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# COTERIE





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## T. W. EARP

### I

**A**N aged king who shook upon his throne  
Spoke a great Word that made his people reel,  
Until within their hearts resolve had grown,  
And their inconstant minds were firm as steel.

Laughing, some died upon the plains of war,  
Laughing at death, because they once had heard  
That Word of promise they were fighting for ;  
In meanest flesh a soul heroic stirred.

Then the victorious remnant to their king  
Cried : We have conquered, Lord ! We pray you give  
The Word again for our glad hearkening,  
And by the Word we would henceforward live.

The palsied king, tragical and absurd,  
Looked out across the fires and huddled dead.  
There was a Word, he said. There was a Word ;  
But now I have forgotten it : he said.

### II

**S**TRONG Titan-Castle and strong Babel-Tower,  
And each high, fabled place in many lands  
Is fallen and lower now than is a flower,  
Because it was a building made of hands.



And he whose dwelling beautiful on all sides  
Was raised with careful labour on the sands,  
Saw it fall down and perish with the tides,  
Because it was a building made of hands.

And thy work, Time, with trumpets and with drums  
Resoundingly erected, nobly stands,  
But it must fall when one hushed moment comes,  
Because it was a building made of hands.

### III

**C**HIN upon hand, with desperate wide eyes  
She stares into the emptiness of space ;  
The peace of utter sorrow smooths her face,  
And her great heart can heave with no more sighs.

Effort is vain, she knows ; and never tries  
Those various keen tools within the place.  
They are but useless symbols of disgrace,  
While yet the unhewn block before her lies.

Shall it be roses or grave myrtle-leaves,  
Defeat or victory, trumpet or flute ?  
Each shape fades with the next her mind conceives.

Now she has won all choice she never stirs ;  
How could she choose when every choice is hers,  
And, when she knows all secrets, not be mute ?

#### IV

**H**E stole alone through the dusk to the river-bank.  
A few reeds grew there, and the sedge was dank  
With marshy exhalations. He was tired  
Of a false life, and but one thing desired :  
Death, that would come to him like a woman, perhaps,  
Gently and silently, an easy lapse  
Into forgetfulness, as though an arm  
Were pressed about him, shielding him from harm.  
The last hope in him whispered : It may be  
That at the final moment I shall see  
Two tender, pitying eyes look down at mine,  
And with my own tears I shall see them shine,  
Just at the end. I shall escape the lies  
That over creeping mankind tyrannise ;  
For I am weary of the monotonous passion  
Of love and hate, the same in a different fashion.  
I would take death quickly to me, the last mate,  
And so become the lord of my own fate.  
A sacred bird flapped away in sudden flight,  
The reeds quivered, black water drowned his sight.  
But still he was not his own when he came to die,  
And knew that he was fooled with a last lie.

#### V

**O**MAR, amid the Persian nightingales,  
Sang of man bowed beneath implacable fate,  
Of Death, the king, that keeps o'er kings his state,  
And yet through all the song the vine prevails.

Villon, within a tavern's murky glow,  
Laureate of ruffians and the gallows-tree,  
Sang beauty's end, how it must shameful be,  
And yet made beauty live, dead long ago.

Herrick, a wanderer in west-country lanes,  
Sang man repentant, God the judge of sin,  
How in the end tears end what tears begin,  
And yet his laughter on his warning gains.

Now are the singers dead, and yet their song  
Lives, with the vine, with beauty and with laughter ;  
Though death be soon or late, before and after  
Those frailest things live, and outlive the strong.

## VI

**A**RTHUR, Charlemagne and Barbarossa sleep,  
Round an old table seated, buried deep  
Within a cavern underneath a hill ;  
And in the peaceful world men with good will  
Plough the brown fields, and at the harvest reap  
The golden corn, and eat and drink their fill.

Arthur, Charlemagne and Barbarossa wake,  
And from the table a huge dice-box take,  
And with great knotted fingers throw a main ;  
Then over the torn world are many slain,  
Beauty lies bleeding, old foundations shake,  
Until the three kings nod asleep again.



## WILFRED CHILDE

### THE BLUE FLOWER

**I**N no far vale or faery dale  
The Azure Blossom blows,  
Where lilies pale bend to soft gale,  
Or redly burns the rose,  
Or glimmers the dim primrose.

But, child, in thine own sacred heart  
Its beauty bright extends ;  
There are the guarded groves apart,  
Where magic gleams of water start,  
And the Hesper-star of the Spirit bends  
Above the woods—O holy heart,  
O sacrament of friends !

Seek not thy God in the angry fire,  
Or in the outward world :  
The Blue Flower shines within, within,  
Where the soul's pure æthers know not sin ;  
There is its heart uncurled ;  
With the priceless tears of the Seraphin  
Is its sea-blue raiment pearled.

And it smiles like a wise and lovely child,  
As it laughs in its guarded place ;  
Innocent, wild and undefiled,

Stares forth its cherub-face,  
In the holy heart of the taintless wild,  
And the seven springs of grace !

On its pure flesh the radiant dew  
Trembles pearl over pearl,  
The Sylphs sip deep from its chalice blue,  
And many a crystal Girl  
Drinks from its lucid springs.  
Knowledge of golden things.

And the birds of the burnished Eden trees  
That have human heads and eyes  
Come round it and sing in the sweet morning,  
When the milky dawn-stars rise,  
And the young blue Day leads on God's May  
Through the valleys of Paradise !

## THE LONDON RIVER

“And that stupendous jewel from New York.”—R. BROWNING.

**P**ROUD sea of ships and prouder Soul of Man,  
Gray tattered mantle of perilous gorgeous days !  
What supreme enterprise Atlantian  
Drew vessels hence in search of golden praise,  
And dragged them down the hollows of the West  
Into that bleeding Shell of sunset, beyond  
Isles, friths and capes and the glittering wave's last crest,  
Seeking the quintessential Diamond !

O, never satisfied, wild mariners,  
That in the Deluge saw Jehovah walking ;  
Fronting the scarlet levin with a curse,  
Hearing the bowels of deep ocean talking !  
Because of them, beneath Titanic skies  
Manhattan like a phoenix doth arise !

### STELLA MARIS

AND the last star gone lonely to its bed,  
And all the torches quenched in the high Heaven ;  
The sea silent and the speechless wilderness  
Aghast for sorrow of utter weariness !  
It is at such times that the Morning Star,  
A babe of jewels in her arms, a crown  
Of fiery crystals burning on her brow,  
Like a jet of light out of the blue night springs :  
Or she is as a fountain that sings alone  
With sprays of song in Silence, vane on vane  
Of lonely minarets in glittering fire,  
Up piled into the eternity of Silence,  
And on the topmost vane a holy Bird,  
And in his golden beak a magic Rose !  
Then we descry beyond that pathless sea  
Hills of the rosy land called Blossomon  
Appear and disappear, and in the cloud  
Shining, half hidden, children of the Angels  
Laugh with pure lips and smile from rapturous eyes.

R. C. TREVELYAN

AFTER LIEH TZU

ONE day Confucius the sage,  
With his favourite disciples, Yu,  
Tzen San, Yen Hui and Tuan Mu,  
Set forth upon a pilgrimage  
To climb the sacred mount Tai Shan.  
The sun was hot, the path was steep.  
By zigs and zags from slope to slope  
Slowly and wearily they creep,  
Until, not far beneath the top,  
They met with a solitary old man,  
Rambling through the wilderness  
Clad only in a deer-skin dress,  
And girdled with a plain grass rope,  
Plucking a lute as he strolled along,  
And singing to himself a blithe and careless song.  
Confucius, wondering much, and glad to find  
Excuse to pause and rest awhile,  
Bowed twice and thus spoke courteously :  
“Most venerable sir, I pray you, be so kind  
As to explain to us for what cause  
You seem so happy.” With a smile  
The old man answered : “ Have I not  
Causes enough for happiness ?  
Man, of all living things by Heaven created,  
Is noblest. Now it has fallen to my lot

To have been born a man, and not a snail,  
A crocodile, a fish, or a baboon.  
Moreover, the more nobly rated  
Of the two sexes is the male :  
And I, who might have been  
A washerwoman, or at best a queen,  
Was born a male, and a philosopher.  
That is my second ground for bliss.  
My third is this, most honoured sir :  
Many there are who pass the gates of birth,  
Yet ne'er behold the light of sun or moon,  
But perish in their swaddling clothes ; while I  
For ninety years already have walked the earth.  
What though I be but poor, and must die soon.  
Poverty is the sage's lot, my friend ;  
And death for all men is the appointed end.  
Have I not reason then for my felicity ? ”  
Away slowly the old man wandered,  
Twanging his lute, and singing still  
His happy song. Awhile Confucius pondered,  
Then turned to his friends and said : “ How admirable  
Is he who for life's miseries can find  
Wise consolation thus in his own mind ! ”

### WINTER RAINS

**W**HEN after weeks of winter rains  
The foggy air hangs chill and wet,  
When misted are the window-panes,  
And walls and sheets and cupboards sweat ;



When chilblains itch in every shoe,  
And the mind's furnished chambers, too,  
Are damp and sodden through and through ;

When meals are glum and shoulders ache,  
No match will strike nor firewood blaze,  
Fiddle-strings squeak and tempers break,  
No robin sings and no hen lays ;  
When paths are pools and noses pearled,  
And cats in kitchen fenders curled  
Dream of a happier, drier world ;

Then suddenly, when least we think,  
A bright wind breaks the mist, and there  
The sun looks out above the brink  
Of piled up clouds, stair over stair :  
Glad then at heart are all live things,  
Both small and great, on feet or wings,  
Birds, boys and beggars, cats and kings.

LEONARD A. S. STRONG

FROM THE DUBLIN STREETS

I. THE BREWER'S MAN.

**H**AVE I a wife ? Bedam ! I have !  
But we were badly mated :  
I hit her a great clout one night,  
And now we're separated.  
An' mornin's goin' to me work  
I meets her on the quay :  
" Good mornin' to ye, ma'am," says I.  
" To hell wid ye ! " says she.

II. A YOUNG MAN WITH SORROW ON HIM.

I seen her last night,  
And nothin' ailed her.  
She was laughin' ; and now  
The breath has failed her.  
Her two hands I held  
Are cold as clay :  
Her two lips I kissed,  
Agape and grey.  
A round black penny  
On each eye socket,  
And herself  
In God's pocket.

### III. AN OLD MAN AT A CROSSING.

I sweeps the road an' lifts me hat  
As persons come an' persons go,  
Me lady an' me gentleman :  
I lifts me hat—but yous don't know !

I've money by against I'm dead,  
A hearse an' mourners there will be :  
An' every sort of walkin' man  
Will stop an' lift his hat to me.

A. E. COPPARD

THE IRISH ROAD

WHAT are these passengers that stray about the road  
Undriven nor bereft  
Of their ease and sweet of the world ?

One time it is hens, hesitant,  
With blink of the furtive eye and snap of the bill,  
Or lambs trotting ;  
And there's a gallant young gander.

The pig grunts,  
The ass brays,  
The dog snarls,  
The bullock pauses,  
But my courage abides and I pass on.

And on either hand  
The fields gather up their grace,  
The forest calls with the grandeur of its deep voice,  
The hills toss the smoke from their temples,  
And I salute them,  
Salute them with my farewell.

Is the lot of a man this only—for ever  
To be saying good-bye to beauty ?  
Could I turn myself into a pig or a tree  
To what should I say good-bye ?

## THE OBSEQUIES

**M**ARCH not so slowly, you compassionate soldiers,  
With guns slanting to earth ;  
Pass quickly, fifes and drums,  
Nor mock with deliberate stride  
The eager wings of death,  
The querulous pace of the living.

Hurry, O hurry, you, hurry him away,  
This captain who was once an ironmonger,  
Into that dreadful grave.  
Cease, deep bell ;  
Horror has fall'n upon him like a bolt,  
And all the ardours that encompassed him  
Are faint with those wreaths, those wreaths.

Pass quickly, desolate drums, reluctant fifes,  
Stabbing with practised melancholy  
The bright uncomprehending world.  
Sad soldiers, with your grave-denoting guns,  
Pass on, pass on.



## ALDOUS HUXLEY

### BEAUTY

#### I

**T**HERE is a sea somewhere—whether in the lampless crypts of the earth, or among sunlit islands, or that which is an unfathomable and terrifying question between the archipelagos of stars—there is a sea (and perhaps its tides have filled those green transparent pools that glint like eyes in a spring storm-cloud) which is for ever troubled and in travail—a bubbling and a heaving up of waters as though for the birth of a fountain.

The sick and the crippled lie along the brims in expectation of the miracle. And at last, at last . . .

A funnel of white water is twisted up and so stands, straight and still by the very speed of its motion.

It drinks the light : slowly it is infused with colour, rose and mother-of-pearl, Slowly it takes shape, a heavenly body.

O dazzling Anadyomene !

The flakes of foam break into white birds about her head, fall again in a soft avalanche of flowers. Perpetual miracle, beauty endlessly born.

#### II

Steamers, in all your travelling have you trailed the meshes of your long expiring white nets across this sea, or dipped in it your sliding rail, or balanced your shadow far down upon its glass-green sand ? Or, forgetting the pre-occupations of commerce and the well-oiled predestination of your machinery, did you ever put in at the real Paphos ?

### III

In the city of Troy, whither our Argonautical voyages had carried us, we found Helen and that lamentable Cressid who was to Chaucer the feminine paradox, untenably fantastic but so devastatingly actual, the crystal ideal—flawed; and to Shakespeare the inevitable trull, flayed to show her physiological machinery and the logical conclusion of every the most heart-rendingly ingenuous gesture of maidenhood. (But, bless you! our gorge doesn't rise. We are cynically well up in the damning theory of woman, which makes it all the more amusing to watch ourselves in the ecstatic practice of her. Unforeseen perversity.)

Fabulous Helen! At her firm breasts they used to mould delicate drinking cups which made the sourest vinegar richly poisonous.

The geometry of her body had utterly outwitted Euclid, and the Philosophers were baffled by curves of a subtlety infinitely more elusive and Eleusinian than the most oracular speculations of Parmenides. They did their best to make a coherent system out of the incompatible, but empirically established, facts of her. Time, for instance, was abolished within the circle of her arms. "It is eternity when her lips touch me," Paris had remarked. And yet this same Paris was manifestly and notoriously falling into a decline, had lost whatever sense or beauty he once possessed, together with his memory and all skill in the nine arts which are memory's daughters. How was it then, these perplexed philosophers wondered, that she could at one and the same moment give eternity like a goddess, while she was vampiring away with that divine,

thirsty mouth of hers the last dregs of a poor mortal life? They sought an insufficient refuge in Heraclitus' theory of opposites.

Meanwhile Troilus was always to be found at sunset, pacing up and down the walls by the western gate—quite mad. At dusk the Greek camp-fires would blossom along Xanthus banks—one after another, a myriad lights dancing in the dark.

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,

O'er heaven's pure azure spreads her something light . . .

He would repeat the simile to himself, but could never remember the correct epithets. Not that they mattered—any more than anything else.

#### IV

“There are fine cities in the world—Manhattan, Ecbatana and Hecatompylus—but this city of Troy is the most fabulous of them all.

“Rome was seven hills of butcher's meat, Athens an abstraction of marble, in Alexandria the steam of kidney-puddings revolted the cœnobites, darkness and size render London inappreciable, Paris is full of sparrows, the snow lies gritty on Berlin, Moscow has no verisimilitude, all the East is peopled by masks and apes and larvæ. But this city of Troy is, most of all, real and fabulous with its charnel beauty.

“Is not Helen the end of our search—paradisa! Little World, symbol and epitome of the Great? Dawn sleeps in the transparent shadow of roses within her ear. The stainless candour of infinity—far-off peaks in summer and the Milky Way—has taken marvellous form in her. The Little World has its meteors

comets and shadowy clouds of hair, stars at whose glance men go planet-struck. Meteors—yes, and history it has. The past is still alive in the fragrance of her hair and her young body breathes forth memories as old as the beginning of life—Eros, first of gods. In her is the goal. I rest here with Helen.”

“Fool,” I said. “Quote your Faustus. I go further.”

## V

Further—but a hundred Lilliputian tethers prevent me, the white nerves which tie soul to skin. And the whole air is aching with epidermical magnetism.

Further, further. But Troy is the birth-place of my homesickness. Troy is more than a patriotism, for it is built of my very flesh ; the remembrance of it is a fire that sticks and tears when I would pull it off.

But further. One last look at Troilus where he stands by the western gate, staring over the plain. Further. When I have learnt the truth, I will return and build a new palace with domes less ominously like breasts, and there I will invent a safer Helen and a less paradoxical Cressid, and my harem will be a very library for enlightenment.

## VI

Here are pagodas of diminishing bells. The leopard sleeps in the depth of his rosy cavern, and when he breathes it is a smell of irresistible sweetness : in the bestiaries he is the symbol of Christ in his sepulchre.

This listening conch has collected all the rumours of pantheism ; the dew in this veined cup is the sacrament of



nature, while these pale thuribles worship in the dark with yellow lamps and incense.

Everywhere alchemical profusion—the golden mintage of glades and ripples, vigils of passion enriched with silver under the fingers of the moon ; everywhere lavishness, colour, music ; the smoothness of machinery, incredible and fantastic ingenuities. God has lost his half-hunter in the desert.

But we have not come to worship among these Gothic beeches, for all their pillars and the lace-work of their green windows. We are looking for other things than churches.

## VII

Trees, the half fossilised exuberances of a passionate life, petrified fountains of intemperance—with their abolition begins the realm of reason.

Geometry, lines and planes, smooth edges, the ordered horror of perspectives. In this country there are pavements bright and sleek as water. The walls are precipices to which giants have nailed a perpetual cataract of marble. The fringes of the sky are scalloped with a pattern of domes and minarets. At night, too, the down-struck lamps are pyramids of phantom green and the perfect circle they make upon the pavement is magical.

Look over the parapet of the Acropolis. The bridges go dizzily down on their swaying catenaries, the gull's flight chained fast. The walls drop clear into the valley, all the millions of basalt blocks calcined into a single red monolith, fluted with thirstily shining organ pipes, which seem for ever



wet. There are no crevices for moss and toad-flax, and even the claws of the yellow lichen slip on its polished flanks.

The valley is all paved and inlaid with rivers of steel. No trees, for they have been abolished.

“Glorious unnature!” cries the watcher at the parapet. His voice launches into the abyss, following the curve of the bridges. “Glorious unnature! We have triumphed!”

But his laughter as it descends is like a flight of broken steps.

### VIII

Let us abandon ourselves to Time, which is beauty's essence. We live among the perpetual degenerations of apotheoses. Sunset dissolves into soft grey snow, and the deep ocean of midnight, boundless as forgetfulness or some yet undiscovered Pacific, contracts into the green puddle of the dawn. The flowers burn to dust with their own brightness. On the banks of ancient rivers stand the pitiful stumps of huge towers and the ghosts of dead men straining to return into life. The woods are full of the smell of transience. Beauty, then, is that moment of descent when apotheosis tilts its wings downwards into the gulf. The ends of the curve lose themselves parabolically somewhere in infinity. Our sentimental eyes see only the middle section of this degeneration, knowing neither the upper nor the lower extremes, which some have thought to meet, godhead and annihilation.

Old Curiosity Shops! If I have said: “Mortality is beauty,” it was a weakness. The sense of time is a symptom of anæmia of the soul, through which circulates angelic ichor. We must escape from the dust of the shop.

Cloistered darkness and sleep offer us their lotuses. Not to perceive where all is ugly, eaten into by the syphilis of time, heart-sickening—this is beauty : not to desire where death is the only consummation—wisdom.

Night is a measureless deep silence : daybreak brings back the foetid gutters of the town. O, supreme beauty of a night that knows no limitations—stars or the jagged edges of cock-crowing. Desperate, my mind has desired it : never my blood, whose pulse is a rhythm of the world.

At the other extreme, Beatrice lacks solidity, is as unresponsive to your kisses as mathematics. She too is an oubliette, not a way of life ; an oubliette that, admittedly, shoots you upwards into light, not down to death ; but it comes to the same thing in the end.

What then is the common measure ? To take the world as it is, but metaphorically, informing the chaos of nature with a soul, qualifying transience with eternity.

When flowers are thoughts and lonely poplars fountains of aspiring longing ; when our actions are the poem of which all geographies and architectures and every science and all the unclassed individual odds and ends are the words ; when even Helen's white voluptuousness matches some candour of the soul—then it will have been found, the permanent and living loveliness.

It is not a far-fetched, dear-bought gem ; no pomander to be smelt only when the crowd becomes too stinkingly insistent ; it is not a birth of rare oboes or violins, not visible only from ten to six by state permission at a nominal charge, not a thing richly apart, but an ethic, a way of belief and of practice, of faith and works, mediæval in its implication with the very

threads of life. I desire no Paphian cloister of pink monks. Rather a rosy Brotherhood of Common Life, eating, drinking ; marrying and giving in marriage ; taking and taken in adultery ; reading, thinking, and when thinking fails, feeling immeasurably more subtly, sometimes perhaps creating.

Arduous search for one who is chained by his desires to dead carcasses, whose eyes are dimmed with tears by the slow heart-breaking twilights full of old family ghosts laid in lavender, whose despair cries out for opiate and anodyne, craving gross sleep or a place on the airy unsupported pinnacles which hang in the sterile upper chambers of ether.

*Ventre à terre*, head in air—your centaurs are your only poets. Their hoofs strike sparks from the flints and they see both very near and immensely far.

ERIC DICKINSON

THE ILEX GROVE

**I**N the noise of the surf that gets down to the bones of men I  
loved you :  
In the noise of the wind crying out like a beast to the heath-  
moon's light ;  
And I loved the white of your body like milk on the foam of the  
breakers,  
And I dreamed your limbs sped in hymnals to Lucetius piercer  
of night.

Yea, the strength of your naked youth should shine pure in a  
grove of ilex :  
So wondrous, so perfect your youth in the beauty godlike of  
man ;  
And though I be tossed like a cockle in the tumult of years I  
would win you :  
Yea, though I be smote to the knees in the hoof-cloaked glades  
of Pan.

For the glamour of splendour, and truth of your nature is  
perfect as beauty  
Drawn to the nets of the fishers who delve in meads sea deep :  
And Love, afloat in the swirl of the moon's high concourse, is  
shriven  
If we two live perfect together before we are put to sleep.

## TUSCAN LOVE SONG

**H**EIGH ho ! you linger still ;  
Oh, why do you stay,  
Simonetta, my love, whom I kissed away,  
And dreaming my love to kill ?  
Ah, sadly speaks the day !

Without song the night I have waited,  
Without life until you come—  
Why is it you do not come ?  
The sun has sunk to his purple bed,  
The wind has jostled the poppy's head :  
All my pleasaunce with sorrow mated.

Heigh ho ! you linger still ;  
Oh, why do you stay,  
Simonetta, my love, whom I kissed away,  
And dreaming my love to kill ?  
Ah, sadly speaks the day !

O love, from passionate madness  
I pass to a mist of tears  
Which arise in a night of fears.  
Ah, the summer noon saw you go to the town—  
And what lips now at the hem of your gown  
And I alone with sadness.

Heigh ho ! you linger still :  
Oh, why do you stay,  
Simonetta, my love, whom I kissed away,  
And dreaming my love to kill ?  
Ah, sadly speaks the day !



## THE MOTHER'S SONG

**I**N your eyes I see the light of the moon,  
    But black in the moon's play  
Is the doom of a mother who weareth soon  
    The raiment of Death's array ;

O calm white lady, what do you say  
    Riding under the moon ?

His looms are weaving and never are still,  
    And garments he has in his room  
That a shape embroiders from morn to night  
    With cunning wizard skill :  
For a bride Death spins a dress of white  
    And a black he spins for a groom.

O witch-maid, straight in the light of the moon  
    On your foal of mottled grey,  
What is your rede before I swoon  
    In the arms of this white day ?

O calm white lady, what do you say  
    Riding under the moon ?

Ah, louder the looms that never are still,  
    Plainer the cloth in his room  
That he shakes at morning and smooths at night—  
    Work of his tireless skill :  
For the bride the robe of virgin white,  
    And the cavern's hue for the groom.

O witch-maid, with sheen of the mountain-beech,  
    Before you ride away—  
You know of the night that shall hush my speech,  
    But what will you tell of the day ?  
O calm white lady, what is it you say  
    Riding under the moon ?

### BEATA SOLITUDO

**D**EAR love, there never touched the world's faint breath  
Upon our play. Here with my cheek to thine  
I dwell in gardens west of the dawn and east  
Of the moon ; beyond the pinnacles of time  
And life. The crimson trapping-bells of love  
Lend all their notes to golden noons wherein  
We race, breaking the whispered marge of pools  
With flash of fawn, and seeking all the mirth  
Of summer's lips. I deem these chasèd hours—  
And six upon the skein of my sweet joy  
I've threaded now—more rare than orient pearls  
Upon the ivory of costly slaves.  
And music we have stolen subtler far  
Than reed-song's voice between the lips of Pan  
When from the sedges of the brook Molpeia  
He gathered it to wake a humid noon.  
And did Death come with shrilly tread and swift,  
He would not spoil our blossomed time, my love,  
With ebon shade, for we should view a home  
Of fretted heights, a palace shaped by hands

More cunning than Arabian slaves, and reared  
Ere monsters quarrelled on the high world's ridge,  
Or sea orcs shrieked the Polypheme for friend,  
Or time, or earth, or space made covenant  
To shelter love, ere he with gentle sigh  
His reign began. Here with my cheek to thine  
I work the warp and woof of this one hour  
Unsullied by the world's faint breath, that when  
Unto the world we must return, we may  
In rich recall forget the day's tired end,  
So dream of all the magic wonder-worth enshrined.

HAROLD J. MASSINGHAM

PILS DON PEN

“ **W**HEN I saw you across the vale  
So many miles, O Pils don Pen,  
High, low, great, small, I sent you out  
Such flocks of fancies then.

“ A haughty bronze of couchant lion,  
Symbol of some slave people’s woe,  
Glowing on puny statuettes  
Of jackal-hills below.

“ A dark-winged privateering cloud,  
Bound for the gold-fields of the sun,  
Sunk in some heavenly hurricane  
Lies here and his last voyage done.

“ The fortress of the robber winds,  
Whence they despoil rich autumn trees  
And see the sun’s ambassadors,  
Those shadows, bowing at your knees.

“ A hope far off but permanent,  
Fond image of melancholy,  
When May is too like October,  
When we are sad and know not why.

“ Form of imagination’s self,  
Castle made visible of Spain,

A monumental line of verse,  
A thought of tall disdain.

“But now, my Gulliver, I’ve climbed  
Your hairy chest, and topped your crown,  
Then you’re the Latin adjective,  
But I’m the Saxon noun.

“Your wind-scored eyes can spy that town,  
But I can see the hill beyond ;  
I’m one straight hair on your big head,  
But mighty as a wand.

“The child is father of the man,  
If you are tall, I am still more,  
If you’ll not grant me victory,  
I’ll stamp you till you roar.”

## TO DON QUIXOTE

**Y**OU saw the world a golden age,  
A country wench a Queen,  
What is dull, wonted, formal, stale  
Magnificent Has Been ;  
Against you, zany of world’s stage,  
The man of safety wins ;  
But heaven shall be your own tilt-yard,  
Its palaces your inns.

TO W. H. D.

WHEN you have flown the world,  
In nineteen ninety-nine,  
A Bird of Paradise,  
As radiant as your line.

The piping auctioneer  
Will sound your ancient name,  
“Genuine copy writ  
From D. to H. J. M.”



## CHAMAN LALL

### DREAMS

**S**TAND upon a precipice,  
Catch the cold stars  
In the caverns of your eyes,  
Until the long night surely fills with dreams :  
But then,—  
What need have you of dreams ?

### LEGENDS

**T**HE bronze of his body  
Flashed through the marble hall  
When the Egyptian danced to music.  
Leaning idly against a pillar,  
With shy meaning hidden in her looks,  
She gazed upon the bronze of his body.  
.  
.  
.  
.  
.  
.  
Guard well your secret :  
O keen-eyed picturesque lady!  
There are ancient legends in your looks.

## DEPARTURE

### I

**T**HIS wind sighing recalls certain things.  
I warned you :  
Beware of it :  
Passion has wings ;  
And will return with the year's return  
Like a bird on migrant wings.  
This wind sighing recalls  
Certain half-remembered things.

### II

**Y**OU have left something of you behind,  
But you went with eager step,  
Fearful, lest what you have left behind  
Should halt your eager step.  
When the lean years bring you back,  
You will be as one  
Who has laughed the lean years with strange men ;  
You will be different then.

### III

**B**EYOND the gate of the sun  
I shall not seek you :  
Before the last days are done  
You have sung your last song,  
You have played your last tune,  
You have danced your steps too soon.

It is not easy  
When great moments are so few :  
Beyond the gate of the sun  
I shall not seek you.

## TREES

**T**HERE sways the Queen of China  
In her cloak of red embroideries,  
You may go seek in far countries  
Where rocks, maybe, grow coloured trees  
That home the storying myna,  
But find no trees in those countries  
Like the red-robed Queen of China.

\* \* \* \*

**I** SAW a goddess  
In a temple,  
Carved in ivory,  
Bending grace Græcian  
Over a marble pool of water,  
Where walls of black rock  
Glazed in the gloaming  
Striking silence upon the gazer.

## RUSSELL GREEN

### HILLS

**A**S I go inland,  
Lo ! my heart drooping  
As a bird's in the grove when the shadow  
falls swooping  
Of the hawk's wing down from a clouded sky.

For the hills creep together,  
Murmuring, conspiring ;  
Solitude, poverty, sorrow desiring  
For men that are born to dream and to die.

A prison land-locked,  
A grave for the living,  
And the ancient warders, unsleeping, unforgiving,  
Cordon after cordon, massing behind me.  
I am in peril ; I have left the sea.

### DEFEAT

**I**HAVE struggled in the arena. I have pursued the elusive foe. I have slashed at the quivering air, that fluttered against my brow like a thousand puny flags as it thrilled with the heat of the sun. I have been deluded by the baffling Retiary. The blood and sweat of the combat breathe over my eyes in a swoon of nausea.

And all the time the dim circles of the amphitheatre have

looked on, immobile, dissecting me with scrutiny. Pale mute faces, are you dead? Will you not cry out?—if it is only derision of my little petulant agonies. O drown me in a clamour of scorn, crush me with a tumult of contempt! What? Do you not hold me worthy even of scorn, even of contempt? Still this implacable silence? Why! then I will turn this sword against myself. Then I may sit with you and look on with you, cold, calm, silent.

### PLEADING

**A**RE we not all as unknown merchantmen  
Come from a distant haven, freighted all  
With curious cargo of unsorted wares?  
And if the ensign wavering over us  
Chance at the first to be unrecognised,  
What matter? Surely nothing can ensure  
The worth of all the hidden merchandise  
Save but to see. And if without assay  
One have dismissed a sea-worn argosy,  
Deep-laden as the ships of old that came  
From Ophir,  
Wave-weary, seeking the long harbourage  
So often miraged in the clouds of hope . . .  
Well! to the deep it must beat out again,  
Drive back into the weary silences.

Why should one thwart the Sower as he sows,  
Or burn the furrows ere the seed be sprung

Even to the tender blade ?  
There might have come the full corn in the ear,  
Sighing before the slow soft winds of night,  
Full harvest for a splendid garnering.

Why should you be but one more broken dream,  
A melancholy memory till the far  
Endings of earth and faltering fall of life ?

### ESQUISSES

**T**HE shadow of my head on the wall over  
there is four feet wide.  
Now I wonder—  
Had I a brain as large as that—  
If I should be God ?

Since you envelop me, since you sheath me with pleasure,  
since whenever I wander through the pale underworld of  
thought, I find that all roads lead back to you, how then should  
I make poems to you ?

For do men fling pearls into the opulent sea ?

Is it but that thou giv'st me ?  
No deeper,—  
As one with another lightly,  
By chance, on a journey,  
With careless wit and word of careless jest,  
Neurotic laughter.



Then, as light parting ?  
Oh ! is there nothing deeper ?

I came along on my way  
And I found a girl on my way,  
And she did not understand ;  
But she gave me a few kisses, words, and smiles  
To help me on my way.  
And I went on my way.

T. S. ELIOT

A COOKING EGG

PIPIT sate upright in her chair  
Some distance from where I was sitting ;  
*Views of the Oxford Colleges*  
Lay on the table, with the knitting.

Daguerreotypes and silhouettes,  
Her grandfather and great-great-aunts,  
Supported on the mantelpiece  
*An Invitation to the Dance.*

. . . . .

I shall not want Honour in Heaven,  
For I shall meet Sir Philip Sidney  
And have talk with Coriolanus  
And other heroes of his kidney.

I shall not want Capital in Heaven,  
For I shall meet Sir Alfred Mond,  
We two shall lie together, lapt  
In a five per cent Exchequer Bond.

I shall not want Society in Heaven,  
Lucrezia Borgia shall be my Bride ;  
Her anecdotes will be more amusing  
Than Pipit's memory could provide.

I shall not want Pipit in Heaven :  
Madame Blavatsky shall instruct me  
In the Seven Sacred Trances ;  
Piccarda de' Donati will conduct me . . .

But where is the penny world I bought  
To eat with Pipit behind the screen ?  
The red-eyed scavengers are creeping  
From Kentish Town and Golder's Green.

Where are the eagles and the trumpets ?

Buried beneath some snow deep Alps.  
Over buttered scones and crumpets  
Weeping, weeping multitudes  
Droop in a hundred A.B.C.'s.



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How men by everything they call their own,  
Do but weigh down the common weight of care  
That rich or poor must bear?'—*A Winter's Night*.

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CONRAD AIKEN

COUNTERPOINT: PRIAPUS AND THE POOL

. . . **W**AS God, then, so derisive, as to shape us  
In the image of Priapus? . . .

(Priapus? Who was he?)

Are we never to be left by our desires,  
But forever try to warm our foolish hearts  
At these illusory fires? . . .

(Priapus! do you mean a terminal figure  
In a garden by a sea?)

It is strange!—for one so easily conceives  
A quieter world, in which the flesh and dust  
Are contented, do not hunger, or thirst, or lust . . .

(Priapus! Well, I don't know who you mean . . .  
Do you intimate God played some trick upon us? . . .  
I will tell you about a pool that I have seen!

It is very old, it is very deep and clear,  
No one knows how deep it is.  
The ancient trees are about it in an ancient forest,  
It is a pool of mysteries!)

. . . It is puzzling, none the less, to understand  
How God, if He is less or more than flesh,  
Could have devised for us, walking in His garden,  
The delicate imperfections of this mesh! . . .

(When it is clear, the pool reflects the trees;  
Look down, and you will see the flight of a bird  
Among the wavering boughs! But when a breeze  
Comes slowly from that wood, the pool is stirred  
And a shadow like the skeleton of a cloud  
Shivers like a ghost across it, puffs and passes . . .  
When it is still the sky comes back again,  
And at the fringes it reflects the grasses.)

. . . Must we always, like Priapus in a wood,  
 In the underbrush of our perplexities,  
 Pursue our maidens,—pursuer and pursued ? . . .  
 (I will not say it is not sometimes troubled !  
 It is very old : strange things are imaged there.  
 Out of its depths at night the stars have bubbled ;  
 And into those depths maidens have hung their hair.  
 Leaves have fallen into it without number  
 And never been found again . . .  
 Birds have sung above it in the ancient trees . . .  
 And sometimes raindrops fall upon it, and then  
 There are rings of silver upon it, spreading and fading,  
 Delicately intersecting . . .  
 But if you return again when the sky is cloudless,  
 You will find it clear again, and coldly reflecting . . .  
 Reflecting the silent trees of the ancient forest,  
 And the ancient leaves ready to fall once more,  
 And the blue sky under the leaves, old and empty,  
 And the savage grasses along the shore ! . . . )

. . . Priapus, himself, was never disenchanted . . .  
 Why, then, did God permit us to be haunted  
 By this sense of imperfections ? . . .

(But can a pool remember its reflections ?  
 That is the thing that troubles me !  
 Does it remember the cloud that falls upon it ?  
 Or the indignation of a tree ? . . .  
 Or suppose that once the image of Priapus  
 Fell quivering in ferocious sunlight there  
 As he came suddenly upon it from his forest,  
 With fir-cones in his hair,—  
 Would the pool, through the silences thereafter,  
 Recall that visitation and be stirred  
 Any more than it would hear and heed the laughter  
 Of a swinging ape, or the singing of a bird ?)

. . Was God then, so derisive as to shape us  
In the image of Priapus ? . . .  
(It is very old, it is very deep and clear,  
No one knows how deep it is !  
The ancient trees are about it in an ancient forest,  
It is a pool of mysteries.)

## WILFRED CHILDE

### CHANT OF HIM WHO WAS CRUCIFIED

**I** WILL go forth like a flame over the hill-country of Anglia ;  
and be as it were a white flame in the scarlet streets of the  
City of Hild :

To raise up a noise of laughter where there has been wailing ;  
to give roses instead of tears and instead of wounds to sow  
kisses :

To issue forth in the morning like the white Sun out of his  
fiery tabernacle : to shine forth upon the young green of the  
wheat, to cause it to spring up and ripen and to bear bread :

To burn like the golden Moon in the violet vaults of the  
evening : to smile upon the mouths of lovers and to melt the  
high hearts in their breasts :

To ripen the apple till it turn ruddy on the tree ; to ripen  
the poem in the womb of the poet's mind ; to adorn the flower  
with honey and to draw thither the bee :

To fill the mouths of babes with honey and to cause the  
virgins to conceive kings :

To go forth in the morning like a sword of Delight, to be a  
Spear of Anger at noon, and to return in the evening like a  
white Ox of Counsel, moon-browed, carrying many sheaves !

### ABARIS : A RHAPSODY

**W**HAT plaintive magic, I wonder, dipped those old roofs  
in so rich a scarlet and out of what romantic mystery  
were evolved those rambling and peculiar lanes ? What wistful  
Child-God, weary of His toys, set up for a jest this fantastic  
city by the sea and dyed it in gold and vermilion, in sea-blue  
and the dust of pearls, darkening its leaning alleys with rich  
mirk and setting the children of the fishermen to brawl and

pipe in its twisted alleys like elfin dolls, painted and flaxen-haired ? And over it all did He not set up an Abbey, carven out of silver and with alabaster adorned, full of shaven men to chant and sing, till He grew weary of their ecstatic music and broke their house with a hammer ; so that the white seamews scream now where the incense used to rise and the brown-sailed fishing-boats go out to sea now with no haloed images in their bows ? Yes, certainly out of the mind of a dreaming Child-God, weary of His own gardens of Azure, issued forth those scarlet gables, and from the jewelled mystery of His sadness came forth this sea-city, where she lies like a fretted and misty Rose on the golden confines of Autumn, on waters where float the white breasts of clamorous gulls, betwixt the heath-country and the sea !

## ROSE BLANCHE DES AUBES

**F**ROM Eastaway she came  
With the faint dawn-tide flame,  
What time the cocks were crowing,  
And the rivers of morning flowing :

And she bore in her bare hands  
The perfume of Holy Lands ;  
In her garments lingered the myrrh  
Men burn at God's Sepulchre.

Knee-deep in marish flowers,  
In those pale twilight hours,  
The lowing oxen heard  
The magic of her word.

In cities of hushed bells,  
Abbeys and citadels,  
Her fragrant footsteps lit  
Sweet legends infinite.



Beauty was come again  
Into the courts of men  
Out of the ashen pain  
And anguish of men slain.

With ivory feet she trod,  
Like a Messenger of God ;  
The wild anemones  
Greeted her, and young trees.

Whiter than Death, more fair,  
She burned through the still air :  
The star-eyed Marigolds  
Opened their chalice folds.

Out of the East she came,  
A silver taper-flame  
Of delicate dreaming Day,  
White Rose from Eastaway !

## RICHARD ALDINGTON

### MINOR EXASPERATIONS

#### I. THE OCCULTISTS.

**F**IND love so very difficult a deed,  
Theirs is so pure, so educational.

God! I've been sensual enough,  
You can call me beast,  
But these, these finger-twitchers, neck-paddlers,  
These "souls" with wrists and ankles  
But no inwards——!

Spit clean your mouth, Caligula;  
At least I'll set my teeth  
Deep in the Dead Sea apple,  
Not sniff and tongue and pat it  
Like an eunuch monkey.

*Rome, 1912.*

#### II. VALHALLA.

**T**HE war-worn heroes take their rest  
In the mess ante-room . . .

Some sprawl asleep by the stove,  
Some play bridge on green tables,  
Some read novels,  
Mournfully peering through smoky air.

Thus, O Athene, do the high heroes,  
Even as Odysseus and the noble Menelaus,  
Rest from the toils of war.

*Newhaven, 1918.*



### III. MY COLONEL.

**M**Y colonel has several dabs of bright colour  
Over his left top pocket ;  
He walks with harassed dignity ;  
His gaze of intelligence is deceptive —  
There is nothing in his head  
But a précis of King's Regs.,  
Crime sheets and military handbooks.

Every day he talks seriously to poor fools  
Who have stayed out too late at night  
Or lost a rifle or forgotten to shave ;  
Nearly every day he condemns to prison  
Some weak-minded son of Cain  
For an absurd triviality.

I have never spoken unofficially to my colonel  
But I suspect he is even more imbecile than I have painted him.

*Newhaven, 1918.*

### IV. BREAKING-POINT.

**H**AVE I still three friends in the world  
Untainted by moral cowardice,  
By respect for institutions ?

I will dance a solemn war dance,  
Crouching down, beating my hands,  
Solemnly stamping my feet ;  
I will dance on the grave of prosperity.  
I lust for the scalp of smug security,  
To rattle the bones of the bourgeois.

I will make mock of brass hats and brass buttons.  
At a serious ceremonial moment  
When the hero of a hundred newspapers  
(The general who never saw the line)  
Is inspecting a motionless brigade,  
I will pierce the shocked air  
With a laugh of preposterous ribaldry.

I will sneer at this silly war  
(I have suffered, I can do as I please),  
I will sneer at its bastard pomp,  
Expose its flatulent hypocrisy.

O, I could charm the high gods  
With a more than Aristophanic levity,  
Deploy before their histrionic cachinnations  
The biggest fraud in history ;  
O, I could play hell with this epoch  
Had I still three friends in the world  
Untainted by moral cowardice,  
By respect for institutions.

*Newhaven, 1918.*

**HENRI GAUDIER-BRZESKA**



HERBERT READ

SMOKER

**T**HREE elaborate coons  
Intone a melody . . .

*Yakky-hikky-doolah . . .*

Above the bleary swoon of smoke  
The lamps like greasy moons  
Preside with indecision.

Beneath them,  
Reflecting the light of greasy moons,  
The oily bright faces of the audience  
Grimace and sing.  
Moved in some current of laughter,  
Their elastic cheeks  
Oscillate from a rock of skulls  
Like sea-anemones.

*The blue Hawaiian bay . . .*

The rhythm of this song  
Ripples the pool of shiny faces.  
Ultimate echoes  
Quaver in the melon domes of annalists.

IN THE WEST RIDING

**C**ANCROID irradiation  
Of gritty gray hovel-blocks over the dull green  
Excavated hills ;  
The neat sheen  
Of the sunlit serrated roofs of the mills  
Against blue pyramids of vitreous furnace-cinders.

Squat gas-cylinders  
Sink in the clutch of hexagonal frames. An hydraulic pump  
With up-sob and down-sump  
Glistens and flickers in its cavernous shed,  
Impelling essential blood  
Through the black dead  
Carcase of the land. A sulphurous hood  
Caps all—cowl of an earth-monk's meditation.

R. C. TREVELYAN

CLOUD-BIRTH

FROM a peak of Glaramara  
I watch the clouds mist-born on Bow Fell's precipices,  
Insensibly forming, swelling and severing,  
Then one by one drifting away on the wind  
To be lost from sight in the East.  
Vainly I try to fix in memory  
The image of each transitory cloud-shape.  
Easier it were to remember  
The thoughts that are born in the misty chasms of my mind,  
Ceaselessly forming and changing,  
Then floating away to fade into the past.

A CHILD'S BIRTHDAY

SIX years ago to-day, when first  
On my senses the light burst,  
When my mind became aware  
Of strange brightness everywhere,  
Did I then shut my eyes in fright,  
And shrink back into friendly night?  
Or in troubled, sulky mood  
Did I stare, and blink, and brood,  
Teased by changing mysteries  
That mocked the question of my eyes?  
Or in gladness and amaze  
Quietly did I lie and gaze,  
Till drowsiness upon me crept,  
And with pleasure tired I slept?  
Or was then my mind so small  
It had no room for thoughts at all,  
But as a leaf or flower might,  
Through wide eyes drank in the light?

## JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

### AT SUNRISE

A WAVE hung over the city like an enormous cloud  
Crested with smoky foam, and menaced him with death :  
But he did not fear, for he had been blown out upon the sky  
Like a tired swallow travelling to its nest against the eaves,  
And through the great green wave, astonished, resolute,  
He plunged . . .

The light went out and there was nothing left  
But the grinding clash of waters, the whirling drift of spray :  
Then he arose and saw  
That the waters beat straight down  
Till the houses of the city were invaded, washed away,  
And there arose  
Out of the surf and eddies no more men, but gods.

Gods with white laughter crowned arose and fought and sang,  
Naked as time, through the blinding drift that beat about  
their knees,  
They pelted each other with snowballs torn from a comet's tail,  
They screamed and shook with laughter, they hugged and  
danced and sang,  
And all about the bare horizon rang  
With the glory that no memory could assail.

Yet all the while he lay still as death, still as death,  
Still as white waters lapping softly under a lagging morn,  
A tired swallow blown from its nest against the eaves,  
He lay and listened secretly, and still the gusty breath  
Of thunderous laughter crashed about the cloudless sky till  
noon.



## THE FOREST OF NIGHT

**I**N the valley of vision are villages hidden in sleep,  
In the valley of vision are whip-poor-wills crying aloud,  
And a chill wind, flitting and sombre, brushes the tops of the  
trees

In the valley of vision, where the pale light is outspread.

Slow drags the lagging October moon  
Up through the mist—slowly waver  
Golden trees, whispering, chattering,  
Trailing their heavy branches.  
Southward through the pale mist  
The moon sleeps on lake and on river,  
Motionless, brokenly gleaming  
Down stretches of desolate forest.

In the valley of vision are passionate cries through the night :  
The whip-poor-will never ceases his mournful, far-off complaint :  
The trees creak and trail their great branches, the dry, sliding  
sound of a snake

Moves for an instant amid the withered and pungent grasses ;  
Afar in the stillness there is the harsh crack of a branch  
And a startled leap in the darkness ;  
Then stillness again but for a soft-hooting owl  
Coming from nowhere to trouble an instant the silence.

Death broods under the yellow October moon,  
Death broods solemnly  
Over the world of dropping leaves, and grasses  
Brittle and thin in the forest.  
Death is very quiet ;  
It takes with scarcely a whisper  
Sorrowful autumn leaves and years and seasons,  
And mournful rivers meandering off to the marshes.

In the valley of vision a black cloud scuds over the moon,  
Like a dark cloth suddenly dropped upon a face that is silent ;  
And the mournful sullen forest  
Lies still and holds its breath :  
The plumes of the funeral cypress  
No longer lonesomely wave to the white-shining marshes,  
And shadows walk out of the forest  
And slowly climb up to the hills.

Passion has blotted out the waning October moon ;  
Passion and sorrow  
Have stifled the shining sky  
To the last star's glimmer.  
Passion that seeks in death  
For love remembers  
Its old inevitable failure,  
And breaks in floods of tears.

In the valley of vision the lightning stalks through the night,  
With winds howling and rains plashing and crash of branches ;  
And, when the morning rises,  
The valley is like a tomb,  
With its network of naked branches  
Swung over lofty columns,  
And dry leaves spreading a carpet  
For men unreturning, footfalls that never come back,  
Dark longings for beauty  
Utterly broken and shattered,  
Dogging them down to the valley —  
Whence there rises no cry of a bird nor a whisper to break their  
bleak sleep.

H. J. MASSINGHAM

WAR—AND PEACE

**T**HEY died in millions : yes, that more may die,  
For a few covetous old men ? for a lie ?  
For fun ? for the jargon of policy ?  
For a *petitio principii* ?  
To make the State more heathen idol than  
Worshipped the Hittite or Assyrian ?  
For nought ? For the night mare Chimæra rides ?  
Or for old Travesty to slap his sides ?  
For the effective use of irony ?  
To supply bishops with new blasphemy,  
Contracts to swindlers, fallacies to fools,  
Thoughts to wise men that harrow them like ghouls,  
Per cent. to frenzy, dividends to death ?  
To cosen that cheat life who gave us breath ?  
For some huge paradox forged into laws ?  
Because there was no other way ?—Because . . .  
What then ? 'Tis pitiful ; but they are dead.  
Flesh is grass ; there is no more to be said,  
Or wept. I tell you they are blessed who stole  
Hence, from this Lock Hospital of the soul.

SORS EXITURA

**L**ITTLE oak-tree  
Two inches high ;  
You live, insect,  
One day, then die ;  
Old, very old oak  
Now rots away ;  
You, little insect,  
Are born next day.

Death, you are buxom,  
    Cæsar, you're dead,  
And old Mortality  
    Creeps home to bed.  
But are you any older,  
    O cherub Love ?  
Is your beard whiter  
    O God above ?

CORA GORDON



T. W. EARP

URBANITY

AFTER dinner, a little brandy  
For meditation would be handy ;  
Waiter ! A double cognac, please !  
Now I can sit and take my ease,  
Observing, with post-prandial face,  
The various people in this place. —  
Next me, the lady with a fan,  
Sitting by that weak-chinned young man,  
A Surbiton or Kew Euphemia,  
Has been brought here to see Bohemia.  
Half in fright, half in disgust,  
She gazes hard, for gaze she must,  
Across at a young smart town-lady  
All too bright and all too shady ;  
The girl laughs louder when she stares. —  
Discussing intimate affairs,  
A woman in a flaring hat  
Smiles on an amorous lump of fat,  
There in the corner ; farther on,  
Sitting alone, and woe-begone  
Because not yet quite drunk, a boy  
Who comes in search of love and joy,  
Anxiously hoping that he'll dare  
Hail the next girl who passes there.  
Beyond him, looking like a saint,  
Sits a young artist who doesn't paint,  
Talking to one who lets you know it  
That by his hair he is a poet. —  
Those two tired men, who's day's work's done,  
Have come in here to see some fun ;  
They watch a woman in the distance  
Taking the line of least resistance,

Because she's got enough to pay  
The drinks that help her to be gay. —  
Not heeding her, just opposite,  
Two big black-bearded Frenchmen sit,  
Impassively playing dominoes ;  
And so on, down the various rows,  
Table on table, I can see  
An infinite humanity,  
And meet, where'er my gaze is bent,  
The curious, the indifferent,  
The drunk, the half-drunk, and the lusting. —  
O soul, and it's to these I'm trusting  
Your little hour 'twixt dark and dark,  
And letting smoulder out your spark  
Fitfully here in this false light ;  
To these, because the London night  
Here to this festering place drives in  
Creatures of loneliness and sin,  
And crushes us within its grip  
To a despairing fellowship. —  
O better any place or doom  
Than sitting in the lonely room,  
With London lying all about,  
With siren London holding out  
Promise of all its many blisses,  
Laughter and talk and drinks and kisses ;  
For though this whole place seems to lie  
Like a painted smile, you can't deny  
It's better than the sound of bells  
That through a desolate attic swells,  
Better than blank house-fronts that stare  
Into the streets while you pass there,  
Better than starveling ghosts of trees  
Out in the square, or lights that freeze  
And stab you with their sharp blue ray,  
Better than hearing, far away,



Another haunted creature's feet  
Upon the echoing pavement beat.—  
Here at least there is a shelter  
From the night, in this queer welter,  
And a refuge from yourself.  
Here, the little sceptic elf  
Who pursues you with self-doubting  
You've at last a chance of routing ;  
For the individual grows dim,  
Merged into the general swim,  
And to the spirit of the crowd  
The little private plaint is bowed.—  
So we sit and smoke and pick up  
Sounds of laughter, oath, and hiccup,  
London's children, London's lost,  
Foam o' the city, hither tossed,  
Thinking that things aren't so bad,  
Soothed by liqueurs, and each one glad  
Because he sees a neighbour near,  
Because we're all together here,  
Dreading but the clock up there,  
Murmuring but this one prayer,  
As the hands move towards the chime—  
Save us, God, from closing-time !

RUSSELL GREEN

AVE ATQUE VALE

**A**ND you will stand in the remembered place  
And hear new winds sigh their old refrain  
Of love that comes and goes its way again  
And beauty that endures for a space.

Over the northern moors of long ago  
The dying memories will slowly fade like stars,  
One by one,  
And in their place memories I do not know.

EMBANKMENT NOCTURNE

**S**WIFT dreams of variable gold converge  
From those far lamps on life's circumference  
Into the egocentre of the sense.  
Beneath the dreams the dead black waters surge  
From hills they have forgotten to the sea,  
The distant, unseen, legendary sea.

So be it! Let sun and stars, future and past,  
Circle around my solitary pleasure!  
Let all created beauty find its measure  
In demiurgic self! Yet, at the last,  
Now do I fear lest circle and centre go  
Together down that silent underflow.

## SONG

**I** WENT from boarding-house to boarding-house.  
“Do you sing?” asked they. “Do you sing?”  
“Yes! I sing,” said I. “Yes! I sing!”  
But my song is not of this world,  
And my music is not of men.  
It is not song that would rouse  
The feet of men to a fling.  
The kind of song that I sing  
Would make you sleep in your chairs!  
The first wild curve of the wing  
Of the first swift swallow of spring;  
Or the wind that blows on the fen  
In November sunsets and bares  
The last gray willow of leaves  
And murmurs under the eaves  
And murmuring goes from our ken;  
The beauty deep in the heart  
Whispering day after day  
As I go along on my way.  
Are these a song for you,  
O boarders?  
Or would you prefer a new  
Bright thing from the last revue?”

## SOLITUDE

**H**ELL poured through woman's soul its levity,  
Dissolving evil into luscious vapours  
To infect all earth. O victory!  
O peaceful penetration!  
Levity! Thy name is woman.  
Where are the strong and silent streams?  
Where is the glory of the vast extremes,  
The asymptotes of the immortal soul,

Sweeping down paths of the speedful universe,  
Dynamic, slow, ponderous, good ?  
“ They should not marry till they’re thirty-five ” ;  
(And yet she takes advantage of her sex).  
“ I think it’s really good to be alive.”  
Oh God, oh God, fend this agony !  
Dyke off the slime of this advancing tide !  
Oh God immortal, kill us in the pride  
Of our still beautiful youth before we fall,  
Before we fall into this tide of trash, —  
Seawrack and drifting corks and chips of wood  
Seething along the fringe of the great seas,  
The clean, great seas.  
Death, death, is better than this agony, —  
To be possessed by the desire of trash !  
Barbarians we are, nude on the earth,  
Crying for strips of gaudy frippery  
That would not burn even in the fire of hell.  
O little flames ! jets in the catacombs,  
Light jets of nauseous gas throwing small shadows  
To daze the wits of men who should know better !

\* \* \* \*

ERIC DICKINSON

THE ENTHUSIAST

NOW, who is that curious old man ?  
He examines a catalogue  
As though he would swim in it.  
He searches like that every day —  
I believe it's a question of man's immortality.  
See, but now he has turned ;  
With head set back he seeks the campanile.  
Tenderly he caresses his moustache  
As an abbot a stoup of malvoisie.  
Behind the goggling glasses —  
Pleonastically obtuse expression.  
His crown is bald —  
Yet a Pachmann setting  
Lends a flavour of genius  
To cheeks amazingly textured.  
Grave, curious old man in the Bodleian,  
How calm you stand !  
Yet what is that sparkle, I wonder,  
That gleam of the iris —  
Is some demon down leaping  
From a rim o' the stars,  
Grave, curious old man in the Bodleian ?  
Yet your pardon, sir,  
Upstairs an intrigue attends me —  
A matter of Degas :  
" Danseuses à leur toilette."  
You understand —  
Now if only you were a ballet-master,  
Grave, prying old man in the Bodleian !

CHAMAN LALL

THE MAN WHO WAS AFRAID

I

I HAVE heard their laughter, I have seen their tears,  
I have heard the mad rush of years  
Without hope or fears.  
Was it in vain that the tide ebbed away ?  
Why did the tide slink away  
Like a shy man afraid to stay ?  
I thought I would take a walk across the sands  
When the sands are dry, the tide far away,  
I thought, half-way, I would greet old Omar,  
I would work a great Sin and say :  
Life is but a gay misnomer  
For the things one may not tell ;  
And if in the end it is not well  
I thought I would find the Unknown  
In a wayside carven stone,  
And I would touch its broken feet.  
(I hold no Damascene sword in hand,  
How should I turn into a dark lane,  
To do high deeds maybe with Tamerlane ?).

And so the tide of my desires  
(Drift and wane)  
Slinked away  
Like a shy man afraid to stay.

II

ONE came to me and said,  
(As one in a difficulty might lose his head) :  
“What have we two left to feel  
Spending our lives like women at the wheel ?  
Did we not scale the moon and empty the stars in one  
experience ?



Our days were like the sea  
When the sea is gold and ivory,  
Inlaid with cloud and sun.  
Is that past and done ?  
Did we not pave our youth with questions ?  
We are desolate, bereft ;  
There is not another question left.

### III

“ **S**HOULD God stare one in the face  
And blink His eye with perfect lack of grace  
As God might blink across a coffin  
Whilst hired mourners trail their grin  
Along cobbled streets  
(Trailing like old women) ;  
And should Death go hurrying by,  
What would the four roses and a lily signify ?  
Or the pose of a Mazarin with his mace,  
The huddled volumes in your case,  
The four gestures in your face ?

### IV

“ **E**TERNITY one day will pay you an after-dinner call  
When jesting guests are gathered in the hall ;  
He in his hat, she with her shawl !  
Beneath the jest, as if it were a shawl,  
You will meet Eternity ;  
And you will ask the meaning of it all ;  
And of ten thousand years pencilled in a phrase,  
Or it may be in a woman's praise.”  
Is there a meaning after all ?

\* \* \* \*

I am Alnaschar tired of vague desires ;  
I shall forever drift with my desires :  
I shall forever build a golden chamber in the waters.



## HELEN ROTHAM

*(The Editor regrets that the article to which the following translations from "Les Illuminations," by Arthur Rimbaud, are appended as quotations, has been held over for a subsequent issue.)*

### MARINE

**C**HARIOTS of silver and of copper.  
Prows of steel and of silver  
Beat the foam,  
Lift the stems of the brambles.  
The streams of the barren parts  
And the immense tracks of the ebb  
Flow circularly towards the east,  
Towards the pillars of the forest,  
Towards the piles of the jetty,  
Against whose angle are hurled whirlpools of light.  
Behind the opera-bouffe huts one hears the cascade.  
There are Catherine-wheels and revolving suns in  
the orchards, and in the alleys near the maze;—  
the setting sun paints the sky with green and red.  
There are Horatian nymphs with their hair dressed  
in the style of the First Empire, Siberian roundelays,  
and Chinese ladies painted by Boucher.

### METROPOLITAN

**F**ROM the indigo straits to the seas of Ossian, on the rose  
and orange sands which have been washed by the wine-  
coloured sky, crystal boulevards have just arisen, inhabited  
forthwith by young, poor families. They are fed at the  
fruiterer's. There is nothing rich.—A town!

Flying from the bituminous desert, flying in a disordered  
rout with masses of shifting fog surging hideously towards a  
bending, changing sky (a sky formed of the black sinister  
vapour which the mourning ocean breathes out) are helmets,  
wheels, boats and cruppers.—A battle!

Raise your head ; see this arched wooden bridge, these last few kitchen-gardens, these coloured masks lighted up by the lamp which the cold night lashes, the giggling ninny naiad in the loud dress down by the river, the phosphorescent turnip-heads amongst the pea-plants, and the other phantasmagoria.—The country !

There are roads bordered with railings and walls which can scarcely contain their groves, with atrocious flowers which one is supposed to call one's brothers and sisters, damask of a damning languor—possessions of a fabled aristocracy, ultrarhenan, Japanese or Guarinno, the proper sort of people to receive the music of the ancients. There are inns which will never open again,—there are princesses, and if you are not too bored, there is the study of the stars.—Heaven !

There was the morning when, with Her, you struggled amongst those banks of snow, those green-lipped crevasses, that ice, those black flags and blue rays, and the purple perfumes of the polar sun.—Thy force !

## BARBARIC

**L**ONG after days and seasons, long after the creatures and the countries,

The scarlet pavilion was set up on the silk of the seas and of the Arctic flowers (which are not).

There arose remembrances of the fanfares of old heroic days,—which still attack our hearts and our heads,—far from assassins of old.

Behold ! The scarlet pavilion set up on the silk of the seas and of the Arctic flowers (which are not).

The brasiers scattering their showers of hoar frost.—Oh delight !—Those fires with sudden gusts and showers of diamonds, thrown off by the heart of the world eternally carbonised for us.—Oh world !

(How far are we from those by-gone haunts and flames that we hear and feel!)

The glowing fires and the foam on the waters! The music of the whirling of bottomless gulfs, and the clash of icebergs against the stars!

Oh Delight, oh World, oh Music! And there, shapes, vapours, hair and eyes floating in the vast! And tears, white and hot!—Oh Delight! and woman's voice reaching to the depths of Arctic caves and volcanoes . . . The Pavilion. . . .

## FLOWERS

**S**EATED on a golden stair, amongst silken cords, grey gauzes, green velvets, and crystal disks which blacken in the sun-like bronze—I watch the foxglove open on a ground of filigree-work of silver, eyes and hair. Pieces of yellow gold lie scattered upon the agate, mahogany pillars support a dome of emeralds, white satin bouquets and slender twigs of rubies encircle the water-lily.

Like a blue-eyed god sculptured in snow, the sea and the sky allure to the marble terraces the crowd of strong young roses.

## DEMOCRACY

“**T**HE flag is in keeping with the unclean landscape, and our jargon drowns the sound of the drum.”

“At certain centres we will encourage the most cynical prostitution. We will crush logical rebellion.”

“Let us go to dusty and exhausted countries—put ourselves at the service of monstrous industrial or military exploitations.”

“To our next meeting—here—no matter where! Conscripts of good intention, we shall have a ferocious philosophy. Dunces shall be devotees of knowledge, sybarites enthusiasts for comfort; and for this busy world there shall be dissolution. This is real progress! Forward! March!”

EDITH SITWELL

WHAT THE GOOSE-GIRL SAID ABOUT  
THE DEAN

**T**URN again, turn again,  
Goose Clothilda, Goosie Jane.

Bright wooden waves of people creak  
From houses built with coloured straws  
Of heat ; Dean Pappus' long nose snores  
Harsh as a hautbois, marshy-weak.

The wooden waves of people creak  
Through the fields all water-sleek.  
And in among the straws of light  
Those bumpkin hautbois-sounds take flight.

Whence he lies snoring like the moon  
Clownish-white all afternoon.

Beneath the trees' arsenical  
Sharp woodwind tunes ; heretical——

Blown like the wind's mane  
(Creaking woodenly again).

His wandering thoughts escape like geese  
Till he, their gooseherd, sets up chase,  
And clouds of wool join the bright race  
For scattered old simplicities.

“TOURNEZ, TOURNEZ, BON CHEVAUX  
DE BOIS”

**T**URN, turn again,  
Ape's blood in each vein !  
The people that pass  
Seem castles of glass,



The old and the good  
 Giraffes of blue wood,  
 The soldier, the nurse,  
 Wooden-face and a curse,  
 Are shadowed with plumage  
 Like birds, by the gloomage.  
 Blond hair like a clown's  
 The music floats—drowns  
 The creaking of ropes,  
 The breaking of hopes.  
 The wheezing, the old,  
 Like harmoniums scold ;  
 Go to Babylon, Rome,  
 The brain-cells called home,  
 The grave, new Jerusalem—  
 Wrinkled Methusalem !  
 From our floating hair  
 Derived the first fair  
 And queer inspiration  
 Of music, the nation  
 Of bright-plumèd trees  
 And harpy-shrill breeze . . .  
                   \* \* \* \*  
 Turn, turn again,  
 Ape's blood in each vein !

### BY CANDLELIGHT

**H**OUSES red as flower of bean,  
 Flickering leaves and shadows lean !  
 Pantalone, like a parrot,  
 Sat and grumbled in the garret—  
 Sat and growled and grumbled till  
 Moon upon the window-sill  
 Like a red geranium  
 Scented his bald cranium.

Said Brighella, meaning well :  
“ Pack your box and—go to Hell !  
Heat will cure your rheumatism ! ” . . .  
Silence crowned this optimism—  
Not a sound and not a wail :  
But the fire (lush leafy vale)  
Watched the angry feathers fly.  
Pantalone 'gan to cry—  
Could not, *would* not, pack his box !  
Shadows (curtseying hens and cocks)  
Pecking in the attic gloom  
Tried to smother his tail-plume . . .  
Till a cockscorn candle-flame  
Crowing loudly, died : Dawn came.

WALTER SICKERT





W. ROTHENSTEIN

I



DR. SEAL.

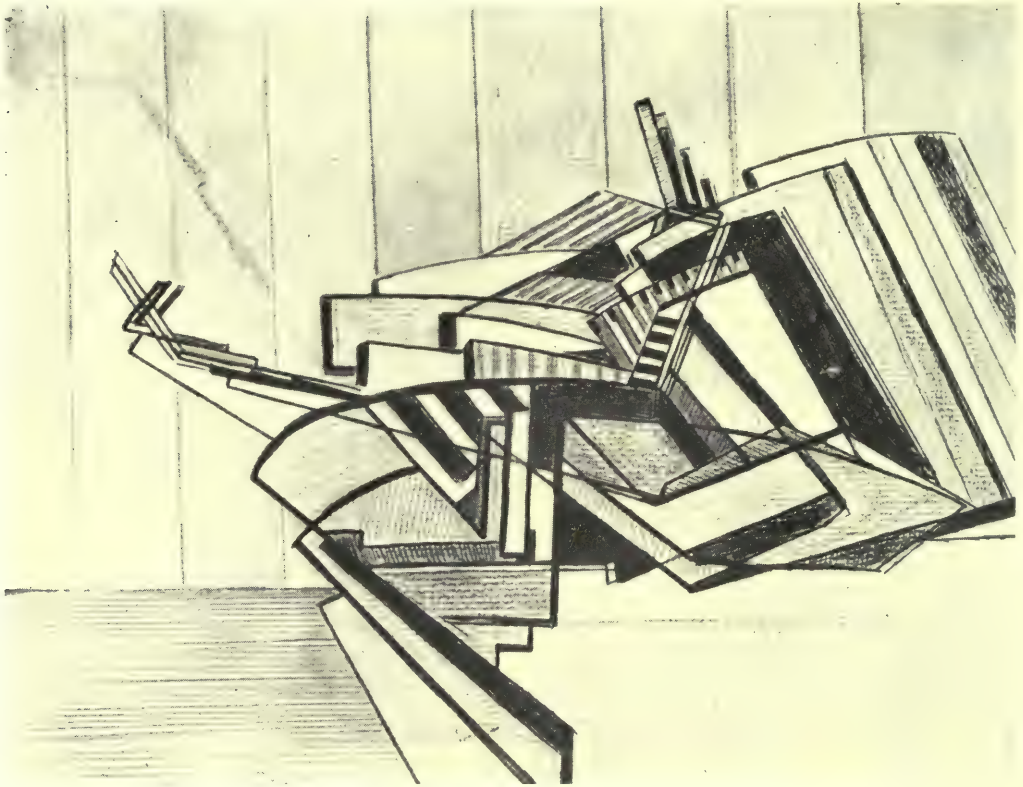
W. ROTHENSTEIN

II



ANDRÉ GIDE.

LAWRENCE ATKINSON



STILL LIFE.

A. E. COPPARD

## THE STREAMS

**H**IDDEN by sweet bushes, where blooms an acacia tree,  
Let a river be turning among its rocks :  
I would sit on the bridge and think my thoughts—  
The red streams of my heart to be going about  
In riot among the rocks of the mind  
And to be cloven by them—  
Until the light was smitten from the hills,  
And little splashing stars  
Were come to be walking with the moon.

Now in this quiet house,  
When the door and the half-door are bolted,  
The woman with down-fallen hair smiles strangely towards me—  
The clock is ticking,  
The bird hops in its cage,  
The child stirs not from its slumber—  
Beautiful are her glances to me  
As she lights the tall candle.

## WISHES

**A**Y, I may wound my heels on the stones of the street,  
And break my heart for the things far out in the world,  
But ever the wish of my mind waits for a thrust from me  
That will not come.

How could I receive my wishes, who had but the heart of a hen ?  
And lived but looking at things, and sighing for things  
With the cry of a vexed bird, lonely  
On this flat strand of the sea ?

But to lie down now, now in the sand of the shore, and watch  
the plane,  
The flying plane that hums at the hinge of heaven,  
Or crawls like a flea  
In the skin of the holy dog ;

And let me be covered with your carsses, green wandering  
wave,  
Your curving sea be spilled in my empty heart,  
Lest I live vainly on :  
This is my wish indeed.

L. A. G. STRONG

TO A NOSE

(After the Spanish of Villegas)

**T**HERE was a nose grew on a man  
(Stuck on with glue, ye might suppose),  
A corpulent an' clerkly nose,  
A scythe, an' it a hairy one.  
A sundial visage turned about,  
A chemist's bottle thinkin' hard :  
An elephant's gob, would add a yard  
To Ovid, old Rome's snouted bard.  
'Twas like the beak of a ship of old  
A pyramid blessed with the sense o' smell.  
The whole ten tribes into one nose rolled,  
A nose whose limit 'd fail ye to tell.  
Ye could damn, O swaggerin' nose so bold,  
The Jews' High Priest himself to Hell.

EENA-MEENA-MINA-MO

**E**ENA—meena—mina—mo,  
Catch a nigger by 'ees toe :  
If 'e 'olleys let 'n go.  
O—U—T spells out.  
And out you must go :  
You'm of it, O !

Children playing on the green.  
Joe Treguddick, deathly ill,  
Hears them very clearly still.  
Silently with blinking eyes  
Two great sons have dragged his bed  
To the window, till he dies.



Now he is wandering in his fields  
Where all things lose their certain shape . . .

The cows in munching quiet lie,  
And on the orange of the sky  
The trees stand out like scissored crape.

With deep, cool breaths he drinks the night :  
Then in a sudden sweat of pain  
He twists upon his bed again.

The children's voices die away,  
And seldom now the footsteps pass :  
A hobnailed tread upon the road  
Falls sudden silent on the grass.

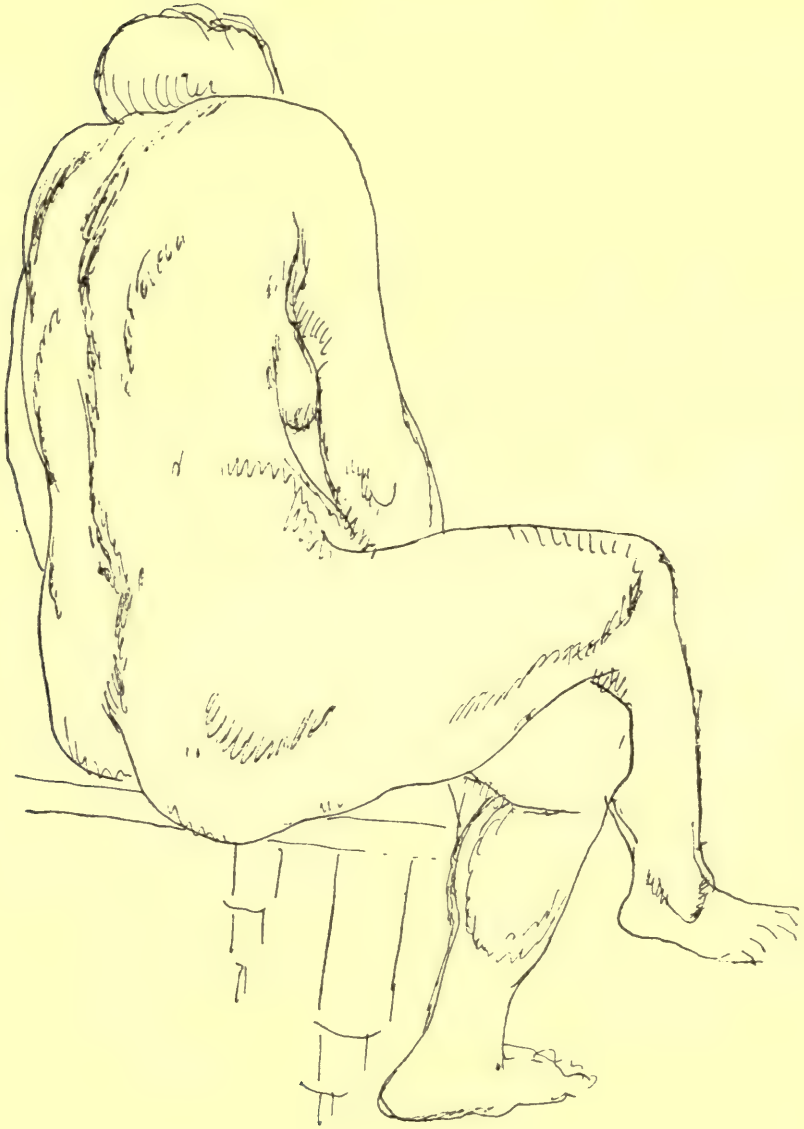
Still with throb and throb of pain  
He hears the children at their play  
Chanting insistent in his brain :

Coughs : and with a whistling breath,  
Though he knows how the count will fall,  
Turns to play the game with Death.  
Turns to the last game of all.

Eena—meena—mina—mo,  
Catch a nigger by 'ees toe :  
If 'e 'olleys let'n go.  
O—U—T spells out.  
And out you must go :  
You'm of it, Joe !



NINA HAMNETT



## ALDOUS HUXLEY

### LEDA

**B**BROWN and bright as an agate, mountain-cool,  
Eurotas singing slips from pool to pool ;  
Down rocky gullies ; through the cavernous pines  
And chestnut groves ; down where the terraced vines  
And gardens overhang ; through valleys grey  
With olive trees, into a soundless bay  
Of the Ægean. Silent and asleep  
Lie those pools now : but where they dream most deep,  
Men sometimes see ripples of shining hair  
And the young grace of bodies pale and bare,  
Shimmering far down—the ghosts these mirrors hold  
Of all the beauty they beheld of old,  
White limbs and heavenly eyes and the hair's river of gold.  
For once these banks were peopled : Spartan girls  
Loosed here their maiden girdles and their curls,  
And stooping o'er the level water stole  
His darling mirror from the sun through whole  
Rapturous hours of gazing.

The first star

Of all this milky constellation, far  
Lovelier than any nymph of wood or green,  
Was she whom Tyndarus had made his queen  
For her sheer beauty and subtly moving grace—  
Leda, the fairest of our mortal race.

Hymen had lit his torches but one week  
About her bed (and still o'er her young cheek  
Passed rosy shadows of those thoughts that sped  
Across her mind, still virgin, still unwed,  
For all her body was her own no more),  
When Leda with her maidens to the shore  
Of bright Eurotas came, to escape the heat  
Of summer noon in waters coolly sweet.

By a brown pool which opened smooth and clear  
 Below the wrinkled water of a weir.  
 They sat them down under an old fir-tree  
 To rest : and to the laughing melody  
 Of their sweet speech the river's rippling bore  
 A liquid burden, while the sun did pour  
 Pure colour out of heaven upon the earth.  
 The meadows seethed with the incessant mirth  
 Of grasshoppers, seen only when they flew  
 Their curves of scarlet or sudden dazzling blue.  
 Within the fir-tree's round of unpierced shade  
 The maidens sat with laughter and talk, or played,  
 Gravely intent, their game of knuckle-bones ;  
 Or tossed from hand to hand the old dry cones  
 Littered about the tree. And one did sing  
 A ballad of some far-off Spartan king,  
 Who took a wife, but left her, well-away !  
 Slain by his foes upon their wedding day.  
 " That was a piteous story," Leda sighed,  
 " To be a widow ere she was a bride."  
 " Better," said one, " to live a virgin life  
 Alone, and never know the name of wife  
 And bear the ugly burden of a child  
 And have great pain by it. Let me live wild,  
 A bird untamed by man ! " " Nay," cried another,  
 " I would be wife, if I should not be mother.  
 Cypris I honour ; let the vulgar pay  
 Their gross vows to Lucina when they pray.  
 Our finer spirits would be blunted quite  
 By bestial teeming ; but Love's rare delight  
 Wings the rapt soul towards Olympus' height."  
 " Delight ? " cried Leda. " Love to me has brought  
 Nothing but pain and a world of shameful thought.  
 When they say love is sweet, the poets lie ;  
 'Tis but a trick to catch poor maidens by.

What are their boasted pleasures ? I am queen  
To the most royal king the world has seen ;  
Therefore I should, if any woman might,  
Know at its full that exquisite delight.  
Yet these few days since I was made a wife  
Have held more bitterness than all my life,  
While I was yet a child." The great bright tears  
Slipped through her lashes. " Oh, my childish years !  
Years that were all my own, too sadly few,  
When I was happy—and yet never knew  
How happy till to-day ! " Her maidens came  
About her as she wept, whispering her name,  
Leda, sweet Leda, with a hundred dear  
Caressing words to soothe her heavy cheer.  
At last she started up with a fierce pride  
Upon her face. " I am a queen," she cried,  
" But had forgotten it a while ; and you,  
Wenches of mine, you were forgetful too.  
Undress me. We would bathe ourself." So proud  
A queen she stood, that all her maidens bowed  
In trembling fear and scarcely dared approach  
To do her bidding. But at last the brooch  
Pinned at her shoulder is undone, the wide  
Girdle of silk beneath her breasts untied ;  
The tunic falls about her feet, and she  
Steps from the crocus folds of drapery,  
Dazzlingly naked, into the warm sun.  
God-like she stood ; then broke into a run,  
Leaping and laughing in the light, as though  
Life through her veins coursed with so swift a flow  
Of generous blood and fire that to remain  
Too long in statued queenliness were pain  
To that quick soul, avid of speed and joy.  
She ran, easily bounding, like a boy,  
Narrow of haunch and slim and firm of breast.

Lovelier she seemed in motion than at rest,  
If that might be, when she was never less,  
Moving or still, than perfect loveliness.  
At last, with cheeks afire and heaving flank,  
She checked her race, and on the river's bank  
Stood looking down at her own echoed shape  
And at the fish that, aimlessly agape,  
Hung midway up their heaven of flawless glass,  
Like angels waiting for eternity to pass.  
Leda drew breath and plunged ; her gasping cry  
Splashed up ; the water circled brokenly  
Out from that pearly shudder of dipped limbs ;  
The glittering pool laughed up its flowery brims,  
And everything, save the poor fish, rejoiced :  
Their idiot contemplation of the Moist,  
The Cold, the Watery, was in a trice  
Ended when Leda broke their crystal paradise.

Jove in his high Olympian chamber lay  
Hugely supine, striving to charm away  
In sleep the long, intolerable noon.  
But heedless Morpheus still withheld his boon,  
And Jove upon his silk-pavilioned bed  
Tossed wrathful and awake. His fevered head  
Swarmed with a thousand fancies, which forecast  
Delights to be, or savoured pleasures past.  
Closing his eyes, he saw his eagle swift,  
Headlong as his own thunder, stoop and lift  
On pinions upward labouring the prize  
Of beauty ravished for the envious skies.  
He saw again that bright, adulterous pair,  
Trapped by the limping husband unaware,  
Fast in each other's arms, and faster in the snare—  
And laughed remembering. Sometimes his thought  
Went wandering over the earth and sought  
Familiar places—temples by the sea,



Cities and islands ; here a sacred tree  
And there a cavern of shy nymphs.

He rolled

About his bed, in many a rich fold  
Crumpling his Babylonian coverlet,  
And yawned and stretched. The smell of his own sweat  
Brought back to mind his Libyan desert-fane  
Of mottled granite, with its endless train  
Of pilgrim camels, reeking towards the sky  
Ammonian incense to his horned deity ;  
The while their masters worshipped, offering  
Huge teeth of ivory, while some would bring  
Their Ethiop wives—sleek wineskins of black silk,  
Jellied and huge from drinking asses' milk  
Through years of tropical idleness, to pray  
For offspring (whom he ever sent away  
With prayers unanswered, lest their ebon race  
Might breed and blacken the earth's comely face).  
Noon pressed on him a hotter, heavier weight.  
O Love in Idleness ! how celibate  
He felt ! Libido like a nemesis  
Scourged him with itching memories of bliss.  
The satin of imagined skin was sleek  
And supply warm against his lips and cheek,  
And deep within soft hair's dishevelled dusk  
His eyelids fluttered ; like a flowery musk  
The scent of a young body seemed to float  
Faintly about him, close and yet remote—  
For perfume and the essence of music dwell  
In other worlds among the asphodel  
Of unembodied life. Then all had flown ;  
His dream had melted. In his bed, alone,  
Jove sweating lay and moaned, and longed in vain  
To still the pulses of his burning pain.  
In sheer despair at last he leapt from bed,  
Opened the window and thrust forth his head

Into Olympian ether. One fierce frown  
Rifted the clouds, and he was looking down  
Into a gulf of azure calm ; the rack  
Seethed round about, tempestuously black ;  
But the god's eye could hold its angry thunders back.  
There lay the world, down through the chasméd blue,  
Stretched out from edge to edge unto his view ;  
And in the midst, bright as a summer's day  
At breathless noon, the Mediterranean lay ;  
And Ocean round the world's dim fringes tossed  
His glaucous waves in mist and distance lost ;  
And Pontus and the livid Caspian sea  
Stirred in their nightmare sleep uneasily.  
And 'twixt the seas rolled the wide fertile land,  
Dappled with green and tracts of tawny sand,  
And rich, dark fallows and fields of flowers aglow  
And the white, changeless silences of snow ;  
While here and there towns, like a living eye  
Unclosed on earth's blind face, towards the sky  
Glanced their bright conscious beauty. Yet the sight  
Of his fair earth gave him but small delight  
Now in his restlessness : its beauty could  
Do nought to quench the fever in his blood.  
Desire lends sharpness to his searching eyes ;  
Over the world his focussed passion flies  
Quicker than chasing sunlight on a day  
Of storm and golden April. Far away  
He sees the tranquil rivers of the East,  
Mirrors of many a strange barbaric feast  
Where un-Hellenic dancing-girls contort  
Their yellow limbs, and gibbering masks make sport  
Under the moons of many-coloured light  
That swing their lantern-fruitage in the night  
Of overarching trees. To him it seems  
An alien world, peopled by insane dreams.



But these are nothing to the monstrous shapes—  
Not men so much as bastardy of apes—  
That meet his eyes in Africa. Between  
Leaves of grey fungoid pulp and poisonous green,  
White eyes from black and browless faces stare.  
Dryads with star-flowers in their woolly hair  
Dance to the flaccid clapping of their own  
Black dangling dugs through forests overgrown,  
Platted with writhing creepers. Horrified,  
He sees them how they leap and dance, or glide,  
Glimpse after black glimpse of a satin skin,  
Among unthinkable flowers, to pause and grin  
Out through a trellis of suppurating lips,  
Of mottled tentacles barbed at the tips  
And bloated hands and wattles and red lobes  
Of pendulous gristle and enormous probes  
Of pinked and slashed and tasselled flesh . . .

He turns

Northward his sickened sight. The desert burns  
All life away. Here in the forkéd shade  
Of twin-humped towering dromedaries laid,  
A few gaunt folk are sleeping : fierce they seem  
Even in sleep and restless as they dream.  
He would be fearful of a desert bride  
As of a brown asp at his sleeping side,  
Fearful of her white teeth and cunning arts.  
Further, yet further, to the ultimate parts  
Of the wide earth he looks, where Britons go  
Painted among their swamps, and through the snow  
Huge hairy snuffling beasts pursue their prey—  
Fierce men, as hairy and as huge as they.

Bewildered furrows deepen the Thunderer's scowl :  
This world so vast, so variously foul—  
Who can have made its ugliness ? In what  
Revolting fancy were the Forms begot

Of all these monsters ? What strange deity—  
So barbarously not a Greek !—was he  
Who could mistake such beings in his own  
Distorted image. Nay, the Greeks alone  
Were men ; in Greece alone were bodies fair,  
Minds comely. In that all-but-island there,  
Cleaving the blue sea with its promontories,  
Lies the world's hope, the seed of all the glories  
That are to be ; there, too, must surely live  
She who alone can medicinably give  
Ease with her beauty to the Thunderer's pain.  
Downwards he bends his fiery eyes again,  
Glaring on Hellas. Like a beam of light,  
His intent glances touch the mountain height  
With passing flame and probe the valleys deep,  
Rift the dense forest and the age-old sleep  
Of vaulted antres on whose pebbly floor  
Galloped the loud-hoofed Centaurs ; and the roar  
Of more than human shouting underground  
Pulses in living palpable waves of sound  
From wall to wall, until it rumbles out  
Into the air ; and at that hollow shout  
That seems an utterance of the whole vast hill,  
The shepherds cease their laughter and are still.  
Cities asleep under the noonday sky  
Stir at the passage of his burning eye ;  
And in their huts the startled peasants blink  
At the swift flash that bursts through every chink  
Of wattled walls, hearkening in fearful wonder  
Through lengthened seconds for the crash of thunder—  
Which follows not : they are the more afraid.  
Jove seeks amain. Many a country maid,  
Whose sandalled feet pass down familiar ways  
Among the olives, but whose spirit strays  
Through lovelier lands of fancy suddenly  
Starts broad awake out of her dream to see

A light that is not of the sun, a light  
Darted by living eyes, consciously bright ;  
She sees and feels it like a subtle flame  
Mantling her limbs with fear and maiden shame  
And strange desire. Longing and terrified,  
She hides her face, like a new-wedded bride  
Who feels rough hands that seize and hold her fast ;  
And swooning falls. The terrible light has passed ;  
She wakes ; the sun still shines, the olive trees  
Tremble to whispering silver in the breeze  
And all is as it was, save she alone  
In whose dazed eyes this deathless light has shone :  
For never, never from this day forth will she  
In earth's poor passion find felicity,  
Or love of mortal man. A god's desire  
Has seared her soul ; nought but the same strong fire  
Can kindle the dead ash to life again,  
And all her years will be a lonely pain.

Many a thousand had he looked upon,  
Thousands of mortals, young and old ; but none—  
Virgin, or young ephebus, or the flower  
Of womanhood culled in its full-blown hour—  
Could please the Thunderer's sight or touch his mind :  
The longed-for loveliness was yet to find.  
Had beauty fled, and was there nothing fair  
Under the moon ? The fury of despair  
Raged in the breast of heaven's Almighty Lord ;  
He gnashed his foamy teeth and rolled and roared  
In bull-like agony. Then a great calm  
Descended on him : cool and healing balm  
Touched his immortal fury. He had spied  
Young Leda where she stood, poised on the river-side.

Even as she broke the river's smooth expanse,  
Leda was conscious of that hungry glance,

And knew it for an eye of fearful power  
 That did so hot and thunderously lour,  
 She knew not whence, on her frail nakedness.  
 Jove's heart held but one thought : he must possess  
 That perfect form or die—possess or die.  
 Unheeded prayers and supplications fly,  
 Thick as a flock of birds, about his ears,  
 And smoke of incense rises ; but he hears  
 Nought but the soft falls of that melody  
 Which is the speech of Leda ; he can see  
 Nought but that almost spiritual grace  
 Which is her body, and that heavenly face  
 Where gay, sweet thoughts shine through, and eyes are bright  
 With purity and the soul's inward light.  
 Have her he must : the tease-fingered burr  
 Sticks not so fast in a wild beast's tangled fur  
 As that insistent longing in the soul  
 Of mighty Jove. Gods, men, earth, heaven, the whole  
 Vast universe was blotted from his thought  
 And nought remained but Leda's laughter, nought  
 But Leda's eyes. Magnified by his lust,  
 She was the whole world now ; have her he must, he must . . .  
 His spirit worked : how should he gain his end  
 With most deliciousness ? What better friend,  
 What counsellor more subtle could he find  
 Than lovely Aphrodite, ever kind  
 To hapless lovers, ever cunning, too,  
 In all the tortuous ways of love to do  
 And plan the best ? To Paphos then ! His will  
 And act were one ; and straight, invisible,  
 He stood in Paphos, breathing the languid air  
 By Aphrodite's couch. O heavenly fair  
 She was, and smooth and marvellously young !  
 On Tyrian silk she lay, and purple hung  
 About her bed in folds of fluted light



And shadow, dark as wine. Two doves, more white  
Even than the white hand on the purple lying  
Like a pale flower wearily dropped, were flying  
With wings that made an odoriferous stir,  
Dropping faint dews of bakkaris and myrrh,  
Musk and the soul of sweet flowers cunningly  
Ravished from transient petals as they die.  
Two stripling cupids on her either hand  
Stood near with winnowing plumes and gently fanned  
Her hot, love-fevered cheeks and eyelids burning.  
Another, crouched at the bed's foot, was turning  
A mass of scattered parchments—vows or plaints  
Or glad triumphant thanks which Venus' saints,  
Martyrs and heroes on her altars strewed  
With bitterest tears or gifts of gratitude.  
From the pile heaped at Aphrodite's feet  
The boy would take a leaf, and in his sweet,  
Clear voice would read what mortal tongues can tell  
In stammering verse of those ineffable  
Pleasures and pains of love, heaven and uttermost hell.  
Jove hidden stood and heard him read these lines  
Of votive thanks—

Cypris, this little silver lamp to thee  
I dedicate.

It was my fellow watcher, shared with me  
Those swift, short hours, when raised above my fate  
In Sphenura's white arms I drank  
Of immortality.

“A pretty lamp, and I will have it placed  
Beside the narrow bed of some too chaste  
Sister of virgin Artemis, to be  
A night-long witness of her cruelty.  
Read me another, boy,” and Venus bent  
Her ear to listen to this short lament.

Cypris, Cypris, I am betrayed!

Under the same wide mantle laid  
I found them, faithless, shameless pair !  
Making love with tangled hair.

“ Alas,” the goddess cried, “ nor god, nor man,  
Nor medicinale balm, nor magic can  
Cast out the demon jealousy, whose breath  
Withers the rose of life, save only time and death.”  
Another sheet he took and read again.  
Farewell to love, and hail the long, slow pain  
Of memory that backward turns to joy.

O I have danced enough and enough sung ;  
My feet shall be still now and my voice mute ;  
Thine are these withered wreaths, this Lydian flute,  
Cypris ; I once was young.

And piteous Aphrodite wept to think  
How fadingly upon death's very brink  
Beauty and love take hands for one short kiss—  
And then the wreaths are dust, the bright-eyed bliss  
Perished, and the flute still. “ Read on, read on.”  
But ere the page could start, a lightning shone  
Suddenly through the room, and they were ware  
Of some great terrible presence looming there.  
And it took shape—huge limbs, whose every line  
A symbol was of power and strength divine,  
And it was Jove.

“ Daughter, I come,” said he,  
“ For counsel in a case that touches me  
Close, to the very life.” And he straightway  
Told her of all his restlessness that day  
And of his sight of Leda, and how great  
Was his desire. And so in close debate  
Sat the two gods, planning their rape ; while she,  
Who was to be their victim, joyously  
Laughed like a child in the sudden breathless chill  
And splashed and swam, forgetting every ill

And every fear and all, save only this :  
That she was young and it was perfect bliss  
To be alive where suns so goldenly shine  
And bees go drunk with fragrant honey-wine,  
And the cicadas sing from morn till night  
And rivers run so cool and pure and bright . . .  
Stretched all her length, arms under head, she lay  
In the deep grass, while the sun kissed away  
The drops that sleeked her skin. Slender and fine  
As those old images of the gods that shine  
With smooth-worn silver, polished through the years  
By the touching lips of countless worshippers,  
Her body was ; and the sun's golden heat  
Clothed her in softest flame from head to feet  
And was her mantle, that she scarcely knew  
The conscious sense of nakedness. The blue,  
Far hills and the faint fringes of the sky  
Shimmered and pulsed in the heat uneasily,  
And hidden in the grass, cicadas shrill  
Dizzied the air with ceaseless noise, until  
A listener might wonder if they cried  
In his own head or in the world outside.  
Sometimes she shut her eyelids, and wrapped round  
In a red darkness, with the muffled sound  
And throb of blood beating within her brain,  
Savoured intensely to the verge of pain  
Her own young life, hoarded it up behind  
Her shuttered eyes, until, too long confined,  
It burst them open and her prisoned soul  
Flew forth and took possession of the whole  
Exquisite world about her and was made  
A part of it. Meanwhile her maidens played,  
Singing an ancient song of death and birth,  
Seed-time and harvest, old as the grey earth,  
And moving to their music in a dance



As immemorial. A numbing trance  
Came gradually over her, as though  
Flake after downy-feathered flake of snow  
Had muffled all her senses, drifting deep  
And warm and quiet.

From this all-but sleep

She started into life again ; the sky  
Was full of a strange tumult suddenly—  
Beating of mighty wings and shrill-voiced fear  
And the hoarse scream of rapine following near.  
In the high windlessness above her flew,  
Dazzlingly white on the untroubled blue,  
A splendid swan, with outstretched neck and wing  
Spread fathom wide, and closely following  
An eagle, tawny and black. This god-like pair  
Circled and swooped through the calm of upper air,  
The eagle striking and the white swan still  
'Scaping as though by happy miracle  
The imminent talons. For the twentieth time  
The furious hunter stooped, to miss and climb  
A mounting spiral into the height again.  
He hung there poised, eyeing the grassy plain  
Far, far beneath, where the girls' upturned faces  
Were like white flowers that bloom in open places  
Among the scarcely budded woods. And they  
Breathlessly watched and waited ; long he lay,  
Becalmed upon that tideless sea of light,  
While the great swan with slow and creaking flight  
Went slanting down towards safety, where the stream  
Shines through the trees below, with glance and gleam  
Of blue ærial eyes that seem to give  
Sense to the sightless earth and make it live.  
The ponderous wings beat on and no pursuit :  
Stiff as the painted kite that guards the fruit,  
Afloat o'er orchards ripe, the eagle yet

Hung as at anchor, seeming to forget  
His uncaught prey, his rage unsatisfied.  
Still, quiet, dead . . . and then the quickest-eyed  
Had lost him. Like a star unsphered, a stone  
Dropped from the vault of heaven, a javelin thrown,  
He swooped upon his prey. Down, down he came,  
And through his plumes with a noise of wind-blown flame  
Loud roared the air. From Leda's lips a cry  
Broke, and she hid her face—she could not see him die,  
Her lovely, hapless swan.

Ah, had she heard,

Even as the eagle hurtled past, the word  
That treacherous pair exchanged. "Peace," cried the swan,  
"Peace, daughter. All my strength will soon be gone,  
Wasted in tedious flying, ere I come  
Where my desire hath set its only home."  
"Go," said the eagle, "I have played my part,  
Roused pity for your plight in Leda's heart,  
(Pity the mother of voluptuousness).  
Go, father Jove; be happy; for success  
Attends this moment."

On the queen's numbed sense

Fell a glad shout that ended sick suspense,  
Bidding her lift once more towards the light  
Her eyes, by pity closed against a sight  
Of blood and death—her eyes, how happy now  
To see the swan still safe, while far below,  
Brought by the force of his eluded stroke  
So near to earth that with his wings he woke  
A gust whose sudden silvery motion stirred  
The meadow grass, struggled the sombre bird  
Of rage and rapine. Loud his scream and hoarse  
With baffled fury as he urged his course  
Upwards again on threshing pinions wide.  
But the fair swan, not daring to abide

This last assault, dropped with the speed of fear  
Towards the river. Like a winged spear,  
Outstretching his long neck, rigid and straight,  
Aimed at where Leda on the bank did wait  
With open arms and kind, uplifted eyes  
And voice of tender pity, down he flies.  
Nearer, nearer, terribly swift, he sped  
Directly at the queen ; then widely spread  
Resisting wings, and breaking his descent  
'Gainst its own wind, all speed and fury spent,  
The great swan fluttered slowly down to rest  
And sweet security on Leda's breast.  
Menacingly the eagle wheeled above her ;  
But Leda, like a noble hearted lover  
Keeping his child-beloved from tyrannous harm,  
Stood o'er the swan and, with one slender arm  
Imperiously lifted, waved away  
The savage foe, still hungry for his prey.  
Baffled at last, he mounted out of sight  
And the sky was void—save for a single white  
Swan's feather moulted from a harassed wing  
That down, down, with a rhythmic balancing  
From side to side dropped sleeping on the air.  
Down, slowly down over that dazzling pair,  
Whose different grace in union was a birth  
Of unimagined beauty on the earth :  
So lovely that the maidens standing round  
Dared scarcely look. Couched on the flowery ground  
Young Leda lay, and to her side did press  
The swan's proud-arching opulent loveliness,  
Stroking the snow-soft plumage of his breast  
With fingers slowly drawn, themselves caressed  
By the warm softness where they lingered, loth  
To break away. Sometimes against their growth  
Ruffling the feathers inlaid like little scales

On his sleek neck, the pointed finger-nails  
Rasped on the warm, dry, puckered skin beneath ;  
And feeling it she shuddered, and her teeth  
Grated on edge ; for there was something strange  
And snake-like in the touch. He, in exchange  
Gave back to her, stretching his eager neck,  
For every kiss a little amorous peck ;  
Rubbing his silver head on her gold tresses,  
And with the nip of horny dry caresses  
Leaving upon her young white breast and cheek  
And arms the red print of his playful beak.  
Closer he nestled, mingling with the slim  
Austerity of virginal flank and limb  
His curved and florid beauty, till she felt  
That downy warmth strike through her flesh and melt  
The bones and marrow of her strength away.  
One lifted arm bent o'er her brow, she lay  
With limbs relaxed, scarce breathing, deathly still ;  
Save when a quick, involuntary thrill  
Shook her sometimes with passing shudderings,  
As though some hand had plucked the aching strings  
Of life itself, tense with expectancy.  
And over her the swan shook slowly free  
The folded glory of his wings, and made  
A white-walled tent of soft and luminous shade  
To be her veil and keep her from the shame  
Of naked light and the sun's noonday flame.

Hushed lay the earth and the wide, careless sky.  
Then one sharp sound, that might have been a cry  
Of utmost pleasure or of utmost pain,  
Broke sobbing forth, and all was still again.



A. ODLE



# AT THE BOMB SHOP

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# COTERIE *A Quarterly* ART, PROSE, AND POETRY

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## JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

### THE STONE PLACE

I COME and I return to a place of stone ;  
Where there is nothing left but granite and silence,  
And on the upland, spotted with heather, stand  
Weatherworn blocks that time has not taken away.  
I come to where rain and dust are quiet at last ;  
Here I set forth at evening long ago,  
And as of old the bumble-bee goes by,  
The crickets are all shrilling in the grass  
The dry blades lightly press the naked stone.

Last night the wind  
Shook the great beech-trees, ramped about the house,  
Covered the heather with trailing wisps of cloud,  
Left pools of rain in cup-shaped hollows of turf.  
To-day again  
There is peace everywhere and the worn stones  
Patiently look out upon the mountain,  
That to the south spreads out  
Naked grey ridges on a bank of cloud.

To a place of stone I come and I return :  
Granite to granite is my destiny,  
The lips of rock pressed closely to my lips,  
The strength of stone renewing all my own ;  
Whatever the seagull to the east is seeking,  
Or the grey raincloud follows, I know not.  
Drops without number falling have worn down  
My heart to rock in this grim wilderness.

## GATES

**T**HERE are red gates of painted ivory,  
And smoky gates of horn;  
And secret gates within our lives,  
Where once shut out, we never can return:  
But the day I drifted through  
The gates of blue and green,  
I have not yet forgotten  
And never can forget.

The sun lay listless on the water.  
The distant lands on the horizon  
Were utterly blotted out  
By veils of slate-grey haze.  
The hills stood up, quite naked,  
Made as of glass with the sun burning through them;  
The hills swung open,  
On the day when I set forth.

It was noonday within my life,  
Noonday upon the hills,  
Grey calm on the glassy water,  
When I went out to sea.  
I did not seek to wander;  
I merely drifted by  
Towards the desolate ocean  
Which held for me my path.

There are dark gates on which we vainly beat,  
And others we pass by,  
And some that suddenly let us through  
When we find there is no returning;  
But the gates of blue and green  
Which opened for me that hour,  
The thundercloud that lifted like a door  
And showed for me glassy untroubled oceans  
Ringed wide to the horizon,  
I shall not ever forget.

E. R. DODDS

LOW TIDE ON THE FORESHORE AT  
MERRION

**T**O-NIGHT there is nothing, nothing at all, down on the  
strand.

Even the women who gather cockles have gone away.  
The adventure of waters has ebbed away from the grey sand,  
All but a dribble of white foam on the lips of the Bay.

Obstinately, like the feet of a dream, your two feet crawl  
Over the dumb weed and the glaucous ridgy pools.  
Nothing lives or laughs or cries on the strand at all.  
Nobody walks on the strand but dead persons and fools.

You have seen the shallow pools blazing white,  
Mirrorwise, to meet the moon; you have seen  
Them cry and laugh with windy ripples; but to-night  
It is as if no moon nor wind had ever been.

Only, under the weight of the dark, like a slow beast  
All the night through, close and closer, padding obscene  
Across the limitless void unechoing multiple-creased  
Terrible sand, fear will follow you, soft and unclean.

Until you, too, are of those that are outcast from the city,  
Outcast from singing girls and from laughter, hiding your  
face,  
Ashamed under the lamps, self-slain with your own self-pity,  
Entangled between two worlds in the sunken marginal place.

\* \* \* \*

Until you forget how in the South above your fears,  
Above the sea-pools, the dead things and the sand,  
Dividing the level-folded night with heavy spears  
Patient in immortality the mountains stand.

## THE BLIND GLEN

WHEN I came first to the valley of Saint Colum  
I was clean of women and heart-free.  
Because I was quiet, the quiet souls, the grave uncovetous  
souls of places  
Mirrored their pieties in me.

Hastening down at moonrise out of the moors to the valley,  
I saw the lift of waters like flame in the west.

In the heart's leap then I dreamed myself priest, dreamed  
myself child and bridegroom and master  
Of an uncomprehended breast.

Cleanly still the wind blows from Saint Colum's beaches  
And clean the tide sets where the last fields cease.  
Still the moorland, still the unpastured honey-scented boughs  
interpret  
Their timeless hieratic peace.

But I'll come back never, never again to the valley,  
Knowing time, and what women are, and men.  
I am ashamed now before the steadfast faces of the Undesiring.  
I am afraid of the Blind Glen.

## THE MOON-WORSHIPPERS

WE are the partly real ones  
Whose bodies are an accident,  
Whose phantasies were never meant  
To fix their unsubstantial thrones  
Inside a house of blood and bones.  
All day we creep about the brain,  
Benumbed and deafened with the noise  
Of carnal pains and carnal joys,

That thrust their stupid joy and pain  
Across the peace of our disdain.

But when the grosser senses swoon,  
Then with dances privily  
And the wordless litany  
A million ghosts will importune  
Our vestal mistress, Lady Moon :

“O undefiled, O lucid Moon!  
Hear our attenuated cry!  
O little fish of the cold sky,  
O swimmer of the void lagoon,  
O Moon, shall our release be soon?”

## WHY SHOULD BEAUTY ENDURE ?

“ **W**HY should beauty endure,  
Once in its perfect act  
Manifest and secure ?

“ Although to-day retract  
The breath that yesterday  
Informed the body's fact,

“ Still from the angry clay  
Some ripe significance  
Is reaped and laid away,

“ Out of the husk of chance  
Drawn clear, and purified  
Of earthy circumstance.”

So they said. I tried  
To believe what they said,  
Because my friend had died. . . .

But the dead are dead.



SACHEVERELL SITWELL

WEEK-ENDS

**B**LOW your long horn,  
red cloud,  
before the wide-thrown gates  
and fresh-lit braziers of heaven ;—  
to move the snowy mane  
like mist above the plain,  
and thus uncover  
lawns like level seas,  
and houses cool as trees  
run round by balconies  
that lead from house to house  
and shew the sky against  
a web of shivering leaves  
struck through with gold.

The gardener must drop his fruit  
and running down the ladder from the tree  
must bow respectfully  
to Mrs. . . . .  
who walks into her Paradise  
like a young deer playing in its park—;  
and I must enter as a friend  
to watch her wise commandments—

“The roses must be sprayed,  
and judging from the apples in your hand  
a thousand wasps have dug there.”

“ Yes, M’um.”

“ Yes! I think so ;  
and the borders are not neat enough,  
these stalks again are short enough,  
why aren’t they longer ?”

“ Yes! M’um.”



“ Well then, you see,  
I want the tree-tops trimmed  
and then at tennis  
one can watch the steamers  
through Lord Dodo’s chimneys.”

“ Exactly.”

“ Yes! M’um.”

“ And growing in the beds,  
embroidering the paths,  
gazing in each other’s eyes  
wherever there is water  
I’ve laid geraniums  
like this one.”

“ I see.”

“ Yes! M’um.”

“ Hold it!”

“ Yes! M’um.”

“ Whilst I show this gentleman  
the way I’ve dug the lake  
just lying where it nets the houses  
and reflects them with their window-boxes.”

“ Fascinating.”

“ Yes! M’um.”

“ What do you think my husband  
waits for in the train.”

“ Tell me!”

“ M’um.”

“ Every yard the train comes  
nearer to the station  
he’s thinking of the view;  
steps on to the platform,  
leaves the station,  
turns the corner,  
and it’s there before him.”

“ M’um.”

“A moment, m’um!  
Miss Argentine was telling that her trees . . .”  
“You see it is no selfish pleasure,  
not a private toy——”  
“May I speak a moment, m’um. . . .”  
“Others share the joy.”

That moment there came  
ringing through the leaves,  
shaking the canopies  
and falling from the branches like soft snow,  
the voice of some one from a balcony;

Mrs. . . . was listening  
to recognise the call  
that deals a death-blow to each afternoon.  
With but a brief farewell  
this lady left us,  
and all the while  
we saw her white dress  
glistening through the boughs,  
and heard her footsteps  
leave the lawn  
to sound upon the gravel,  
till she left a railing of gold spears between us;  
while even then  
we heard her answer  
mocking questions lowered through the air.

E. C. BLUNDEN

THE PIKE

FROM shadows of rich oaks outpeer  
The green-mossed bastions of the weir,  
Where the quick dipper forages  
In elver-peopled crevices.

And a small runlet, glistening down the sluice  
Into the broad pool's flaming empery,  
Gentle as gossamer tires not to unloose  
The music of her charmed soliloquy.

Else round the broad pool's hush,  
Nothing stirs.—

Unless sometime a straggling heifer crush  
Through the thronged copsewood whence the pheasant  
whirs ;

Or martins in a flash  
With shrill-voiced mirth dip, dimpling silver rings,  
While in the shallow some doomed bulrush swings,  
At whose hid root the vole's teeth sap and gnash.

And nigh this toppling reed, still as the dead,  
The great pike lies, the murderous patriarch,  
Watching the waterpit sharp-shelved and dark  
Where through the splash his lithe, bright vassals thread.—

The rose-finned roach and bluish bream  
And staring perch steal up the stream  
Hard by their glutton tyrant, now  
Motionless as a sunken bough.

He on the sandbank lies,  
Sunning himself long hours,  
With stony gorgon eyes:  
Westering the hot sun lowers.

Sudden the gray pike changes, and quivering poises for slaughter ;  
Intense terror wakens around him, the shoals seud awry, but  
    there chances  
A chub unsuspecting ; the prowling fins quicken, in fury he  
    lances ;  
And the miller that opens the hatch stands amazed at the whirl  
    in the water.

### AN EVENSONG

**M**OONSWEET the summer evening locks  
The lips of babbling day :  
Mournfully, most mournfully  
    The light dies away.

There the yew, the solitary,  
Vaults a deeper melancholy,  
As from distant dells  
The pale music wells  
Of the thaives' quaint bells.

Thus they dingle, thus they chime,  
    While the woodlark's dimpling rings  
In the dim air climb :  
Over the alleys' lulling lonesness  
    Born of calling springs.

If the sight seek heaven,  
    There the citizens of night  
Seem to kindle cresset lamps  
    To guide the nightingale aright  
    To Time's delight—  
With chanting ecstasies he spins  
    And weaves among the linden-leaves ;  
And such a coronal he wins  
    As soothes his sprite.

Rivers evermore entombing  
    Something of eternity,  
Lonely evermore, but lovely  
When the sunset lies in purples  
On the amice of the glooming  
    Water-witches' errantry—  
Steal on the dreamer, and are fled  
    With the closing in of shade :

Thoughts of bridges come instead  
    Where the loitering man and maid  
Look down on the deep, deep pool  
Moving slow, and smooth, and cool,  
    With pale mirroring of stars  
In its dim grots beautiful.

*Trenches, 1916.*

## THE UNCHANGEABLE

**T**HOUGH I within these two last years of grace  
    Have seen bright Ancre scourged to brackish  
    mire,

And little Belgian becks by dale and chace  
Stamped into sloughs of death with hideous fire,—  
Spite of all this, I sing you high and low,  
My old loves, Waters, be you shoal or deep,  
Waters whose lazy and continual flow  
Learns at the drizzling weir the tongue of sleep.

Dear Sussex cries from primrose lags and brakes,  
“Why do you leave my woods untrod so long?  
Still float the bronze carp on my liliated lakes,  
Still little wood-folk round my spring wells throng;  
And chancing lights on willowy waterbreaks  
Dance golden arabesques to elfin song.”

1917.

*Looking out from Larch Wood Tunnels  
on the railway cutting.*

## A WATERPIECE

**T**HE wild rose-bush lets loll  
Her sweet-breathed petals on the pearl-smooth  
pool,

The bream-pool overshadowed with the cool  
Of oaks where myriad mumbling wings patrol.

There the live dimness burrs with droning glees  
Of hobby-horses with their starting eyes  
And violet humble-bees and dizzy flies:  
That from the dewsprings drink the honeyed lees.

Up the slow stream the immemorial bream  
(For when had Death dominion over them?)  
Through green pavilions of ghost leaf and stem,  
A conclave of blue shadows in a dream,  
Glide on; idola that forgotten plan,  
Incomparably wise, the doom of man.



## HAROLD MONRO

### OCCASIONAL VISITOR

“IF she’s your guest, and staying in your house,  
You surely know her ways.  
Does she not ever tell you how she means  
To pass her days?”

“No . . . Never tells me. She is here sometimes,  
A week, a month, a year:  
I never know when she will come or go,  
Appear, or disappear.”

“You’d better lift your senses for a while,  
Learn to forget about her.  
If Beauty will not live with you, then you  
Must live without her.”

### A CAUTIONARY RHYME FOR PARENTS.

“A CURIOUS thing,” said Mrs. Lack,  
“However many times I whack  
That girl of mine, she still complains  
Whenever she has growing pains!”

The girl, like any other child,  
Looked hurt, but in her heart she smiled,  
As, after each repeated smack  
She cursed the ancient name of *Lack*.

She grew, as every child is wont,  
And learnt the splendid law of *Don’t*,  
And now, not very strange to say,  
She beats her mother every day.

ROBERT NICHOLS

THE SPRING SONG

(From *Sundry Songs suited to Civilization.*  
*For Osbert Sitwell.*)

IN the spring the young man's fancy  
At Eastbourne, Felixstowe, or Hove,  
Turning to Corah and to Nancy  
Hails thee O ageless Queen of Love!

\* \* \* \*

Sinclair's looks can never lie,  
He is well shaved, he has curved lips,  
His nose is straight, so is his eye,  
Also he boasts substantial hips.

Sinclair has bought a new top-hat,  
A jetty coat and honey gloves,  
A cane topped by a glass-eyed cat,  
And Sinclair goes to meet his loves.

Sinclair would make his muslin choice,—  
Spring and his father say he must:  
Corah has ankles and a voice,  
Nancy has French and a neat bust.

Corah does *not* make eyes at him,  
Nancy's lips often have a pout . . .  
Corah—(girls should be nice not prim),  
Nancy—(no gentleman should doubt) . . .

Kupris who from a foam-flowered sea  
Didst lift thy limbs of pearl and rose  
More fell in thy nude majesty  
Than the sunned flanks of icy floes,

Kupris, the Desirable and Dire,  
Who over cities sacked didst tread,  
Whose brows were bound with sheaves of fire,  
Whose titan hands with blood ran red,

Whose couch was in the mountain place  
Canopied by primal night and stars,  
Who took'st all gods to thine embrace,  
Striving in love, like war, with Mars,

Tumbled with Neptune in the deep,  
Drugged Bacchus with unorphic charms,  
And worn with pleasure sank'st to sleep  
In thy last love Adonis' arms,

Now waken from thy flame-like trance,  
Couched where the cedars idly stir,  
Lulled by the fountain's indolent dance  
And fume of sandalwood and myrrh ;

Lift up thy violet-cinctured head,  
Clap thrice thy slim lascivious hands,  
Part thy faint lips, rose-soft, rose-red,  
To breathe thy honey-sweet commands :

Bid the rogue babes who by thee dwell,  
Garland thy bower, asperge thy floor  
With perfumes of the Paphian well  
Or with spread plumes shield thine amour,

Spring upward from the golden courts,  
Wheel in a drove of irised vans,  
And stoop toward our coast resorts  
Where Sinclair broods on beds and banns.

Spring hurtles in his reddened veins :  
Babe, with your wings, disperse the blown

Scandal if Sinclair, dancing, gains  
Brief pause with Nancy quite alone.

And you, O cherub, smite your lyre  
That when the dulcet Corah sings  
Her song, more suitable desire  
May wake in Sinclair's breast and strings.

Grant thou, great goddess, a demure  
Evening, unscented by thy rose,  
That, far from the sinister pier's allure,  
Among pot-herbs he may propose.

Grant this, nor let fair Nancy pine:  
Another Sinclair let her boast,  
And let th' engagements, line by line,  
Jostle within THE MORNING POST.

Sinclair has bought a new top-hat,  
A black frock-coat and dove-grey gloves;  
Sinclair with Sinclair sits to chat:  
To-morrow they will wed their loves.

Passion is on each manly tongue,  
And as they speak each eye must shine:  
Goddess, thy last few loves among  
Why hidest thou thy face divine?

Come forth—discreetly sheathed in silk,  
Corsets, a boa, a plummy hat;  
Take station with the Sinclair ilk  
And follow the Service in B flat.

That when they bustle down the aisle  
And the starched loves, neat choir-boys, leer,  
Into thine eye in proper style  
May steal the long-expected tear,

Until while Amor, pedalling, peals  
    *The Wedding March* of Mendelssohn,  
You, at Miss Aunt Matilda's heels,  
    May, as To-day does, follow on!

\*           \*           \*           \*

In the spring the young man's fancy  
    At Eastbourne, Felixstowe, or Hove,  
Turning to Corah or to Nancy  
    Hails thee all-powerful Queen of Love!

F. S. FLINT

ON RICHARD ALDINGTON

**H**AD you no other evidence than his books, you still could say: Here the poet is the man. His work is a record of his own spiritual experiences; and these are the experiences of a man who lives fully in his own day. He does not exclude some things because of a theory that they should not be said, or include others because it is a fashion to dote on them; and his poems are no mere rearrangement of echoes of bygone literature, chosen by the common ear of a clique, and tuned to its common fads.

The vice of modern English poetry is the pretty line and the fine-sounding word. Aldington is as sensitive to verbal beauty as anybody; but he is careful of the sense of his words, before he looks to their beauty; and, as with the word, so the line is subordinate to the poem, and the poem to the general effect of the whole work. Each one of his three books of poems has been written with a dominating idea. The theme of "Images" is the spiritual contest between imagined beauty and the outer ugliness that is thrust upon you. In this book you have poems like "To a Greek Marble" and "The Poplar," which create a mood of loveliness; and you have others, like "Cinema Exit" and "Childhood," which are simply statements of ugliness. The contest between these two attitudes is seen, in synthesis, in "Eros and Psyche" and in "The Faun Captive." *Images of Desire* is a book of love-poems, in which the human and fallible passion of love is exalted as the only sanction for the weariness of human existence. *Images of the War* translates the emotions and sensations of a civilised man suddenly transported into the barbarous and crushing circumstances of modern battle.



The first book, *Images*, is written from a detached and intellectual standpoint; the other two from the standpoint of common humanity; but the development of the poet is continuous, and the personality revealed is an attractive one. I think of two other poets—Catullus and Horace—who lived in their own century, and left its record in their verse; and I remember the soldier—an ordinary middle-class, hard-headed Yorkshireman—at Bedford, to whom I lent the American edition of *Images of the War and of Desire*. He spent his afternoon off-duty in his billet reading the book, instead of paddling a punt on the Ouse. The book held him. It would hold many more, but for the barrier of insincerity built up by the versifier between the people and the poet.

## RICHARD ALDINGTON

### BONES

**N**OW when this coloured curious web  
Which hides my awkward bones from sight  
Unrolls, and when the thing that's I—  
A pinch of lighted dust that flashes—  
Has somehow suddenly gone out,  
What quaint adventures may there be  
For my unneeded skeleton?

Some men's bones are left (like trees  
Which cannot move from where they root)  
On open hills or low damp hollows,  
Wherever war has struck them down;  
And some bones after many years  
A waggish bomb digs up and strews—  
Thigh-bones and ribs mixed up with coffins—  
About a well-bombarded town;  
And some are plunged with ancient wreckage,  
Where fishes with blue bulging eyes  
Slide past, and clouds of tiniest shells  
In ages make a rocky cover;  
And some lie here and some lie there  
Until they moulder quite away,  
Some in the village garth and some  
In quiet suburban labelled rows,  
And some are powdered up in fire  
And some are shown in dull museums. . . .

Now while his flesh remains, a man  
Is something; but who feels akin  
To any nameless poor old bones?  
Even she, who with miraculous lips

Set little flowering plots of kisses  
Over our body, will not care  
To hug us when our bones are dry ;  
And she who carried us nine months  
And built them with her vital blood  
Might pass them by and never know  
These were the bones so hard to bear ;  
And, likelier still, our dearest child  
Would scorn to know us so unveiled,  
Unwilling to believe his flesh,  
Still firm and petal-sweet, was bred  
By such a pitiful old wreck.

But, in the end, the bones go too,  
And drift about as dust which hangs  
In a long sun-shaft, or dissolve  
Into the air to help build up  
The pulpy tissues of fine leaves  
Or heavier flakes of ruddy flesh,  
Or even someone else's bones.

I leave to those superior minds  
Who make theology their care  
The task of settling whose shall be  
These much-used frameworks at the last ;  
I rather see a wearier world  
Shed, æons hence, its comely flesh  
To dance, a mournful skeleton,  
Sedately round a dingier sun.

## OSBERT SITWELL

### THE NEW LEGEND

**I**T has now  
    Been discovered  
That Judas  
Did not hang himself  
Immediately,  
As was supposed,  
But that, after the Crucifixion,  
He went for a holiday  
To a quiet little fishing village,  
In Brittany,  
From which he wrote  
To Pontius Pilate, and the High Priests,  
Saying: From the rest  
Of this quiet little fishing village,  
Where no sound disturbs my reflections,  
But the distant hooting  
Of the motor-car,  
Or the shy rustle of bank-notes  
In the gaming rooms,  
I am able  
To take a large view of the future,  
People must be more economical.

You must all work harder  
To cut down  
Unnecessary expenditure.  
It appears  
That thirty pieces of silver  
Are missing from the common funds,

I cannot think where they have gone,  
But it is very wrong ;  
People must be more economical.

It seems to me  
That the general extravagance  
Is very shocking.  
The labour situation is very unsettled ;  
It almost looks  
As if the workers  
Were going to demand  
Enough money  
To live upon.  
This would constitute  
A Revolution.  
It has never even been considered before,  
And is not  
In consonance with my resolve  
That other people  
Should live more economical lives.  
I doubt whether the masters  
Would even be able  
To make sufficient money  
To live in quiet little fishing villages,  
Like Deauville,  
It would mean shocking want,  
And on those least accustomed to it.  
People must be more economical.

It is really  
What I call  
“ Bolshevism ”-and-all-that.  
What shocks me  
Is that the Bolsheviek leaders  
Are not really Russians at all.

They are Jews!  
Whereas the leaders  
Of international finance  
Are obviously  
Russians,  
Who long to help their countrymen.  
It is very pathetic.  
People must be more economical.

As Ananias  
Observed to me,  
Shortly before he went to the Rhine,  
The Russian workers shall realise  
That their present Anarchist system  
Of Government  
Not only means  
That they themselves will starve,  
But brings intolerable want  
On the free Democracies  
Of Western Europe.  
One cannot even  
Get sufficient fur  
To line  
A fur coat.  
This is very wrong.  
People must be more economical.

I am glad to see  
That we have had  
A great naval victory  
In the Baltic  
—Seven Englishmen killed  
And eleven missing.  
Ananias, however,  
Is annoyed.



He says that  
If he had been at the Admiralty  
It would never have happened.  
He says it is extraordinary  
How easily things go wrong.  
He had just promised a retreat,  
When the Navy go  
And gain a victory.  
All the other times  
He has promised victories,  
And we have had retreats.  
I expect that if Ananias  
Had been at the Admiralty,  
We should have had  
A really fine naval retreat.  
He says a retreat  
Is more impressive  
Than an advance.  
More men are killed,  
And though it costs less money  
It is more utterly wasted  
Than in an advance.  
People must be more economical.

I cannot understand  
All this talk  
About "Direct Action."  
I have always  
Hated  
Direct action in any form,  
It is very dangerous,  
And I shall not put up with it now ;  
I think the workers  
Have lost their heads.  
If they would only

Save up  
Till they earn  
Thirty pieces of silver,  
And then invest  
In some Company  
Managed  
By straightforward Russian gentlemen,  
They would be able to retire  
For a holiday  
To quiet little fishing villages.  
People must be more economical.

And people are so unkind.  
When I think  
That a great portion of my life  
Has been given  
To doing the workers—  
I mean to say  
Doing good to the workers,  
It makes me . . .

But the cock crew thrice.

## SUMMER WIND

SUMMER wind,  
                  where do you wander,  
Through the thicket, through the grove?  
Where the purple shadows slander  
Heat of Sun; where treasure-trove  
Of bees is found, where hidden sweetness  
Of hidden flowers is unloosed by your hand  
To make your robe? And in your fleetness  
Ruffled leaves seem silver sand

TURNBULL



JOHN FLANAGAN



Stirr'd to patterns by the passing  
Of pursuing Satyr-Hooves. And then  
Softly linger on the hill-tops, laughing  
On your way to weary men ?

Summer wind,  
                  where do you slumber  
Through the hot night ? In the field  
Of misted moonlight, or in umber  
Shade of trees, beneath a shield  
Of half-heard sound and moving shadow ?  
Thus your world-old gifts you yield  
To the dead men whom we echo,  
Those who loved you long ago ?

## WHAT THE SYREN SAID TO THE SEA-HORSE

**H**OW can I practise vocal scales  
While you go galloping about ?  
I'd rather hear ten thousand whales  
Heave thro' the ocean, pause to spout

Pillars of water in the air,  
Than hear you plunging through the foam,  
Snorting and stamping. Is it fair  
To act thus when I sing ? Go home !

When first damp hills began to swell  
From wat'ry chaos, I was thin—  
But now I barely fit the shell  
From which I warble, and the din

Of bands and hokey-pokey men,  
Or nigger minstrel on the shore,  
Confound my sense and ear; and then  
You must come bouncing to the fore!

You know romance and singing are  
A syren's very stock-in-trade,  
Yet you, like every one, now dare  
To snort past, unmoved, unafraid.

It's hard enough to sing a note  
When peace and privacy have gone:  
Just when I start, a pleasure boat  
Hoots by, and plays a gramophone!

Once, too, I ventured near the band,  
Where the pier rises from the sea;  
With wife and child, upon the sand,  
I saw a curate watching me.

He shuddered, and I heard him say,  
Black and reproachful as a rook,  
'Emma, dear heart, we will not stay:  
I should not like the child to look!'

But you are not a tidal wave;  
Be quiet! Leave stirring up the foam.  
It is not civil to behave  
Thus when I sing. Will you go home?



EDWARD J. O'BRIEN

MALIBRAS

THE sun laughed through the rain on Malibras,  
For Malibras was dead,  
And in the trooping city  
The light paused overhead.  
We shall not know the little clinging secret  
That crept behind the door,  
Nor why the slanting dust went singing gaily  
Across his face to the floor.  
But in the morning thunder leaped from the eastward  
And lightning dazzled our eyes,  
As Malibras went onward to the rendezvous  
Without surmise.  
There was a roar of cheering in the city,  
A wind of gold,  
And a swirl of air stole upward from his body,  
Exultant and very old.  
Down the winding pathways of Delauney  
The cortège turned  
To an anthill under beech-trees boled and mossy  
The light had spurned,  
And in the city of the other dreamers,  
Who labour not nor spin,  
There was an arch prepared with suitable inscriptions. . .  
He entered in . . .

From left to right and north to south he wandered,  
For Malibras was glad,  
And he crept through a door in the twilight  
That led to the dream he had.

Grasses curled round his eyelids,  
Roots round his heart,  
And you may see him in the eyes of a violet  
Laughing apart.  
For the ants took the dust of him crumbled to grayness,  
But found not the rest,  
And Malibras shall win when he rouses at the trumpet  
The flame that his heart suppressed.

CHRISTOPHER MARLYE

CHRISTOPHER MARLYE damned his God  
In many a blasphemous mighty line  
—Being given to words and wenches and wine.

He wrote his Faustus, and laughed to see  
How everyone feared his devils but he.

Christopher Marlye passed the gate  
Eager to stalk on the floor of Heaven,  
Outface his God, and affront the Seven :

But Peter genially let him in,  
Making no mention of all his sin.

And he got no credit for all he had done,  
Though he grabbed a hold on the coat of God  
And bellowed his infamies one by one,  
Blasphemy, lechery, thought and deed . . .

But nobody paid him the slightest heed.

And the devils and torments he thought to brave  
He left behind on this side of the grave.

Heigh-ho ! for Christopher Marlye.

## A DEVON RHYME

**G**NARLY and bent and deaf 's a post,  
Pore ole Ezekiel Purvis  
Goeth creepin' slowly up the 'ill  
To the Commoonion Survis.

Tap-tappy-tappy up the haisle  
Goeth stick and brassy ferule ;  
And Parson 'ath to stoopy down  
And 'olley in ees yerole.

## FROM THE DUBLIN STREETS

### AN OLD WOMAN OUTSIDE THE ABBEY THEATRE.

**I**N this theayter they has plays  
On us, and high-up people comes  
And pays to see things playin' here  
They'd run to hell from in the slums.

### A FATHER ADVISES HIS SON

**S**HE'S the loveliest girl? Ay, maybe—by moonlight!  
But ye'll do well not to trust the deceivin' moon.  
I was walkin' along the metals to Dalkey one night,  
When I seen on the groun' a shiny two-shillin' bit:  
When I stooped for to grab it, what was it only a spit.  
Ye'll do well not to trust the deceivin' moon.

## THE TRAIN RUNNED OVER JOE

**T**HE train runned over Joe  
This side o' Prowse's 'ut.  
'E thought 'e'd bring the sheep  
'Ome by the shorter cut.

The wind was blawin' wrong,  
'Twas dimpsey, Joe was deaf:  
And w'en 'e seed the engine  
There wasn't no time lef'.

The engine cut in 'alfs  
Four sheep, the dog, and 'e.  
Bill went up there nex' mornin'  
To see wat 'e cude see.

They'd took away the rummage  
And sprinkled cinders fresh:  
But 'longside of a sleeper  
'E found a 'unk of flesh.

'E knowed by the 'uman skin  
It was a bit o' Joe,  
So 'e put it in 'ees pocket  
And goed to the "Spotty Doe";

And w'en us was to supper  
'E comed 'ome dree parts drunk,  
And showed it to the missis  
And turned 'er stummick runk.

EDITH SITWELL

AT THE FAIR

I. SPRINGING JACK

**G**REEN wooden leaves clap light away,  
Severely practical, as they

Shelter the children candy-pale,  
The chestnut-candles flicker, fail . . .

The showman's face is cubed clear as  
The shapes reflected in a glass

Of water—(glog, glut, a ghost's speech  
Fumbling for space from each to each).

The fusty showman fumbles, must  
Fit in a particle of dust

The universe, for fear it gain  
Its freedom from my cube of brain.

Yet dust bears seeds that grow to grace  
Behind my crude-striped wooden face

As I, a puppet tinsel-pink  
Leap on my springs, learn how to think—

Till like the trembling golden stalk  
Of some long-petalled star, I walk

Through the dark heavens, and the dew  
Falls on my eyes and sense thrills through.



## II. THE APE WATCHES "AUNT SALLY"

**T**HE apples are an angel's meat ;  
The shining dark leaves make clear sweet

The juice ; green wooden fruits alway  
Fall on these flowers as white as day—

(Clear angel-face on hairy stalk :  
Soul grown from flesh, an ape's young talk!)

And in this green and lovely ground  
The Fair, world-like, turns round and round

And bumpkins throw their pence to shed  
Aunt Sally's wooden clear-striped head.—

I do not care if men should throw  
Round sun and moon to make me go—

As bright as gold and silver pence . . .  
They cannot drive their black shade hence !

## ALDOUS HUXLEY

### IMAGINARY CONVERSATION

**M.** DE COLIGNY'S bed was an heirloom. His father and mother had had it made against their wedding night, and surely the voyage to Cythera was never undertaken in a more splendid galleon—a ship whose hull was of carved and polished walnut wood, embellished by gilding and heraldic panels, whose masts were four twisted pillars all inlaid with ivory, and the sails of yellow damask and the ensigns of stiffly worked brocade. The heaven of the bed was a tapestry representing the story of Leda, and when the yellow curtains were drawn it formed the ceiling of a little scented chamber that was entirely shut off from the outer world. That Flemish Leda embracing a swan whose home was some leaden canal between high houses in Bruges, had seen and heard many secret things in her time. To-night, when the curtains were drawn and the little silver lamp, fastened by a bracket to one of the posts of the bed, had been lit, she beheld a more than usually delightful spectacle.

Two persons, both of them in the flower of their youth and beauty, were sitting in the broad bed, propped up against the mountainous pillows of down. One of them was a girl of marvellous loveliness and, to judge from her appearance, not above seventeen or eighteen years of age. She was clad only in a smock, and even that had a habit of slipping off her shoulders to reveal the exquisite contours of a young breast. She was engaged in combing out a great mass of curling brown hair that tumbled in a wild cascade, full of glinting golden lights, about her face. The other was M. de Coligny, the owner of the bed. He was a young man of twenty-two or three, with dark hair and a dark pointed beard and moustache, under which his teeth showed white and regular when he smiled. He was of a Roman

cast of countenance and strikingly handsome. His eyes, brown and piercing, were fixed on his companion as, with body bent forward and hair over her eyes, she tugged at the recalcitrant tangled curls with her comb. She straightened herself up and shook her hair back with a little quick movement that made him catch his breath with delight to see—it was so beautiful and his desire was so great.

“Coligny,” she said, turning to him with one of those smiles that had already made Mlle. de Lenclos famous, “I am quite exhausted with carding my fleece. I wish you would tease it out for me. These curls are the plague of my life.”

“They are the delight of mine,” responded Coligny, gallantly, as he took the comb from her, and began to pass it through the tangled tresses.

“Harder, harder!” cried Ninon, turning round to look at him over her shoulder. “You’ll never get the tangles out unless you comb harder.”

“But doesn’t it hurt?” Coligny was horrified at the prospect of inflicting pain on his mistress.

“Of course not, if you’re not clumsy.”

Coligny went on combing with a set and careful face. He winced at every tug he had to give, as though it were his own hair that were being pulled. Besides, her bare shoulders were so beautiful and so close to him, and the nape of her neck, when he lifted the clustering curls to look at it, was so inviting where the white skin was shadowed by the first tiniest tendrils of her hair. He threw down the comb.

“There!” he said, “that’s enough. I won’t comb any more.” And he put his arm round her and began to kiss her neck and shoulder.

A little shiver ran through her at the touch of his lips, and she laughed.

“What will happen to my poor tangled hair then?” she asked.

“It will get more tangled,” Coligny replied.

“Very well,” said Ninon, and she lay back on the pillow with an air of smiling resignation.

This was not the first, nor the second, time that Ninon had passed a night in M. Coligny's *hôtel* and in M. de Coligny's family bed. Coligny had appeared on her horizon some four or five months before, and it was not long before she had given him the amplest proofs of a first love that had overwhelmed her with irresistible violence. Mme. de Lenclos, her mother, was not only respectable but pious—pious to the verge, Ninon considered, of bigotry. She even cherished a secret hope that Ninon might some day feel moved to embrace the religious life; meanwhile, she kept a very good eye on her daughter. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and since the satisfaction of desire is the first of necessities to one in love, Ninon and Coligny were at no loss to devise schemes for outwitting Mme. de Lenclos' severe vigilance. Ninon, for instance, went very often to pass a night or two with a girl friend who lived at Saint Cloud: she was staying at Saint Cloud to-night, and when she returned home to-morrow she would have a whole fund of stories about Marie and her sisters, Anne and Barbe, to divert her mother with at dinner. She was always very tired and sleepy when she got back from St. Cloud, and Mme. de Lenclos would explain to her friends that the air in that neighbourhood was too nimble, too pure and keen and bracing; so much so that it kept the animal spirits in a state of perpetual activity, not suffering them to stagnate and repose in their canals; so that, paradoxical as it might sound, the sluggish, impure atmosphere of the city was in a sense healthier than the country air, because its very sluggishness was a curb upon the spirits and therefore conducive to sleep—a fact which was empirically proved by her daughter Ninon, who always slept heartily when at home in Paris, while, at Saint Cloud, she never closed an eyelid.

“My love, my life . . .” Ninon murmured between two kisses.

“You are my soul,” said Coligny; “for life comes to an end, but the soul is immortal, even as my love for you.”

The prettiness of the phrase pleased them both, for they belonged to a courtly society which delighted in giving and



receiving compliments; the manifest artificiality of M. de Coligny's wit in no way cooled the ardour of their emotions and their senses, but served rather to quicken and refine and beat up the flames.

"My soul, then," whispered Ninon; "but be careful I don't damn you." And she put her arms round his neck and crushed him close and closer against her.

"What's this?" asked Coligny, whose caressing fingers had come upon a little metal disk which hung by a thread round Ninon's neck and lay low down between her breasts. "What's this?" He lifted it out into the light and began to scrutinise it closely.

"Let it be, my love," said Ninon. "It is a medal of the Blessed Virgin that was sent me to-day from Rome, where it was blessed by the Holy Father himself."

Coligny laughed contemptuously. "Take it off," he said. "There shall be nothing between us when we love, not even so much as this counterfeit silver crown. As our souls escape from our bodies to join together, so our bodies must escape from their clothes—yes, down to the last thread and medal. Besides, it is all a vain superstition."

He made as though to snap the thread by which the medal hung, but Ninon put up her hand and checked him. "No, no. I have promised to wear it always. I forbid you to take it off; I shall never forgive you if you do."

Her tone was so serious that Coligny let the medal fall again and kissed it where it lay on her breast.

"It's the first time," he said with a laugh, "that I've ever kissed such a bit of trumpery, and if it were in any other place in the world but where it now is, I wouldn't touch it. But your bosom has blessed it as a legion of popes couldn't do."

Ninon lay a little while in pensive silence. "You know," she said at last, "you know, Coligny, I am often very much troubled in mind at the thought that you are a heretic. It is terrible to think that people should endanger their souls when it is such an easy thing to believe what is true and be saved."

Coligny laughed rather bitterly. "You may have heard, my Ninon, of one Gaspard de Coligny, who was my grandfather's brother and Admiral of France, and who on a certain twenty-fourth of August, on the eve of St. Bartholomew's Day . . ."

"Hush, hush," said Ninon, putting her hand across his mouth. "I know; but it is all over now. It is not the past we have to think about, but the present, and," she added significantly, "the future. Why won't you think as other people do, my beloved? It is madness to be a heretic when one might belong to the true Church."

The one flaw in Coligny's perfect good manners was his deplorable habit of arguing about religion. All unwittingly Ninon had called up this combative devil from its lurking-place in a corner of his mind.

"My dear child," began Coligny, in a sententious and didactic tone, which was peculiarly irritating, "I do not believe in what you are pleased to call the true Church, because I consider it to be false. The pretensions made by the Bishop of Rome are based upon the so-called Donation of Constantine," and he went on to explain at considerable length how and why the Pope was a pretender. Ninon could only stop him with a kiss.

"Darling," she said, "all this happened very long ago, and I know nothing and believe less than nothing of it. You do not explain to me why it was necessary for such demons as Luther and Calvin to crucify the Mother Church, and tear the world in pieces over a few foolish words."

"They wished to reform the crying abuses within the Church, and to bring back religion into its primitive purity. The lives of the Popes were an open scandal."

"So was Luther's," retorted Ninon. "Why, he ravished a nun, disgusting beast!"

Coligny did not heed the interruption. "The religious houses," he continued, "were full of abominable corruptions. They pillaged the people and then quarrelled over the spoils. The one thing on which monks and nuns ever agreed was disregarding their vows of chastity."



“Poor people!” said Ninon, commiseratingly. “But can you blame them if they erred occasionally?”

Coligny looked at her a moment, and the cloud of seriousness cleared from his face, and he laughed. “No, I honestly can’t blame them,” he said, “if they ever saw any one as beautiful as you.”

“Well, then,” cried Ninon, triumphantly, “I can’t see why you should remain a heretic. Consider, my darling, the company you’re in. There are some Frenchmen of your belief, to be sure, but most of them burgess, dowdy people. How can you associate with them? or with these square-toed Geneva republicans? or nasty, gross, drunken Germans? or ill-mannered Englishmen? I really can’t imagine. You can’t deny that all the best people do belong to the true Church.”

“But what would become of my conscience if I deserted my faith?” inquired Coligny.

“Conscience? I don’t know what you mean. You will just go and acknowledge your errors and confess your sins, and they will make it quite all right for you.”

“Ah, yes,” said Coligny, scornfully; his controversial spirit was roused again. “I know their Jesuit morality. It can condone anything if there’s any profit to be got from doing so. It can swallow a camel . . .”

“Swallow a camel . . .?” echoed Ninon, in perplexity.

“Yes, swallow a camel. It’s a phrase out of the Bible.”

Ninon nodded comprehendingly. “Oh, I see; I’ve never read it.”

“They can swallow more than a camel,” cried Coligny, waving a bare muscular arm above the bed-clothes; they can swallow elephants, leviathans, and mountains with their pernicious doctrine of Probable Opinions and all their devilish casuistical arts. My conscience is tender and nice, but it would soon grow robust enough if I put it into the hands of Escobar and his crew. No, Ninon, my conscience forbids me absolutely to desert the faith in which I was brought up for a faith which has persecuted my ancestors, and which I regard as false to the core.”

Ninon drew close and rubbed herself like a kitten against his side. "Wouldn't you give up being a heretic even for my sake?"

Coligny took her in his arms and began kissing her urgently, violently. "You ask me what is impossible, Ninon. I can't, even for you."

"Heretics never will listen to reason," said Ninon, making a profound generalisation. "Ah, my beloved . . ."

There was a long silence. From her position in the canopy of the bed the Flemish Leda regarded the lovers with equanimity, unmoved as ever. The tiny flame of the lamp burned motionlessly. Time passed, but Ninon and Coligny were beyond time in the dusk of one another's hair.

They were lying quietly and happily side by side when Ninon spoke again. Her thoughts had evidently strayed back to the old subject. "My beloved," she said, "suppose I were to have a baby—I say 'suppose,' for I hope I shan't—but suppose I were to; would it be a Protestant baby or a Catholic baby?"

"That," said Coligny, who had been perhaps a little too well educated for a nobleman's son, "raises the whole question of generation. If you have read philosophy . . ."

"But I haven't," said Ninon.

". . . you will remember," Coligny continued, "that God's two most important instruments in creation are Form and Matter. Matter without form is shapeless and gross; it is chaos, in fact. Form without matter is angelic and altogether too spiritual to be perceived by creatures of our stamp who are a mixture of both. Now, just as the Holy Ghost brooded upon the waters of chaos and informed them so that out of them emerged a world of beauty, shape, and life, appearing where before had been a mere lumpish stagnation; so in the creation of the Little World—for you must know that man is a Microcosm exactly corresponding in little to the universe—in the creation of the Little World, the male seed plays the part of form and the woman's womb of matter. Woman supplies the material for

MODIGLIANI





EDWARD WADSWORTH



LADLE SLAG

creation, the microcosmic chaos, if you take me ; man provides the informing spirit which gives it life and shape. The soul is transmitted, therefore, by the man ; and so, since religion is essentially and fundamentally a quality and attribute of the soul, any child of ours would belong to the Reformed Religion.”

“ Poor baby ! ” said Ninon. “ But I should have him baptized into the true Church at once. My darling, I love you so much, almost too much to be true. Lay your head close to mine, and I will sing you a little lullaby, and we will go to sleep, for I am so tired. There, my baby, shut your eyes and go to sleep.” She smoothed the hair back from his forehead and kissed his eyelids close. Then she sang softly and clearly, in a voice of flawless purity, this little song that they used to sing when the poets of the Pléiade were the arbiters of taste at court :

“ ‘ Après la feuille la fleur ;  
Après l’épine la rose ;  
L’heure après le malheur.  
Le jour on est en labeur,  
Mais la nuit on se repose.’ ”

“ ‘ La nuit on se repose,’ ” repeated Ninon, with a little laugh. “ Entends-tu, mon ami ? ” and a moment later she was fast asleep.

WILFRED OWEN, M.C. (*Killed in Action, 4th Nov., 1918*)

## MENTAL CASES

WHO are these? Why sit they here in twilight?  
Wherefore rock they, purgatorial shadows,  
Drooping tongues from jaws that slob their relish,  
Baring teeth that leer like skull's teeth wicked?  
Stroke on stroke of pain,—but what slow panic  
Gouged these chasms round their fretted sockets?  
Ever from their hair and through their hand-palms  
Misery swelters. Surely we have perished  
Sleeping, and walk hell; but who these hellish?

—These are men whose minds the Dead have ravished.  
Memory fingers in their hair of murders,  
Multitudinous murders they once witnessed.  
Wading sloughs of flesh these helpless wander,  
Treading blood from lungs that had loved laughter.  
Always they must see these things and hear them,  
Batter of guns and shatter of flying muscles,  
Carnage incomparable, and human squander  
Rucked too high up for these men's extrication.

Therefore still their eyeballs shrink tormented  
Back into their brains, because on their sense  
Sunlight seems a blood-smear; night comes blood-black;  
Dawn breaks open like a wound that bleeds afresh.

—Thus their heads wear their hilarious, hideous,  
Awful falseness of set-smiling corpses.

—Thus their hands are plucking at each other;  
Picking at the rope-knouts of their scourging;  
Snatching after us, who smote them, brother,  
Pawing us who dealt them war and madness.



## CONRAD AIKEN

### CABARET

WE sit together and talk, or smoke in silence.  
You say (but use no words), "This night is passing  
As other nights, when we are dead, will pass . . ."  
Perhaps I misconstrue you: you mean only  
"How deathly pale my face looks in that glass . . ."

You say: "We sit and talk . . . of things important . . .  
How many others like ourselves, this instant,  
Mark the pendulum swinging against the wall?  
How many others, laughing, sip their coffee,—  
Or stare at mirrors and do not talk at all? . . ."

"This is the moment" (so you would say, in silence)  
"When suddenly we have had too much of laughter;  
And a freezing stillness falls, no word to say.  
Our mouths feel foolish. . . For all the days hereafter  
What have we saved—what news, what tune, what play?"

"We see each other as vain and futile tricksters,—  
Posturing like bald apes before a mirror;  
No pity dims our eyes. . .  
How many others like ourselves, this instant,  
See how the great world wizens and are wise?" . . .

Well, you are right. . . No doubt they fall, these seconds . . .  
When suddenly all's distempered, vacuous, ugly,  
And even those most like angels creep for schemes.  
The one you love leans forward, smiles, deceives you,  
Opens a door through which you see dark dreams,

But this is momentary . . . or else, enduring,  
Leads you with devious eyes through mists and poisons  
To horrible chaos, or suicide, or crime.  
And all these others who, at your conjuration,  
Grow pale, feeling the skeleton touch of time,—

Or laughing sadly talk of things important,  
Or stare at mirrors, startled to see their faces,  
Or drown in the waveless vacuums of their days,—  
Suddenly, as from sleep, awake, forgetting  
This nauseous dream: take up their accustomed ways.

Exhume the ghost of a joke, renew loud laughter,  
Forget the moles above their sweethearts' eyebrows,  
Lean to the music, rise,  
And dance once more in a rose-festooned illusion  
With kindness in their eyes . . .

They say (as we ourselves have said, remember)  
“What wizardry this slow waltz works upon us!  
And how it brings to mind forgotten things!”  
They say: “How strange it is that one such evening  
Awakes vague memories of so many Springs!”

And so they go. . . In a thousand crowded places  
They sit to smoke and talk, or rise to ragtime,  
And, for their pleasures, agree or disagree.  
With secret symbols they play on secret passions.  
With cunning eyes they see

The innocent word that sets remembrance trembling,  
The dubious word that sets the scared heart beating . . .  
The pendulum on the wall  
Shakes down seconds. . . They laugh at time, dissembling;  
Or coil for a victim and do not talk at all.

## MOVEMENTS FROM A SYMPHONY

### “OVERTONES”

**T**WO lovers, here at the corner by the steeple,  
Two lovers blow together like music blowing :  
And the crowd dissolves about them like a sea.  
Recurring waves of sound break vaguely upon them ;  
They drift from wall to wall, from tree to tree.

“Well, am I late?” Upward they look, and laugh,  
They look at the great clock's golden hands . . .  
They laugh and talk, not knowing what they say ;  
Only, their words like music seem to play ;  
And, seeming to walk, they tread strange sarabands.

“I brought you this . . .” The soft words plunge like stars  
Down the smooth heaven of her memory.  
She stands again by a garden wall,  
The peach-tree is in bloom, pink blossoms fall,  
Water sings from an opened tap, the bees  
Glisten and murmur among the trees.  
Some one calls from the house : she does not answer.  
Backward she leans her head,  
And dreamily smiles at the peach-tree leaves, where through  
She sees an infinite May sky spread  
A vault profoundly blue.  
The voice from the house fades far away,  
The glistening leaves more vaguely ripple and sway . . .  
The tap is closed, the water ceases to hiss . . .  
Silence . . . blue sky . . . and then, “I brought you this” . . .  
She turns again and smiles . . . He does not know  
She smiles from long ago.

She turns to him and smiles . . . Sunlight above him  
Roars like a vast invisible sea,

Gold is beaten before him, shrill bells of silver,  
He is released of weight, his body is free,  
He lifts his arms to swim,  
Dark years like sinister tides coil under him . . .  
The lazy sea-waves crumble along the beach  
With a whirring sound like wind in bells.  
He lies outstretched on the yellow wind-worn sands  
Reaching his lazy hands  
Among the golden grains and sea-white shells . . .

“One white rose . . . or is it pink, to-day?”  
They pause and smile, not caring what they say,  
If only they may talk.  
The crowd flows past them like dividing waters.  
Dreaming they stand, dreaming they walk.

“Pink—to-day!”—Face turns to dream-bright face,  
Green leaves rise round them, sweetness settles upon them,  
Water, in drops of silver, falls from the rose.  
She smiles at a face that smiles through leaves from the mirror.  
She breathes the fragrance; her dark eyes close . . .

Time is dissolved, it blows like a little dust:  
Time, like a flurry of rain,  
Patters and passes, starring the window-pane.  
Once, long ago, one night,  
She saw the lightning with long blue quiver of light  
Ripping the darkness . . . and as she turned in terror  
A soft face leaned above her, leaned softly down,  
Softly around her a breath of roses was blown,  
She sank in waves of quiet, she seemed to float  
In a sea of silence . . . and soft steps grew remote . . .

“Well, let us walk in the park . . . The sun is warm,  
We’ll sit on a bench and talk” . . . They turn and glide,  
The crowd of faces wavers and breaks and flows.

“Look! how the oak-tops turn to gold in the sunlight!  
Look how the tower is changed and glows!”

Two lovers move in the crowd like a link of music,  
We press upon them, we hold them and let them pass;  
A chord of music strikes us and straight we tremble;  
We tremble like wind-blown grass.

What was this dream we had, a dream of music,  
Music that rose from the opening earth like magic  
And shook its beauty upon us and died away?  
The long cold streets extend once more before us,  
The red sun drops, the walls grow grey.

### SUDDEN DEATH

“NUMBER four—the girl who died on the table—  
The girl with golden hair,—  
The purpling body lies on the gleaming marble;  
We open the throat and lay the thyroid bare . . .

One, who held the ether-cone, remembers  
Her dark blue frightened eyes.  
He heard the sharp breath quiver, and saw her breast  
More hurriedly fall and rise.  
Her hands made futile gestures, she turned her head  
Fighting for breath, her cheeks were flushed to scarlet,  
And, suddenly, she lay dead.

And all the dreams that hurried along her veins  
Came to the darkness of a sudden wall.  
Confusion ran among them, they whirled and clamoured,  
They fell, they rose, they struck, they shouted,  
Till at last a pallor of silence hushed them all.



What was her name? Where had she walked that morning?  
Through what dark forest came her feet?  
Along what sunlit walls, what peopled street?

Backward he dreamed along a chain of days,  
He saw her go her strange and secret ways,  
Waking and sleeping, noon and night.  
She sat by a mirror, braiding her golden hair;  
She read a story by candle-light.

Her shadow ran before her along the street,  
She walked with rhythmic feet,  
Turned a corner, descended a stair.  
She bought a paper, held it to scan the headlines,  
Smiled for a moment at sea-gulls high in sunlight,  
And drew deep breaths of air.

Days passed, bright clouds of days. Nights passed. And music  
Murmured within the walls of lighted windows;  
She lifted her face to the light and danced.  
The dancers wreathed and grouped in moving patterns,  
Clustered, receded, streamed, advanced.

Her dress was purple, her slippers were golden,  
Her eyes were blue; and a purple orchid  
Opened its golden heart on her breast...  
She leaned to the surly languor of lazy music,  
Leaned on her partner's arm to rest.

The violins were weaving a weft of silver,  
The horns were weaving a lustrous brede of gold,  
And time was caught in a glistening pattern,  
Time, too elusive to hold...



Shadows of leaves fell over her face—and sunlight :  
She turned her face away.  
Nearer she moved to a crouching darkness  
With every step and day.

Death, who at first had thought of her only an instant  
At a great distance, across the night,  
Smiled from a window upon her, and followed her slowly  
From purple light to light.

Once, in her dreams, he spoke out clearly, saying,  
“ I am the murderer, death ;  
I am the lover who keeps his appointment  
At the doors of breath ! ”

She rose and stared at her own reflection,  
Half dreading there to find  
The dark-eyed ghost, waiting beside her,  
Or reaching from behind  
To lay pale hands upon her shoulders . . .  
Or was this in her mind ? . . .

She combed her hair. The sunlight glimmered  
Along the tossing strands.  
Was there a stillness in this hair,  
A quiet in these hands ?

Death was a dream. It could not change these eyes,  
Blow out their light, or turn this mouth to dust.  
She combed her hair, and sang. She would live for ever.  
Leaves flew past her window along a gust . . .  
And graves were dug in the earth, and coffins passed,  
And music ebbed with the ebbing hours.  
And dreams went along her veins, and scattering clouds  
Threw streaming shadows on walls and towers.

## CONVERSATION : UNDERTONES

WHAT shall we talk of—Li Po? Hokusai?—  
You narrow your long dark eyes to fascinate me;  
You smile a little... Outside, the night goes by.  
I walk alone in a forest of ghostly trees...  
Your pale hands rest palm downwards on your knees.

“These lines—converging—they suggest such distance!  
The soul is drawn away, beyond horizons—  
Lured out to what? One dares not think.  
Sometimes, I glimpse these infinite perspectives  
In intimate talk (with such as you) and shrink...

“One feels so petty!—one feels such emptiness!—  
You mimic horror, let fall your lifted hands,  
And smile at me; with brooding tenderness...  
Alone on darkened waters I fall and rise;  
Slow waves above me break, faint waves of cries.

“And then, these colours... but who would dare describe  
them?  
This faint rose-coral pink... this green—pistachio?—  
So insubstantial! Like the dim ghostly things  
Two lovers find in love's still-twilight chambers...  
Old peacock-fans, and fragrant silks, and rings...

“Rings, let us say, drawn from the hapless fingers  
Of some great lady many centuries nameless—  
Or is that too sepulchral?—dulled with dust;  
And necklaces that crumble if you touch them;  
And gold brocades that, breathed on, fall to rust,—

“No—I am wrong... It is not these I sought for—  
Why did they come to mind?—You understand me—

You know these strange vagaries of the brain!"—  
—I walk alone in a forest of ghostly trees ;  
Your pale hands rest palm downwards on your knees ;  
These strange vagaries of yours are all too plain.

“ But why perplex ourselves with tedious problems  
Of art or . . . such things? . . . While we sit here, living,  
With all that's in our secret hearts to say!—  
Hearts?—Your pale hand softly strokes the satin.  
You play deep music—know well what you play.  
You stroke the satin with thrilling of finger-tips,  
You smile, with faintly perfumed lips,  
You loose your thoughts like birds,  
Brushing our dreams with soft and shadowy words . . .  
We know your words are foolish, yet here we stay,  
I to be played on, you to play ;  
We know our words are foolish, yet sit here bound  
In tremulous webs of sound.

“ How beautiful is intimate talk like this!—  
It is as if we dissolved grey walls between us,  
Stepped through solid portals, become but shadows,  
To hear a hidden music . . . Our own vast shadows  
Lean to a giant size on the windy walls,  
Or dwindle away ; we hear our soft footfalls  
Echo for ever behind us, ghostly clear,  
Music sings far off, flows suddenly near,  
And dies away like rain . . .  
We walk through subterranean caves again—  
Vaguely above us feeling  
A shadowy weight of frescoes on the ceiling ;  
Strange half-lit things,  
Soundless grotesques with writhing claws and wings.  
And here a beautiful face looks down upon us ;  
And some one hurries before, unseen, and sings . . .

Have we seen all, I wonder, in these chambers—  
Or is there yet some gorgeous vault arched low,  
Where sleeps an amazing beauty we do not know? . . .”

The question falls; we walk in silence together,  
Thinking of that deep vault and of its secret . . .  
This lamp, these books, this fire,  
Are suddenly blown away in a whistling darkness.  
Deep walls crash down in the whirlwind of desire.

## THOMAS MOULT

### THE RETURN

A SUN-SWEET day in the sundown time  
Where the great hills dip to the dusking dale,  
And no sound breaking the silent climb  
But a lonely wheeling curlew's wail.  
And the far bird's scream, and the glittering shine  
Of a star on the far dim eastern line  
Bring back far days and a dream once mine  
Where the great hills dip to the dale.

For the world-call came even here, even here  
Where the great hills dip to the dusking dale,  
And the old road laughed at a young heart's fear  
And lured young feet to the wonder-trail  
And drew young eyes to the rosy sky . . .  
And the world grew wide as the feet climbed high,  
But the young heart's dream was a dream gone by  
With the hills dipping down to the dale.

O the world was strange and the years less kind  
Than the years with the hills and the dusking dale  
And the dale's deep calm that none may find  
While the long road lures and the heart is hale.  
And now in the chill of a wild bird's scream  
I linger alone where the gloom is the gleam  
Of a still, far star, with a far, far dream  
And the hills dipping down to the dale.

# WILFRID WILSON GIBSON

## THREE SONGS

### I. THE WILLOWS

**I**N the round hollow of the moonlit meadow  
Over the pond the seven willows shiver,  
And in the ghostly misty shine their branches  
Rustle and glance and quiver—

Rustle and glance and quiver in the moonshine—  
The seven sisters shaking sea-green tresses  
Over the round pond's misty mirror, whispering  
Strange secrets to the shadow in the cresses.

### II. AULLA

**B**RONZED hills of oak, that sweep  
Up to Carrara's peaks of snow  
Against a blue November sky,  
Burnished with evening sunshine glow  
And bask in drowsy sleep—  
When piercingly a cry  
Rings from the little town below,  
And startled echoes leap  
From steep to steep.

What soul in agony  
Cried out at sunset long ago  
I'll never know :  
But in my memory perpetually  
Bronze hills and silver peaks and steely sky  
Reverberate with that despairing cry.



### III. RETURN

**R**UST-RED the bracken in the rain  
Against the wet grey boulder—  
Slowly the cold mist sweeps again  
Over the mountain shoulder,  
And the wind blows colder.

Since last I saw the mist and rain  
Sweep down the mountain shoulder  
Some joy that will not come again  
Has left a heart grown older,  
And the wind blows colder.

## RUSSELL GREEN

### INDIAN SUMMER

**A** SOUTH wind murmurs among the withered auburn bracken. The frail metallic foliage of silver birches sways in the murmuring south wind as weeds on a shallow shore at the turn of the tide. Red and brown are creeping over the verdure of the year. The air is still, a woman mourning at the obsequies of summer. The air is soft and gentle, long shadows lie prone and black along the faded grass. Through the still soft air sounds fall of life that knows longer seasons; voices of men, birds crying, distant bark of dogs, horns and purring wheels of immortal motors. But they know longer seasons. And yet their autumn comes. Not in this tranquillity fails their resilience, not in this placid sun, but in storm and darkness, in mockery, in confusion.

And we shall have our autumn. We shall lose our summer verdure. We shall return with a mute reluctance to the dark sclerosis of earth.

And shall we sit solitary, forgotten by friends, forgotten by enemies, sharing no memories with another? Shall we cry for remembered love that we have despised and rejected? Shall we know our need too late? Will time and distance and interlapsing oblivion give us but a stone when we cry for bread and only ashes when we crave the fire?

### OXFORD BELLS

**I**T is midnight in Oxford. A hundred bells, a thousand bells, hail midnight among ten thousand towers. Ten thousand towers soar up on omnipotent wings into the summer midnight. They are the eagles of human meditation spreading

omnipotent wings against the powers of darkness, against the principalities of time. The dominion of darkness and the cruel tyranny of time fall faint against the guardian wings. And the sleeping light is unquenched and the timeless city is unchanged. No shadow of the oncoming death falls through the omnipotent wings. No stellar dust of approaching age drifts down upon the immortal stone. The human challenge of the hundred bells, the thousand bells, retorts the dull mockery of the universe. The city sleeps on, a child sleeping unafraid in the open fields of eternity.

And the bells maintain their everlasting vigilance.

## TO ONE

WHEN a foam of snow is hurled  
Under the bare black trees  
And rain is on the seas  
And winter on the world,  
Yet when I think of her  
I know where summer is.

When friends to-day forget  
Ardours of yesterday  
And to-morrow turn away  
As if we never met,  
Yet when I think of her  
I know where constancy is.

## ECONOMICS

IN Petticoat Lane by Aldgate East  
On jellied eels I've seen them feast.

The mute dismembered corpses roll  
Salted in an enamel bowl.

Behind his stall the huckster's loud  
Bass 'cello voice compels the crowd,

Whose gaunt innumerable shoes  
Shuffle along the foetid ooze.

And I knew that brick-bound sun must shine  
On eels that swim in wider brine,

Where estuaries drain the sea  
And agile Aldgate eels go free,

Where in pre-natal silence sleeps  
The god of the everlasting deeps,

Where for ten thousand years the sails  
Of ships before the summer gales

Trace the great circles of the seas  
From Ophir to the Caribbees,

Till sails and ships and men are rotten,  
Till years and seasons are forgotten,

Till all that lives is a dead motion  
Of slow winds and a sombre ocean.

## INDIVIDUAL

**I**F I die  
One star fades from the dark,  
One lantern falls from the arc  
Of the sky.

There are still  
Millions to waste their light  
On the long human night,  
Millions still.

And yet, alone,  
In separate magnitude,  
In potent solitude,  
I move, alone,

A centre of fire,  
Redder than ardent Mars,  
I kindle a thousand stars  
To reflect my desire.

### A PRAYER

“ABELARD, Héloïse”—  
A Echoed in a London street  
While the wheels, black thunders beat  
Like swollen veins in a last disease.

Héloïse, Abelard,—  
They were lovers, so am I.  
But at *my* birth, in the sky  
Ruled a solitary star.

Abelard, Héloïse,  
If your influence could move,  
If he lives, the god of love,  
To release me, to release

From incarcerating light  
To an island very far,  
To a mountain, to a star  
In the spaces of night.

Abelard, Héloïse,  
I would give you, I would give  
My soul—my love—that would live, that would live  
Till the centuries cease.

## SOCIETY

I WISH hell were as bloody as they say?  
But that's all lies, for I'm in hell and I know.  
Hell's when you see the flaming colours go  
Blank from your brain and blurs of pallid grey  
Cover your past and future and you ache  
To be taken up and cuddled vulgarly  
And called a dear old thing by a sweet motherly  
Plump girl who will do anything for your sake.

And when you've dreamed of this for half an hour  
You come back to your damned environment  
To find your silly vacant eyes are bent  
On the infernal oilcloth on the floor,  
And you remember that there's no such girl  
This side of death unless you've got the cash  
To buy them up like any other trash.  
And then you damn and curse at life and hurl  
Your rotten clinging soul against the wall  
Of this terrestrial isolation cell.  
Oh, yes! You've got it,—the disease of hell,—  
The germ of solitude. It's in them all.  
But they don't feel it, damn them, all those others,—  
They've got their wives, their sisters, and their mothers!



ENGLISH LITERATURE AND THE  
REVOLUTION

ANY one who picks up one of the weeklies, provided he knows something of literary London, can visualise the cliques and sets, the personal animosities, the log-rolling and the snobbishness which underlie their smooth-flowing columns of praise or blame. A writer who does not lunch with other writers, who has no friends among the literary "best people," who is not published by some smart publisher clever enough to exhale an aroma of "Oxford," will not as a rule receive much attention from the "leading organs of critical thought." The London papers whose reviewing ignores social or commercial influences can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Now it is the function of criticism to act both as a tonic and as a corrective. When criticism decays and loses vigour the arts at once fall into an unhealthy state. The progressive decay of criticism in England during the past half-century has now brought English literature to such a pass that only the most violent remedies can cure it of its many diseases. During the past fifty years writers with original or "revolutionary" ideas have found it increasingly difficult to get a hearing during their lives. Publishers have declined their MSS. as being unsafe, and in cases where the publisher's vigilance has been eluded, the reviewers have either received the dangerous works in silence or have violently denounced them. Mr. Bernard Shaw, realising all this clearly enough, has managed, it is true, by sheer force of character, to make himself the exception which proves the rule. No doubt a knowledge of what Samuel Butler had to

put up with showed him at an early stage in his career what precisely he was "up against." But though Mr. Shaw has triumphed over the shoddy crowd of literary parasites who guard the pass to public recognition, he has not done so without making enemies. These people are like a certain kind of toad. If you step on them they squirt a poisonous liquid at you. Readers of a certain notorious review of Mr. Shaw's *Heart-break House* will realise what it is that he has been able to tread on and to overcome.

Mr. Shaw's success in this direction is, so far as I can discover, unique. For the most part, authors have not his cheerful combative instinct, his capacity to lay about him with freedom and good-humour. Thus it is that the devices which have been, and are, adopted by English writers, small and great, to enable them to squeeze past the barrier into the charmed circle of literary fashion are often so pathetic. The employment of these devices very often causes an agony so excruciating that, although confessions of all kinds have lately had an unprecedented vogue, no man of letters has to my knowledge dared to lay his soul bare in regard to the things he has done to "get through."

To the commercial author the problem is, of course, merely a business problem like another. The man born for success will have begun his career by making friends with the best people at school and university. These friends, when he makes his descent on London, will stand him in good stead. If he writes verses they will soon log-roll a literary prize for him. If he begins by reviewing other men's work, the usual process, he will be sure to find some man of an older year already installed in the office of a comfortable review, who will make the way easy. And then, when his first novel is ready, his social *savoir-faire* will have smoothed the path for its reception. The wife of his future publisher will have gone down to dinner with him, and found him "such an interesting boy." Perhaps he will have floated about London a little with one of those girls whose veneer of culture—added to good looks and an inherited

position—enables them preposterously enough to make or mar a reputation. Thus even his amours will push him along the road to fame and fortune!

There are, of course, many other routes open to the commercial author who is determined to arrive. They could be described in detail, but the psychological interest attaching to them is very small, because the commercial author feels no uneasy shrinking from those methods of achieving his aim which present themselves to his intelligence. The commercial poet does not feel uneasy if, for example, he combines with half-a-dozen other poets in an offensive and defensive alliance formed for mutual "boosting." The commercial novelist does not shudder at the necessity of giving evening parties with a purpose, or strategic luncheons. It is only when we consider the authors whose motive is ambition to succeed in their art and to achieve the admiration of those who can appreciate, the authors with whom that powerful vanity which has given the world half its loveliest things is the real stimulus to production, that the psychological interest begins. And among these, what miseries have been endured in the struggle for recognition, what foolish, pathetic, and even base things have been done to attain it! Very often these unfortunates ape the methods of their brass-bound commercial competitors with tragic inefficiency. They blow ear-splitting blasts on the trumpet, when the situation requires delicate and flute-like modulations; they cringe when they should prance, toady when they should contemn. And always the unsatisfied vanity, more violent in its operations than the unsatisfied appetite of sex, forces them relentlessly forward. It has pushed them, before now, to suicide as a last resource.

This, roughly, is the position of English writers to-day: to the creative effort required to produce a work of art must be added the finesse of a social struggler and the bland assurance of a bagman, or else either the MS. will not be printed at all, or if printed and published will be smothered in unbroken silence. The root of the evil is deep-seated in our social life; it is one



more of those symptoms of national corruption and spiritual deadness which are the preludes to upheaval.

Now a revolution is a setting free of forces which have been violently constrained. The intellectual energies of England, so far as her younger writers are concerned, are to-day bottled up. The natural outlets are closed and barred. The written word must go through a watering down, trimming and softening process before it can hope to squeeze through the needle's eye of a publisher's office and reach the open. The social and commercial censorship exercised by English snobbery, and made possible by the decay of English criticism, is in its effects far more deadening than that naïf censorship which absurd and rather lovable officials exercised during the war. And so in England to-day the artist's way to freedom lies through that drastic change in our social life which it is convenient to refer to as the Revolution. That this is no idle fancy but a statement of fact must be realised by all those who have any appreciation of the change which has come over the continent of Europe during the past two years.

Those who have visited Soviet Russia, those who saw something of Hungary under the revolutionary government, even those who have visited Germany during the past few months, will know to what I am referring. The effect of revolution on the creative capacity of a people is like a renewal of youth; like a change from winter to spring. The windows of the stuffy room are thrown open, the unhealthy stove extinguished. Sunlight pours in and fresh air, and in all the world there is an uttering of joyous leaves. Germany has not yet achieved her revolution politically, but in the domain of thought it is already accomplished. It was my good fortune to spend some weeks in Germany in the month of September, and the difference of intellectual atmosphere which I found between Berlin and London defies description. In Berlin all was energy and activity. "Sorrow brings forth," says Blake in one of his aphorisms, and it seemed that the sufferings of the German people had indeed rejuvenated their creative instinct. The

interest in ideas was universal, and everywhere ideas were finding no hindrance—other than a negligible political censorship—to their expression. Every line of thought which presented itself to the human intelligence could be followed up without fear, and the results of these intellectual explorations published for the examination of other travellers. In Germany to-day, the intellect has been set free, the imagination of the artist liberated from bondage. And in London? Stagnation, intrigue, snobbery, log-rolling, deadness! Our ideas, like the air in our House of Commons, are subject to a process of warming, drying, softening and “disinfecting” before they are allowed to filter through to the public. In England the *bourgeoisie* is still established in control, and—until the New Day dawns—the man of letters must either starve or adapt himself to its standards and do obeisance before the shrines of its false gods.

## CHAMAN LALL

### SHAW, THE SHOW, AND THE SHAWM\*

OR

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE THEATRE?

“King Melinda asked Nāgsena how many kinds of wisdom there are, and he replied Seven, but that it is by one kind of wisdom that a man becomes wise : the investigation of Truth.”

**T**HERE is no desolation comparable to-day to the desolation which pervades the world's theatre. It opens its doors to every obscenity, and barricades its doors against all beauty. Truth is not a *prima donna* within its walls : nay, not even a poor programme-seller. In fact, the world's theatre has become a vast, well-decorated brothel, where strong wine, bad music, and forced prostitution pile up big dividends or colossal bankruptcies for the unscrupulous commercialist. A limited liability company has nothing in common with the limitations of Art. But what else can you expect? Did Darwin visualise a worse society of antagonisms than the world's system of economic *sauve qui peut* under which every man one meets is a potential enemy on a drifting raft, every profession subjugated under the cart of Commerce, every art and craft exploited by the financial magnate? Sometimes Great Art will survive in this desolation like a thrusting poppy in a field of horse-dung; but, none the less, the world presents the spectacle of a wild circus, where human beasts bend to his will, cowering to hear the sjambok of the circus-master.

Now with audiences of this sort needing continual relaxation from the drudgery of their toil in play-houses owned by people

\* *Heartbreak House, Great Catherine, and Playlets of the War.* By Bernard Shaw. Constable, 1919. 7s. 6d.



interested only in making money out of their tired pleasures, pandering to the tastes of the Balham typist (every capital in the world has its Balham typist) for bedroom scenes where the couple, as on the Boulevards, symbolically switch the light off for a while as a tribute to realism, the theatres must inevitably become mere outworks of factories, playwrights become wage-slaves and the players prostitutes. Every age has deserved its literature : let us frankly face the fact that every audience deserves its theatre.

But what of the critics, the custodians of Truth, the sorters and valuers of plays? Are they not like the Roman Pontiffs the possessors of the secret law? What do they say? Unfortunately their ignorance, their stupidity, their malice are beyond question. They are like Swift's idealists, with one eye turned inward and the other heavenward, whom not even the flappers of Laputa can awaken to a sense of their high work. None can say after the scandals of *Heartbreak House* that the scandals of *A Doll's House* are *comme les neiges d'antan* ; whereas the real crime Shaw has committed is to lay waste the whole realm of English drama with his overshadowing genius. The tragedy of St. John Hankin is the tragedy of the barrenness of all Shaw's successors. Oscar Wilde reviving the humors and methods of Fielding, is hailed as the regenerator of the drama. Fielding talking of fornication is hailed as a classic. Artzibasheff talking of fornication with the tremendous difference between a libidinous quack and a scientist-artist is called a pornographer. Look at this :

Oscar's Dumby, in Act VI., says :

“In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it.”

Shaw's Mendoza, in Act IV., says :

“Sir, there are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart's desire ; the other is to get it.”

And Shaw remembering a speech from LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN for Mendoza's last hit in MAN AND SUPERMAN does not elicit a single significant remark. But Shaw writing the play of his life and the play of the decade is execrated for the sake of sensationalism.

Truly the advertisement columns of the newspapers are more interesting to read than the first-night notices by hired critics. As the audience deserves its theatre, the theatre deserves its critics. With managers as they are, critics as they are, above all audiences as they are, what are the prospects for the playwright ?

Literature is of two kinds—of commercialism and convention, and of freedom and revolt, which latter deals, as does *The Way of All Flesh*, the originator of the realistic novel, with “the natural history of our emotions.” Now the world's theatre has a great past of freedom, revolt, and experiment. The lonely dramatists of the great tradition have left us a rich inheritance of emotion and technique, and a marvellous chronicle of trial, error, and success. From as far back as the Greek chorus, the child of Sanskrit drama, from the Morality, from the Elizabethan soliloquy, we have learnt the technique of introducing argument and discussion. From as near as Yeats (note *Reveries*) we should learn new methods of depicting individual psychology. Ibsen introduced the thesis; Shaw broke in the walls dividing tragedy and comedy, introduced a hundred tricks for forcing attention, above all told the truth. Gorky and Chekov, Evreinov and Barker, Andreyev and Joyce, like Synge and Strindberg, have added new meaning and beauty and blown their new trumpets; but the walls of Balham Jericho still stand erect. Go into any modern theatre pandering to the tastes of the Balham typist, with its stale jokes and obsolete mechanism, and you will find that the past might just as well not have been; and you will find that technically and spiritually the drama is far ahead of the managers, far ahead of the critics, and, alas! far ahead of the audiences. Is there nothing to be done ?

Firstly, let us realise that Verse-Drama is a dead thing. The Shawm is quite obsolete. Our ears can no longer strain to familiarity with the sustained diction of uttered verse. *The Dynasts*, the plays of Claudel and of Yeats, may contain great beauty, untold emotional value, but as enacted plays they are negligible, adding an unnecessary strain to the stretch of credibility requisite in an audience. Too long has art been the pastime of the esoteric few. Theatrical art is the only art which breaks through the esoteric circle because its appeal is to the wide, indiscriminate, uninitiated masses. For this reason alone the days of Verse-Drama are extinct. Without doubt if a Moscow Art Theatre were built in London, Joyce's *Exiles* would be an ordinary feature, but *The Dynasts* a curiosity.

Secondly, let us cease bleating for small mercies. The inheritors of a great tradition have handed over to the purveyors of human flesh also the truth in their souls, and here they are clamouring stupidly for National theatres, Repertory movements, Shakespeare memorials, like a child trying to empty the tide with its pail. Why one National theatre? Why not all theatres national? I dare say when the dictatorship arrives it will not be cruel enough to inhibit those who wish to see Delysia's bare back and Gaby's laughing eyes and what they call Life. But it is certain that the Ballets, the Beecham operas, the Stage Societies will be nationalised, one and all.

Finally, let us realise that the new theatre can never be built or the new movement set going without a new audience.

The present system commercialises art and puts it under the Iron Heel of wage-slavery. It deprives the world of art by depriving the artist of bread. Blake died so poor that no one can even identify his grave, and a good deal of his work perished with him. There is Titian under economic pressure creating a chaste Venus for the monks and a voluptuous bawd for the debauchees. Notice the banal effect of Commercialism on Art-product in the abasement of all that is best to the requirements of commercial success. Is it not necessary for the artist to recreate the whole fabric of Society and base it on such foundations that free Art

can thrive without commercial taint? Is it not necessary for the playwright, whose material is humanity, that his material should be improving, displaying newer beauty, newer freedom, newer thought, newer conflicts. "In no man yet has the spirit of all humanity dwelt. The world will, must, bring this about." Only then will the artist understand his business which is to show not merely life but life in relation to his own vision, which is not necessarily a golden vision. Only then will all Great Art become what it should never cease to be, truly prophetic. Only then will the new master-idea arise, giving birth to the new masterpiece to be played in the new theatre before the new audience. "Oh that the poets would again be such as they were wont to be—Seers."

And the playwrights? What are they going to do about it?



E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

LOVE AND SIN

**T**WO creatures stood by a house and one went in,  
The name of the first was Love, of the other Sin.

Sin seem'd a man right fair with a cheek of joy,  
Love was begrim'd and patch'd like a beggar boy.

Sin brake bolt with a laugh, "Shall we to her straight?"  
Love knelt down on the step, "Better dream and wait."

Night and the stars appear'd while Love slept there,  
But nothing came to disturb his uncut hair.

Sin sallied forth at dawn with a splendid brow,  
"She's awake, brother Love," he said, "you can have her now."

ENIGMA

**I** AM dead yet I live, a most wonderful thing;  
I laugh and I talk and my fancy takes wing.  
Here's to you and to you, and I hope you're quite well;  
Your mother was ailing when last I heard tell,  
And that walk, you remember, on Salisbury Plain,  
How gaily we sparr'd in the thunder and rain!  
And moreover I eat and I drink just as ever,  
And put finger to brow when I want to seem clever;  
But all this long while I am dead as a stone,  
With no sense of the difference 'twixt seven and one,

And my friend and my foe are the same to me quite,  
And daylight's as darkness and crimson's as white,  
And old folks as children and children as cats,  
And cats as tin kettles and kettles as bats.  
And if you would know how this marvel took place  
I can no more explain it than alter my face,  
Which is dead, though it moves with a smile or a frown ;  
Yet I died, I bethink me, in old London town.

## SEASONS

**S**NOW on the fields, a spray of briar  
Across the window creaking,  
Two by a sunken fire  
Estrang'd, unspeaking.

O for the radiant mist of leaves,  
The oak upon the meadow,  
And the twin souls with sheaves  
Chasing a shadow.



## HERBERT READ

### HUSKISSON SACRED AND PROFANE

*Another Jest too deep for Laughter*

“Three metamorphoses of the spirit have I designated unto you: how the spirit became a camel, the camel a lion, and the lion at last a child. Thus spake Zarathustra. And at that time he abode in the town which is called the Pied Cow.”—NIETZSCHE.

#### I

*Prelude in  
Arcadia*

EARLY dawn and the nymphs are gliding  
In an elusive sequence  
Of gold light along the woodland's edge;  
And the songs  
Of roused birds are making  
Dawn vocal in leafy domes.

Huskisson is yet sleeping.  
And when at last light slits his puffy lids  
The nymphs have taken to their far recesses,  
And the birds are busy on their wings.

But soon he takes his whittled stick  
And goes out into the early morning.  
Down the lanes to the garth-pen  
He urges the mournful milky cattle.

The milkmaids meet them in the sheds  
With bright-scoured pails and milking-stools:  
They lean their pretty heads  
Against a cow's roan glossy flank  
And languidly impel  
The juicy dugs.

Huskisson leaves for the meadows  
Where the woolly ewes munch cool grass.  
*Koy-bé, koy-bé*, he calls to the lambs  
Who bleat in the wide loneliness.  
He lifts the old ewes' feet to scrape the rot,  
And scatters fresh swedes for them to eat.

The pewits cry; the sun climbs high;  
Huskisson is gay in the meadows.

## II

*The Sacred  
Progression*

**E**VENTUALLY  
Huskisson fell on a spiral vortex,  
The revolutions of which lasted  
Each a decade.

At the end of the first decade  
He had transcended rusticity:  
His natural force  
Melted a way through the pale brains of citizens.

At another revolution of the spiral  
He is eminent and despotic.  
He has taken to wife Emily,  
Daughter of a City Magnate.

The next decade he spends  
Growing rather gross.  
Florid cheeks and intimations of a paunch  
Ruffle his equanimity.

He lives in a northern suburb,  
And his ménage  
Is the ménage of all model men—  
The apex of his distress is infinite.

\* \* \* \*

One night towards the end of the third decade,  
Clad in a pink vest,  
Huskisson crouched on a bedroom chair,  
Scratching his hairy legs.  
Emily  
Made mountains in the bed.  
Said Huskisson: "We have begot  
Children to the number of seven.  
Seven children in their turn beget. . . God only knows.  
Our progeny  
Ultimately lapses into cosmogony."

Emily was mute.

For a while  
Huskisson watched a spider crawl  
Across the cracked white ceiling,  
His vision sinking  
Through deep sub-conscious seas.

Coming suddenly to the surface,  
He donned his flannel pyjamas  
And presently  
Slept peacefully by the side of Emily.

### III

*The Profane  
Rumination*

**T**O woo his Lady in the National  
Lord Nelson descends from his ornate high  
Pedestal the while the passionate  
White fountains sigh.

Huskisson leans against a lion  
And faces down the Strand;  
He gives his mind to meditation,  
Resting his brow on a slender hand:

“The euphonies of Cockspur Street  
Assail mine amorous ear:  
Dim palæolithic crickets screech  
About Cophetua's bier.

I have been solemn over-long  
When I might have been an antelope:  
I would fill my universe with song  
From the vantage of a far Andean slope.

The pendulous trunks of elephants  
Disturb my peace of mind:  
A twilight settles on Energies,  
And I must flee my kind.

To Amazonian forests bilious and lush,  
Where the gobbling boa-constrictor glides,  
And pachyderms twist their nervous tails  
In the middle of absurdly big backsides.

#### IV

*The Profane  
Progression*

**A**T the age of forty-seven,  
Having settled an annuity on his wife Emily,  
Huskisson disappeared one August evening.  
The newspapers talked of him for less than nine days,  
And the detectives were anything but active at that  
time of the year.

Emily, after a spasmodic grief lasting fourteen days,  
Found consolation in the works of Boehme.

Huskisson, down in the docks,  
Booked a passage in the *Queen of the Incas*.  
*En voyage*  
He grew a beard like Walt Whitman's

And became  
Companion of low men and lascars.  
He disembarked at Rio,  
Smiling like Mona Lisa,  
And all his worldly possessions  
Wrapped in a bandana handkerchief.  
He made immediate dispatch  
Into the unknown hinterland—  
His movements meteoric.  
See him! See him!  
Over the rolling savannas he strides,  
Essential shagginess.  
His boots kick the skyline  
And his nose is rheumy in the clouds.  
His scimitar  
Devised of the converging orbits of the sun and moon  
Swings adrift the ether,  
Dismaying the stars.

When among the rustling leaves  
The humming-birds settle at late night,  
Huskisson will kindle his camp-fire,  
And the serenades of tanagers  
Will soothe him till he sleeps.

## BABETTE DEUTSCH

TO —

**S** CARRED from the war-ploughed fields  
You sing of love.  
As those too tired  
With the monotony of their agony  
To know they have desired  
Aught but soft lips and kinder breast,  
And the quick key  
To the undoing of the old unrest.  
The stale and filthy tale of war,  
The golden grace you burned and rotted for  
Are done.  
Poor animal,  
Crawling so sick and lonely from your trench,  
Having seen  
Unburied bones and flesh turned green,  
Swallowed the stench and cleaned your gun,—  
Now there is nothing underneath the sun  
You want  
But the sweet flesh, the lovely bones of her.  
Poor lover,  
We cry, whose nights you envied, lying alone;  
Who have seen peace ride the years,  
And love go before dawn.

### ENTR'ACTE

**Y**OUR eyes  
Are ruddy amber, fired with wit.  
Your mouth  
Trembles with mockery  
Too exquisite for any word.  
Only your body you hold tense,  
With the stiff grace of a sad diffidence.



H. J. MASSINGHAM

EVE

**D**O not think, Eve, I do not know you, Eve,  
Sailing your body down this London way,  
Sowing the air with rosy loves to weave  
Around us, Eve—or is it Lesbia?

Robed in the graces of all Paradise,  
In body, Eve, or is it in the soul?  
Circe, Medusa, whose enchanting eyes  
The script of Nature's debt shall here unroll.

Close to those eyes now shuddering I drew,  
Into your eyes for Paradise I gazed,  
And I found nothing, Eve, nothing but you,  
You in your trophies, Paradise all waste!

For leagues across the wilderness  
I watched you prowl and rove  
And leap and in your talons press  
The moaning wounded dove.

Faster they fled, the many-hued,  
The wingèd thoughts unfurled  
Of God, whose ecstasy has strewed  
Them thick upon the world.

But you have followed after,  
Fresh-blooded with your prey,  
Howling in your Mænad laughter,  
And torn their wings away.

And panting here I found you lain  
In the down of all your slain.

I saw you smiling pass down Oxford Street ;  
On carrion full fed, a smiling ghoul ;  
A surcubus ; sunk, huddled at your feet  
Creation drained : Eve exquisite and foul !

THE TOWER IN THE LANE

WHEN the Spring returned to Challfont, many of the people had died of the winter-fevers, and the churches were draped with purple and glittering with the mortuary tapers. A funeral mass was going on in Saint Werdagh's, and the muted bells tolled a melancholy peal. But the children, to whom Death was merely a mysterious fairy, trooped out gleefully to meet the sun; cats and old women warmed themselves in the pure crocus-coloured light; burning crocuses pushed up their little luminous cups in the green plots and drenching yards; many a bird sang in the leafless boughs, timidly at first, later with ever sweeter, ever more courageous triumph. They knew very well that the sun's victory was now assured.

In Petkin Lane, in the shadow of the grey crumbling tower of the ancient mariners' church, six brats tumbled on the cobbles, quite warm in the young heats, and their tawdry-coloured toys made splashes of brightness in the dingy street. Susan had a bunch of crocuses and primroses in her hands; with the wanton cruelty of children she tore off the petals and scattered them over the brawling mouths of her companions. Joe wrestled with Arthur, and at the door of Number Ten, old Mother Hannakyn, in her red shawl and battered bonnet, peered sharply over her horn spectacles at her noisy charges. The clock in the tower struck twelve: a rout of jarring daws came screaming out of the belfry: between the faded scarlets of the house-roofs the sea showed, dim and far off, vaguely blue like some fragrant flower.

The smoke went up from Petkin Lane, solemn and remote

from the world, and the stone image of Saint Mary, dark and time-worn over the church porch, seemed to include the street in its monotonous benediction. Housewives in the fire-lit kitchens laboured over their cooking, for many fishermen were expected to return at one. The golden weathercock on the tower's top glittered as it pointed to the south, from whence blew a warm and kindly breeze, instinct with a new mysterious life.

## AS AN ARMY WITH BANNERS . . .

### I

**H**ER dark green robes embroidered all with flowers  
Trail to the ground their velvet lengths and fill  
The chapel with a cloud; like a town of towers  
Upon a silent, solitary hill

Stands up the splendour of Our Lady of Mount Carmel:  
A noise of singing fills the fumèd space,  
Where incense rises in blue sweetness whirled  
Before Her painted calm most holy Face.

The nuns have brought dry withered wreaths of flowers,  
Verbenas mild, syringas honey-sweet,  
To sigh out their souls in a serenity of silence  
Amid the waxen drips and tinsel at her feet:

Saying: Avè, O Mother, Mercy of flowers and leaves,  
And of all green growth, of all things lovely and pure;  
Lo, where we Thy children perish at Thy feet  
In the perfume of death—but Thou dost ever endure!

## II

**N**UNS in green chambers have made chaplets: yea,  
Sitting in small dark rooms looking out upon  
A garden dun with yews at the ending of day,  
Where a few small tapers mourn for the sunken sun

With primitive light in silvern candlesticks,  
A few white tapers small and slender-clean—  
Flowers amid bays and prickly leaves they mix,  
To strew about the feet of their only Queen:

And the voices of the children in this House of Carmel  
Going up before Her, punctual noon, dawn, eve,  
Are as flowers breaking open into spring,  
A soft-balmed spring, dreams of even deeper silence.

She is even as the ancient Earth, mother of all,  
The flowers embroider Her dark green mantle round;  
She is even as the grey winds crying out in barren winter,  
As the first blue flower that starts up out of April ground.

## ELIOT CRAWSHAY WILLIAMS

### A PSALM OF PEACE

WE asked for Peace; and they have given us a stone.

We besought them to forge a plough-share; and lo! a badly-tempered sword.

We requested a symphony; they promptly played "The Battle of Prague."

We ordered a statue of Liberty; and they executed a plaster group of Mars and the Furies.

We wished for sunshine; and we find ourselves in a thunder-storm.

We hungered for a good, simple meal; we have to eat a second-rate French *table d'hôte*.

We desired a well-constructed and appointed home; and we are offered a jerry-built villa where the door-handles come off and the hot water is cold.

We longed after a pleasant garden; alas! we shall toil in a wilderness where the weeds are more numerous than the flowers.

We begged them to paint for us a peaceful landscape; and they have produced a cubist sketch of a battlefield.

We asked them to write another "Paradise Regained;" but they have only been capable of a *Daily Mail* feuilleton.

In fact, we wanted a clean peace; and they have made us a bloody mess.



## BESIDE THE STILL WATERS

**B**ESIDE the still waters I will lie me down  
Beside the still waters, solemn, sorrow-deep.  
There is no comfort in the hurrying town;  
Silence I crave, and loneliness and sleep.

Beside the still waters I will rest awhile,  
Beside the still waters, heavy as my heart,  
Where there is none to stab me with a smile,  
There with my sorrow I will dwell apart.

Under the fathomless and uncaring sky  
I will lie down beside the still waters ;  
Lulling my lonely sorrow will I lie,  
Far from the world and all its sons and daughters.

T. W. EARP

BROWN EARTH AND BEECH-TREE

I

THE half-moon has been caught in a small white cloud,  
Its light can hardly reach down into the copse.  
What is the change that has come over the branches?  
Sinister, malignant, they entwine, reach out  
In an obscure web across the path. Now evil  
Creeps through the dusk. All had been quiet before;  
A twig breaks somewhere; a bird with sudden clatter  
Whirrs up; and that last sound was almost a scream.  
Now hoofs and horns shoot, and the rough pelt steals  
Over sleek thighs. This is enchantment. Quickly!  
Out, out to the open and the bare brown fields!

II

Growth, ripening, and fruitage, these have passed;  
The burden has been borne. The large square fields  
Lie open to the sky. The rain descending  
And the great, sweeping winds search through each pore,  
Washing and cleansing. O beauty of bare earth!  
Before the sower comes you may take rest,  
A little rest, O constant, labouring earth.  
Here is no shame in nakedness; nought here  
Save patient, furrowed soil, stripped of all splendour,  
And yet more splendid, being stripped. To-day,  
Is not this field the queenliest, first mother?  
Heaved on the hill-crest up to the clear sky,  
Silent, outspread, she lies. This is her pause,  
Her little respite between labour and labour.  
Watch well, and you will say you see her breathe.  
Listen, and you will hear the bare earth breathing.

## MERLIN

**M**ERLIN the wise and good,  
The counsellor of kings,  
Has gone out to the wood  
And in cracked voice sings ;

Because a maid has caught him  
That had all the world's lore,  
And love's new learning taught him  
That never loved before.

He droops his old, thin hands  
To dabble in the pool,  
And laughs, and understands  
And knows the world a fool.

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Yeats, W. Butler: *The Wandering of Oisín—Poems, 1899–  
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