne is day withouten night,
Withouten endè; strenkthe and might;
And wreche of everich fo;
Mid God himselwen echè lif,
And pas and rest withoutè strif,
Welè withouten wo.

Mayden moder, hevenè quene,
Thou might, and const, and owest to bene
Oure sheld ayein the fende.
Help ous sunnè for to flen,
That we moten thi sone iseen,
In joy withouten hende. Amen.

Anonymous—13th century

iv. I syng-a of a mayden

I syng-a of a mayden
That is makèles;
King of all kinges
To her son she ches.
He cam also stille
There his moder was
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the grass.

fonde: strive. ord: point. biget: obtain. wreche: revenge.
echè: eternal. sunnè: sin.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

He cam also stille
To his moderès bour
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the flour.
He cam also stille
There his moder lay
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the spray.
Moder and mayden
Was never none but sche;
Well may swich a lady
Godès moder be.

Anonymous—14th century

v. Lines from "Brus"

A! fredome is a noblé thing;
Fredome mays man to haiff liking;
Fredome all solace to man giffis;
He levys at es that frely levys.
A noblé hart may haiff nane es,
Na ellys nocht that may him ples,
Gyff fredome failzhe; for fre liking
Is ʒharnvt our all othir thing.
Na he that ay has levyt fre
May nocht know weill the propyrte,
The angyr, na the wretchyt dome
That is cowplyt to foule thryldome.
Bot gyff he had assayit it,
Than all perquer he suld it wyt,
And suld think fredome mar to prys
Than all the gold in warld that is.

John Barbour

ʒharnyt: desired. perquer: by heart.

APPENDIX

vi. Ballade of Good Counsel

Flee fro the prees, and dwell with sothfastnessè;
Suffice unto thy thing, though hit be smal;
For hord hath hate, and clymbing tikelnessè,
Prees hath envye and welè blent overal.
Savour no more than thee behovè shal;
Werk wel thyself, that other folk canst redè,
And trouthè shal deliverè, it is no dredè.

Tempest thee noght al croked to redressè
In trust of hir that turneth as a bal;
Greet restè stant in litel besynnessè;
And eek be war to sporne ageyn an al;
Stryve noght as doth the crokkè with the wal.
Dauntè thyself, that dauntest otherès dedè,
And trouthè shal deliverè, it is no dredè.

That thee is sent receyve in buxumnessè;
The wrastlyng for this world axeth a fal.
Her is noon hoom, her nis but wildernessè.
Forth, pilgrim, forth. Forth, beste, out of thy stal.
Know thy contree. Look up; thank God of al.
Hold the hye way, and lat thy gost thee ledè,
And trouthè shal deliverè, it is no dredè.

ENVOY

Therefore, thou vachè, leve thyn old wrecchednessè
Unto the world; leve now to be thral.
Crye him mercy that of his hy goodnessè
Made thee of noght, and in especial
Draw unto him, and pray in general
For thee, and eek for other, hevenlich medè;
And trouthè shal deliverè, it is no dredè.

Geoffrey Chaucer

vachè: cow. medè: reward.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

vii. The compleynt of Chaucer to his purse

To you, my purse, and to noon other wyght
Compleyne I, for ye be my lady derè.
I am so sory now that ye been light;
For certes, but ye make me hevy cherè,
Me were as leef be leyd upon my berè,
For whiche unto your mercy thus I cryè,
“Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dyè.”

Now voucheth sauf this day, or hit be nyght,
That I of you the blisful soun may herè,
Or see your colour lyk the sonnè bright,
That of yelownessè haddè never perè;
Ye be my lyf, ye be myn hertès sterè,
Omene of comfòrt and of good companyè.
Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dyè.

Now, purse, that be to me my lyvès light
And savèour, as doun in this worlde herè,
Out of this toun help me throgth your myght,
Syn that ye wol not been my tresorerè;
For I am shave as nye as is a frerè.
But yet I pray unto your curtesyè,
Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dyè.

L'ENVOYE

O conquerour of Brutès Albioun,
Which that by line and free cleccioun
Ben verray king, this song to you I sendè;
And ye that mowen al myn harm amendè,
Have mynde upon my supplicacioun.

Geoffrey Chaucer

mot: must.

APPENDIX

viii. Robene and Makyne

Robene sat on gud grenehill,
 Kepand a flok of fe:
 Mirry Makyne said him till,
 " Robene, thou rew on me:
 I haif the luvit, lowd and still,
 Thir yeiris two or three;
 My dule in dern bot gif thow dill,
 Downtless but dreid I de."

Robene ansert " Be the Rude
 Na thing of lufe I knaw,
 But keipis my schein undir yone wid:
 Lo, quhair thay raik on raw.
 Quhat hes marrit the in thy mude,
 Makyne, to me thow schaw;
 Or quhat is lufe, or to be lude?
 Fane wald I leir that law."

" At luvit lair gif thow will leir,
 Tak thair ane A.B.C.;
 Be heynd, courtass, and fair of feir,
 Wyse, hardy, and fre;
 See that no denger do the deir
 Quhat dule in dern thow dre;
 Preiss the with pane at all poweir;
 Be patient and previe."

Robene anserit hir agane,
 " I wait not quhat is lufe;
 But I haif mervell in certaine
 Quhat makis the this wanrufe;

fe: sheep (literally, property). dule in dern: secret sorrow.
 dill: cure. raik: walk. wanrufe: distress.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

The weddir is fair, and I am fane;
My scheip gois haile aboif;
And we wald pley us in this plane,
They wald us baith reproif." . . .

"Robene, thou reivis me roiff and rest;
I luvè bot thee allone."

"Makyne, adew. The sone gois west,
The day is neir-hand gone."

"Robene, in dule I am so drest
That lufe wilbe my bone."

"Ga lufe, Makyne, quhair-evir thow list,
ffor lemman I lufe nane."

"Robene, I stand in sic a styll,
I sicht and that full sair."

"Makyne, I haif bene heir this quhyle;
At hame God gif I wair."

"My huny, Robene, talk ane quhill
Gif thow will do na mair."

"Makyne, sum uthir man begyle,
ffor hamewart I will fair."

Robene on his wayis went

Als licht as leif of tre;

Mawkin murnit in hir intent,

And trowd him nevir to se.

Robene brayd attour the bent:

Than Mawkyne cryit on hie,

"Now ma thow sing, for I am schent.

Quhat alis lufe at me?"

lemman: sweetheart. sicht: sigh. brayd attour the bent: strode
across the grass. schent: shamed.

APPENDIX

Makyne went hame withowttin fail;
 Ful wery eftir cowth weip;
 Than Robene in a ful fair daill
 Assemblit all his scheip.
 Be that sum pairte of Mawkynis aill
 Out-throw his hairt cowd creip;
 He fallowit hir fast thair till assaill,
 And till hir tuke gude keip.

“ Abyd, abyd, thow fair Makyne,
 A word for ony thing;
 For all my luve, it salbe thyne,
 Withowttin depairting.
 All hail thy hairt for till haif myne
 Is all my cuvating:
 My scheip tomorne, quhill houris nyne,
 Will neid of no keping.”

“ Robene, thow hes hard sounng and say
 In gestis and storeis auld,
 ‘ The man that will nocht quhen he may
 Sall haif nocht quhen he wald.’
 I pray to Jesu every day,
 Mot eik their cairis cauld
 That first preiss with the to play
 Be firth, forrest, or fawld.”

“ Makyne, the nicht is soft and dry,
 The wedder is warme and fair,
 And the grene woid rycht neir us by
 To walk attour all quhair:

cowth: did. tuke keip: paid attention. eik: increase.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Thair ma na janglour us espy
That is to lufe contrair;
Thairin, Makyn, bath ye and I
Unsene we ma repair."

" Robene, that warld is all away,
And quyt brocht till ane end:
And nevir agayne thairto, perfay,
Sall it be as thow wend;
For of my pane thow maid it play,
And all in vane I spend;
As thow hes done, sa sall I say,
' Murne on; I think to mend '."

" Makyne, the howp of all my heill,
My hairt on the is sett;
And evirmair to the be leill
Quhill I may leif but lett;
Nevir to fail as utheris feill,
Quhat grace that evir I gett."
" Robin, with the I will nocht deill;
Adew, for thus we mett."

Makyne went hame blyth annewche
Attour the holttis hair;
Robene murnit and Makyne lewche; '
Scho sang, he sichit sair.
And so left him bayth wo and wrewche,
In dolour and in cair,
Kepand his hird under a huche
Amang the holtis hair.

Robert Henryson

janglour: tell-tale. but lett: without intermission. holttis:
woods. hair: hoary. lewche: laughed. wrewche: wretched.
huche: rock.

APPENDIX

ix. To the City of London

London, thou art of townès *A per se*.

Soveraign of cities, semeliest in sight,
Of high renoun, riches, and royaltie;
Of lordis, barons, and many goodly knyght;
Of most delectable lusty ladies bright;
Of famous prelatiſ, in habitis clericaliſ;
Of merchauntis full of subſtaunce and myght:
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Gladdith anon, thou lusty Troynovaunt,
Citie that some tyme cleped was New Troy;
In all the erth, imperiall as thou ſtant,
Prynſſeſſe of townes, of pleasure, and of joy,
A richer restith under no Christen roy;
For manly power, with craftis naturall,
Fourmeth none fairer sith the flode of Noy:
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Gemme of all joy, jaspre of jocunditie,
Most myghty carbuncle of vertue and valour;
Strong Troy in vigour and in strenuytie;
Of royall cities rose and geraflour;
Empress of townes, exalt in honour;
In beawtie beryng the crone imperiall;
Swete paradise precelling in pleasure;
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Above all ryvers thy Ryver hath renowne,
Whose beryall stremys, pleasaunt and preclare,
Under thy lusty wallys renneth down,
Where many a swanne doth swymme with wyngis
fair;

gladdith: be glad. fourmeth: appears.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Where many a barge doth saile and row with are;
Where many a ship doth rest with toppe-royall.

O, towne of townes, patrone and not-compare,
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Upon thy lusty Brigge of pylers white
 Been merchauntis full royall to behold;
Upon thy stretis goth many a semely knyght
 In velvet gownes and cheynes of fynè gold.
By Julyus Cesar thy Tour founded of old
May be the hous of Mars victoryall,
 Whose artillary with tonge may not be told:
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Strong be thy wallis that about the standis;
 Wise be the people that within the dwellis;
Fresh is thy ryver with his lusty strandis;
 Blith be thy chirches, wele sownyng be thy bellis;
 Rich be thy merchauntis in substaunce that excellis;
Fair be their wives, right lovesom, white, and small;
 Clere be thy virgyns, lusty under kellis:
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Thy famous Maire, by pryncely governaunce,
 With swerd of justice the rulith prudently.
No Lord of Parys, Venyce, or Floraunce
 In dignitee or honoure goeth to hym nye.
He is exampler, loode-ster, and guye;
Principall patrone and roose orygynalle,
 Above all Maires as maister moost worthy:
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Attributed to William Dunbar

are: oar. small: slim. kellis: hoods.

APPENDIX

x. *Lament for the makaris quhen
he wes seik*

I that in heill wes and glaidnès
Am trublit now with gret seiknes
And feblit with infirmitie:
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Our plesance heir is all vane glory,
This fals world is bot transitory,
The flesche is bruckle, the fend is sle;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

The stait of man dois change and vary,
Now sound, now seik, now blith, now sary,
Now dansand mery, now like to dee;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

No state in erd heir standis sickir;
As with the wynd wavis the wickir
Wavis this warldis vanitie;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Onto the ded gois all estatis,
Princis, prelotis, and potestatis,
Baith riche et pur of al degre;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He takis the knychtis in to feild
Anarmit vnder helme and scheid;
Victour he is at all mellie;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

makaris: poets. **bruckle:** brittle. **sle:** sly. **wickir:** willow.
mellie: combat.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

That strang vnmercifull tyrand
Takis, on the moderis breist sowkand,
The bab full of benignité;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He takis the campion in the stour,
The capitane closit in the tour,
The lady in bour full of bewtie;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He sparis no lord for his piscence,
Na clerk for his intelligence;
His awfull strak may no man fle;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Art-magicianis and astrologgis,
Rethoris, logicianis, and theologgis,
Thame helpis no conclusionis sle;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

In medicyne the most practicianis,
Lechis, surrigianis, and phisicianis,
Thame self fra ded may nocht supple;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

I see that makaris amang the laif
Playis heir ther pageant, syne gois to graif;
Sparit is nocht ther faculté;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He hes done petuously devour
The noble Chaucer, of makaris flour,
The Monk of Bery, and Gower, all thre;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

stour: fight. piscence: puissance. supple: save.

APPENDIX

The gude Syr Hew of Eglintoun,
And eik Heryot, and Wyntoun,
He hes tane out of this cuntrè.

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

That scorioun fell hes done infek
Maister Johne Clerk, and James Afflek,
Fra balat-making and tragidie:

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Holland and Barbour he has berevit;
Allace, that he nocht with vs lewit
Schir Mungo Lokert of the Le:

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Clerk of Tranent eik he has tane,
That maide the anteris of Gawane;
Schir Gilbert Hay endit hes he:

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He hes Blind Hary and Sandy Traill
Slaine with his schour of mortall hail,
Quhilk Patrick Johnestoun myght nocht fle:

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He hes reft Merseir his endite
That did in lufe so lifly write,
So short, so quyk, of sentence hie:

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He hes tane Roull of Aberdene,
And gentill Roull of Corstorphine;
Two bettir fallowis did no man se:

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

anteris : adventures.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

In Dunfermline he has done roun
With Maister Robert Henrisoun;
Schir Johne the Ros enbrast hes he:
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

And he has now tane, last of aw,
Gud gentill Stobo and Quintyne Schaw,
Of quham all wichtis hes petè:
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Gud Maister Walter Kennedy
In poynt of dede lyis veraily;
Gret reuth it wer that so suld be:
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Sen he has all my brether tane,
He will naught lat me lif alane;
Of forse I man his nyxt pray be:
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Sen for the deid remeid is non,
Best is that we for dede dispon.
Eftir our deid that lif may we:
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

William Dunbar

done roun with: whispered to. wichtis: wights.

APPENDIX

xi. The Notte-browne Mayde

Squire. Be it right or wrong, these men among
 On women do complaine,
 Afferming this, how that it is
 A labour spent in vain
 To love them wele; for never a dele
 They love a man againe;
 For lete a man do what he can
 Ther favour to attaine,
 Yet if a newe to them pursue,
 Ther furst trew lover than
 Laboureth for nought; for from her thought
 He is a banished man.

Maiden. I say not nay, but that all day
 It is bothe writ and saide
 That woman's faith is, as who saithe,
 All utterly decayd:
 But nevtheless, right good witnès
 In this case might be laide
 That they love trewe and continew.
 Record the Nut-browne Maide,
 Which, from her love, whan her to prove
 He cam to make his mone,
 Wolde not departe; for in her herte
 She loved but him allone.

Squire. Then betwene us lete us discusse
 What was all the maner
 Betwene them too: we will also
 Telle all the paine in fere
 That she was in. Now I beginne,
 So that ye me answeare:
 Wherefore all ye that present be,
 I pray you, geve an eare.

in fere: in company (with him).

THE POET'S PROGRESS

I am the knight. I cum be night,
As secret as I can,
Saing, Alas! thus stondesth the cas,
I am a banished man.

Maiden. And I your wille for to fulfille
In this will not refuse;
Trusting to shewe in wordes fewe,
That men have an ille use,
To ther owne shame, wimen to blame,
And causeles them accuse.
Therefore to you I answere now,
Alle wimen to excuse:
Mine owne hert dere, with you what chiere?
I prey you, telle anoon,
For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. It stondesth so: a dede is do
Wherefore moche harme shall growe.
My desteny is for to dey
A shameful dethe, I trow;
Or elles to flee; the ton must be.
None other wey I knowe
But to withdrawe as an outlâw,
And take me to my bow.
Wherefore adew, mine owne hert trewe;
None other rede I can:
For I must to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. O Lorde, what is this worldès blisse,
That chaungeth as the mone?
My somer's day in lusty May
Is derked before the none.
I here you saye, farwel. Nay, nay,
We départe not so sone.

APPENDIX

Why say ye so? wheder will ye go?
Alas! what have ye done?
Alle my welfàre to sorow and care
Shulde chaunge, if ye were gone:
For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. I can beleve it shall you greve,
And somewhat you distraine;
But afterwarde your painès harde
Within a day or tweine
Shall sone aslake, and ye shall take
Comfort to you againe.
Why shuld ye nought? for, to make thought,
Your labour were in vaine.
And thus I do; and pray you to,
As hertely as I can:
For I must to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. Now sith that ye have shewed to me
The secret of your minde.
I shall be plaine to you againe,
Like as ye shall me finde.
Sith it is so that ye will go,
I wol not leve behinde;
Shall never be said the Nut-browne Maid
Was to her love unkind.
Make you redy, for so am I,
Although it were anoon,
For, in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. Yet I you rede to take good hede
Whan men will thinke and sey:

THE POET'S PROGRESS

Of yonge and olde it shall be tolde
That ye be gone away
Your wanton wille for to fulfile,
In grene wode you to play;
And that ye might for your delite
No lenger make delay.
Rather than ye shuld thus for me
Be called an ille womàn
Yet wolde I to the grene wodde go,
Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. Though it be songe of olde and younge
That I shuld be to blame,
Theirs be the charge that speke so large
In hurting of my name:
For I will prove that feithful love
It is devoid of shame;
In your distresse and hevinesse
To parte with you the same:
And sure all tho that do not so
Trewè lovers are they noon;
But in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. I counsel you, remembre how
It is no maiden's lawe
Nothing to dought, but to renne out
To wode with an outlàwe.
For ye must there in your handè bere
A bowè redy to drawe,
And as a thef thus must you live
Ever in drede and awe;
By whiche to you grete harm might grow:
Yet had I lever than
That I had to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banished man.

APPENDIX

Maiden. I thinke not nay but as ye saye,
 It is no maiden's lore;
 But love may make me for your sake,
 As I have said before,
 To com on fote, to hunte and shote,
 To gete us mete and store;
 For so that I your company
 May have, I aske no more.
 From whiche to parte it maketh my herte
 As colde as any stone;
 For, in my minde of all mankinde
 I love but you alone.

Squire. For an outlawe this is the lawe,
 That men him take and binde;
 Without pitè, hangèd to be,
 And waver with the winde.
 If I had neede (as God forbede!)
 What rescous coude ye finde?
 Forsothe I trowe you and your bowe
 Shuld drawe for fere behinde;
 And no mervaile, for little avail
 Were in your counsel than:
 Wherefore I to the woode will go
 Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. Full well knowe ye that wimen be
 Full febil for to fight;
 No womanhede is it in deede
 To be bolde as a knight:
 Yet in such fere if that ye were
 With enemys day and night,
 I wolde withstonde, with bowe in hande,
 To greve them as I might,

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And you to save, as wimen have
From deth men many one;
For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. Yet take good hede; for ever I drede
That ye coude not sustein
The thorney wayes, the depe valeis,
The snowe, the frost, the rein,
The colde, the hete; for drie or wete,
We must lodge on the plain;
And, us above, noon other rove
But a braké bussh or twaine;
Which sone shuld greve you, I beleve,
And ye wolde gladly than
That I had to the grene wode go
Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. Sith I have here ben partinere
With you of joy and blisse,
I muste alsò parte of your wo
Endure, as reason is:
Yet I am sure of oon plesùre,
And shortly it is this—
That where ye be, me semeth, perdé,
I coude not fare amisse.
Without more speche I you beseche
That we were soon agone,
For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. Yef ye go theder, ye must consider,
Whan ye have lust to dine,
There shall no mete be for to gete,
Nor drinke bere, ale, ne wine;
Ne shetès clene to lie betwene,
Made of thred and twine;

APPENDIX

Noon other house, but leves and bowes,
To kever your hed and mine.
Lo, mine herte swete, this ille diët
Shuld make you pale and wan:
Wherefore I to the wood will go
Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. Amonge the wild dere suche an archiere,
As men say that ye be,
Ne may not faile of good vitaile,
Where is so grete plentè:
And watir clere of the rivere
Shall be full swete to me;
With whiche in hele I shall right wele
Endure, as ye shall see;
And, ere we go, a bed or two
I can provide anoon,
For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. Lo yet, before ye must do more,
If ye will go with me:
As, cutte your here up by your ere,
Your kirtel by the knee;
With bowe in hande for to withstonde
Your enmys, if nede be;
And this same night, before daylight,
To woodward will I flee.
And ye wille all this fulfille,
Do it shortely as ye can:
Ellès will I to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. I shall as now do more for you
Than longeth to womanhede;

THE POET'S PROGRESS

To short my here, a bowe to bere,
To shote in time of nede.
O my swete moder, before all other
For you I have most drede!
But now, adiew; I must ensue
Where fortune doth me leede.
All this make ye: now lete us flee;
The day comth fast upon:
For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. Nay, nay, not so; ye shall not go,
And I shalle tell you why.
Your appetite is to be light
Of love, I wele aspye:
For, right as ye have said to me,
In like wise hardely
You wolde answer who so ever it were,
In way of company:
It is said of olde, Sone hote, sone colde;
And so is a woman:
Wherefore I to the wode will go,
Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. Yef ye take hede, it is no nede
Suche wordes to say by me;
For ofte ye preyed, and longe assayed,
Or I you loved, perdé:
And though that I of auncestry
A baron's daughter be,
Yet have you proved how I you loved,
A squier of lowe degree;
And ever shall, what so befallé,
To dey therefore anoon;

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For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. A baron's child to be begiled,
It were a curssèd dede;
To be felow with an outlawe,
Almighty God forbede!
Yet better were the power squier
Alone to forest yede
Than ye shall saye another day
That by my wiked dede
Ye were betrayed. Wherefore, good maide,
The best rede that I can,
Is, that I to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banished man.

Maiden. Whatsoever befalle, I never shall
Of this thing you upbraid:
But if ye go, and leve me so,
Than have ye me betrayed.
Remembre you wele, how that ye dele;
For if ye, as ye saide,
Be so unkinde to leve behind
Your love, the Not-browne Maide,
Trust me truly that I shall dey
Soon after ye be gone:
For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. Yef that ye went, ye shulde repent;
For in the forest now
I have purveyed me of a maide
Whom I love more than you:
Another more faire than ever ye were
I dare it well avowe;

yede: went.

THE POET'S PROGRESS

And of you bothe eche shuld be wrothe
With other, as I trowe;
It were mine ease to live in pease;
So will I, if I can:
Wherefore I to the wode will go,
Alone, a banisshed man.

Maiden. Though in the wode I understode
Ye had a paramour,
All this may nought remeve my thought,
But that I will be your:
And she shall finde me softe and kinde
And courteis every hour;
Glad to fulfille all that she wille
Commaunde me, to my power:
For had ye, lo, an hondred mo,
Yet wolde I be that one:
For in my minde of all mankinde
I love but you alone.

Squire. Mine owne dere love, I see the prove
That ye be kinde and trewe;
Of maide, and wif, in all my lif,
The best that ever I knewe.
Be mery and glad; be no more sad;
The case is chaungèd newe;
For it were ruthe that for your trowth
You shuld have cause to rewe.
Be not dismayed, whatsoever I said
To you whan I began:
I will not to the grene wod go;
I am no banisshed man.

Maiden. Theis tidings be more glad to me
Than to be made a quene,

APPENDIX

If I were sure they shuld endure;
 But it is often seen
 When men will breke promise, they speke
 The wordès on the splene.
 Ye shape some wile me to begile,
 And stele fro me, I wene.
 Then were the case wurs than it was,
 And I more wo begone:
 For in my minde of all mankinde
 I love but you alone.

Squire.

Ye shall not nede further to drede:
 I will not disparàge
 You, God defende, sith you descende
 Of so grete a linàge.
 Now understonde, to Westmerlande,
 Whiche is my heritage,
 I will you bringe, and with a ringe
 By wey of mariàge
 I will you take, and lady make,
 As shortly as I can:
 Thus have ye wone an erlès son,
 And not a banished man.

Here may ye see that wimen be
 In love meke, kinde, and stable;
 Late never man repreve them than,
 Or calle them variable;
 But rather prey God that we may
 To them be comfortable;
 Which sometime preveth suche as He loveth,
 If they be charitable.

For sith men wolde that wimen shulde
 Be meke to them each one,
 Moche more ought they to God obey,
 And serve but Him alone.

Anonymous—15th century

THE POET'S PROGRESS

xii. To maystres Margaret Hussey

Mirry Margaret,
As mydsomer flowre,
Jentill as fawcoun
Or hawke of the towre;
With solace and gladnes,
Moche mirthe and no madnes,
All good and no badnes,
So ioyously,
So maydenly,
So womanly
Her demenyng
In euery thyng,
Far, far passyng
That I can endyght,
Or suffyce to wryght
Of mirry Margarete
As mydsomer flowre,
Jentyll as fawcoun
Or hawke of the towre;
As pacient and as styll,
And as full of good wyll,
As fayre Isaphill;
Colyaunder,
Swete pomaunder,
Good cassaunder;
Stedfast of thought,
Wele made, wele wrought;
Far maybe sought
Erst that ye can fynde
So corteise, so kynde
As mirry Margaret,
This midsomer flowre,
Gentyll as fawcoun
Or hawke of the towre.

John Skelton

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