

Personae

Ezra Pound

09a

1st edition

PS3531

PG853

P3

000 no. 629 subd. 380614

OXEX

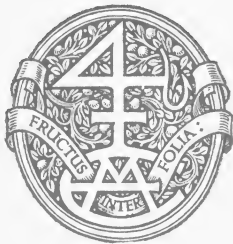
1/0

1750

PERSONAE

W. A. ...
In der ...
...

PERSONAE
OF
EZRA POUND



LONDON
ELKIN MATHEWS, VIGO STREET
MCMIX

First published in April, 1909

“ Make-strong old dreams lest this our world lose heart.”

THIS BOOK IS FOR
MARY MOORE
OF TRENTON, IF SHE
WANTS IT

CONTENTS

	PAGE
GRACE BEFORE SONG	9
LA FRAISNE	9
CINO	12
NA AUDIART	14
VILLONAUD FOR THIS YULE	16
A VILLONAUD: BALLAD OF THE GIBBET	18
MESMERISM	20
FIFINE ANSWERS	21
IN TEMPORE SENECTUTIS	22
FAMAM LIBROSQUE CANO	23
SCRIPTOR IGNOTUS	25
PRAISE OF YSOLT	28
CAMARADERIE	30
MASKS	31
TALLY-O	31
BALLAD FOR GLOOM	32
FOR E. MCC.	33
AT THE HEART O' ME	34
XENIA	35
OCCIDIT	36

	PAGE
SEARCH	36
AN IDYL FOR GLAUCUS	37
IN DURANCE	40
GUILLAUME DE LORRIS BELATED	42
IN THE OLD AGE OF THE SOUL	46
ALBA BELINGALIS	47
FROM SYRIA	48
FROM THE SADDLE	50
MARVOIL	51
REVOLT	53
AND THUS IN NINEVEH	54
THE WHITE STAG	55
PICCADILLY	56
NOTES	57

PERSONAE

Grace before Song

L ORD GOD of heaven that with mercy dight
Th' alternate prayer-wheel of the night and light
Eternal hath to thee, and in whose sight
Our days as rain drops in the sea surge fall,

As bright white drops upon a leaden sea
Grant so my songs to this grey folk may be:

As drops that dream and gleam and falling catch the
sun,
Evan'scent mirrors every opal one
Of such his splendour as their compass is,
So, bold My Songs, seek ye such death as this.

La Fraisne ¹

SCENE: *The Ash Wood of Malvern.*

F OR I was a gaunt, grave councillor
Being in all things wise, and very old,
But I have put aside this folly and the cold
That old age weareth for a cloak.

¹ Prefatory note at end of volume.

I was quite strong—at least they said so—
The young men at the sword-play;
But I have put aside this folly, being gay
In another fashion that more suiteth me.

I have curled mid the boles of the ash wood,
I have hidden my face where the oak
Spread his leaves over me, and the yoke
Of the old ways of men have I cast aside.

By the still pool of Mar-nan-otha
Have I found me a bride
That was a dog-wood tree some syne.
She hath called me from mine old ways
She hath hushed my rancour of council,
Bidding me praise

Naught but the wind that flutters in the leaves.

She hath drawn me from mine old ways,
Till men say that I am mad;
But I have seen the sorrow of men, and am glad,
For I know that the wailing and bitterness are a folly.
And I? I have put aside all folly and all grief.
I wrapped my tears in an ellum leaf
And left them under a stone
And now men call me mad because I have thrown
All folly from me, putting it aside
To leave the old barren ways of men,
Because my bride
Is a pool of the wood, and
Though all men say that I am mad

It is only that I am glad,
Very glad, for my bride hath toward me a great love
That is sweeter than the love of women
That plague and burn and drive one away.

Aie-e! 'Tis true that I am gay
Quite gay, for I have her alone here
And no man troubleth us.

Once when I was among the young men
And they said I was quite strong, among the young men.
Once there was a woman
. . . . but I forget she was
. . . . I hope she will not come again.

. . . . I do not remember
I think she hurt me once, but
That was very long ago.

I do not like to remember things any more.

I like one little band of winds that blow
In the ash trees here:
For we are quite alone
Here mid the ash trees.

Cino

Italian Campagna 1309, the open road.

BAH! I have sung women in three cities,
But it is all the same;
And I will sing of the sun.

Lips, words, and you snare them,
Dreams, words, and they are as jewels,
Strange spells of old deity,
Ravens, nights, allurements:
And they are not;
Having become the souls of song.

Eyes, dreams, lips, and the night goes.
Being upon the road once more,
They are not.
Forgetful in their towers of our tuning
Once for Wind-runeing
They dream us-toward and
Sighing, say, "Would Cino,
Passionate Cino, of the wrinkling eyes,
Gay Cino, of quick laughter,
Cino, of the dare, the jibe,
Frail Cino, strongest of his tribe
That tramp old ways beneath the sun-light,
Would Cino of the Luth were here!"

Once, twice, a year—
Vaguely thus word they:

"Cino?" "Oh, eh, Cino Polnesi
 The singer is't you mean?"
 "Ah yes, passed once our way,
 A saucy fellow, but
 (Oh they are all one these vagabonds),
 Peste! 'tis his own songs?
 Or some other's that he sings?
 But *you*, My Lord, how with your city?

But you "My Lord," God's pity!
 And all I knew were out, My Lord, you
 Were Lack-land Cino, e'en as I am,
 O Sinistro.

I have sung women in three cities.
 But it is all one.
 I will sing of the sun.
 eh? they mostly had grey eyes,
 But it is all one, I will sing of the sun.

"'Pollo Phoibee, old tin pan, you
 Glory to Zeus' aegis-day,
 Shield o' steel-blue, th' heaven o'er us
 Hath for boss thy lustre gay!

'Pollo Phoibee, to our way-fare
 Make thy laugh our wander-ried;
 Bid thy 'fulgence bear away care.
 Cloud and rain-tears pass they fleet!

Seeking e'er the new-laid rast-way
 To the gardens of the sun

. . . .

I have sung women in three cities
But it is all one.

I will sing of the white birds
In the blue waters of heaven,
The clouds that are spray to its sea.

Na Audiart

Que be-m vols mal.

NOTE: Any one who has read anything of the troubadours knows well the tale of Bertran of Born and My Lady Maent of Montaignac, and knows also the song he made when she would none of him, the song wherein he, seeking to find or make her equal, begs of each preëminent lady of Langue d'Oc some trait or some fair semblance: thus of Cembelins her "esgart amoros" to wit, her love-lit glance, of Aelis her speech free-running, of the Vicomp-
tess of Chales her throat and her two hands, at Roacoart of Anhes her hair golden as Iseult's; and even in this fashion of Lady Audiart "although she would that ill come unto him" he sought and praised the lineaments of the torse. And all this to make "Una dompna soiseubuda" a borrowed lady or as the Italians translated it "Una donna ideale."

THOUGH thou well dost wish me ill
Audiart, Audiart,
Where thy bodice laces start
As ivy fingers clutching through
Its crevices,
Audiart, Audiart,
Stately, tall and lovely tender
Who shall render
Audiart, Audiart

Praises meet unto thy fashion?
Here a word kiss!

Pass I on
Unto Lady "Miels-de-Ben,"
Having praised thy girdle's scope
How the stays ply back from it;
I breathe no hope
That thou shouldst

Nay no whit
Bespeak thyself for anything.
Just a word in thy praise, girl,
Just for the swirl
Thy satins make upon the stair,
'Cause never a flaw was there
Where thy torse and limbs are met:
Though thou hate me, read it set
In rose and gold.¹

Or when the minstrel, tale half told,
Shall burst to liting at the phrase
"Audiart, Audiart"

Bertrans, master of his lays,
Bertrans of Aultaforte thy praise
Sets forth, and though thou hate me well,
Yea though thou wish me ill
Audiart, Audiart.

Thy loveliness is here writ till,
Audiart,
Oh, till thou come again.²
And being bent and wrinkled, in a form
That hath no perfect limning, when the warm

¹ *I.e. in illumed manuscript.*

² *Reincarnate.*

Youth dew is cold
Upon thy hands, and thy old soul
Scorning a new, wry'd casement
Churlish at seemed misplacement
Finds the earth as bitter
As now seems it sweet,
Being so young and fair
As then only in dreams,
Being then young and wry'd,
Broken of ancient pride,
Thou shalt then soften,
Knowing I know not how
Thou wert once she

Audiart, Audiart

For whose fairness one forgave

Audiart, Audiart

Que be-m vols mal.

Villonaud for this Yule

TOWARDS the Noel that morte saison
(*Christ make the shepherds' homage dear!*)
Then when the grey wolves everychone
Drink of the winds their chill small-beer
And lap o' the snows food's gueredon
Then makyth my heart his yule-tide cheer
(Skoal! with the dregs if the clear be gone!)
Wineing the ghosts of yester-year.

Ask ye what ghosts I dream upon?
(*What of the magians' scented gear?*)
The ghosts of dead loves everyone
That make the stark winds reek with fear
Lest love return with the foison sun
And slay the memories that me cheer
(Such as I drink to mine fashion)
Wineing the ghosts of yester-year.

Where are the joys my heart had won?
(*Saturn and Mars to Zeus drawn near!*)¹
Where are the lips mine lay upon,
Aye! where are the glances feat and clear
That bade my heart his valour don?
I skoal to the eyes as grey-blown mere
(Who knows whose was that paragon?)
Wineing the ghosts of yester-year.

Prince: ask me not what I have done
Nor what God hath that can me cheer
But ye ask first where the winds are gone
Wineing the ghosts of yester-year.

¹ *Signum Nativitatis.*

A Villonauud
Ballad of the Gibbet
Or the song of the sixth companion

SCENE: "*En cest bourdel ou tenoms nostr estat.*"

It being remembered that there were six of us with Master Villon, when that expecting presently to be hanged he writ a ballad whereof ye know :

"Frères humains qui après nous vivez."

DRINK ye a skoal for the gallows tree!
Francois and Margot and thee and me,
Drink we the comrades merrily
That said us, "Till then" for the gallows tree!

Fat Pierre with the hook gauche-main,
Thomas Larron "Ear-the-less,"
Tybalde and that armouress
Who gave this poignard its premier stain
Pinning the Guise that had been fain
To make him a mate of the "Haulte Noblesse"
And bade her be out with ill address
As a fool that mocketh his drue's disdeign.

Drink we a skoal for the gallows tree!
Francois and Margot and thee and me,
Drink we to Marienne Ydole,
That hell brenn not her o'er cruelly.

Drink we the lusty robbers twain,
Black is the pitch o' their wedding dress,¹
Lips shrunk back for the wind's caress
As lips shrink back when we feel the strain
Of love that loveth in hell's disdeign
And sense the teeth through the lips that press
'Gainst our lips for the soul's distress
That striveth to ours across the pain.
Drink we skoal to the gallows tree!
Francois and Margot and thee and me,
For Jehan and Raoul de Vallerie
Whose frames have the night and its winds in fee.

Maturin, Guillaume, Jacques d'Allmain,
Culdou lacking a coat to bless
One lean moiety of his nakedness
That plundered St. Hubert back o' the fane:
Aie! the lean bare tree is widowed again
For Michault le Borgne that would confess
In "faith and troth" to a traitoress,
"Which of his brothers had he slain?"

But drink we skoal to the gallows tree!
Francois and Margot and thee and me:
These that we loved shall God love less
And smite alway at their faibleness?
Skoal! ! to the Gallows! and then pray we:
God damn his hell out speedily
And bring their souls to his "Haulte Citee."

¹ Certain gibbeted corpses used to be coated with tar as a preservative; thus one scarecrow served as warning for considerable time. See Hugo "L'Homme qui Rit."

Mesmerism

“And a cat’s in the water-butt.”—ROBERT BROWNING.

AYE you’re a man that! ye old mesmerizer
Tyin’ your meanin’ in seventy swadelin’s,
One must of needs be a hang’d early riser
To catch you at worm turning. Holy Odd’s bodykins!

“Cat’s i’ the water butt!” Thought’s in your verse-
barrel,

Tell us this thing rather, then we’ll believe you,
You, Master Bob Browning, spite your apparel
Jump to your sense and give praise as we’d lief do.

You wheeze as a head-cold long-tonsilled Calliope,
But God! what a sight you ha’ got o’ our in’ards,
Mad as a hatter but surely no Myope,
Broad as all ocean and leanin’ man-kin’ards.

Heart that was big as the bowels of Vesuvius,
Words that were wing’d as her sparks in eruption,
Eagled and thundered as Jupiter Pluvius,
Sound in your wind past all signs o’ corruption.

Here ’s to you, Old Hippety-hop o’ the accents,
True to the Truth’s sake and crafty dissector,
You grabbed at the gold sure; had no need to pack cents
Into your versicles.

Clear sight’s elector!

Fifine Answers

“Why is it that, disgraced they seem to relish life the more?”—FIFINE AT THE FAIR, VII, 5.

SHARING his exile that hath borne the flame,
Joining his freedom that hath drunk the shame
And known the torture of the Skull-place hours
Free and so bound, that mingled with the powers
Of air and sea and light his soul's far reach
Yet strictured did the body-lips beseech
“To drink” “I thirst.” And then the sponge of gall.

Wherefore we wastrels that the grey road's call
Doth master and make slaves and yet make free,
Drink all of life and quaffing lustily
Take bitter with the sweet without complain
And sharers in his drink defy the pain
That makes you fearful to unfurl your souls.

We claim no glory. If the tempest rolls
About us we have fear, and then
Having so small a stake grow bold again.
We know not definitely even this
But 'cause some vague half knowing half doth miss
Our consciousness and leaves us feeling
That somehow all is well, that sober, reeling
From the last carouse, or in what measure
Of so called right or so damned wrong our leisure
Runs out uncounted sand beneath the sun,
That, spite your carping, still the thing is done

With some deep sanction, that, we know not how,
Sans thought gives us this feeling; you allow
That this not need we *know* our every thought
Or see the work shop where each mask is wrought
Wherefrom we view the world of box and pit,
Careless of wear, just so the mask shall fit
And serve our jape's turn for a night or two.

Call! eh bye! the little door at twelve!

I meet you there myself.

In Tempore Senectutis

“FOR we are old
And the earth passion dieth;
We have watched him die a thousand times,
When he wanes an old wind crieth,
For we are old
And passion hath died for us a thousand times
But we grew never weary.

Memory faileth, as the lotus-loved chimes
Sink into fluttering of wind,
But we grow never weary
For we are old.

The strange night-wonder of your eyes
Dies not, though passion flieth
Along the star fields of Arcturus
And is no more unto our hands;
My lips are cold

And yet we twain are never weary,
And the strange night-wonder is upon us,
The leaves hold our wonder in their flutterings,
The wind fills our mouths with strange words
For our wonder that grows not old.

The moth-hour of our day is upon us
Holding the dawn;
There is strange Night-wonder in our eyes
Because the Moth-Hour leadeth the dawn
As a maiden, holding her fingers,
The rosy, slender fingers of the dawn."

He saith: "Red spears bore the warrior dawn
Of old
Strange! Love, hast thou forgotten
The red spears of the dawn,
The pennants of the morning?"

She saith: "Nay, I remember, but now
Cometh the Dawn, and the Moth-Hour
Together with him; softly
For we are old."

Famam Librosque Cano

YOUR songs?
Oh! The little mothers
Will sing them in the twilight,
And when the night
Shrinketh the kiss of the dawn

That loves and kills,
What time the swallow fills
Her note, the little rabbit folk
That some call children,
Such as are up and wide
Will laugh your verses to each other,
Pulling on their shoes for the day's business,
Serious child business that the world
Laughs at, and grows stale;
Such is the tale
—Part of it—of thy song-life

Mine?

A book is known by them that read
That same. Thy public in my screed
Is listed. Well! Some score years hence
Behold mine audience,
As we had seen him yesterday.

Scrawny, be-spectacled, out at heels,
Such an one as the world feels
A sort of curse against its guzzling
And its age-lasting wallow for red greed
And yet; full speed
Though it should run for its own getting,
Will turn aside to sneer at
'Cause he hath
No coin, no will to snatch the aftermath
Of Mammon.
Such an one as women draw away from

For the tobacco ashes scattered on his coat
And sith his throat
Show razor's unfamiliarity
And three days' beard:

Such an one picking a ragged
Backless copy from the stall,
Too cheap for cataloguing,
Loquitur,

“Ah-eh! the strange rare name . . .
Ah-eh! He must be rare if even *I* have not . . .
And lost mid-page
Such age
As his pardons the habit,
He analyzes form and thought to see
How I 'scaped immortality.

Scriptor Ignotus

Ferrara 1715

To K. R. H.

“**W**HEN I see thee as some poor song-bird
Battering its wings, against this cage we call
Today,
Then would I speak comfort unto thee,
From out the heights I dwell in, when
That great sense of power is upon me
And I see my greater soul-self bending
Sibylwise with that great forty year epic

That you know of, yet unwrit
But as some child's toy 'tween my fingers,
And see the sculptors of new ages carve me thus,
And model with the music of my couplets in their
 hearts:

Surely if in the end the epic
And the small kind deed are one;
If to God the child's toy and the epic are the same,
E'en so, did one make a child's toy,
He might wright it well
And cunningly, that the child might
Keep it for his children's children
And all have joy thereof.

Dear, an this dream come true,
Then shall all men say of thee
"She 'twas that played him power at life's morn,
And at the twilight Evensong,
And God's peace dwelt in the mingled chords
She drew from out the shadows of the past,
And old world melodies that else
He had known only in his dreams
Of Iseult and of Beatrice.

Dear, an this dream come true,
I, who being poet only,
Can give thee poor words only,
Add this one poor other tribute,
This thing men call immortality.
A gift I give thee even as Ronsard gave it.
Seeing before time, one sweet face grown old,

And seeing the old eyes grow bright
From out the border of Her fire-lit wrinkles,
As she should make boast unto her maids
“Ronsard hath sung the beauty, *my* beauty,
Of the days that I was fair.”

So hath the boon been given, by the poets of old time
(Dante to Beatrice,—an I profane not—)
Yet with my lesser power shall I not strive
To give it thee?

All ends of things are with Him
From whom are all things in their essence.
If my power be lesser
Shall my striving be less keen?
But rather more! if I would reach the goal,
Take then the striving!
“And if,” for so the Florentine hath writ
When having put all his heart
Into his “Youth’s Dear Book”
He yet strove to do more honour
To that lady dwelling in his inmost soul
He would wax yet greater
To make her earthly glory more.
Though sight of hell and heaven were price thereof,
If so it be His will, with whom
Are all things and through whom
Are all things good,
Will I make for thee and for the beauty of thy music
A new thing
As hath not heretofore been writ.
Take then my promise!

Praise of Ysolt

IN vain have I striven
to teach my heart to bow;
In vain have I said to him
“There be many singers greater than thou.”

But his answer cometh, as winds and as lutany,
As a vague crying upon the night
That leaveth me no rest, saying ever,
“Song, a song.”

Their echoes play upon each other in the twilight
Seeking ever a song.

Lo, I am worn with travail
And the wandering of many roads hath made my eyes
As dark red circles filled with dust.

Yet there is a trembling upon me in the twilight,
And little red elf words crying “A song,”
Little grey elf words crying for a song,
Little brown leaf words crying “A song,”
Little green leaf words crying for a song.

The words are as leaves, old brown leaves in the
spring time

Blowing they know not whither, seeking a song.

White words as snow flakes but they are cold
Moss words, lip words, words of slow streams.

In vain have I striven
to teach my soul to bow,

In vain have I pled with him,
 " There be greater souls than thou."

For in the morn of my years there came a woman
As moon light calling
As the moon calleth the tides,
 " Song, a song."

Wherefore I made her a song and she went from me
As the moon doth from the sea,
But still came the leaf words, little brown elf words
Saying " The soul sendeth us."
 " A song, a song !"

And in vain I cried unto them " I have no song
For she I sang of hath gone from me."

But my soul sent a woman, a woman of the wonder folk,
A woman as fire upon the pine woods
 crying " Song, a song."
As the flame crieth unto the sap.
My song was ablaze with her and she went from me
As flame leaveth the embers so went she unto new
 forests
And the words were with me
 crying ever " Song, a song."

And I " I have no song,"
Till my soul sent a woman as the sun :
Yea as the sun calleth to the seed,
As the spring upon the bough
So is she that cometh the song-drawer
She that holdeth the wonder words within her eyes

The words little elf words
that call ever unto me
“Song, a song.”

ENVOI

In vain have I striven with my soul
to teach my soul to bow.
What soul boweth
while in his heart art thou?

Camaraderie

*“E tuttoque io fosse a la compagnia di molti, quanto
alla vista.”*

SOMETIMES I feel thy cheek against my face
Close-pressing, soft as is the South's first breath
That all the subtle earth-things summoneth
To spring in wood-land and in meadow space.

Yea sometimes in a bustling man-filled place
Me seemeth some-wise thy hair wandereth
Across mine eyes, as mist that halloweth
The air awhile and giveth all things grace.

Or on still evenings when the rain falls close
There comes a tremor in the drops, and fast
My pulses run, knowing thy thought hath passed
That beareth thee as doth the wind a rose.

Masks

THESE tales of old disguisings, are they not
Strange myths of souls that found themselves
among

Unwonted folk that spake a hostile tongue,
Some soul from all the rest who'd not forgot
The star-span acres of a former lot
Where boundless mid the clouds his course he swung,
Or carnate with his elder brothers sung
E'er ballad makers lisped of Camelot?

Old singers half-forgetful of their tunes,
Old painters colour-blind come back once more,
Old poets skillless in the wind-heart runes,
Old wizards lacking in their wonder-lore:

All they that with strange sadness in their eyes
Ponder in silence o'er earth's queynt devyse?

Tally-O

WHAT ho! the wind is up and eloquent.
Through all the Winter's halls he crieth Spring.
Now will I get me up unto mine own forests
And behold their bourgeoning.

For E. Mc C

*That was my counter-blade under Leonardo Terrone,
Master of Fence.*

GONE while your tastes were keen to you,
Gone where the grey winds call to you,
By that high fencer, even Death,
Struck of the blade that no man parrieth;
Such is your fence, one saith,
 One that hath known you.
Drew you your sword most gallantly
Made you your pass most valiantly
 'Gainst that grey fencer, even Death.

Gone as a gust of breath
Faith! no man tarrieth,
“*Se il cor ti manca,*” but it failed thee not!
“*Non ti fidar,*” it is the sword that speaks
“*In me.*”¹
Thou trusted'st in thyself and met the blade
'Thout mask or gauntlet, and art laid
As memorable broken blades that be
Kept as bold trophies of old page antry.
As old Toledos past their days of war
Are kept mnemonic of the strokes they bore,
So art thou with us, being good to keep
In our heart's sword-rack, though thy sword-arm
 sleep.

¹ Sword-rune “If thy heart fail thee trust not in me.”

ENVOI

Struck of the blade that no man parrieth
Pierced of the point that toucheth lastly all,
'Gainst that grey fencer, even Death,
Behold the shield! He shall not take thee all.

At the Heart o' Me

A.D. 751

WITH ever one fear at the heart o' me
Long by still sea-coasts
 coursed my Grey-Falcon,
And the twin delights
 of shore and sea were mine,
Sapphire and emerald with
 fine pearls between.

Through the pale courses of
 the land-caressing in-streams
Glided my barge and
 the kindly strange peoples
Gave to me laugh for laugh,
 and wine for my tales of wandering.
And the cities gave me welcome
 and the fields free passage,
With ever one fear
 at the heart o' me.

An thou should'st grow weary
 ere my returning,

An "*they*" should call to thee
 from out the borderland,
What should avail me
 booty of whale-ways?
What should avail me
 gold rings or the chain-mail?
What should avail me
 the many-twined bracelets?
What should avail me,
 O my beloved,
Here in this "Middan-gard"¹
 what should avail me
Out of the booty and
 gain of my goings?

Xenia

AND
Unto thine eyes my heart
Sendeth old dreams of the spring-time,
Yea of wood-ways my rime
Found thee and flowers in and of all streams
That sang low burthen, and of roses,
That lost their dew-bowed petals for the dreams
We scattered o'er them passing by.

¹ Anglo Saxon "Earth"

Occidit

AUTUMNAL breaks the flame upon the sun-set
herds.

The sheep on Gilead as tawn hair gleam
Neath Mithra's dower and his slow departing,
While in the sky a thousand fleece of gold
Bear, each his tribute, to the waning god.

Hung on the rafters of the effulgent west,
Their tufted splendour shields his decadence,
As in our southern lands brave tapestries
Are hung king-greeting from the ponticells
And drag the pageant from the earth to air,
Wherein the storied figures live again,
Wind-molden back unto their life's erst guise,
All tremulous beneath the many-fingered breath
That Aufidus¹ doth take to house his soul.

Search

I HAVE heard a wee wind searching
Through still forests for me;
I have seen a wee wind searching
O'er still sea.

Through woodlands dim have I taken my way;
And o'er silent waters night and day
Have I sought the wee wind.

¹ The West wind.

An Idyl for Glaucus

*Nel suo aspetto tal dentro mi fei
Qual si fe' Glauco nel gustar dell' erba
Che il fe' consorto in mar degli altri dei.*

PARADISO, I, 67-9.

*"As Glaucus tasting the grass that made
him sea-fellow with the other gods."*

I

WHITHER he went I may not follow him. His
eyes

Were strange to-day. They always were,
After their fashion, kindred of the sea.

To-day I found him. It is very long
That I had sought among the nets, and when I asked
The fishermen, they laughed at me.
I sought long days amid the cliffs thinking to find
The body-house of him, and then
There at the blue cave-mouth my joy
Grew pain for suddenness, to see him 'live.
Whither he went I may not come, it seems
He is become estranged from all the rest,
And all the sea is now his wonder-house.
And he may sink unto strange depths, he tells me of,
That have no light as we it deem.
E'en now he speaks strange words. I did not know
One half the substance of his speech with me.

And then when I saw naught he sudden leaped
And shot, a gleam of silver, down, away.
And I have spent three days upon this rock
And yet he comes no more.
He did not even seem to know
I watched him gliding through the vitreous deep.

II

They chide me that the skein I used to spin
Holds not my interest now,
They mock me at the route, well, I have come again.
Last night I saw three white forms move
Out past the utmost wave that bears the white foam
crest.
I somehow knew that he was one of them.

Oimè, Oimè! I think each time they come
Up from the sea heart to the realm of air
They are more far-removed from the shore.
When first I found him here, he slept
E'en as he might after a long night's taking on the
deep.
And when he woke some whit the old kind smile
Dwelt round his lips and held him near to me.
But then strange gleams shot through the grey-deep
eyes
As though he saw beyond and saw not me.
And when he moved to speak it troubled him.
And then he plucked at grass and bade me eat.
And then forgot me for the sea its charm
And leapt him in the wave and so was gone.

III

I wonder why he mocked me with the grass.
I know not any more how long it is
Since I have dwelt not in my mother's house.
I know they think me mad, for all night long
I haunt the sea-marge, thinking I may find
Some day the herb he offered unto me.
Perhaps he did not jest; they say some simples have
More wide-spanned power than old wives draw from
them.

Perhaps, found I this grass, he'd come again.
Perhaps 'tis some strange charm to draw him here,
'Thout which he may not leave his new-found crew
That ride the two-foot coursers of the deep,
And laugh in storms and break the fishers' nets.
Oimè, Oimè!

SONG.

Voices in the Wind.

We have worn the blue and vair,
And all the sea-caves
Know us of old, and know our new-found mate.
There's many a secret stair
The sea-folk climb . . .

Out of the Wind.

Oimè, Oimè!

I wonder why the wind, even the wind doth seem
To mock me now, all night, all night, and
Have I strayed among the cliffs here

They say, some day I'll fall
Down through the sea-bit fissures, and no more
Know the warm cloak of sun, or bathe
The dew across my tired eyes to comfort them.
They try to keep me hid within four walls.
I will not stay!

Oimè!

And the wind saith; Oimè!

I am quite tired now. I know the grass
Must grow somewhere along this Thracian coast,
If only he would come some little while and find it me.

ENDETH THE LAMENT FOR GLAUCUS

In Durance

I AM homesick after mine own kind,
Oh I know that there are folk about me, friendly
faces,
But I am homesick after mine own kind.

“These sell our pictures”! Oh well,
They reach me not, touch me some edge or that,
But reach me not and all my life's become
One flame, that reacheth not beyond
Mine heart's own hearth,
Or hides among the ashes there for thee.
“Thee”? Oh “thee” is who cometh first
Out of mine own-soul-kin,

For I am homesick after mine own kind
And ordinary people touch me not.

Yea, I am homesick

After mine own kind that know, and feel
And have some breath for beauty and the arts.

Aye, I am wistful for my kin of the spirit
And have none about me save in the shadows
When come *they*, surging of power, "DAEMON,"
"Quasi KALOUN" s.T. says, Beauty is most that a
"calling to the soul."

Well then, so call they; the swirlers out of the mist
of my soul,
They that come mewards bearing old magic.

But for all that, I am home sick after mine own kind
And would meet kindred e'en as I am,
Flesh-shrouded bearing the secret.
"All they that with strange sadness"
Have the earth in mock'ry, and are kind to all,
My fellows, aye I know the glory
Of th' unbounded ones, but ye, that hide
As I hide most the while
And burst forth to the windows only whiles or whiles
For love, or hope, or beauty or for power,
Then smoulder, with the lids half closed
And are untouched by echoes of the world.

Oh ye, my fellows: with the seas between us some be,
Purple and sapphire for the silver shafts
Of sun and spray all shattered at the bows
Of such a "Veltro" of the vasty deep

As bore my tortoise house scant years ago:
And some the hills hold off,
The little hills to east us, though here we
Have damp and plain to be our shutting in.

And yet my soul sings "Up!" and we are one.
Yea thou, and Thou, and THOU, and all my kin
To whom my breast and arms are ever warm,
For that I love ye as the wind the trees
That holds their blossoms and their leaves in cure
And calls the utmost singing from the boughs
That 'thout him, save the aspen, were as dumb
Still shade, and bade no whisper speak the birds of
how
"Beyond, beyond, beyond, there lies . . ."

Guillaume de Lorris Belated A Vision of Italy

WISDOM set apart from all desire,
A hoary Nestor with youth's own glad eyes,
Him met I at the style, and all benign
He greeted me an equal and I knew,
By this his lack of pomp, he was himself.

Slow-Smiling is companion unto him,
And Mellow-Laughter serves, his trencherman.
And I a thousand beauties there beheld.

And he and they made merry endlessly.
And love was rayed between them as a mist,
And yet so fine and delicate a haze
It did impede the eyes no whit,
Unless it were to make the halo round each one
Appear more myriad-jewelled marvellous,
Than any pearled and ruby diadem the courts o' earth
 ha' known.

Slender as mist-wrought maids and hamadryads
Did meseem these shapes that ministered,
These formed harmonies with lake-deep eyes,
And first the cities of north Italy
I did behold,
Each as a woman wonder-fair,
And svelte Verona first I met at eve;
And in the dark we kissed and then the way
Bore us somehow apart.
And yet my heart keeps tryst with her,
So every year our thoughts are interwove
As fingers were, such times as eyes see much, and
 tell.

And she that loved the master years ago,
That bears his signet in her "Signor Square,"
"Che lo glorifico."¹

 She spread her arms,
And in that deep embrace
All thoughts of woe were perished
And of pain and weariness and all the wrack
Of light-contending thoughts and battled-gleams,
(That our intelligence doth gain by strife against
 itself)

Of things we have not yet the earned right to clearly
see.

And all, yea all that dust doth symbolize
Was there forgot, and my enfranchised soul
Grew as the liquid elements, and was infused
With joy that is not light, nor might nor harmony,
And yet hath part and quality of all these three,
Whereto is added calm past earthly peace.

Thus with Verona's spirit, and all time
Swept on beyond my ken, and as the sea
Hath in no wise a form within itself,
Cioè, as liquid hath no form save where it bounden is
By some enshrouding chalice of hard things—
As wine its graven goblet, and the sea
Its wave-hewn basalt for a bordering,
So had my thought and now my thought's remem-
brance

No "*information*" of whatso there passed
For this long space the dream-king's horny gate.

And when that age was done and the transfusion
Of all my self through her and she through me,
I did perceive that she enthroned two things:
Verona, and a maid I knew on earth;
And dulled some while from dream, and then become
That lower thing, deductive intellect, I saw
How all things are but symbols of all things,²
And each of many, do we know
But the equation governing.
And in my rapture at this vision's scope
I saw no end or bourn to what things mean,

So praised Pythagoras and once more raised
By this said rapture to the house of Dream,
Beheld Fenicè as a lotus-flower
Drift through the purple of the wedded sea
And grow a wraith and then a dark-eyed she,
And knew her name was "All-forgetfulness,"
And hailed her: "Princess of the Opiates,"
And guessed her evil and her good thereby.

And then a maid of nine "Pavia" hight,
Passed with a laugh that was all mystery,
And when I turned to her
She reached me one clear chalice of white wine,
Pressed from the recent grapes that yet were hung
Adown her shoulders, and were bound
Right cunningly about her elfish brows;
So hale a draught, the life of every grape
Lurked without ferment in the amber cloud.
And memory, this wine was, of all good.

And more I might have seen: Firenza, Goito,
Or that proudest gate, Ligurian Genoa,
Cornelia of Colombo of far sight,
That, man and seer in one, had well been twain,
And each a glory to his hills and sea;
And past her a great band
Bright garlanded or rich with purple skeins,
And crimson mantles and queynt fineries
That tarnished held but so the more
Of dim allurement in their half-shown folds:
So swept my vision o'er their filmy ranks,
Then rose some opaque cloud,

Whose name I have not yet discerned,
And music as I heard it one clear night
Within our earthly night's own mirroring,
Cioè, San? — San Pietro by Adige,³
Where altar candles blazed out as dim stars,
And all the gloom was soft, and shadowy forms
Made and sang God, within the far-off choir.
And in a clear space high behind
Them and the tabernacle of that place,
Two tapers shew the master of the keys
As some white power pouring forth itself.

And all the church rang low and murmured
Thus in my dream of forms the music swayed.
And I was lost in it and only woke
When something like a mass bell rang, and then
That white-foot wind, pale Dawn's annunciatrice.
Me bore to earth again, but some strange peace
I had not known so well before this swevyn
Clung round my head and made me hate earth less.

For notes on this poem see end of volume.

In the Old Age of the Soul

I DO not choose to dream; there cometh on me
Some strange old lust for deeds.
As to the nerveless hand of some old warrior
The sword-hilt or the war-worn wonted helmet
Brings momentary life and long-fled cunning,

So to my soul grown old—
Grown old with many a jousting, many a foray,
Grown old with many a hither-coming and hence-
going—
Till now they send him dreams and no more deed ;
So doth he flame again with might for action,
Forgetful of the council of the elders,
Forgetful that who rules doth no more battle,
Forgetful that such might no more cleaves to him
So doth he flame again toward valiant doing.

Alba Belingalis

PHOEBUS shineth ere his splendour flieth
Aurora drives faint light athwart the land
And the drowsy watcher crieth,

“ ARISE.”

Ref.

O'er cliff and ocean the white dawn appeareth
It passeth vigil and the shadows cleareth.

They be careless of the gates, delaying,
Whom the ambush glides to hinder,
Whom I warn and cry to, praying,

“ ARISE.”

Ref.

O'er cliff and ocean the white dawn appeareth
It passeth vigil and the shadows cleareth.

Forth from out Arcturus, North Wind bloweth
The stars of heaven sheathe their glory
And sun-driven forth-goeth

Settentrion.

Ref.

O'er sea mist, and mountain is the dawn display'd
It passeth watch and maketh night afraid.

From a tenth-century MS.

From Syria

The song of Peire Bremon "Lo Tort" that he made for his
Lady in Provença: he being in Syria a crusader.

IN April when I see all through
Mead and garden new flowers blow,
And streams with ice-bands broken flow,
Eke hear the birds their singing do;
When spring's grass-perfume floateth by
Then 'tis sweet song and birdlet's cry
Do make mine old joy come anew.

Such time was wont my thought of old
To wander in the ways of love.
Burnishing arms and clang thereof,
And honour-services manifold
Be now my need. Whoso combine
Such works, love is his bread and wine,
Wherefore should his fight the more be bold.

Song bear I, who tears should bring
Sith ire of love mak'th me annoy,
With song think I to make me joy.
Yet ne'er have I heard said this thing:
"He sings who sorrow's guise should wear."
Natheless I will not despair
That sometime I'll have cause to sing.

I should not to despair give way
That somehow I'll my lady see.
I trust well He that lowered me
Hath power again to make me gay.
But if e'er I come to my Love's land
And turn again to Syrian strand,
God keep me there for a fool, always!

God for a miracle well should
Hold my coming from her away,
And hold me in His grace always
That I left her, for holy-wood.
An I lose her, no joy for me,
Pardi, hath the wide world in fee.
Nor could He mend it, if He would.

Well did she know sweet wiles to take
My heart, when thence I took my way.
'Thout sighing, pass I ne'er a day
For that sweet semblance she did make
To me, saying all in sorrow:
"Sweet friend, and what of me to-morrow?"
"Love mine, why wilt me so forsake?"

ENVOI

Beyond sea be thou sped, my song,
And, by God, to my Lady say
That in desirous, grief-filled way
My nights and my days are full long.
And command thou William the Long-Seer
To tell thee to my Lady dear,
That comfort be her thoughts among.

The only bit of Peire Bremon's work that has come down to us, and through its being printed with the songs of Giraut of Bornelh he is like to lose credit for even this.—E.P.

From the Saddle

D'AUBIGNE TO DIANE

WEARIED by wind and wave death goes
With gin and snare right near alway
Unto my sight. Behind me bay
As hounds the tempests of my foes.
Ever on ward against such woes,
Pistols my pillow's service pay,
Yet Love makes me the poet play.
Thou know'st the rime demands repose,
So if my line disclose distress,
The soldier and my restlessness
And teen, Pardon, dear Lady mine,
For since mid war I bear love's pain
'Tis meet my verse, as I, show sign
Of powder, gun-match and sulphur stain.

Marvoil

A POOR clerk I, "Arnaut the less" they call me,
And because I have small mind to sit
Day long, long day cooped on a stool
A-jumbling o' figures for Maitre Jacques Polin,
I ha' taken to rambling the South here.

The Vicomte of Beziers 's not such a bad lot.
I made rimes to his lady this three year:
Vers and canzone, till that damn'd son of Aragon,
Alfonso the half-bald, took to hanging
His helmet at Beziers.

Then came what might come, to wit: three men and
one woman,
Beziers off at Mont-Ausier, I and his lady
Singing the stars in the turrets of Beziers,
And one lean Aragonese cursing the seneschal
To the end that you see, friends:

Aragon cursing in Aragon, Beziers busy at Beziers—
Bored to an inch of extinction,
Tibors all tongue and temper at Mont-Ausier,
Me! in this damn'd inn of Avignon,
Stringing long verse for the Burlatz;
All for one half-bald, knock-knee'd king of the
Aragonese,
Alfonso, Quatro, poke-nose.

And if when I am dead
They take the trouble to tear out this wall here,

They'll know more of Arnaut of Marvoil
Than half his canzoni say of him.
As for will and testament I leave none,
Save this: "Vers and canzone to the Countess of
Beziers

In return for the first kiss she gave me."
May her eyes and her cheek be fair
To all men except the King of Aragon,
And may I come speedily to Beziers
Whither my desire and my dream have preceded me.

O hole in the wall here! be thou my jongleur
As ne'er had I other, and when the wind blows,
Sing thou the grace of the Lady of Beziers,
For even as thou art hollow before I fill thee with
this parchment,
So is my heart hollow when she filleth not mine eyes,
And so were my mind hollow, did she not fill utterly
my thought.

Wherefore, O hole in the wall here,
When the wind blows sigh thou for my sorrow
That I have not the Countess of Beziers
Close in my arms here.
Even as thou shalt soon have this parchment.

O hole in the wall here, be thou my jongleur,
And though thou sighest my sorrow in the wind,
Keep yet my secret in thy breast here;
Even as I keep her image in my heart here.

Mihi pergamena deest.

Revolt

Against the crepuscular spirit in modern poetry

I WOULD shake off the lethargy of this our time,
and give
For shadows—shapes of power
For dreams—men.

“It is better to dream than do”?

Aye! and, No!

Aye! if we dream great deeds, strong men,
Hearts hot, thoughts mighty.

No! if we dream pale flowers,
Slow-moving pageantry of hours that languidly
Drop as o'er-ripened fruit from fallow trees.
If so we live and die not life but dreams,
Great God, grant life in dreams,
Not dalliance, but life!

Let us be men that dream,
Not cowards, dabblers, waiters
For dead Time to reawaken and grant balm
For ills unnamed.

Great God, if we be damn'd to be not men but only
dreams,
Then let us be such dreams the world shall tremble at
And know we be its rulers though but dreams!

Then let us be such shadows as the world shall
tremble at
And know we be its masters though but shadow!

Great God, if men are grown but pale sick phantoms
That must live only in these mists and tempered lights
And tremble for dim hours that knock o'er loud
Or tread too violent in passing them;

Great God, if these thy sons are grown such thin
ephemera,
I bid thee grapple chaos and beget
Some new titanic spawn to pile the hills and stir
This earth again.

And Thus in Nineveh

“**A**YE! I am a poet and upon my tomb
Shall maidens scatter rose leaves
And men myrtles, ere the night
Slays day with her dark sword.

“Lo! this thing is not mine
Nor thine to hinder,
For the custom is full old,
And here in Nineveh have I beheld
Many a singer pass and take his place
In those dim halls where no man troubleth
His sleep or song.
And many a one hath sung his songs

More craftily, more subtle-souled than I;
And many a one now doth surpass
My wave-worn beauty with his wind of flowers,
Yet am I poet, and upon my tomb
Shall all men scatter rose leaves
Ere the night slay light
With her blue sword.

“It is not, Raama, that my song rings highest
Or more sweet in tone than any, but that I
Am here a Poet, that doth drink of life
As lesser men drink wine.”

The White Stag

I HA' seen them mid the clouds on the heather.
Lo! they pause not for love nor for sorrow,
Yet their eyes are as the eyes of a maid to her lover,
When the white hart breaks his cover
And the white wind breaks the morn.

*“'Tis the white stag, Fame, we're a-hunting,
Bid the world's hounds come to horn!”*

Piccadilly

*BEAUTIFUL, tragical faces,
Ye that were whole, and are so sunken;
And, O ye vile, ye that might have been loved,
That are so sodden and drunken,
Who hath forgotten you?*

O wistful, fragile faces, few out of many!

*The gross, the coarse, the brazen,
God knows I cannot pity them, perhaps, as I should do,
But, oh, ye delicate, wistful faces,
Who hath forgotten you?*

NOTES

NOTE PRECEDENT TO "LA FRAISNE"

"When the soul is exhausted of fire, then doth the spirit return unto its primal nature and there is upon it a peace great and of the woodland

"magna pax et silvestris."

Then becometh it kin to the faun and the dryad, a woodland-dweller amid the rocks and streams

"consociis faunis dryadisque inter saxa sylvarum."

Janus of Basel.¹

Also has Mr. Yeats in his "Celtic Twilight" treated of such, and I because in such a mood, feeling myself divided between myself corporal and a self aetherial "a dweller by streams and in woodland," eternal because simple in elements

"Aeternus quia simplex naturae."

Being freed of the weight of a soul "capable of salvation or damnation," a grievous striving thing that after much straining was mercifully taken from me; as had one passed saying as one in the Book of the Dead,

"I, lo I, am the assembler of souls," and had taken it with him leaving me thus *simplex naturae*, even so at peace and transient as a wood pool I made it.

The Legend thus: "Miraut de Garzelas, after the pains he bore

¹ Referendum for contrast. "Daemonalitas" of the Rev. Father Sinistrari of Ameno (1600 circ). "A treatise wherein is shown that there are in existence on earth rational creatures besides man, endowed like him with a body and soul, that are born and die like him, redeemed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and capable of receiving salvation or damnation." Latin and English text, pub. Liseux, Paris, 1879.

a-loving Riels of Calidorn and that to none avail, ran mad in the forest.

"Yea even as Peire Vidal ran as a wolf for her of Penautier though some say that twas folly or as Garulf Bisclavret so ran truly, till the King brought him respite (See 'Lais' Marie de France), so was he ever by the Ash Tree."

Hear ye his speaking: (low, slowly he speaketh it, as one drawn apart, reflecting) (*égaré*).

NOTES ON NEW POEMS

VISION OF ITALY.

1. "*che lo glorifico*." In the Piazza dei Signori, you will find an inscription which translates thus:

"It is here Can Grande della Scala gave welcome to Dante Alighieri, the *same which glorified him*, dedicating to him that third his song eternal."

"C.G. vi accolse D. A. che lo
glorifico dedicandogli la terza,
delle eterne sue cantiche."

2. Ref. Richard of St. Victor. "On the preparation of the soul for contemplation," where he distinguishes between cogitation, meditation, and contemplation.

In cogitation the thought or attention flits aimlessly about the subject.

In meditation it circles round it, that is, it views it systematically, from all sides, gaining perspective.

In contemplation it radiates from a centre, that is, as light from the sun it reaches out in an infinite number of ways to things that are related to or dependent on it.

The words above are my own, as I have not the Benjamin Minor by me.

Following St. Victor's figure of radiation: Poetry in its acme is expression from contemplation.

3. San Pietro Incarnato. There are several rows of houses intervening between it and the river.

ALBA BELINGALIS

MS. in Latin, with refrain,

“L alba par umet mar atras el poy
Pas abigil miraclar Tenebris.”

It was and may still be the oldest fragment of Provençal known.

MARVOIL

The Personae are :

Arnaut of Marvail, a troubadour, date 1170-1200.

The Countess (in her own right) of Burlatz, and of Beziers, being the wife of

The Vicomte of Beziers.

Alfonso IV of Aragon.

Tibors of Mont-Ausier. For fuller mention of her see the “razos” on Bertran of Born. She is contemporary with the other persons, but I have no strict warrant for dragging her name into this particular affair.

Marco Londonio's Italian version of “Nel Biancheggiar”:

Nel biancheggiar di delicata rosa
Risplendono i colori
D' occidentali fiori
Prima che l'alba, in esultanza ascosa

Voglia bacciarli. Ed aleggiar io sento
Qual su dolce liuto
Nel lor linguaggio muto
Fiorir di gioia e tocco di tormento

Così un' arcano senso di languore,
Le sue sognanti dita
Fanno scordar la vita
Spirando in verso tutto pien d'amore. . .

Senza morir : chè sanno i suoni alati,
Vedendo il nostro stato,
Ch' è dal dolor turbato,
Di lasciarci, morendo, desolati.



CHISWICK PRESS : CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON



PS 8531

P6853

P3

F/W

Ladies Key Leaf.
Educational # 3
1st edition

