

A Pageant of Life

Poems by

GAMALIEL BRADFORD, Jr.

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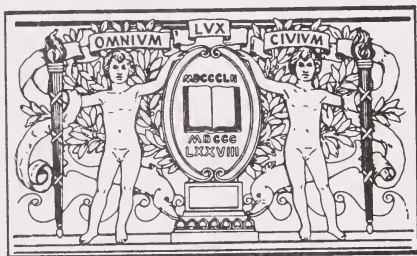
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A PAGEANT OF LIFE

Gamaliel Bradford, Jr.



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A PAGEANT OF LIFE

HERACLITUS

As one who in a mighty river swims
And feels the water's smooth, incessant flow,
With drops that ever come and ever go,
Till his brain totters and his eyesight dims,
So may we feel our life fly. Lightest whims
And fiercest lusts that rock us to and fro
Shift, fade alike, and vanish. Fast or slow,
The endless stream its unknown channel brims.

One only in this change remains unchanged.
All time sweeps on and all it leaves behind,
The heart that harbored and the heart that ranged,
All passion's ebbs and flows, and hope's clear wind,
All love and hate, estranger and estranged,
Are quiet in that one eternal mind.

EPICURUS

From early morn till late at eve I use
To ponder on the cause and end of things:
Whether the gods are vain imaginings,
Why love is blind, why passions crush and bruise,
Why men seek evil and the good refuse.
Beneath my trees, where Philomela sings,
Where fountains play, and marble gods and kings
Look on benign, I meditate and muse.

Sometimes a wave of girlish love breaks in
And floods my reveries with passion's foam—
I laugh, and pant, and struggle for my breath.
So years pass on, and end, as they begin;
And I, contented, wait till that day come,
Which leads from quiet life to quiet death.

MENANDER

The mighty days were gone and the mere lees
Of poetry and song alone were left.
Athens, of glory and high place bereft,
Forgot her Phidias and her Sophocles.
Yet thou, content with lesser palm than these,
Didst frame with careful grace thy comic weft.
With easy raillery and conduct deft
At once couldst charm the sage, the vulgar please.

A mellow wisdom through thy pages flows,
Not shaking laughter, holding both his sides,
But such sweet wit as meditation guides,
Just tempered with the pause of him who knows
That human life and love are light as breath,
Till weighted with the leaden thought of death.

ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE

Swift Europe rushed on Asia, horse and man,
Borne onward by that young heroic soul,
Like winter tides, whose surge brooks no control.
The heavy East could but with wonder scan
So many fiery hearts that rode, and ran,
And raved, and fought, and bled, and drank,
and stole
Her hoarded wealth, and had no other goal
Than noise and blood, action without a plan.

Patient she watched and waited for her time,
Until at length the victors' selves were changed:
From Grecian thought and Grecian strength
estranged,
In womanish garb which womanish life beseems,
Consumed by Eastern vice and Eastern dreams,
They rotted in the quiet Asian clime.

THEOCRITUS

The country life of poets is so sweet!
The low, the base, the clogging, and the mean
Are banished far from that enchanting scene.
The flute and tabor tempt unwearied feet
To gleam like stars for starless age, whose seat
Is quiet under boughs forever green.
If only such a sweet world e'er had been
Outside of Fancy's realm and dear retreat.

In thee alone that golden world seems real.
The breath of cattle, touch of hairy goats,
Coarse rustic jest, laugh long and loud and
free—
All mingle in thy pastoral ideal,
Lending a homely savor to thy notes,
Sung by the blue, divine, Sicilian sea.

HANNIBAL

Son of the splendid city of the sea,
Who climbed so high to fall at last so low,
How grand it was to sweep from ice and snow,
Like Alpine eagle, on thine enemy;
To gorge on spoil of Roman luxury,
To grind thy heel into thy country's foe,
To make her writhing, groaning, pleading, know
The bitter taste of scorned humility.

Vain triumph! She was sterner framed than thou,
As thou wert doomed to find, when, slow and sure,
She urged revenge unto thy very home.
The knee she made to bend must ever bow;
No hope could medicine, no time could cure
What once was shattered by imperial Rome.

DYING GREECE

Light of the world, thou idol of the wise,
Greece, first in thought and first in beauty too,
Thy grandeur gone, thou needs must stoop to sue,
Cringing and pleading, 'neath the Roman eyes,
Full of strange greed and barbarous surprise.
Worse still is yet to come: a filthy crew,
Christian and Turk, in ruffian hordes, must strew
Thy sacred soil with their iniquities.

Yet through the night and storm of time's decay
Thy memory and glory shall abide.
Though winds may rave and shattering tempests
sway
The bark in which the hopes of man are driven;
No mist shall dim, no cloud of fate shall hide
Athens, the fairest star in all thought's heaven.

REPUBLICAN ROME

Let others shape and carve and paint and gild,
Our Rome shall triumph in the rule of men.
The whole wide world shall hail the denizen
Of this imperial city seven-hilled.
Let Carthage sullen bow, Greece servile build
Our monuments with trowel and with pen.
In far Helvetia's most sequestered glen
Men's mouths shall be with Roman glory filled.

Alas, if fame of rule could outwear fame
Of lyre, of pen, of chisel, or of brush!
But consuls steal and great commanders thief;
The hand that was so mighty to achieve
Is mightier still to burn and grind and crush;
And Roman glory is but Roman shame.

LUCRETIUS

Great rebel, in the thunder of thy verse
The beating of thy passionate heart is heard,
Which stamped its energy on every word,
And dared proclaim the universal curse
That broods on life. Thou labored'st to disperse
The pale deceits, by fond man still preferred
To bare and naked truth, not over-blurred
With foul hypocrisy and evils worse:
Hatred, and superstition, and low guile.
Thou hast thy sweets, too: pure, serene content,
In realms where high philosophy doth move;
Stoic resolve to meet what fate hath sent;
And here and there the purple light of love,
Touching thought's arid desert with a smile.

LESBIA

That piercing, tender, grief-thrilled plaint must
harrow
The souls of all who hear with lover's ears.
And still, with thee, after two thousand years,
We mourn about the falling of a sparrow.
So, like a swift gleam through a casement narrow,
Pours down on us a flood of smiles and tears,
Blending thy name with all Love's hopes and
fears,
In words bright, keen, and stinging as his arrow.

Kisses, and kisses, and kisses, yet again,
As thick as autumn leaves, or summer rain,
Or arid sand upon the Libyan hills!
If only so love could be made to stay,
And hideous, creeping age be kept away,
Which starves and numbs and freezes, ere it kills.

CLEOPATRA

Thou serpent of old Nile, in whose gay coil
The noblest of the world were caught and stung,
Fierce, opulent beauty, from whose honeyed
tongue
Variety flowed still, thyself the foil
To thine own loveliness, in what turmoil
Thou put'st him even today, who dreams among
Old books in which thy witcheries are sung!
What would he give to tread thy mystic soil,
To swim thy sacred river, whose divine,
Slow tide flows seven-mouthed to the sea,
To serve thine Isis, to adore thy shrine
With trembling, love-infatuated knee,
To feel thy burning lips once kiss him thine—
What would he give to have been loved by thee!

VIRGIL

The sheaf, the vine, the apple, and the bee,
And fauns who pipe to old Silenus bass,
Sufficed thy dreaming youth. The Roman race,
With all its pomp and glory, could not be
Enough for thy maturer faculty,
Till human love warmed it with crimson trace.
Who of the poets of sweetness and of grace—
Beloved band,—has ever equalled thee?

Not pure Racine, too conscious of his age,
Not Tasso, smothered in a world of dreams,
Not Spenser, lost in his own melody,
Has mastered so the subtle witchery
Of words and thoughts, whose intricate blending
seems
An opiate for life's dull pilgrimage.

THE STAR

In old Chaldea, in the chilly night,
The shepherds watched their flocks, and hid
among
Their fleecy charge, told the dull hours along.
When sudden, in the East, an unknown light
Flares upwards, and about its lustre bright
Angels, in flashing cohorts, singing, throng.
The lovely echo of that morning song
Made the foul shadows of the dark take flight
And waked another world. To blast old lies
And the weak, futile dreaming of the wise,
To teach us what we cannot quite forget,
To free mankind from death's eternal prison—
Star of the world, for these things wert thou risen,
Star of the world, ah, wherefore art thou set?

EPICETETUS

Serve wisdom only, make the right thy guide,
And let desire with all its evils be.
Behold the shadow world indifferently,
That neither life nor death may once divide
Thy thoughts from the Unchanged whom changes
hide.
Trust in thine own firm will, and thou shalt see
Pleasure and pain become alike to thee,
And man in his own virtue deified.
Stern law and guide severe, ah, too severe,
For men of dust not moulded into stone,
Too barren is the refuge thou supply'st.
The broken human heart, too weak to bear
Thy harsh and rigid rule, sighed and took on
The mild and gentle yoke of Jesus Christ.

THE VILLA OF HADRIAN

"Animula, vagula, blandula."

The golden glory of an autumn sun
Sheds its full radiance on the mountain tops;
While, save the birds' bright singing in the copse,
No murmur breaks the midday hush, not one.
I dream among vast columns, overspun
With cobwebs, walls from which the ivy drops
In gleaming clusters, roofs whose mighty props
Are tottering, halls whose grandeur is undone.

And thou, whose curious spirit planned this whole,
To make thine eve epitomize thy noon,
Whose restlessness, forced here to find its goal,
Lay brooding on the hour that comes too soon,—
Flits now thy timid, frail, unquiet soul
Beyond the orb'd wanderings of the moon?

THE FAUN

Out from the covert of the tangled boughs
A faun, crouched close, peered, with his strange,
wild eyes,
Watching the sacred Christian mysteries.
No rout he saw in Bacchanal carouse,
No spilt blood, no plight of grosser vows.
He heard the blessed hymn so solemn rise
It touched the very azure of the skies:
The Son of Man receives the Church, his spouse.

The scared faun heard and shook in every limb.
His eyes grew wilder with a strange dismay.
The gospel new he felt was not for him,
Creature of unmixed earth and tainted clay.
He turned; and far within the forest dim,
Sought to escape the glare of Christian day.

LUCIAN

Thou could'st call spirits from the vasty deep,
And they would come when thou did'st call for
them;

Could'st hang the sparkle of an airy gem
Of wit on mortals who had lain asleep
So long, they had forgot to laugh or weep;
Could'st make a skeleton shake off its phlegm
And dance a jig or phrase an apothegm,
Then back once more to dust and quiet creep.

The gods for thee would leap like marionettes,
Or mow like apes, or chatter like the jay.
Happy such heart as thine, which walks its way,
In pleasant sunlight of its own sweet mirth;
And pleased with airy mockery, forgets
The dusty toil and vain deceits of earth.

MARCUS AURELIUS

Beggars in rags and bare philosophers
Take comfort in the airy sweets of thought.
The austere paths of truth are seldom sought
By those who plunge their hands in Fortune's purse
Up to the elbow. Solid joys of hers,
Though with satiety and sadness fraught,
Beguile the proud. He only who is taught
By care and grief the way of right prefers.

Yet thou, arrayed in thy imperial might,
Seated on what seemed Rome's eternal throne,
With treasures and armies at thy nod,
Kept'st firm, and calm, and clear, thine inward
sight,
And still, with steady step, wert pressing on
Toward a diviner resting place in God.

A SAINT (Third Century A. D.)

Come, hack me, hew me, tear me limb from limb.
Bring out your rack, your pincers, and your steel.
Urge on your executioners to deal
Quick death or slow, with all their torments grim.
What though my heart should faint and my brain
swim,
What though my weak will cannot quite conceal
The throb and wrench of human nerves which
feel?—
Your sword, your axe, your flame cannot hide him.

O God! The smoke and blaze are mounting
higher.
I hear the fearful rushing of the fire,
Give me that courage which thou ne'er deny'st.
After the draining of this bitter cup,
My soul in glory shall be lifted up
And I shall triumph with the risen Christ.

ST. ANTHONY

Devils of fear, devils who roar and rage,
Devils with rending steel and scorching fire;
Devils of greed, who spur on sharp desire
With gold and gems that dazzle even the sage;
Devils of power, who whisper wars to wage
And thrones to which the wicked may aspire;
Devils of ease, who proffer rich attire
And idle shifts to cheer life's pilgrimage;

Devils of lust, with strange, voluptuous forms,
Enchanting eyes that make the soul afraid,
That wither virtue and turn conscience tame;
Devils alone, devils in shoals and swarms—
Yet all these devils tremble and fear and fade
And vanish, when I name the Saviour's name.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE

"New creeds," thou said'st, "new evils. Men contend

For foolish fancies about things unknown,
Because they dare not live for right alone.
They think their greed and wickedness will end
When once a dream-god ventures to descend
And bear the curse of flesh with mortal groan.
Fools, never yet could man for man atone.
Keep your old gods and let your own lives mend."

Vain hope, to raise the dead, bring back the past:
New Gods are born, the old are forced to bow.
In spite of yearning hearts and bitter tears,
The most supreme must fade and fail at last.
And many and many a soul is striving now,
As thou did'st—after fifteen hundred years.

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

Strange strife of words, which love and good forgets,
Damnation deep backward and forward tossed,
The depths of man's dark ignorance shown most
By the impatient rage with which he frets
Against the hopeless impotence that nets
And strangles him. Scholars in host on host,
Branding each other with enormous boast
Of sounding wrath and empty epithets.

And out of this grotesque debate there grew,
From those who conquered and those overcome,
The hugest fabric the world ever knew,
Creed piled on creed and tome on dusty tome.
Strange that so vast an edifice should be
Reared from that simple life in Galilee.

DAPHNIS AND CHLOE

Love, warm and fresh and innocent as May;
 Love, panting in the inmost solitudes
 And quiet, dewy nooks of dim, green woods;
Love, bright beneath the placid eye of day,
Not forced to hide its glowing joys away
 From canting gossipry, whose tongue intrudes,
 And cold, cramped, harsh, dull age's platitudes;
Love, which forgets the hours that will not stay
And makes a man immortal as a god;
 Love, still athirst, still quenched, whose golden
 cup
 Makes the whole world to passionate music
 move;
Love, at whose royal and omnipotent nod,
 The soul in one wide flame is lifted up—
 See here thy sweetest sacrifice, O Love.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES

The fierce and torrid suns of summer flash
 Upon me, till I wither in the glare;
 And fiery devils, sailing in the air,
Tempt my sick fancy, till I long to dash
My reeling brains out. Storms immense and rash
 Come hurrying from the angry South wind's lair.
 Mad lightnings lay the vault of Heaven bare,
Till all my senses shiver in the crash.

Then, slow awaking, in a vision dim,
I hear the murmur of a solemn hymn,
 From the devout below who watch and pray;
While far above, in azure depths of Heaven,
Resounds the ringing of the planets seven,
 In mighty march on their eternal way.

THE DARK AGES

Like the amazement of a night attack,
When arms resound and half-waked sentries stare,
And lurid torches flicker in the air,
Making the heavy dark more dense and black:
Such were those hideous ages. Storm and sack,
Man's hate let loose without control or care,
Terrible wrath, more terrible despair,
Strife here, strife there, urged forward and urged
back.

All Europe shook with the insensate jar;
Yet, mid the crash of moving horde on horde,
Above the tumult and the din of war,
Brighter than gleam of torch or flash of sword,
Calm in the vault of Heaven hung one fair star,
The memory and love of Christ the Lord.

THE KNIGHT ERRANT

All day I ride at will through sun and shade;
Sometimes with rein upon my horse's neck,
Lazily watching drops of light that fleck
The leaves and blossoms in a woodland glade;
Sometimes, in wild career, with eager blade,
Crushing out wrong and setting bound and check
To cruelty and greed, which at my beck
Cower and cringe, of honest wrath afraid;

And sometimes, through the forest green, I see
A lady dim, who nods and laughs at me,
I follow, follow, follow, in despair;
Until at length, in some secluded grot,
Where angry winds and tempests enter not,
She kisses me, and soothes my soul from care.

THE SEA KING

No doubter he, nor questioner of things,
No pallid student, worn with thought's decay.
Over the pathless water lies his way.
Still in his ear the boisterous North wind sings,
Still he flies forward, on the eager wings
Of swift white galleys, till he strikes his prey,
Leaving behind him terror and dismay.—
Then with his cry the vault of Heaven rings.

And when his battles end, as end they must,
At least the bard's shrill legend he can hear,
Singing of bold deeds and the din of war.
What though his body be but sin and dust?
His soul sweeps out beyond the realm of fear,
The child of Odin and the loved of Thor.

THE CRUSADES

With flaunting plumes and gorgeous banners gay,
The lordly hosts went forth on sea and land;
Prelates and kings, exultant in command,
Made ancient realms stoop low beneath their sway.
Their splendor dimmed the eye of southern day,
And scared the Moslem from the sacred strand;
Till, lost in that drear waste of barren sand,
Famine and discord wasted them away.

Then they came back, like spent thieves, wearily,
Wounded and broken, faint, and sore, and wan,
Their splendor gone, their grandeur infamy,
Loathing the pride with which they first began.
So fail, so fade, so wither, and so die
The vast ideal hopes and aims of man.

THE TROUBADOUR

With lute and sword I wander all day long
Through quiet lanes and over sunny slopes;
Nor envy I the weary mole who gropes
In cities close, though gold to him belong.
Who has no end to reach can scarce go wrong;
The poor with neither thief nor beggar copes.
I have no other kingdom than my hopes;
I have no other riches than my song.

My song which I love more than even love,
Though love be all the matter that I sing.
Ah, when on moonlit eves I cease to rove
And bid my passion in my notes take wing,
It seems as if the very heaven above
Were set on fire with my carolling.

THE MENDICANT FRIAR

What though his frock be torn and skin be brown,
With filth of many years quite overlaid?
Does he not prosper in his jolly trade,
Trotting at vagrant will from town to town?
Can he not laugh at ease and lay him down
With well-filled can beneath the pleasant shade?
Why should he not be kissed by wife or maid,
When he for Christ's poor follower is known?

Mixed company, these followers of Christ:
Tiaraed Popes, with purple luxury;
Fat curates comfortably beneficed;
The easy-going flock, who keep one eye
On heaven, and clutch the world with greedy fist;
And some rare, sweet, white flowers of charity.

THE COURT FOOL

What though mankind still jangle and go wrong?
Not for the wisest prater of them all, I
Will bate one jot of my fantastic folly.
I shake my bells and sing an idle song.
For all world's beauty doth to me belong.
Let them have wisdom with her melancholy,
Let them be politic and me be jolly,—
I shake my bells and sing an idle song.

Sometimes, upon a summer afternoon,
I dream that men are governed by the moon,
And still, and still, the wild procession swells:
Wise kings, wise priests, wise fools run mad with
laughter;
And while they dance, and reel, and tumble after,
I sing an idle song and shake my bells.

THE MONK SIRENIUS

In quiet cell my quiet hours I spend,
A round of daily duties daily done:
Now slipping through my fingers, one by one,
My well worn beads, which well-worn prayers at-
tend;
Now adding splendid tints to what I penned
About the holy Mary and her son.
The task so long, so long ago begun
Goes leisurely; I would not have it end.

They say there's wild work in the world outside,
Princes and kings are hurrying far and wide;
There's crowns stuck on awry, crowns rent away;
And sometimes, with vague murmur from afar,
I hear the din and crash of hideous war—
What care I, so they let me paint and pray?

A SAINT (Thirteenth Century A. D.)

Out of the waves of vanity which toss
My weary soul, till grief is all it knows;
Out of the sharp variety of woes;
Out of the world's delight, which is but dross;
Out of the world's gain, which I count but loss;
As one scarce yet recovered from death's throes,
Who dazzled, weak, stumbling, and creeping goes,
I turn, and fling my arms about the Cross.

My brow is wet, my heart is filled with flame,
Thinking of all my sin and bitter shame—
And then I faint with breath of lilies sweet.
Close at my side I hear my Loved One say,
"Blessed are those that watch and those that pray;"
And all my soul is poured out at his feet.

THE GOTHIC

A dream of stone! Upon thy walls without
Is carved the tumult of the life of man,
The passions and the hopes, which, through the
span
Of years so brief, still hurry him about,
That flying from the strange, disordered rout,
He may find refuge in thy calm, may scan—
His arms about the Cross — those wounds that ran
With God's own blood, to free mankind from doubt.

We too would seek a refuge; but to thee
We come in vain; for all thy help is gone.
Thy Cross is broken. Where God's blood should be,
Mere man's blood is that never can atone
For one man's sin. And where we hoped to see
A dream of Heaven, we find a dream of stone.

PETRARCH

Thou master of this fourteen-stringed lyre,
 Cunningest weaver of delicious song,
 Whose stately measures even roll along,
Chilly without, but touched within with fire
Of stinging intellectual desire;
 Thou prince of those whose ecstasies belong
 To thought, not feeling, thou whose golden
 tongue
Made love's ideal soar a Heaven higher—
Petrarch, I thee invoke to aid my Muse;
 Not like believers who with vows adore,
 And kneel, and kiss, and pass, and so forget;
But that the constant worship which I use
 May grow in comprehension more and more,
 Till thy high seal upon my song be set.

CHAUCER

Thy tears are sweet, Dan Chaucer: Palemon,
 And Arcite, and the gentle Emily,
 And Constance, and Griselda, and most he
Who still so loud and clear kept singing on,
When they had cut his throat unto the bone,
 Those cursed Jews, with all their knavery.
But sweeter far than even thy tears can be,
Is thy serene, bright laughter, harming none,
Welling forth ever in delicious ease,
Like dancing sunlight on the dancing seas,
 Clear as the North wind, or a winter star.
What mirth, what revelry, what keen delight,
What jest by day and snatch of kiss by night,
 What smile supreme at life's tumultuous war!

THE RENAISSANCE

After the dreary night of blood and grief,
A crimson dawn of joy and splendor flowed
Out of the East, and touched the dark abode
Of stupid, low-browed priest and feudal thief.
All Europe woke and sighed with sweet relief,
Wondered and watched, while clear and clearer
glowed
Old loveliness, which neither storms corrode
Nor years can dim, though thick with gross belief.

Then sudden poured the fount of beauty forth,
Gorgeous with color, rich with phrase and rhyme,
Packed close with human love and hate intense:
It purpled east, and west, and south, and north,
Splendid with varying hues in every clime,
A carnival of passion and of sense.

BOTTICELLI

The pagan beauty and the pagan mirth;
The Hell-forgetting, Heaven-forgetting glee,
Which filled his age with sensual revelry,
That full and joyous age of the re-birth;
The round perfecting of our life on earth,
Which old Greece cherished, till it grew to be
Tainted with sombre Christianity—
All this he knew, knew it and knew its worth.

But when he tried to paint it, in his heart
He felt the throbbing of the Christian pain.
All Heaven and Hell were brooding o'er his art;
And in his fauns' wild eyes you see a start
Of terror; while his Graces strive in vain
To dance the old, mad, pagan dance again.

TITIAN AND THE VENETIAN PAINTERS

Who is the artist? He who sees and hears
Like common men, but sees and hears far more.
For common eyes, with busy haste, pass o'er
The beauty hidden in human smiles and tears.
Only the artist sees in what appears
To casual senses dull and mean and poor
A light and splendor never dreamed before,
And fixes it beyond the touch of years.

So thou and thy great fellows could perceive
Beauty in grief, which gladdens them that grieve,
And joy in joy beyond all common ken;
Nay more, could pour it forth with brush and pen,
Until the enraptured gazers half believe
A new and fairer world is given to men.

THE VOYAGERS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

"Let the dead world her dust and ashes breathe,
We wander forth to seek a continent.
Old sights, old sounds, old dreams cannot content
Our hungry souls, nor glory's common wreath.
Through the wild stir of waves that boil beneath
We battle on, for gain and conquest bent;
And throbs of fire, through all our pulses sent,
Make the quick brain with hope and ardor seethe."

So cried those ancient voyagers. Now no more
We sail an untried sea for unknown shore:
The outer world is dull and worn and old.
Our voyages lie o'er thought's enormous deep,
Where unfound lands of hidden wonder sleep
And gulfs that shake the heart however bold.

THE ARMADA

In the dim chambers of the Escorial
The sour fanatic mumbled o'er his creed.
"God gives me grace," he said, "to uproot the
weed
Of error from my land imperial.
Through Spain and through the world the axe shall
fall,
The heretic shall burn, with all his seed.
Yet who can say God reigns supreme indeed,
Till England's haughty splendor fade and pall."

So said he. And he sent his galleys forth
To crush that little island of the north,
England the fair, England the brave and free.
In thousands went they forth; but few came home,
Beaten and shattered by the icy foam,
Their fierce God baffled by the fiercer sea.

CERVANTES

Sweet saint of merriment, with kindly eyes,
Of all the many mingled gifts of Heaven
What better for all moods has e'er been given
Than that which bears thy name. So just, so wise,
So ripe in mirth, in all the quick surprise
Of ever-ready wit so calm, so true,
Furbishing up old nobleness in new,
Bright laughter, under which half-hidden lies
A world-wide sympathy with all that's good.
Or whole, or half, or nothing understood,
Thou art beloved still; and still do pass,
In mellow sunshine, as we dreaming lie,
The wan knight, with his spear held martially,
And Sancho plodding on his patient ass.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

No simple, quiet, palmer-folk were they,
With fearful mien, and humble staff and scrip.
It needed sterner hands to drive their ship
Over the dark and awful watery way.
It needed sterner hands to rear and stay
The firm erection of their statesmanship.
O mighty men of old, how great things slip,
Totter, and fail, and sink, unknown, away!

Your names remain, but gone, forever gone
Are those beliefs you reared your dwelling on,
Deeming it sure as the eternal rock.
Your children praise your virtues half in fear,
They hardly love you when they most revere;
And some there are who scruple not to mock.

THE ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

Land of my first love, garden of my heart!
Let other nations keep their simpler fare;
Let Spain exult in Calderon's sweet air;
And Athens triumph in her tragic art.
For throb of human life, for rushing dart
Of passion, like the storm in speed and glare,
What other nation can with you compare,
Land of my first love, garden of my heart?

Laughter and tears in like profusion come,
Blossom of rose, blossom of bitter rue,
Words which assuage the anguish they impart,
A tongue supreme, to me the tongue of home—
Sweet fate, to walk through life alone in you,
Land of my first love, garden of my heart.

RUBENS

No spirit world is thine, no saints who thresh
The grain of virtue from the chaff of life.
Thy saints are men of earth and earthly strife.
No Heaven in them. Thine is a world of flesh,
Flesh glowing, panting, with the throb of fresh,
Intense delight of sensual joy, flesh rife
With keen desires that sting it like a knife,
Flesh snared with witcheries of Satan's mesh.

No spirit world is thine. The solid earth,
With all it bears, is good enough for thee:
Fierce human passions and the plague of worth;
The sweet fruit of an hour's felicity;
And over all that smile at death and birth,
Whose calm outwears wrinkled philosophy.

CALDERON

Rosaura, Laura, Clara, Isabel,
Clarinda, Flora, Leonora, Elvira,
With Juan, Sancho, Ferdinand, and near a
Half hundred other dainty Dons as well.
Swords flashing, pistols crashing, there the swell
Of Christian organs booming loud, and here a
Grim Moslem with red turban—may the wearer
Burn redder, thousand fathoms deep in Hell!

Strange honor, striking, shooting, poisoning, stab-
bing;
Strange creed of hatred, shrined 'mid brands and
spears;
Laughter that bites its lips to hold from blabbing;
And anguish that keeps smiling through its tears.
Such—and in Heaven or earth thy like is none—
Such art thou, Spanish, Spanish Calderon.

VOLTAIRE

“Thou incarnation of a shallow age,
When love was dead, and virtue was a dream,
And God a name, and piety the theme
Of gibe and laughter, and to be a sage
Meant to throw off old custom and engage
In endless war with all men holy deem:
How canst thou ask for honor and esteem
From those who toil in life's stern pilgrimage?”

So cry thy foes; but I delight in thee,
Thy splendid wit, thy keen and sober sense.
I ask thee not for dreams or hopes intense;
But what a pleasure is thy mockery,
With what keen shafts thy foeman thou canst
press,
Pricking dull heads and empty nothingness.

RICHARDSON

Fair Pamela, with maiden grace demure,
Whom mirth-begotten Joseph cannot spoil;
And stately Grandison, whom patient toil
Framed to a type that ever shall endure;
Between them both the glorified, the pure,
Angelic lady, who mid all the coil
Of greed and lust, with ravenous turmoil,
Shines like a quiet star, serene and sure—

These are thy children, musty publisher,
Thou cotton nightcap, thou trim wig and sword,
Thou Philistine of Philistines at heart!
These are thy children. That the muse should stir
So tame a spirit with so swift a word!
How pleasant are thy mockeries, O Art!

KANT

Undoer of old creeds, thy mighty word,
Breathed from that peaceful German dwelling-
place,
Upheaved the temple of wisdom from its base
And shook the solid world. Thy voice was heard
But faintly, even as his was, who first stirred
New laws about the planetary race
And all the endless suns on suns that chase
Each other through the void; for men preferred,
As they have always done, their smooth old lies.
But thou did'st walk along thy quiet street,
And live thy quiet life, heeding them not,
In busy leisure piling thought on thought,—
Now is thy name the first of those we meet
In the eternal record of the wise.

THE RETURN TO NATURE

"My passion is the passion of the sea.
I share the glorious wandering of the cloud.
The tempest speaks my spirit, stern and proud.
The winds, which murmur everlastingly,
Breathe my regrets' unknown infinity.
My soul in bending flowers is bent and bowed."
Thus cried those men who saw behind the shroud
Of Nature omnipresent Deity.

Now man stands silent in the vast abyss,
He shudders at the crash of winds and seas,
Cold laws surround him with their hearts of
stone.
Nature no more can soothe him or caress:
Her starlit gulfs and awful mysteries
Leave him unpitied, loveless, and alone.

MODERN MUSIC

All beauty and all passion of all time
Are gathered in a carnival of sound:
The other arts seem creatures of the ground,
Compared to this, whose mounting raptures climb
Beyond the height of Heaven, and sublime
By their mere vagueness, wither and confound
The dusty webs of thought, which set a bound
To stone, to clay, to color, even to rhyme.

And yet are souls by art more deeply stirred
Than by an idle tune, which lovers play
On summer eves, or by a careless bird
Dropping his silver notes from woodland spray?
I know not; but such music I have heard
Till life and death and love did melt away.

SAINTE-BEUVE

To feel what other men feel; to command,
With insight keen, the subtle human soul;
To be one's self yet see what thoughts control
The artist's brain, the soldier's gleaming brand;
To pray with saints, yet press the sinner's hand;—
This was thy hope, this was thy constant goal.
One word will sum thy life up round and whole:
"All longings fail save that to understand."

Yet, after all, how much can knowledge give?
What have we gained, when thought's pale corrosive
Has soured the palate and made dull the eye?
These stores of learning, when we've laid them
by,
Can neither help the throbbing pulse to live,
Nor cheer the fainting heart, when it must die.

THE SOCIALISTIC-IDEALIST

Long ages since the poets sang, in hope,
Of dreams ideal and conditions new.
"The world," they said, "must needs the good
pursue
By rough and crooked ways, long, long must cope
With thieves who prey, and worthless drones who
mope;
But clear, behind the black cloud, spreads the blue,
And God will overcome, for he is true."
So sang the poets long since, and still we grope.

Ah, let us grope no longer! Poet nor God,
Neither in earth beneath nor Heaven above,
Can do for man what man must do himself.
Forget this race insane for pride and pelf.
Live by the golden rule, not by the rod.
The world has striven enough; now let it love.

DEMOCRACY

For ages in a sluggard doze he lay,
While kings and priests careered upon his back.
They stirred his dreams with steel and flame and
rack;
But still he slept and snored the time away.
At length he turned and felt the warmth of day,
And reared, and plunged, and learned the cruel
knack
Of blood, till purple kings and prelates black
Found he could smite and stab, as well as they.

Now he sprawls free, and shakes his mighty limbs,
Till palaces and temples rock and strain;
Combs back the dirty, matted hair, which dims
His blinking eyes, and chants, with might and
main,
In penny-sheets, self-laudatory hymns,—
Monster, with arms, legs, belly, and no brain.

L'ENVOI

Farewell, thou lovely harp of fourteen strings,
Companion, whom my idle hours employ,
Interpreter of sorrow and of joy,
Sweet utterer of unutterable things,
Strong bird, who bear'st away on fleet, white wings
The trivial fret whose waspish stings annoy,
Nay, even those deeper sorrows that destroy
The golden bloom of high imaginings.

Farewell! And let me whisper to thy chords
The highest message that my heart affords.
Sound thou it loud to earth and Heaven above:
Over the stormy sea of human fear
Two stars forever shine, serene and clear,
The star of laughter and the star of love.

THE VILLA OF HADRIAN

THE VILLA OF HADRIAN

Beyond the Atlantic surges drear
November winds blow shrill and clear,
And those I love and who love me
Are watching winter wearily.
But here, beneath the sky of Rome,
In Hadrian's forgotten home,
The ardent touch of summer still
Lies radiant over vale and hill,
And still the sun in mid-day height
Shines supereminently bright.

Close at my side, and all around,
Colossal fragments strew the ground,
Column and moulding, base and frieze,
Lost all their primitive degrees,
In huge confusion huddled lie,
And bare walls gape at the vast sky:
Decay of grandeur, wreck immense,
Imperial magnificence,
Sunken, fallen, ruined, gone,
Naught left behind but formless stone.
Yet, with soft and gentle plan,
Nature veils the grief of man:
Over broken pillar weaves
Ivy bright, with glittering leaves;
Spreads her flowers, far and wide,
Desolation's touch to hide,
Daisies tipped with crimson hue,
Gentians delicately blue,
Buds all yellow, pink, and white,
Starring the green, like drops of light;
Sends the quick, industrious bee,
To shame, with his activity,
Thoughts of death and dull decay;
Makes the timid lizard stray
Quiet over sunny wall,

Quiver and vanish ; best of all,
Bids the birds, in every bush,
Break the golden, mid-day hush
With flashing, trembling throbs of sound
That stir response above, around,
Then die away, and all is still.

So, undisturbed, I dream at will
Of him whose spirit framed this place,
The architect of imperial race,
Who planned this refuge for his age,
After a toilsome pilgrimage :
A strange caprice, a royal whim,
To reproduce in image dim,
Where senile thought in peace was furled,
The varied wonders of the world.

Athens here, the cynosure
Of thought and wit, in miniature,
The splendors of her art unfolded,
By consummate skill re-moulded ;
Trod, beneath these wood-slopes green,
In Aeschylean might, the scene.
Tempe's mimic waters flowed
By this felicitous abode.
Arching hall and gloomy shrine
Wakened memories divine,
Decked with wonders of the East ;
While the slow and solemn priest
Chanted on the sacred sod
Every rite of every god.
Nor were images of pleasure
Wanting in an equal measure.
Here the holy river ran,
Nile, the oldest god of man,
On whose quiet waters sail
Barks, by many a gentle gale
Borne voluptuous along,

Filled with love and filled with song.
Age, whose joys are fled away,
Bids revel and keep holiday
Youth, whose bliss must fade so soon,
Swifter than the changing moon,
Swifter than the rose or cloud,
So near the banquet to the shroud.
Nor less do ancient writers tell
That in these narrow limits Hell,
With all its tortures, was conceived,
A fable quick to be believed ;
For man's inventive genius well
Can figure all the pains of Hell :
But not so readily 'tis given
To feign a satisfying Heaven.

Thus the imperial traveller,
The memory-laden wanderer,
Without fatigue, or toil, or pain,
Could trace his journeys o'er again.
Happy! As I know well, whose ease,
Perilled in enormous seas,
Has all too hopelessly been lost
In slow sojourn, on foreign coast.
Quick-witted Rosalind, for me,
Spoke truth, in sprightly repartee :
He who strays long in foreign lands
His eyes are rich, but poor his hands.

Yet, spite of all the varied stores
Of beauty from a hundred shores,
Though memory wooed him with her smiles,
And love, from Asiatic isles,
Laid all its graces at his feet ;
I know that Hadrian's subtle, fleet,
And eager mind must oft have turned
From breath of parasites, whom he spurned,
From trickling fount and golden dome,
To thoughts of manlier, grander Rome.

At least, it must be so with me,
When hung afar in mist I see
That mighty fane that swells on high,
Like thunder-cloud in evening sky.
Far, far beyond that fane, I gaze
Back to the might of other days,
Back to the Caesars, back to Rome,
Who bade all other nations come
And bend the neck and bow the knee
And own her awful sovereignty.
I ponder on that regal state,
On those, the greatest of the great,
Of whom but one, nor best nor worst,
Was Hadrian, neither blessed, nor cursed.
What an enormous throne they filled,
Whose smile made rich, whose anger killed,
Whose jewelled sceptre, careless hurled,
Shook the foundations of the world.
And how in them, amazed, we scan
The incapacity of man.
For though some earned their high estate,
And some were wise, some good, some great,
The many were but ass, or ape,
Deformed by power from human shape,
Haters of men, deprived of good,
Their mighty place not understood,
Spurred on to wrath, to blood, to lust,
A mockery of gilded dust.
And under them the wise and free
Lived one long life of agony;
Till Rome, the mighty Rome supreme,
Grown great beyond her Fathers' dream,
Whose grandeur, like a golden girth,
Involved the nations of the earth,
Tottered, and failed, and sank, and fell.
As some vast ship, in vaster swell
Of monstrous and engulfing seas,

Whose masts are cut to give her ease,
Whose rudder gone, whose cables rent,
Whose utmost energy is spent,
Still toils and strains amid the surge;
Now sinks, yet once more to emerge;
Then, slow and sullen, rolls to sleep,
Far down in the enormous deep:
So Rome.

The shade, in Tempe vale,

Deeper grows, the olives pale
Shiver in the autumn breeze,
Which has driven home the bees,
And no longer here is heard
Sound of any singing bird.
Home of empire, fare thee well!
Better tales than thou canst tell
Come to me from far away,
In the realms of fading day.
Four bright eyes and four quick hands,
Over in the sunset lands,
Weave for me a garland sweet
Of merry looks and gestures fleet.
Forced from them to stray awhile,
I can here my hours beguile;
But neither art, with all its grace,
Nor sunny smile, nor fairy face,
Nor old world imaginings,
Dreams of consuls and of kings,
Nor even the mighty past of Rome,
Can give me what I have at home.

SONG OF THE SIRENS TO ULYSSES

Weary wanderer, wave-worn Ulysses,
Stay thy bark by this sunny isle.
Let Siren murmurs and Siren kisses
Soothe thy wayfaring soul awhile.

Why should'st thou battle on, sad-eyed wanderer?
Why should'st thou seek for thy barren Greece?
Why face the storm, with head bared to the Thunderer?
Weary Ulysses, here rest in peace.

Hera hates thee, Zeus longs to be rid of thee,
Pallas Athena guides thee no more.
She will be loving another instead of thee,
Turn, O Ulysses, thy prow toward shore.

Men have belied us, have slandered us, hated us,
We have not loved them, have paid scorn with scorn.
Thou, O Ulysses, unknown, hast awaited us,
Fate made us love thee the hour thou wert born.

Come, O Ulysses! Sweet meadows attend thee,
Soft dews, and softer sleep, love dreams for care.
We will adore thee, preserve thee, defend thee,
Rock thee and pillow thee with white arms fair.

What is the world but a black sea of trouble?
Here is no sorrow, no fear, no annoy.
Out on the dark deep thy cares will redouble,
Here thou wilt faint with the taste of our joy.

Weary wanderer, wave-worn Ulysses,
Stay thy bark by this sunny isle.
Let Siren murmurs and Siren kisses
Soothe thy wayfaring soul awhile.

A VERSE OF ISAIAH

"Take a harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered."—Isaiah xxiii, 16.

O harp forgotten, ravish men once more!

Lay the whole world's desire at my feet.

Youth and love's delight are sweet, so sweet,
And age is cold. My heart, my heart is sore.
'Tis not so many years since I was young;
Even yet my brow is younger than my heart;
But all the sweets of life are fled away,
So far away, I hardly know their names.
Yet I *was* young, and fair—they said—and pure.
I knew not there was evil in the world,
Set off in my own world of quiet joy.
I lived a child's life, sucked the sweets of it,
Filled myself with it to the very core.

O harp forgotten, ravish men once more!

Then came the sweet of love, sweetest of sweets,
A rose so red it filled the whole, wide earth,
And stained the blue of Heaven. Oh, so sweet,
So red! I asked no more than just that love,
One dear possession ever. Men forget,
Men weary. We, who have the charm to win,
Have not the skill to keep. That day! That day!
I was flung from him, bruised, and faint, and sore.

O, harp forgotten, ravish men once more.

I wandered then upon the world's wide sea.
Men called me fair, and often touched my lips,
And wooed me for a smile. And some I loved;
Not as I loved him first; but half in scorn,
Half with a hungry longing to forget,
To drown remembrance in the stinging wave
Of human passion; not, Oh, not for gold!

I never bartered even the fruits of love,
Not love's frail blossom for a kingdom's ore.
O harp forgotten, ravish men once more.
But I was fain to still the endless fret,
To dull cold fear and cheat the touch of time,
To quench a woman's longing, and blot out
Faint, far, sweet thoughts of home, and lovely
peace,

And all I was not and I might have been.
I drained the cup, I strained the aching nerve,
I sought not love, but lovers. That is o'er.

O harp forgotten, ravish men once more.
Yes, that is o'er; and I must sit alone,
And feel gray age along my temples creep,
And cold airs cling about me, damp and dead;
Alone, amid the song of lovely winds,
Amid the pleasant murmur of the waves,
Beneath the quiet motion of the stars,
Alone, and close before me swift decay,
Forgetfulness, or ignominy, among men,
Shame, and the unavoidable, horrible,
Blank, desolate, sombre portal of the tomb.
Woe, woe for all I loved and lost before!

O harp forgotten, ravish men once more.

Lay the whole world's desire at my feet.

Love and love's keen delight are sweet, so sweet,
And age is cold. My heart, my heart is sore.

LEOPARDI

I feel the quiet breath of summer winds
Kissing my forehead. Overhead the clouds
Drift slowly in the infinite of blue.
The vesper bell is ringing. Now the hind
Wearily trudges homeward, to forget
Labor and pain. The stars will soon be out,
Soon glimmer in the quiet dome of night,
Greeting thee, Italy. My Italy!
So great, so mighty once, so wretched now.
Can I forget the splendor of thy name,
The matchless fortune of imperial Rome?
Can I forget? Oh, bitter to remember!
In the vast tide and flux of human things
The blotting stain of memory alone
Makes us ourselves, the infinite curse of nature,
Who loves us not. A harsh and bitter power
Fostered us in a universe of pain,
A universe instinct with strife alone,
A universe whose essence is but war,
Whose mere existence is in mutual hate.
Oh, mystery! Oh, mystery! Our selves
Are but two jarring principles, the one
Still striving to assert itself and live,
To smite, and cleave, and crush, and overcome;
The other to forget itself, and be
But one pulse in the immensity of life,
To feel with all that feels, to be at one
With what eternally is not itself.
So torn, so worn, dismembered, shattered, null,
We roll into the sea of time, and float,
And suffer, and roll back into eternity.
They say that I am weak, and that my soul
Sees all things therefore darkly, I, they say,
Show in a wretched body wretched mind.
But even for that I dare rebel, and brand

Remorseless Nature with her wickedness.
Why am I weak? Why do I drag along
This wretched body through the wretched days,
Indolent, impotent, well nigh mad with pain?
Who made me so to suffer, what vile will,
With infinite, cold cruelty condemned
Its creatures to these ecstasies of grief?
Vain question! Vain as thought which beats its
wings

A little, with the passion of despair,
Flutters and struggles, cannot hold its poise,
And sinks into the silent deep of night.
Thought! Thought! In thought lies our primeval
curse;

For beasts can suffer and perchance forget,
Can snatch an hour, when the pulse of pain
Is dulled; but unto man fierce memory brings
Ever the weary strain of jarring nerves,
Ever brings shame and impotent regret,
Ever brings woe.

O quiet autumn winds,
Breathe on me still and seal my eyes in sleep,
Sleep that supplies a momentary balm,
Sleep, the beloved forerunner of death.
And death? If death were death, I would invoke
Him rather to shut up my woe and me
In the blank prison of forgetfulness.

SONNETS

FATE

That dark, enormous power, which made its lair
Of old in the bleak caverns of dim night,
Chilling the fragile flowers of earth's delight,
Ruling the universe to all men's care ;
That power, whose chain was linked to Jove's own
chair,
From whence unrolling, with resistless might,
It held the world entangled, in despite
Of fear, and grief, and agony, and prayer,—
That power is gone forever. In its stead
Our modern men have framed a huge machine,
Necessity by name, which in its play,
Aimless and pauseless, thoughtless, hopeless, dead,
Grasps all that is, or will be, or has been,
Rends all, grinds all, and passes on its way.

To——and——

Sweet girls, I pray you, come and let's be merry.
Let care be but a dull, forgotten fellow,
Whose pale seductions cannot make us yellow,
Nor teach us how, like ghosts in cemetery,
To sit and watch him his thin phantoms bury.
Come, let us bite sweet apples that are mellow,
And troll a clearer catch than old Sordello,
A light, bright piping, like a child of fairy,
Who whistles all day in a forest green.
Good faith, there is a deal of revelry
In this old world, could we but pluck it out.
Mad laughter's hid, where only woe is seen ;
Our hearts are grayer than our foreheads be ;
And we should sing, not sit, and grieve, and
doubt.

ON READING MASSON'S MILTON

Monarch of music stormy or serene,
Under whose hand the solemn periods flow,
With motion as enormous and as slow,
As that of tides, heaving the ocean green,
Which flood the verge, with energy unseen,
And jar the world in tossing to and fro,
Thy pure austerity doth make us know
The grandeur of convictions that have been
And are no more. To our frivolity
Thou art repulsive almost, strange at least,
Like some huge mammoth, digged from icy
grave
In far Siberia by the Northern sea,
Or like thine own Leviathan, shadowy beast,
Wallowing at length upon the oozy wave.

When in the trackless caverns of the mind
I plunge and wander all a winter's day,
In those vast shadowy regions, where I stray,
Vague terrors haunt me. Now I turn and find
Some grim thought that comes creeping up behind
Like a vain phantom. Now I fall a prey
To memories that beckon me away,
With chilly murmur, like an autumn wind.
Now some huge chasm opens at my feet,
Making me start and tremble on its verge,—
And rarely, if I linger long, I reach
Some still nook, where the summer air breathes
sweet,
Where lovely sounds from depths profound
emerge,
Like gentle waves upon a pebbled beach.

TO H. F. B.

Dear Heart, the ample orb of human fate
Sweeps in a wider circle than we know.
On one small arc in this dim world we go,
And see not what new fortune may await
Our little, troubled, frail, uncertain state,
When it has met its mortal overthrow
And plunged into the grave. What winds may
blow,
What storms may shatter us, what vexed debate
Jar in that hidden future, who can tell?
And that one thing by which our present life
Is not past bearing, that sweet love we
cherish,
That quiet island in a sea of strife,
That little Heaven in the world's wide Hell—
Oh, if we knew that that could never perish!

SONGS AND LYRICS

HUMAN LIFE

A butterfly I deem the soul of man,
Which flits a moment between earth and sky
And trembles through the measure of a span,
A butterfly.

From flower to flower it idly passes by,
And sucks such honeyed sweetness, as it can.
Swinging with indolent poise, luxuriously,

On purple blooms, which wayward breezes fan,
It thinks its summer beauty shall not die.
Tell me, then, pray, is not the soul of man
A butterfly?

Child of light with sunny hair,
Who can measure the delight
Thou dost scatter everywhere,
Child of light?

Older hearts, though spotless white,
Feel a touch of grief or care,
Feel a shadow of death's night.

May the breath of Heavenly air
Ever fan thy forehead bright.
That I make my only prayer,
Child of light.

FAIR WEATHER

The moon is out and leads her starry train
Across the heavens again.
The white clouds, in a fleecy pack,
Are driven back,
Like routed hosts, across a battle plain,
Whom foeman press.

Between them, in the cavernous blue,
I see the stars shine through,
Much like to snowy lilies set
In beds of violet,
Or like the globed drops of summer dew
Fallen on thy dress.

DIRGE

She sleeps beneath the clinging sod.
May rest her portion be,
Gone back into the heart of God
From whence she came to me.

Gone back into the heart of God,
Too pure, too fair for me,
She sleeps beneath the clinging sod.
Ah, might I with her be!

MARE MAGNUM

O Hope, which art but pain,
Yet in the root, unbudded. O Desire,
Which fillest nerve and brain
With such unquenchable, consuming fire!
O Wisdom, untransmutable
Into accordant act and so most vain!
O Thought! O Passion! O inscrutable
Gleams of delight, which flash out and retire,
Like moonbeams on a softly shuddering sea!

I ask you what you are
And whence. And yet I ask you not in fear,
But wondering; for afar,
The hollow whisper of the tide I hear,
Which brought me to this shore;
And well I know, that when its wave once more
Has borne me hence, your jar,
And tedious strife you wage forever here,
Shall have no longer power over me.

NIGHTPIECE

No stir on the tide but one long faint wave
Over the black rocks curled,
Like memory clinging about hope's grave,
Drowned in a pitiless world.

No sound but the cricket's changeless croon,
No sight on the wave or the lea,
But one white star on the breast of the moon,
And one white sail on the sea.

NIGHTPIECE

I am alone here by the sea.
No human folly mars
My dream. The ocean's harmony
Is all I hear, and all I see
One wild rose and the stars.

The moon is setting through cloud bars.
I have no thought but thee,
Here, far remote from mortal jars,
With one shut wild rose and the stars
And the far-sounding sea.

Holy is night!
Not her own are the crimes she veils,
Not her own are the passions of men,
Nor their evil thoughts,
Nor their lusts,
Nor their sin.

Holy is night!
Calm is she and austere.
Before the stars, her children, she was;
Before the gods, her children, she was;
And shall be after them.

Holy is night!
And, as she looks on me gazing,
Her calm immensity out of my heart
Drives all weariness, all petty thoughts,
And leaves it lost
Deep in its own immensity of love.

SONG

Bid the blossom on the bough
Droop and fade and die in vain.
Bid the wreath of April's snow
Melt, untouched by earthly stain.
Bid the virgin heart before it wake,
Break,
Ah, bid it break.

Soiled too soon in mud and mire,
Withered, even before belief,
Fades illusion, fades desire,
Fades the last consoler, grief.
Autumn waits to crush the dreams of June
soon,
Alas, too soon.

They said: "We have loved one another
In days that have gone before."
They said: "We have loved one another,
We love one another no more.

In those days youth was behind us
And love and delight before.
Oh, who had the power to blind us
And blindeth us not any more?

The world grows darker and colder,
Ay, colder than ever before.
Our hearts grow older and older:
They are not moved any more."

CLOWN'S SONGS

Oh, a little, little cot
In a valley green,
Where the sun shines hot,
And you lie between
Sweet vines breathing an autumn flavor!
So to be kissed and caressed for ever!
Derry, derry down.

Heigh-ho!
For moons must wax and moons must wane.
And pleasure too often is bought with pain.
And care rides early in rags and tatters.
And what the world says of us little matters,
So long as we lie in a corner warm
And wrap us close from the pitiless storm.
Heigh-ho!

Oh!

To be singing all the day,
To be loving all the night!
How can creatures made of clay
Taste a more supreme delight?

Naught of wit my folly knows.
Dreams of mine no deeper are
Than the budding of a rose,
Or the falling of a star.

A touch of dust and a touch of clay,
A touch of dark and a touch of day,
A touch of work and a touch of play,
Vast hopes in a little span;

A bit of sound and a bit of sight,
The fitful gleam of a vanishing light,
A spark gone out in enormous night.—
Such is the life of man.

PROLOGUE AND LYRICS FROM
A MAD WORLD

PROLOGUE

Kind friends, our author hopes that it may seem
As if you wandered in some old sweet dream;
While we with antique melody rehearse
The golden treasures of forgotten verse.
Forget, forget the troubles of today!
Fling sordid, hungry, gnawing care away!
Believe yourselves, with gentle magic, whirled.
Back to the laughter of an earlier world.
Believe that you are tasting the delights
Of country air and country sounds and sights.
Believe that nothing on the dusty earth
Is better than an evening's easy mirth.
Believe that all these fleeting shadows be
More lovely far than dull reality.
Believe—But stop! Our friend begins to fear
His modesty is not conspicuous here.
What if, instead of dreams, he finds he's drawn
One dire, general, huge, enormous yawn,
While all his patient hearers go away
And swear they've never seen so dull a play?
Good faith, he doubts he's laid his plot too deep:
He bids you dream, but would not have you sleep.

PRUDENCE' SONGS

Lady rose and lady lily,
Dewdrops fall, like kisses, on you.
Violet and daffodilly,
Sunlight smiles, like love, upon you.
Dewdrops and sun are all you flowers crave:
Kisses and love for maids; and then a grave.

Love doth wither like a flower;
Kisses have uncertain savor;
Sweet is madness for an hour;
But will sweetness bide for ever?
Madness or sweetness, which shall bear the bell?
Sweetness or madness, flowers, I cannot tell.

Love, O Love, where thou art playing,
Hope and joy delight to linger.
Grief would never think of straying,
Where thou once hast touched thy finger.
Come, Love, Oh, quickly come!

Thou dost banish dreams unsightly,
Life's harsh ways are all made even,
Where thy feet have wandered lightly,
Making earth a kind of Heaven.
Come, Love, Oh, quickly come!

SERENADE

Tarry, tarry yet awhile,
Love, the fading and the frail.
Oh, that thou shouldst only smile
Once, and leave the world so pale.
When thy first delight is o'er,
Well we know thou comest never more.

Know thou comest never more.
Then abide a little while.
Life, too desolate before,
Grows so lovely with thy smile.
Thou canst hallow every spot
Of this drear earth. O Love, then, leave us not.

CLOWN'S SONGS

From a lip to steal a kiss
My supremest wisdom is.
On a sunny bank doth lie
My profound'st philosophy.
I could never taste nor savor
Knowledge with eternal labor.
I must wander wild and far,
Like a light and laughing star.

Tinkle, tinkle go my bells,
Driving ugly care away,
Luring still delight to stay,
While my heart with laughter swells.

Folly hath her own sweet spells,
Woven out of mirth and sleep.
Else perchance even fools would weep.
Tinkle, tinkle go my bells.

Who can say that folly dwells
Only under cap and bells?
She does haunt a graver cover,
Clerk and soldier, saint and lover.
Clatter bauble, jingle bell.
Sings pope or parson half so well?

Oh, sweet, sweet, sweet
Is love's caress on a midsummer day,
When corn is swinging,
And mad birds singing,
And the wild world laughs at play.
Oh, sweet, sweet, sweet!

"Here I lie on the cold earth.
Thou art laughing there above.
Prithee, let me in for mirth,
If thou wilt not, Sweet, for love.
But a kiss, but a kiss, but a kiss, and away!
In the high heaven dawns the bright day."

"Mount up, mount up, my honey-sweet love.
'Twere pity thou should'st mourn.
While I am laughing here above,
Thou shalt not lie forlorn.
But a kiss, but a kiss, but a kiss, and away!
In the high heaven dawns the bright day."

TRANSLATIONS

THE EVENING AFTER A FESTIVAL.

(From Leopardi.)

Serene, and clear, and windless is the night.
Quietly floats the moon above the roofs
And peaceful gardens, showing pale, far off,
The mountains wrapped in calmness. O my Lady,
Now ways are silent and the nightly lamp
Shines with a dim, frail gleam through casements
barred.

Thou sleepest, thee an easy sleep has charmed
In thy still chambers; nor does any care
Sting thee: thou dost not think, thou canst not
know

How great a wound thou hast opened in my heart.
Thou sleepest: I, here watching, greet in pain
The heavens which smile, with aspect so benign,
And old, omnipotent nature, who created
Me to be wretched. "Even hope," she says,
"Even hope I have denied thee, and thine eyes
Shall know no other gleam than that of tears."
This day has been a feast day: thou dost rest
Now from thy merriment; perchance in dreams
Thou see'st all who have loved thee, all whom thou
Might'st learn to love: not I, alas, not I
Am found among that number. I, meanwhile,
Ask how long life is left me, cast me down
On the firm earth and rave. Oh, horrible
Such days in youth's green season!

Hark! I hear,

Not too remote, the solitary song
Of some belated peasant, who returns
After his labor to his lowly home.
And hearing him my heart is chilled with grief,
To think upon the fleeting of the world,
That leaves no trace behind. See, now is fled

The festival; and on its heels comes swift
The common day; and so time sweeps along
Each accident of life. Where is the fame
Of those old nations, where the great renown
Of our forefathers, and the vast domain
Of mighty Rome, her arms, and all the wrath
She thundered to the limits of the world?
Engulfed in night and silence, all that stir
Forgotten, no man knows them any more.
In my first childish years, when some bright day,
Such as young hope anticipates, had come,
And passed, and gone, I, grieving, on my couch
Lay, watched; and, in the stillness of the night,
A song, far-heard in dark and quiet ways,
Which swelled upon the stillness and died off,
Even then, as now, passionately wrung my heart.

THE INFINITE

(From Leopardi.)

This quiet slope was always dear to me,
And this enclosure, which shuts off my gaze
From half the circle of the far horizon.
And sitting here, in thought I have devised
Interminable vastness out beyond,
And superhuman silence, and some rest
Profoundest, gazing, where a little while
The heart frets not itself. And, as I hear
The night wind howling idly through the woods,
I can compare its turbulence with that
Infinity of silence, and remember
The eternal, and the years past, and those present
And living, and their murmur. So, in that
Immensity my thoughts have lost themselves;
Nor am I loath to wreck in such a sea.

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