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43

notes 2

POEMS

By J. H. HEWITT.

Somewhat small echoes —
Nothing worth,
Yet glimpses of the Soul
That gave them birth.
1924)

To July 1927



Hawthorn lynci 235
Railway Journey 247

Sonnets.

My Faith. 126

In the workshop of all the gods I stood,
And saw them hammer out new faiths & creeds.
"O Fashion me according to my needs"
A god "I cried "But not of stone or wood,

Nor one who bears a side that drips with blood,
Nor one to whom I must account like beads,
All I have done or said, my words or deeds;
But one who will pass by all but the good

That I have wrought - 'Tis by the Highest me
That I would He should weigh me, this my god,
All that I dreamt, all that I wist to be
For I saw the stars tho' I hugg'd the sod.

Then I shall attempt great Heaven's heights to win
By this god's mercy and my light within.

Moses before Pharaoh. ²⁶

Fearless he strode to Ramses golden throne
 And, as the quaking courtiers speechless stood
 This desert prophet with demeanour rude,
 Said now omnipotent himself, alone.

To that crown'd worshipper of gods of stone
 He cried "O Pharaoh, let my people go"
 Those words spoken in halting tones and slow,
 Have echoed still, a universal moan;

The cry of the oppress'd and downtrodden,
 Still challenging the right that keeps them there,
 And claiming yet a heritage for men
 Where all are brothers and all laws are fair.
 To cry "Let now the People go" with pen
 With tongue, with sword, let him arise who dare

Erin's Sorrow ended; a Hope. ²⁶

Nay, Kathleen ni Houlihan, not so pale,
 Thy bleeding will cease and thy hurts be bound,
 Come from that cairn, that monumental mound
 Let only ^{the} moan ^{the} winds in Innisfail.

The need is o'er for tears or bitter wail -
 Hear ye not now, in freedom newly found
 A strange new note, a happy, thrilling sound
 'Tis ^{mended at last} the harp o' the Gall!
 { sounding again }

Thy sister of the North with misty eyes,
 Comes slowly toward you with rapt'nd face,
 Enlighten'd growing as each old hate dies,
 Remembering now the kinship of her race.

The old gods turn in sleep about to stir,
 Mannanan, Oisin, Concobar and Lir.

Ugliness. - 25

One day I heard a child cry in the street:
 I saw a beggar shiver in the rain:
 I saw a drunkman fall down at my feet:
 I saw a strong man wince and weep with pain.

One night I saw a hoorman's home afire:
 I saw a dead dog rotting in a lane:
 I scratch and cut my hand upon a briar:
 I heard a man talk, with a sickly brain.

I saw the sunset sky of gold and red
 Obscured by the smoke of a thousand mills.
 I saw an old horse with raw sores that bled:
 I saw the burnt heather on the high hills.

Said I "Art thou, who dost with beauty bless
 This earth, also the Lord of Ugliness."

A City tree in Spring 1926.

There is an old tree in a bleak blank street
 Fenct in by rusty rail from curious child;
 Barebrancht and sooty hued, not freshly wild,
 It hath no leaf the coming spring to greet.

Branches like black supplicatory hands
 It lifts above to lead grey barren skies,
 Nor feels the vital sap within it rise
 To burst in buds from Winter's icy bands.

There stood an old man by that city tree
 His garments were the stuff of poverty:
 I thought of that tree and its stunted growth

Of the curse by the dark harsh city wrought,
 Of that sad dweller in its streets too, thought
 How chang'd from what was meant by God for both.

8
Seeing a Carthorse on a Frosty morn.²¹

No maner art thou, nor can war's alarms
Force fury, fire or valour thro' thy veins
Thou canst not with fierce forefet haw the plain
When comes mid clashing loud, onset of arms.

Thy lot is laid in fields or roads or farms
Not sparkling jewell'd are thy curbing reins;
But robes and leather'n thongs and clanking
Bedrake thy massive neck like fetish charms.

Than grim grey dragons of eadtime no less
Dost thou, O staggering strength in harness,
Breathe smoke and belch forth steam when works
Afoot.

Thou toilest well thy daily food to earn
From idle drones who work not I do turn
To Thee O Horse, my kinsman tho' a brute.

9

On hearing "Big Ben" by wireless ²⁵

Some nights I have sat late to hear thy chimes
Creep on, resound and echo off in space.
I ne'er in London was nor saw thy face
Yet will I take thee as theme for my rimes

Bands playing jigging jazzes and ragtimes
Are sudden stopt: their mad incessant race
Is lull'd to silence; a different pace
Rumbleth thy throb as 'twere from other climes.

'Tis solemn dealing, with import of fate
Clangbragen blows upon the midnight air:
'Tis crackt in tone, maybe by Sorrow's weight
Meseems it doth a Symbol's garment wear.

And as the fire evanishes in gloom
methinks I hear the very stroke of doom.

On Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" 25

Oftime as I gaze on thy lips, thy smile
 Greyed phantoms, shadowy face and limb,
 Arise before me in a pageant dim
 And past me then, Earth's loves' loved ones file

I see too clear, that serpent o' the nile
 Pearldrunken, evil Cleopatra, she;
 Our own Erin's Deirdre solitary
 Of Venus' girdle's flowers most fragile

Hero with seaward everstealing eyes
 And Trojan Helen with that face divine
 Which made Greece drain Mars' bloody cup like

Petrarch's Laura to one wrongly wed
 And Lilith the lurer, deceiver with lies
 And Haidee weeping yet for Juan dead.

Poetical Trifles

"O Bird in the Rain" '26

O Bird in the rain
I hear your sweet voice
O Strange is your choice
To sing in the rain.

Had I my own choice
Again and again
I would sing "Rejoice"
But not in the rain
O Bird with sweet voice

Pan's Tune '25

Pan play'd a tune ; I heard it
of moon and maid and boy.
With rimes and words I snid' it,

Brought it home as a toy
Writ in a book how faid it ?
Fa good ? a thing of joy ?

Pan play'd a tune ; I heard it
A tune older than Troy
Of moon and maid and boy.

Shatter'd Dream '24

'Twas night ; the woods were still.
The moon crept slowly up the sky
Came as a seabird's wailing cry
A violin's sweet melody
Shake a voice, harsh - and shrill

"Aisy wi' yer dam' fiddle -
Yer all outa tune
Don't daid' t'stop in the middle
Lukin' at the moon "

Three Things '26

Three things I never dare forget;

That sweet Spring eve when first we met;

That cool cheek where my hot lips set

A blush that burneth gently yet;

Those dear clear eyes that were dim wet
On parting at that sad sunset;

Three things I would I could forget.

Just for this Rose's sake. '26

Oft at midnight I wake
Thinking on a pale oval face
That I once kiss'd in secret place
At a chill daybreak.

The sun on the calm lake
Call'd up clear colours o' the hills,
When, on a bank of -daffodils
You said "This rose take

And, your heart nigh to break,
Think of that breathless day in June
Of me, of last night's heavy moon—
Just for this rose's sake"

Summer

'26

Long I waited its coming:
 Then with a rush it came
 Swallows' sweeping, bees' humming,
 Hillside gorse afame;

Sweet sleepings in sunsplendour,
 Thin white clouds floating by,
 Westwind, the may bloom spender,
 Cuckoo's double cry.

a Villanelle

'26

What is fairest, my love, in spring,
 Fairest in all the wide land,
 That thou so sweetly dost sing?

I sit the bough that gently doth swing,
 White as thy hawthornwhite hand?
 What is fairest, my love, in spring?

I sit swift swallow, the season's king,
 Circling round us as we stand,
 That thou so sweetly dost sing?

I sit the fresh daffodils that cling
 To April with golden band?
 What is fairest, my love, in Spring?

I'st the bluebells that nobly fling
 Their banners o'er hillsides grand,
 That thou so sweetly dost sing?

Nay! Tell me now that I may bring,
 Heedfull of thy dear command
 What is fairest, my love, in spring
 That thou as sweetly may'st sing.

A Child's Cry. 25

I said "Show me the worst thing that there is,
 So I may know then how to pass it by
 as o'er the road o' Life I journey long"
 He murmured then to me this strange reply
 "No wrong in Hell is deeper than an infant's cry"

It is a little thing and yet a great,
A childish whimper from a tiny star:
 When it is heard in Heaven angels rise,
 And seize their swords and mutter words
 of war,
 And God Himself lets fall a tear on
 Heaven's bar.

The Secret Face

26

Show me thy face O God my father
 The face of Christ the Lord is not enough.
 Agony writ in flesh, or bone, or blood,
 Is common stuff.

Bleeding brow and downcast weeping eyes,
 Pain twitch'd mouth, the corners tight drawn in,
 Lie far too near the great World's ^{bleeding} throbbing heart
 And its sad mystery of sin.

Longer miscellaneous
 Poems.

The Search.

26

Long I sought to save my soul
 But 'twas clearly fric'd :
 Then I beheld the only g-oal
 Was Him, Jesus the Christ.

So I now
 At th'altar bow
 With Him to tryst.

Long I sought ere I found Him,
 Th' ineffable Christ :
 His word and deed were won^{der} dim
 Yet He alone suffic'd.

So I plead
 Whate'er you need
 With Him make tryst.

A Hymn.

26

O Love of God dost Thou still see
 The sorrows of my own country?
 The fairest land in all the earth,
 And meet to be a holy place,
 Full worthy of a Saviour's birth,
 Sweet mother of a mighty race.

O Grace of God ~~had~~ come unto me
 I long to be as Springtime free.
 The Springtime and the rising lark,
 The Springtime and its rapturous songs
 For my deep heart is ever dark
 Long brooding over others' wrongs

A Hymn

O Wrath of God I beg of Thee
 That all Thy courage enter me,
 That I may rise and with hot words
 Deltwoven into bitter songs,
 And sharper edg'd than steel keen swords
 Sound the loud deathknell of these wrongs.

Soul Strife

25

"Where is he?" cried the Lord of all,
 "For now I would wrestle a fall"

He took a soul, shaped it right well:
 Cast it down mid the flames o' Hell.

Then on a wrack Satan laid it;
 Soon a thing of pity made it.

Smote it with sorrow, anguish, woe,
 Yea all the pains the devils know,

Lash't it with thongs of scorn and shame
 Held it long in the hottest flame

Nail'd it then on a wooden cross -
 Cried "Father, own defeat and loss

Look at that head - that sunken head:
 Look at that side - the drops it bleed;

Look on that sorely twisted frame:
 Look at that holy mocking name -

Yea even those words of hate and abuse -
 "Jesus of Nazareth, King o' the Jews"

Then a voice thro' the Heavens laugh'd -
 "Father now, see Thy Cup is grafft".

The Sunset glory's Birth '20

God was tired : he'd been painting all day,
 So he stopped a while to rest (they say)
 And look on all that he had done
 Which but five days had been begun.

The Heavens filled up above the clouds,
 The seething starwaste that earth ensounds
 He had painted both land and sea
 Touching the hilltops with white, and he
 Then had spotted the leopard's coat
 And reddened the robin's throbbing throat.
 So round him were ranged black paints and pink

As the sun was beginning to sink
 He called to his friend and foe and son
 Saying "Come, look on what I have done"
 His son and foe as he ran caught his foot
 In a moonbeam's tangle like a tree root :
 Headlong he fell: stopped just on the brink

Spilling only God's paintpot of pink.

It stain'd the sky from Heaven to Earth:
 Thus had the Splendor of Sunset its birth

Nirvana : Aspiration 125

Then I shall be one with the mother,
 the damp earth from whence I sprang.
 -and I shall be one with the anthem
 that the stars o' the morning sang.

Then I shall be one with the darkness
 that hung ere God's face burst bright:
 -and I shall be one with the silence
 that steals o'er the arch o' night.

Then I shall be one with the rainbow
 that glitters and glints and gleams;
 -and I shall be one with all sorrow
 -and sadness and deadmen's dreams.

Then I shall be one with the Springtime
 that laughing throws wide the gate:
 -and I shall be one with the songbirds
 that twitter and chirp and mate

Then I shall be one with the Winter
 that shrouds earth with mantle of snow;
 -and I shall be one with the Summer
 that squanders her glory of rose.

Then I shall be one with the Autumn
 that comes with goldheavy wings:
 -and I shall be one with the mountains,
 swift torrents and bubbling springs.

Then I shall be one with the great deeds
 done by the world's highest men
 -and I shall be one with the glories
 that come not ever again.

G-onfessio

126

I when that I was young
 Laught the sages to scorn
 When they toed with bated breath
 How all the gods were born.

I call'd it all a lie,
 This talk o' living gods,
 Sneer'd at th' ancient tales
 O' mortuary rods.

I called it all a lie,
 Their legends o' marty'd men,
 "No Christ, tho' God" quo'
 Can ever come back again

No God on the hillside
 Lends his timorous sheep;
 No Goddess slumbers there
 In the cool bluedark sleep.

The gods are dead as stone:
 Yea, Christ even as Pan;
 And I ^{am} left alone
 To worship the God in man."

Years came and took much from me
 Yet gave they in return
 The gather'd warmth o' life
 Instead of straws that burn.

I found Death is a Reaper,
 Sickle in skinny hand;
 There cutting down the flower,
 There letting the rank weed stand.

And Love is a living thing
 For I have seen it die:
 Love is a little child
 with laughter in his eye.

The Suicide

'24

I met a man with a bloody throat
 With a ghastly pallid face:
 With dark bloodstains on his coat;
 Walking near the haunted place.

He raised his head (the wound gaped wide
 Bloody, ragged and gashed)
 But ever it dropt to the side
 As down his coat more blood splash'd.

His hands were twisted and gnarld
 In hideous, grotesque shapes —
 When he saw me he there he snarl'd
 With a mouth like to an apē.

Then from his lips came a moan
 A horrid icecold sound,
 The sounds o' the night, the steady drone
 Of the city, it drown'd

"Blood, blood floats all around;
 Damnable, awful, red.

Those dark pools upon the ground
 Are all blood" he said

"Who are you alive or dead?"

He answer'd "I am he
 Who cut two throats that bled
 Me thought, interminably".

A Recollection of Peel Castle '26

Have you ever stood by me
 Gazing steadfast out to sea
 Where in maze of welting gold
 Dieth day now waxen old?
 Mourning clouds swift gather round
 Shadows lengthen on the ground:
 Then stands clear that castle old,
 Writ in black on welting gold:
 Round its foot the gruff waves chide,
 Round its crest the calm birds glide.

Gazing steadfast out to sea
 That old castle seems to me
 A melody of oldentine
 For a recurring rime
 The ceaseless song o' the sea.

I see wild old pirate bands,
 Saints with clenched praying hands;
 Iron knights in clang ing mail
 Lowmound vessels swift of sail,

| Stately galleons slow, at ease
 Heavy with plunder of purple seas.

X

Things I have longed for. '26

Things I have longed for, over and over:
 Smell of the hayfield, scent of sweet clover,
 Tossing of treetops, swish o' the grass
 Soft sweet songs of the winds that pass,
 Stateliness of slow clouds drifting by,
 Patches of blue in a rainy sky
 Birds too, and cows, and yelping dogs,
^{Blue snowin'} And damp deep woods ^{unf} _{brown} and rotten logs,
 Swift white ships on the blue sea's rim
 Glowing coals when the fire's grown dim,
 And laughing faces, happy eyes,
 nearby playing children's cries,
 Shouts of boys at manly games,
 Flicker of bunting like magic flames,
 Of all these things am I a lover
 These things I long for, over and over.

Things I have hated. '26

These make me tir'd and bitter of heart
 Make hot blood thro' my pulses start.
 My wild rage knoweth no bounds
 Hearing the bay of victor hounds,
 Blind men begging in the street,
 And little babes with shoeless feet,
 Smoky skies and grates without fire
 And women that give men their dread desire
 Crippled people hobbling slow,
 Ragged coats in the season of snow,
 Cursing of drunkards, shrew's shrill cries,
 Bookbleaid weary redrimm'd eyes,
 Holy churches with lofty domes
 High narrow streets - the workers' homes,
 These things I hate and will hate forever,
 To change the which be my life's endeavour.

Evening in the City.

26

I love to tread the streets and roads and ways
 When slanting sunbeams fall athwart the morn
 And lightly leap from glittering roof to roof,
 While bright-faced workers flow in steady stream
 To toil in shipyard, office, shop or mill.

But better far I love the later sight
 With sun long set and streetlamps all aglow,
 Bright windows blazing forth in myriad hues
 And roads a-shimmer with late fall o' rain.
 Whirling past with clattering, buzz and roar
 Spin motors homeward splashing sparkling gems
 While clanging bells bid tramcars come and go.
 There, rancorous calling newsboys sell their sheets
 And in the gold gutter a blindman sings
 Some hackney'd theme with shaking, feeble voice
 An organ play'd by one arm'd navy man
 Jingling loud, whirs out new dancing tunes,
 And splendour spilt from flower girls' baskets
 Laps round the feet of careless passers by:
 Then, late shopping women parcel laden,

And message boys on errands over due,
 And weary workers tired in brain and limb
 Thong on, and on, and on, in endless line,
 For 'tis the best hour of the whole long day.
 Then booming out above the hoarse hubbub
 The Townclock lingers o'er the chimes it loves
 One, two, three, four, five, six: 'tis six o'clock!

Mona.

126

I methought the soul of mona was to
our Erin kin.

I dreamid o' th' ancient manannan,
of Oisin and of Finn.

I methought her deepest valleys hid cohorts
of brave men
like to our battle breakers in years that
come not again.

I methought her old crones stories told of
the same deep things,
And the light lilt of her plowsong the same
as our plowboy sings.

The ^{green}scent of her heat woud be to me like
from my own home door,
and the clatter o' the spinning wheel
in the middle o' the floor:

And talk o' the deepwater from tanned faces
and bearded lips,
Such as is heard in our harbours, ere outward
go the ships.

But things I found that sadden'd me
beyond all sorrows known;
The former things were past and gone,
like last Spring's swallows flown.

A hard race ruled the feast, now, flintlike
to their trade;
And farmers dreamid of money as they
plied the shade:

And dreary men in dirty shops sold
relics there for gold,
And every glen was well fence in, lest
men grow overbold.

a penny price was on the sand, a toll too,
for the sea:

If you would pluck a rare wildrose a
settling there must be.

As over the hills the sun sinks when
silent droops the land
I heard the scraping music of a blaring
dancing-band.

The ribbon roads that lead you like
a loving friend
are rushing streams of motors thump-
thumping without end.

When the ship plunged up the Channel
low down on the portbow
I saw the grey hills of my own land
so I took a solemn vow

To bide by the blood of my own folk
to glory in Erin's weal,
To serve the cause of my own land
with tongue or sword of steel:

To brush her hearthstone cleaner, to clear
her fields of weed
To stand with ready hands to answer
her utmost need.

Denunciation:

125

Of old to Jeremiah came a voice [men
 That bid him speak nor fear the wrath o'
 Nor any blows nor scouges remonst'rt
 Nor stonings in the marketplaces then.

The cities in their pride and haughty hearts
 Their wealth and merchandise and many ships
 Their glories and their boasting loud and great
 Condemn'd he bravely with inspired lips.

I too, have heard the whisper o' the Lord
 To rise and chide the cities for their sin,
 Their jewell'd cancers and their leprous wealth
 Their little gods of copper, gold and tin.

Their churches where strange things are taught
 by men

Who have forgot the Lord Jehovah now:
 Who have forgot the prophets of oldtime
 And he who bore a thorn-torn milk-white

cow

Who have forgot the hard words that he spoke,
 Words still that sparkle like a diadem;
 Who have forgot the Kingdom o' the Lord,
 The Holy City, new Jerusalem.

Their streets that glitter with a mighty blaze
 Of lights that hide the sordidness and shame
 Where shops, saloons and theaters throw their
 signs
 And honesty is but a little name.

Their ways where starving swarms walk up & down
 And steal or sell their bodies for a price,
 Or beg a crust of Charity's sour bread
 And fall and die - unholy sacrifice

Their slums where children breed of sickly folk
 Struggle helplessly against their fate,
 And sicken and lie down in bed with death
 Or live and with their ailing kindred mate.

For Remembrance: 1st July 1916-26

The - died ten years ago today,
 Ten frantic, brimful, hectic years;
 Better to lie 'mid mates and peers
 Than live on thro' them all, I say.

A wooden cross, I hope, is there
 To mark that lonely little spot
 That men may know he's not forgot
 Tho' summer suns still shine as fair.

O God! I can recall that night:
 The dreary endless march thro' town,
 The endless dreary ranks o' bawn,
 Only the bayonets gleaming bright.

"Who loves her, let him dare and do"
 They shake of Britain in this wise
 And, raising hands to evoke the skies
 "Go, make" they cried "The Earth anew"

51

"No more shall War lift up his head
 When once this holy deed is done.
 Peace shall be sweet, wide as the sun
 And only Age shall claim our dead."

"The blessed Reign of Peace shall come,
 When all as Britons shall be free;
 No mailed vessel sail the sea
 No thrill or throb of fife or drum"

The went - and never came again
 Back to our dusty highwall'd street.
 No more shall echo to their feet
 Our ways belov'd of many men.

Ten years it is since he is gone
 Giving himself a world to save
 Sad France of him is still the grave,
 And of his joyous youth's clear dawn.

Our streets still rumble to the tread
Of many feet and many men.

The years have runt from one to ten
And of their dreams naught now is said.

Still rattles in its sheath the sword
Low mutterings wax now great and loud
Black strife is nigh 'twixt Chiefs and Crowd
Rises hate at a little word.

Lame men and blind now beg their bread
That lost so much for such a lie
And in the dark midnight they cry
Because they be not as the dead.

O sad - too sad for weeping yet
This thing that wounds me sore and
not those deep
Our brothers' who in farfields sleep
the
Our brothers' flight whom we forgot.

Now I am hoarse and needs must stop.

My voice is waken faint and weak -

Say, better then no more to speak
Of this sorrow, but let it drop,

And rise and go to some far place
Where life is sweet and nature kind
Dismissing there from out my mind
The ingatitude of Britains race?

Nay! such a deed were craven fear
Here will I ride the better day
Struggle and preach, strive and pray
While hand is firm and eye is clear.

And, if I do much in my way
To bring the better thing to be,
It is my only wish that ye
Remember one who died this day.

X L'Envoi

124

The game's over, my bats in the bag,
 The umpire's left, the crowd's away;
 The stumps are drawn, so why do you lag?
 How stands the score at close of play?

Dramatic Lyrics
 -and Monologues.

My Third Love. '21

I have three loves that love me.

(Many, Mother, sway my choice)

One is young: one smooth o'tongue:

One hath a Poet's voice

One, lord of half a county

(O many is he thy choice?)

One is old - hath vaults o' gold -

One hath a Poet's voice.

One takes my hands, kisses them

(Sweet many, such is his choice)

One doth seek to touch my cheek

One hath a Poet's voice

I had three loves that loved me.

(O many I ha' made my choice!)

One is blind yet he's my mind

Having a Poet's voice

(Holy Mary bless Thou my choice)

Love Divine '26

A lonely road I trod tonight,
Yet met with the Christ array'd in white.
Wherefore I thank the deed that gave
This chance for me my soul to save.
Had I not seen that bitter sight
I had not wended forth tonight.

I kiss him, at parting, with tears
Shed for love's death and past years.
Dropt quickly then his icy hand
Nor any longer dare I stand
For his eyes pierc my soul like sharp spears
So I came unto Christ mid hot tears.

Therefore I plead that Thou wilt bless
That lover of my loveliness,
For he and his past love of me
Hath made me clearer, better see
That the greater love succeeds the less;
Therefore O Christ I bid Thee bless.

The Old Singer

124

I had - a reputation, I believe,
 A - shall I say - something like fame?
 Lords and dukes and ladies mine to receive,
 Covent Garden fill'd by long name.
 The critics said (once that mattered -
 Leastwise they call'd my voice good)
 'Gold notes like largesse be scatter'd'
 (They said - and never understood)
 Faust I sang - aye all the old things,
 Don José was breath o' my breath,
 That Prolog tugg'd at all heartstrings
 Tannhäuser too, in his death
 So, I have grown old and very weak
 Toothless, a blind almost, useless thing
 Baldheaded, gaunt, hollow of cheek
 With no voice now to sing.
 Well - Singing, it was my chiefest gift -
 - Not the only by a long way -
 I us'd to dream that once I should lift
 Churches and towers t' endure for aye
 not for aye? Say then a thousand long

years? But I builded no such thing
 Pillars and high Palaces of song
 I reared - and now I cannot sing!
 Sad? Yea, every thing to be sure
 Is sad sometime for all grows old.
 But this I know well - my soul is pure
 For I sang from a heart of gold.

The Old Singer

'24

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The Picture.

26

There, take my picture - it is well nigh done.
 Finish it? Nay in truth I dare not try:
 A picture's never finisht when all's said.
 Man's mind is incomplete. A picture's what
 But a dropping-off, mere slough o' the mind:
 What else could it than incomplete the more
 I stole that arm from Tintoret's last work,
 You know, the thunderhanded Jupiter,
 The which he took, I guess, from Angelo,
 Samson he was then, slaying Judah's foes
 With Balasam's assis ^{j-a-w-} no I am wrong
 To steal a god is no ignoble theft;
 Titian done it in his Cadore battle;
 So I, who merely make a limb resemble
 Some one else's, am not thereby condemned.

Tintoret's a model and a warning.
 How so? a model? So to Saint Cassano's
 His "Crucifixion" to the altars left.
 Stand and stare at it a week, a year.
 Look at that seamless robe cast carelessly down

Those greens turrid browns beside Christ's crimson,
 Those soldiers and Saint John, Her Holy self
 And Her own Son, His cross and the two thieves.

Tintoret a warning? look but here! above.
 His Resurrection there in all its pride.
 O weep that the same brush wrought this & that.
 Cherubim with organ, angels, flowers,
 Fat bishops in regalia... (only one?)
 That comes of overpainting at a theme.
 I'm ^{no} Carlo Maratti, you should know
 (I think you his hard three hundred head sublime)
 I sketch a piece but twice, then let it go:
 For if I catch not then the harmony,
 The spirit o' the thing, 'twill never come -
 No, not tho' I try a million times.

A painter or a poet's call'd inspirid.
 No Inspiration's seen in the slow hand,
 The steady rule right eye o' th' artisan -
 Nay - a better image call'd from sacred
 things:

Call you the priest Godfild, who driving

dull

Builds up his sermon, text or obvious text,
 Piecing it out in firstlies.... to the end,
 Long seen or ere the choirboys fall asleep?
 Is it not he who with stammering tongue,
 Sometimes a mumble unintelligible,
 Lights up his subject in a few bright words
 Ere lapsing into mutter once again,
 Leaving a holy radiance in your heart?

Just that. Apply the parallel to this -
 That line needs straightening to the right -
 That's my slow stammer from the pulpit place.
 That hand with its long fingers, wants a thumb -
 Call it my mumble unintelligible!
 That face, at least & my mind (I should know)
 It is a sermon worthy Leonard!

You're satisfied? Give me that gold you've got
 Then tuck it under arm and go off home,
 Another pictures in my mind just now!

The Amateur.

26

Yes dear, I'm what one calls a middle soul;
 Sounds strange, not pleasing, nevertheless 'tis true.
 The sheep and goats ain't all that's in the flock -
 That's an exaggeration, Eastern wise,
 For men don't grasp such subtleties at once
 As are the most o' things - (I am not clear)
 Th' indubitable sheep, the angels' side
 Are what we call the geniuses here,
 Those who with poem, fiddle, stove or paint
 Give out a new thing, high and wide and deep -
 Take painting - you know somewhat of it
 These geniuses then of whom I've told
 They spell in pictures all God's wonders out,
 And linn the soul in its celestial hues.
 Well - the mass of men don't care a penny piece
 For this or that conception o' the brush,
 Whistler, Van Dyck or Rembrandt, it's all one.
 They're goats, alad (no joke) and asses too,

Now here's the strange part, where I get that

name

There are a few, less than the goats, than sheep
 A thousand more; a motley crew in truth.
 At daily earning they work as the rest,
 But 'stead of spending leisure like a beast,
 Content to browse and sleep in silent peace,
 They are the artist fellows, t'other lot,
 And try - take me, to paint as best they can
 Results are poor, tho' sometimes not too bad.
 The pity is, they see what they can't do.
 My argument is this now, understand
 We who know art and yet can't paint (I'm ple
 As much less than the higher ones who can,
 (How far behind 'tis are, 'tis God who knows)
 Are much more than the braindead ones below
 Who live long lives without a little gleam,
 A hint of something far beyond their ken.

When all's done, where's our place? where do we fit?
 Now God is just and I have thought it out;
 So we are what one calls the middle sort.

The Accident. '26

O Sir I see you and your sneer:
 You coudn't understand;
 For this dog that's dead was dear,
 Dear as my own right hand.
 I'm mad to love a mere beast?
 Nay 'tis better not so to speak.
 If I weep for a friend at least
 You wouldn't call me weak?
 This dog - O Sir just stand
 A minute's trivial space,
 Not swiftest in the land,
 Not champion of his race.
 But a kindly ambler along,
 A sideways runner thro' streets,
 His tail erect at a song,
 Ears too, when any sheep bleats.
 Blind now or nearly so I think,
 Deaf too, if truth all were told
 Yet happy as if he didn't shrink
 The fact that he was growing old.

Fifteen years this dog was mine,
 "One to drown, and one to keep"
 That's what his master said in fine
 What time I minded his sheep.
 None to drown, for I took him
 Repentant never of such a deed
 A fifteen years' mist makes much dim,
 A tired soul's better freed.
 Dog's have no souls? O Sir you dare
 Stand by my dead dog and me,
 Gaze on blood and dust matted hair
 And sockets where no eyes now be
 And say there's nothing from this gone?
 Yet this is not a broken shell?
 You'll say there's no beauty in dawn
 Nor rapture in roses' smell!
 What? You pay me for my dead deer?
 Nay I'd throw your coins in your face
 You standing there, with devils' sneer;
 O Devil's look never so base.
 You cursed thumping bumping car,
 That jolting horro of the street,
 A sudden flash - and there you are

a dead dog at your feet.
 His spine broken - and skull crushed,
 Bald patches on his hide
 Where your infernal wheels brush
 Just before he died.
 This makes me strangely think
 Of the deep mystery of death:
 How all stand on the dread brink
 As th' apostle saith.
 I have seen many people die
 Old, young or in their prime,
 I have heard the orphans cry
 The widow, many a time.
 But something seems always away
 I feel no pang you understand
 nor ever kneeld with them to pray
 For peace in the Promised Land.
 Some that I know were better dead,
 Broken in limb or in mind,
 Wiser to go to him who said
 "What's broken I shall bind"
 That's if their faith is really true,-
 The which I much misdoubt -

Seeing never any I knew
 One try th' experiment out.
 Heaven's a place to be desired,
 Yet they live on here?
 Call their Bible a book inspir'd!
 Small wonder Sir you sneer!
 There's such a lot o' this to say
 That I see I tire you, too,
 now let's sum up in a little way -
 Something must be true.
 If death ends us as you say,
 It ends this dog o' mine
 we should never hope, never may
 But drain to the lees life's wine.

If dead, we go to Heaven or Hell,
 According to our reward.
 In choosing the better way 'tis well
 To be ever on your guard -
 So little makes a sinner or saint -
 The step'twixt Genius and Fool
 May in 'tween a boy playing with pain
 And the master of a School.

my view? O Sir I now have none.
 I had tho' half anchor back.
 Seeing today this sad deed done
 Has put me on a new track.

The Gardener.

26

He came on a winter evening
 Ragged and bent and old:
 In the dark November drizzle
 Bending double with cold.

With a wracking cough he ask'd me
 For a copper or two
 "Nothin' since early this mornin'"
 'Twas truth he spoke I knew

"I'll come and dig up yer garden,
 An' sew seed - fur a bob -
 Fur before this fever tub me
 Gairdinin' wuz me job.

"There wuz river roses lak mine,
 my tomatoes wuz ripe"
 And in the November twilight
 I saw his tearfill'd eyes.

So he came and dug my garden:
 Slow was he at the work;
 His foot scarce could drive in the shade,
 His hands scarce hold the fork

The sowid then, the seeds I choose him
 In beds set square and right,
 And with a coin in his pocket
 Went out into the night.

[grinder,

with Spring comes round the knife
 His stone set on a wheel.
 "The mornin's frosty yet sor
 But Spring's in the air I feel.

"Yer flowers is doin' well sor,
 All looks decent an' trim
 Ye musta had a gairdner
 I see clear signs o' him

"Ye don't min' me sayin' it sor
 But yer no born t' the lan'
 An' the shake ur yer grinden now
 Shows a trade knownin' han'

"Now who wud he be as done it?"
 Said the grinder, sparkling steel
 "I know most men on Antrim roads"
 Raapt his rough grating steel.

So I spoke and describd the man
 And then when I had done
 "I know'd him well" said the grinder
 "As decent as ivr run

"Ye cudn't help seein' that he's cough
 Wup rexin' him an' sore.
 But sor its the truth I'm tellin',
 Yell not see him no more

"Him dead? Och aye sure an' he is,
 As deids-a lump ur stone
 An' a hanper's grave's his bed noo
 Fur he wuz all his lone

"No cross, nor stone nor weeglass case
 Wi' wreaths an' doves inside
 No letters, sign nor ony word
 Tae tell ye whin he died

"Yit I do be thinking' that it
 Wont be so far too long
 Fur yer grinden in a wee while
 Wi' flowers'll all be throng

"Just as he wud be wantin' it
 In them long summer days
 The grinden beds an' walks an' roa
 All yin bright big blaze

"Gowd an' red an' yella an' white,
 Blue skies an' sunny days.
 Them's the things that will be lef'
 Tae gie the Gardner his praise.
 Is that all the knowes the day, Sir?
 Blunt mower's is hard tae draw -
 I cud reset yer blades now
 Or put new teethin' a saw"

The Antrim man. '26

I'm goin' noo tae my ain hame
 Tho' it's over the sea.
 It's a honeley county
 In a far country.

Irishmen are hearty,
 Ulstermen are kin',
 my ain fowk are Irish
 In heart an' min'

It's an Ulster county
 wi' mountain, sea an' glen -
 I thank God fur Ireland
 an' Irishmen.

The whin's blazin' oot in gowl'
 Lak the wee fowks fire:
 An' at the damp fut ur the hills
 Clatters ov yella daffadils
 An' hawthorn hedges higher.

Ye sit round' the fire in winter
 Tellin' the quare ou' tales.
 Ye stan' on the brace in summer
 Watchin' the slow white souls.

There's wan wee toon in my county,
 Wi' wan wee nana' street
 Wheer ye go on the fairday
 Wheer the neighbours meet.

This street's white an' steep,
 Turnin' sharp at the en'
 A pub's at each ur its corners
 Wheer ivywain's a frien'

There's a side dune at each ur thin
 Wheer ye git in if ye rap,
 There's an ou' white bearded praych
 Drivin' his horney an' trap

An' then there's the wee white schoolhouse
 Wheer ye had concerts an' swannies
 (I min' me mitchin'days
 Aswimmin' up at the grannies)

Och I'm thinkin' I'm stooit,
 Travelling on this way
 I'm forgittin' the rale ou' place
 Bein' so long-away.

I'm forgittin' the things und ille ye
 The bluddy things an' the bad
 The turnible things - an' hellish,
 Things und make ye mad

The scrapin' - an' the savin',
 Hearts so bitter an' coul',
 Hard Workks fur the young'uns
 Workks fur the ou'

The win' blowin' under the dune
 An' nathin' fur men till ate
 But black putatas and mala
 In the big pot on the grate

The cow' loft I hadtae sleep in,
 Far away from the fire:
 An' the choakin' dust an' chaff
 An' the stinkin' sloin' in the byre.

The airy risin' till wash
 Criggin' yer toes on the stanes,
 The win' wheelin' thro' yer shift
 Freezin' yer vary bones

The one' white bearded maycher
 G'needy as God iv'er made,
 Stanin' up in his pulpit
 Sayin' "Yer dues hes paid"

An' the people at nod "Amen"
 Are just as bad as him.
 I've seen them ~~stink~~^{junk} into the hubs
 When the lights grow'd dim.

Them cursed pubs at the corner
 Each at the Townsend'
 Wheer ivry wan's a pal
 If ye're mony to spen'

The men that sleep in the shengts-
 Them that has no home,
 The wemen at the cross roads
 Beggin' money fur rum.

The street wheer the wemen colloque
 From mornin' till late at night
 Except whin they stop too watch
 A Prod or a Fenian fight.

It's an Irish county
 wi' mountain, sea, an' glen,
 I thank God fur Antrim
 But not fur Antrimmen

Irishmen are wicket hearted
 Antrim men are bad
 An' if I ever go back till Ireland
 I surely will be mad.

Remembered Song. '25

A starry night, long years ago
 As I went down by Netherstow
 A sweetvoic'd maiden was singing a song
 "O love me little or love me long"

Then, Netherstow was left behind,
 Yet still kept ringing in my mind
 The voice o' the maiden, swing of her song.
 "O love me little or love me long"

Years after, 'twas in London street
 I heard a shuffle o' following feet -
 The voice that tempted me to wrong
 Was the voice o' her that sang that song
 "O love me little or love me long"

I turn'd and saw her standing there;
 Even now she was passing fair,
 Tho' painted lip and reddend cheek
 Bespoke the shame she dare not speak

At Netherstow I heard a song
 "O love me little or love me long"

" Methinks you be that singer fair,
 Say, is answerid yet your plaintive pray'r
 Then in the lamplight I saw her stare:
 She dreamid of the past and of her song
 "O love me little or love me long"

The muddy gutter ran pure gold:
 The rainwet pavement was pure gold
 Where we stood till all her tale was told,
 For she it was who sang that song
 "O love me little or love me long"

""I was a common tale, a plighted troth -
 Young and foolish they were both - "
 For sorrow she stopt - I hummid that song
 "O love me little or love me long"

Sir, it happens so to many such -
 A girl's name is easy to snatch -
 And times are hard, and one must live,
 And I have only one thing to give -

I can but say in the wads o' that song
 "O love me little or love me long"

Last Adieu. 26

So you've slipt out to see me this last once
 They will not miss you in that whirling throug
 Let's sit, hold hands, talk this thing slowly o'er
 For we are wiser than the common crowd
 Who spoil an incident's dramatic force
 By tears, recriminations, stumplings-out,
 And all the petty lumber of a play.

You love me still? are sad? think this of her?
 Well, Explanations odious... but one must:
 She's not like you; as pretty? maybe so.
 O different entirely, she is that. [eyes]
 You know her? pale, deepsunken, dark rime
 Brownflashing underneath strong angry brows
 And slender too, her hair's as black as mine
 Teeth, white and even like your very own.

That moon is strangely bright above the trees
 You're not cold here in that frail ballroom gown?
 Your hand is slipping out: is mine too cold?

And did I ever love you? Nay, for shame
 Have all my protestations been in vain?
 Have all my sonnets fallen on deaf ears?
 I still do love you. Cannot? 'Cause of her?
 Now think of what I said "Not understood"
 I'm a Poet, have aspirations such,
 And poets are not ordinary men, [fire].
 But temperid souls finewrought in fancy's
 The Poet sees a symbol in the sky,
 The star, the petal, or the insect, worm:
 Symbols in everything, thought and Truth.
 In every man I see a dream come true -
 A prophecy, at least that's what I mean.
 Only some very few are dreams come true
 I rime? Yes I'm a Poet am I not?
 And Rime has still some value in these days.
 Let me return to my philosophy [worth-]
 Yes, you too, symbolise a dream of
 What's best to love, and honor and hold dear.
 She? well she too, in her own way is that:
 You're different, I said so, that's my point:
 Both you & she make up God's perfect piece,

I love you both; no harm. For I'm a Poet,
 I love God's perfect whole. You cannot grasp
 How one man can love two at the same time?
 O listen! you've been dreaming by my side
 Else had you heard me say I a Poet
 Am therefore not an -ordinary man.....
 There ... you weep... I thought we were above that.
 Said I so? I did: and yet weep you on still
 Misunderstood again, O God, again!

Come, let me kiss your brow and say goodbye!
 You hope she loves me as well as you did?...
 See I stand with bair'd head before such love!

And furthermore that I won't leave her too,
 For some new fancy.....

As I have said before I am a Poet,
 Not an ordinary ... Stop ... No?

She's gone!

Free Verse.

The Song Theme. 124

I feel a yearning within me - 1 8
Prompting utterance of song. 6

What shall I sing?

Shall I trill in lisping phrases the
glory of the seasons, babbling brooks,
chattering streams, hastening clouds in
a summer sky, falling leaves, and
bare stark trees, roar of the rushing
sea, mournful moan of the wind?

Or shall I sing

The darkness, appalling blackness,
squalor and filth of towns, the
toiles imprisoned, hedged in, choking
in soot smoking cities?

Or shall I sing

of Poverty and Theft, gnawing
hunger of hearts and stomachs,

The callous blunting of minds, the
turning crooked thereof,
or stalking and gaunt Disease?

Yet there exists a remedy
Unfailing, sure,
For all these wrongs!

'Tis time a clarion call went forth
'Tis time it was proclaimed from
housetops, steeples, hills, mountain
chimneys, wherever men dwell.

Yes I shall sing a song!
A wonderful, all encircling song,
a cosmic, universal, all containing
song

The trivial, clever rimes of men
with metres, accents,
with iambs, trochees, dactyls will
be left behind

They that bore the melodies of
hitherto, delude the ear
Mine shall ring the heart!
O Greats the need.

Then will come a time,
O happy time
When I the Singer, shall have pass'd
And the need for my song also.

126 A City Song of Suggestion.

I sing a song for love of you
 O city for love of you.

I know you, therefore I love you.

Streets glittering in rain, men thought,
 Slums, stinking and unclean,
 Publichouses with warm tempting

shops and apron'd men,
 Ships and whistling rigging, streaming
 decks, gushing portholes,
 Holy high chimneys and spires,
 Whirling traffic round white glov'd
 policemen,
 Quiet avenues, rosebushes by the
 doors, with
 names on the gates like whiffs of
 springtime.

Summersongs are far away from you
 my city

Your streets are dusty, walls high.
 Behind and above the high hills call
 But crowded streets call

I listen

They say "Come
 Join me, join us, come"

And I go:

I mix with your people O city
 Shuffling beggars with sad stories
 on little slates,

Tramping men bearing creaking boards
 Barefooted boys bellowing news,
 Clattering horses and vans,
 Lines of waiting workless men,
 Glorious motors exulting in their
 power

Long low luxurious limousines
 and fat cigarmakers,
 And messengers on wheels of fire.

Then a voice whispers within me
 "It will not always be so"
 Then I dream in your streets.....
 Your people see me and smile and
 pass.....
 I dream of you My City and your
 people

And the voice whispers
 "New Jerusalem"
 And I in my heart, say "Amen"
 And your people see me and smile
 and pass.
 That is why I sing of you O City
 that I love so.

95
 '7' What the Fire Spirit in the Coal Said

Do you not hear me, speaking out
 mid the roar of the crackling coals?
 Great tales and strange I am telling
 Would you but heed.

I tell of primeval forests and bogs and
 swamps and sluggish streams
 -and slow crawling slime dwellers
 -and Peace

Broken only by the dripping, the drip,
 -drip, constant drip

From branches -and limbs -and fronds
 of innumerable trees -and palms
 and tree-like ferns.

And at dawn the splash of the slime
 creatures tails.

I tell of ages long
 So long they seemed nigh ageless:
 Then the waters rose, ever upcreeping,
 And the trees into slumber fell,

and they dropt and as bowed by
unutterable anguish dropt one by one,
None heard the splash save god and I,
For the creatures had sunk beneath
the tree roots long ago
And their splashing tails and lashing
were at rest..

The trees for ages slept.

So when they woke they were chang'd:
Gone the sunlight sparkle,
Gone the whispering winds
Gone the sweep and sway of their limbs
Gone the creatures that splasht.....

When they woke it was all darkness
not the evening gloom that wander'd
'mid the tree trunks long ago when
day went and came.....
It was darkness, mother of night.

They knew not how the time pass'd;
but god knew and I....

Came man the mighty killer
Hairy now but strong and happy
New trees rose and clothed the hillsides
Bent he these to his mind's desire.
Shaft him huts and bows and boats,
Build the sea and kill'd great
creatures that no longer crawled.

Then he took the cold, red ironstone
Long he look'd at it in sorrow
Then I whisper'd in his ear
And he rose and said "I dream'd
a dream"

went and broke the sleeping trees
from their hold within the hill
Cast them on a pile of branches -
Struck two stones together
Cried "I saw it in a dream ... "

Built a fire and made the
ironstone pliant to his hand as
butty.

More I have told and am telling

But my strength is almost gone
And I see thro' that small window
Comes my climbing brother the Sun
To whom I shall ascend when ashes
are in this grate.

Irish Ballads
and other
Narrative Pieces.

The Old Sailorman. 125

It's a tale o' the deep sea, lads, the
deep blue foe o' man.

I'll tell now a tale o' the deep sea
as well's ever I can.

It's not a tale of valour lads, it's sad
as sad can be.

It's about a sailorman lads, and the
deep blue sea.

His father died and left him; his
mother married again.

He was put out to a grocer tho'
he was but ten.

Five years he lived among bacon,
butter and tea;

But one day a call came to go down
to the sea.

It wasn't any romance or foolish
talk about

The blue sea, the true sea, the swift
tide running out.

He had heard a lot o' yarning from
men with bearded lips,
who told plain truth about the sea,
And all its hellish ships:

The cursing and the bullying, the
dog's life and the pay,
And how they all would settle down
On a little farm - someday.

They said "Don't go to sea lad, it's
a ruddy awful life,
Save up an' buy a shop lad an'
take yerself a wife"

But he was young and they were old
and he knew he knew all.
So he went down to the green sea
in answer to her call.

His first trip taught him nothing
he hadn't learnt before.
At home he told the grocer that
he'd go to sea no more -

His second was no better, a crazy
Atlantic tramp:

He told the grocer that the town
was far too foggy and damp.

Rio was too warm where he anchored
for a while,
"a little longer at the life, an' then
I'll make me pile,

An' stop on shore fur good an' all
 an' buy a tiny farm"
 But the sea was old, and she was
 wise, holding him with a charm.

He crosst and recrosst the seven
 seas in many weird craft.
 "Next trip I'll stop an' settle down"
 but the blue sea laughed,

She knew he was one of the doomed:
 had he not kiss'd her lips
 And therefore must bide by her while
 the sea has ships?

His mother died and her man died,
 children they had none.
 His millions he left to her and to
 his stepson.

She left all to him, heaps and
 piles o' glittering gold.
 "It's time to stop seafarin' now
 fur I am gettin' old"

He said in 'Frisco as he read
 the lawyer's telegram,
 "An' anyway the hard old sea
 isn't worth a damn"

But the sea her broad bosom
 beating and heaving in hate
 Cried to the winds in answer "O
 sailorman, too late"

He went back to his mother's
 country and built a mansion hall
 married a lady of fashion; was
 made a Baronet and all.

Long he staid ashore, his years
numbered seventy one
His lady dead, his daughters married
and eldest son.

In his desk early one morning was
found a short note
"I have gone back to my love and
again am afloat.

My ship by now is beating out, past
Greenwich and the more.
I, the old sailorman, have gone down
to the seas once more."

The Who Came by Night. 125

As he lay by the fire - a dark shape
stole him upon,
Flickerid and flairid the flames
showing a face, haggard wan.

Sudden he rose, grasp'd his spear,
cried "Who art thou Son o' Night?"
Naught spake the shape in the dark
but sprang forth to the fight

They brake their spears, they lost their
shield, hacket they with swift swords,
Trampling to mire the burning brands,
nor spake they any words.

At last he overcame him, bound
him with thongs, strong and tight:
Yet he saw not the face of his foeman
so dark was the night

Then a light wind sprang up, blowing
from the chill north,
The moon from her haven of clouds,
as a bold ship glided forth:

A beam fell on the bounden man, it
fell his face upon,
It glitterid icr his armour, shovd a
face haggaid and wan.

When he beheld him lying there, great
was his amaze.
Sad grew his look for he thought of
old times and former days.

He thought o' the whitearm'd maiden,
her music - and song.
Over he bent to the bounden, loosend
then each thong.

He gave him his sword and shield
then spake "Ye must begone.
In an hour the moon's at setting,
- another brings the dawn".

Heber and Heremon '75

So slain the Danaan princes were
And slain a mighty host.
Victors now the sons of miled,
Come from a faroff coast.

"We twain shall divide this fair land
And I shall take the South"
Quo' Heber as a crafty smile
Stole o'er his lips and mouth

Quo' Heremon "O Earl Heber
Me deems thou art no fool.
Take thou the South, I in the North
An equal king will rule

Our folk we will part in such lots
As equal we can make:
Even to the parting of hairs
I and Thou half will take"

Among the folk was Cir macLis
Poet of honey'd breath,
Singer of honour or of love,
Red battle or black death.

O' Naoi was of them also,
Harper of sweetest touch
Player from deep bosom's passion,
Never a player such.

Cried Heber "These twain shall be mine
Dwell wi' me in the South"

Rose up thereat proud Heremon
Smote him strait on the mouth.

Then lifted they spears, drew glittering
swords

Each struck his ringing shield.
Long then they fought and until dawn
Would neither shftain yield.

So up rose stout Ollam Fodhla
 One of the sages, then
 "Be at peace o' brothers by blood
 Ye are not savage men

"Lo now ye ha' fought since yestreen
 Nearly the whole day long
 For the sake o' paltry singers,
 For the sake of a song.

"Say, will ye ne'er cease?" quo' he
 "Grow cold as ye waat hot.
 'Tis sinful to slay a kinsman.
 Choose ye this thing by lot."

Heber stood silent a moment;
 Heremon dropt his sword
 Blood heavily drifit from their wounds.
 Speke Ollam then this word,

"Fall thou on the neck o' thy brother,
 Kiss Heber on the lips,
 Nor foes again be ever
 O men o' the swift ships

So by them lots were cast and drawn
 O' Naoi to Heber fell
 To Heremon Cír mac Cis
 Thus then it ended well.

So in Erin music makers,
 Men o' the Singing mouth
 Strike melodies from magic harps
 From the Land o' the South.

Thus all the rams, and rimes and songs
 From ardent hearts pour'd forth,
 Tho' they be sung by Southern men
 Are made by men o' the north.

The Harper from the Sea. '15

Now mighty was Partholan,
 Fair as dawn was his lady
 A prince's dear daughter tair
 From out a far country.

She had not come then by her will
 But had been carried away
 She lov'd not chief Partholan
 And freedom oft did pray.

Sad and full sorry she was
 Naught lov'd there save a dog.
 Lonely the land and deserted
 His castle stood nigh a bog.

From out that bog came a man,
 Wild was his hair and long,
 Bearing a harp on his shoulder
 Singing a lilting song

"Now who are ye?" Partholan spoke
 "What manner o' man be ye?"
 "O great chief my name is Togha
 I come from the green backt sea

I am a harper c' renown -
 I sing all happy things"
 Whereat he fill'd the hall so great,
 By plucking his harp strings

"O now by the gracious gods
 Long have I sought for your like
 Gold will I give if by your touch
 A smile for me canst strike

Tis my own dear sweet lady
 She bides in her room alone,
 She fondleth a greyhound
 And weeps and maketh moan."

"To her I will go then alone"

The harper Tagha saith
"No longer shall she sorrow,
No more wish for death"

Smild then the bold Partholan

Quo' he "An I wish ye well
So when first she doth smile
O ye then ring a bell,

A braven bell by the door -

Do ye ring it loud and long
That I may reward the singer
O' such a wondrous song"

He went. They heard a clear music
Sweet as Athene's lute.

Came a long hollow silence,
No ancient tomb's so mute

Quo' then the chief Partholan

"He tarrieth over long
A liar was Tagha, that singer,
Useless is his song"

Sudden came clamorous pealing
That braven toned bell

Uspiringeth brave Partholan
Crying "All's not well"

He hurried to her high room
Open thrusts the door,

The lady on bier of rushes
Lieth dead upon the floor

And in the bellrope bound
Swingeth a choking hound.

Galbina's Lover. '25

His face was mild as a maiden's
 His locks heavy with gold
 In his strong right arm he carried
 Swift death to warriors bold

Black was her hair as the raven's
 Milkwhite her lovely brow
 At her smile would even a coward
 Find strength and courage now

Swift were they in the chase
 Swift as the fleetfoot deer
 Swift as sheds the arrow
 Swifter than speeding spear

He was Cromail, her sire was Conlock
 Long had they lov'd these twain
 Cromail - dark chieftain of Ardven
 Lov'd her too, but lov'd in vain

Once hot from the panting chase
 To Ronan's Cave they crept:
 During long days at the hunt
 Here Cromail oft had slept

Sudden Cromail cried "From Mora
 I hear the bell of the deer
 Bide thou here my sweet Galbina
 No ha' any fear

If Cromail but come nigh thee
 Blow thou this ramshorn here
 If wild wolf cometh prowling
 Slay him with this spear"

The place was fill'd with arms
 A fire burn'd on the floor
 Hides lay round for couches
 A bearskin hung as door

Then awhile the fireflames glowed
 On the burnish'd arms arrayed
 They flicker'd and wove a spell
 Over the soul o' the maid

Nor bode she there any longer
 But arose with a cry.
 "Tho' Cromail to me seems faithful
 Yet his love I will try

From the walls she lifted down
 The armour that was light
 Don'd then the warrior's gear
 As one arm'd for fight

By the ford Cromail saw a shape
 As of an arm'd man
 So its way seem'd strait leading
 From the Cane o' Ronan

"'Tis curst Cromail mine enemy
 Galbria he hath slain
 Because he knows that her dear heart
 Was my life's greatest gain"

He took up his bow and strung it
 Pulld arrow to his ear:
 As blithe as a bee it hummeth
 As it were slaying a deer.

Fell then the oncoming figure
 With a cry of sad surprise
 As when one beholds a lord's one
 Kiss'd on the mouth and eyes.

"I was not the harsh cry of Cromail
 Chief o' the gloomy glen
 'Twas not the voice o' the accursed
 Black lord of Arden

With startled step he strode across
 To where his quan^y lay low
 Murmuring "Tis not Galbina"
 But al^e he found it so.

He met Gruenall on a windy day.
 The mist roll'd down the hillside;
 And mist was in the wind's voice
 What time Earl Gruenall died.

1925

The Ballad of the Wandering Jew
 after the ancient manner.

It was the Christmastide
 The king at meat was set:
 His hall was throngd with folk,
 His chiefest thanes were met.

The fire blaz'd in the great hearth,
 The rushlights burnt full low.
 The wind outside ran howling,
 All round lay deep snow.
 Then call'd the king his harper
 For song o' long ago.

O' Beowulf and the Rhinefolk,
 The strongmen and the bold
 And all those monsters mighty
 Slain by men of old.

The harper took up his harpnail
 And plukt the sleeping strings
 Raisd then his voice to sing them
 Old songs of antient things.

When all the meat was eaten,
 The bones thrown to the dogs
 Outspake the King to bid them
 Pile on the driest logs.

When all the bread was eaten,
 The scraps cast to the curs
 Outspake the King to bid them
 Bring forth the hides and furs,

And spread them round the hearthplace
 Where they might sit at ease,
 Drink from the flowing winecup,
 Or sleep as each might please

To the King there came a spearmen
 Said "O King before thy house door
 Standeth an old and poor man
 Saith he can journey no more

The King his heart winewarnd
 Said "Bring the fellow in,
 On such an eve as this
 To do else were sore sin"

They brought the oldman in
 By the fire him set
 So wan water ran from his garments
 For melting snow grows wet.

Quo' King "We shall send the harp
 round,
 Each shall sing us a song -
 'Tis as a fee for the winedrinks
 Ye'll tak afore the dawn"

They pass'd the harp around
 Each one sang his song
 And the milk hours o' the midnight
 Sped like swift ships along.

They pass'd the harp round the ring
 Till it came to the stranger man
 Quo' King "O good strange fellow
 Sing ye as well as ye can

Ye owe me for the fire heat;
 Ye owe me for the wine.
 Settle now your heavy score
 Wi' a song of olden time"

The oldman smild at this saying
 And a little laugh laught he
 "O King shall I sing ye a seasong
 Or one of my ain countree?"

"We ha' heard mony a seasong
 An ye wad please me
 O sing us then a true song -
 One of your ain countree"

The old man stopt for a while
 Gaz'dg into the glowering fire.
 Then turning a wan face to the King
 Saith "O King 'tis thy desire

Mony year agone now
 In a countree far o'er the wan faim
 A man livd in a great city,
 Yeleft Hierusalem

'Twas the tide o'-a feast,
 The streets were crowded close.
 Mountain men and valley men
 That were forever fols
 And men from lonely places
 Wherin the fair lily grows

They had great strife in the town
 Over a prophet woodnigh't,
 A holy man from Galilee
 Jesu Ben Joseph nigh't.

He shake and taught strange matters
 Which none did ken but he
 And a dark band o'sathsworn brethren
 From out o' Galilee

(1926) Wending this yellow fields
 He plukt on Sabbath, corn,
 And, did the priests rebuke him
 The turnd on them wi iscom
 But tall soldiers came and seijd him
 When midnight turns to morn

He was seijd, brought before Pilat
 A Roman of high degree.
 Pilat spake seeking an answer
 But naught shake he

He was taen then to be kill'd
 Naile to a Roman crosstree
 They crown'd him and robd him in purple
 But naught shake he.

The man I said, livid in the city
 Was standing in his street
 When he saw the Romans come
 Their captive boun' and dumb
 S tumbling on weary feet

Flusht were those Roman faces
 White an' snowwhite was he
 Tho' blud - drift fro' his brow
 As he bore his heavy tree

He fell down nigh this man's door
 Too heavy was that tree
 Upturning a calm white face
 He shake wearily -

"O Brother ye see I am faint
For weariness I sink
Give me a cup o' cool water
A little I wad drink"

This man lookt down on him fallen
A cruel laugh laught he
"No I'll not get ye cool water
A dog's death ye maun dee."

Slow he rose to his feet
Another hand bore his tree,
And turning to the mocking one
He spoke "An I maun dee
Ye sure will be a sorry man
An' wish that ye were me."

Ye wad na do a kindness
To one in waeosome plight
So now ye never shall rest
Fro' this very night

"Ye shall ha' muckle sorrow
An' weepin', an' sighin', an' pain
But rest ye never shall have
Until I come again.

The Romans pusht him roughly on,
So on his sad way went he.
They nail'd him to a Roman cross
On a hill cleft Calvary.

Rest the wooduricht found in death
On that Roman tree -
Wad ye heid if I did say
The other man was me!

So, I maun lay down the harp
An' rise an' gang out thro' the snow
An' leave ye thinkin' on a deed
In a far countree long ago".

Inedited Pieces. 1926

The Hawker's Barrow.

A hawker with his barrow pass'd my door.
 A tired old face was his and grey with cold,
 For on the roads there was a muddy thaw,
 And puddles with thin broken skin of ice
 Threw back the dreary greyness of the sky.

His barrow held a store of gaudy toys:
 Red, blue, and yellow, sausage shaped globes,
 Big, bright balloons bump't buoyant in the wind;
 Celluloid windmills whirr'd a light refrain:
 And yellow singingbirds on little sticks
 With tuft of scarlet feathers for a tail.
 Behind these, in the barrow, heapt up, lay
 A pile of rags, old shawls, & patched coats;
 With here and there a crimson blur of wool,
 And white soild grey & blue worn shiny green.
 Jamjots and bottles clinkt a tiny peal,
 As cried the hawker in his raucous voice
 "Money fur reg's, bones, or bottles.
 Balloons fur the children, money fur you,
 Bring out yer oul'regs an' see if it's true"

He turn'd the corner and went on his way.
 I heard his cries die down a nearby street.
 But I could not dismiss him from my mind.
 He stand as vivid as a midnight fire;
 So musingly I moralis'd him thus

The rags are old selves, empty bottles too,
 We change them for the better things o' life
 And our old rubbish is rummled away.
 He's the type of the orthodox Jesus
 Playing Alladdin's foe's subtlest trick
 "New lamps for old. Come buy new lamps for
 old"

Golden Things - and Things of gold.

When I was young I studious sought
 Red gold for my lifework's fee.
 Golden crowns were my highest thought
 Coins of gold seem'd good to me

But I have found now I am old
 The best things in life are these:
 Golden gorse; laburnum gold;
 Golden apples on the trees.

~~Gold of sunset, ribb'd with red;~~
~~Golden dawn over the sea;~~
~~Golden wheat's ripe heavy head;~~
~~Gold moon drooping wearily:~~

~~Gold at night of windows lit;~~
~~Gold of friendly stars above;~~
~~Gold buttercups where gold bees fly;~~
~~Golden hair of one I love.~~

Casual Thoughts.

Someone gave me a rose
 (A red rose today)
 That I with my nose
 might triumphantly pray.

Roses, Roses of you I cannot sing
 Why? Don't you know you defy song like
 Spring?

So I let you go for my poor brain dozes
 At sight of you, at scent of you. Roses,
 Roses.

Garden Plotting

Some folks' garden plot
 Is a red flowerpot ('Tis all they've got)

My gardenplot is eightfeet square,
 And O what splendor is pris'nd there!

A piece of green grass, tablecloth size, -
 (Green grass to me is balm for ~~the~~^{tired} eyes
 Green grass and blue skies are Earth's greatest prize)

A ribbon of black scented mould
 Is my plots border. And in bright order
 There's pinks, and roses, and daffodils gold.

A privet hedge, white of bloom,
 Fills up the riches of the little room.

Now- I'm wrong I forget the weed,
 A dandelion 'tis indeed;

I dare not dig it out or kill it -
 Its heart's pure gold, just watch it spill it!

That's my complete gardenplot
 So I thank God I have got
 A Gardenplot.

Life-Workers.

All men are working builders
 Shaping the City of God:
 This one gilds the weathervane;
 That one bears the hood;
 This one sinks the foundations;
 That one rears the wall;
 This one planes the doorpost;
 That one paves the hall.

This man sings in his working,
 That man and this one hum.
 But some there be there working
 Whose voices are ever dumb.

For they know not they are workers
 Building the City of God.
 Tho' he knows, who gilds the weathervane
 He knows not, who bears the hood.

During a Shower

No. I don't think that it will rain all day.
 Well have a difficult hour 'fore the close.
 Meantime there's nothing to be done but wait.
 You're right, it seems to me most tiresome time
 Is waiting for the umphries to go out,
 When all the benches in the sunlight shine
 With starts and fitful flashes from grey clouds.
 Still I don't really know

When some hair's in,
 Piling up (and you're next) a long slow score . . .
 You sit and watch with your pads tightly on,
 Grow tired, go down below and have a yarn,
 A cheer bursts out, you hurry up the stairs
 But find that it is only a six hit.
 That's far more tiresome still without a doubt.

So this is your first game for the county?
 But dash it all I thought I knew your face!
 What's that? Your name? ah yes I know all now.
 I thought it was your father sitting there
 Just as he us'd to sit in the old days

Waiting for the rain to pass.— Thirty years
 You say since he went to the wicket there? . . .
 Bad habit time has flying like a dream....
 I don't play now, just potter round the nets
 And toss a few up when there's no one else.
 You say your father's spoke of me. I'm glad
 Your hand son, and if you're half as good
 As the old Block, luck's turned for the County.
 He said that did he? Well I mind it still
 We were forty behind and two to go....
 Old Jim and me; now Jim he was no bat
 So I went in and joind you dad out there.
 "Easy" he says "It's just singles we'll take"
 "Right" says I and third ball I bang'd a four.
 "Steady" he shouts, and hits a six himself.
 We pull'd it off with "Come on" . . . "Take your time".
 He toed about that time he held a catch
 For my first hat-trick four feet from the bat?

No I'm not telling stories. Not my way.
 I've heard a few yarns in my sporting life;
 I've read a lot o' books "memories" and such

And I can't say that I know many tales
 That kind the public gobble up like cake —
 I never scold'd a hundred in my life.
 Your dad did once, and lucky too he was
 Dropped by slip at ten, miss too at ninety six,
 And given seven lives behind the stumps.
 A day it took to score that century!
 But his twenties, thirties, and safe hair o' hands
 And my couple o' wickets every match
 Just helpt the County over a bad spell.
 A wasted life you say? well sonny think
 Had I not been a cricketer what then?
 A miner or a stiff-necked soldierman!
 Out here in God's good sunshine better far
 To send the red ball whizzing at the stumps
 So yellow, on the carpet of fresh green,
 To give hard knocks and take 'em all in fun
 Than in the darkness to perspire for coal
 Or on the barrack ground to form in fours.
 Life's like cricket every time, my boy;
 The world is but an Oval or a Lord's
 And each of us or bowls or bats or fields
 As best he can, playing the heavenly game

And God's the Umpire always fair & strait.
 The ring? o They are angels I suppose
 And when we hit a stump or hold a ball
 They murmur, wag their heads, and clap applause.

I like to think about it thus, you see
 Just watch the perfect batsman Jesus Christ
 See that cut, that glide, that hook, that forward drive,
 No blind slogging there! nor yet stonewalling.
 Hold your bat so and you can't go far wrong.

There lad the umpires are going down the steps
 Run now and change your shoes & join the boys.

In the Ward.

It's kind of you to come here. You can't know
 How wearily the time goes in this place:
 The silent sisters on their slipp'd feet,
 The mutter of the doctor with his watch,
 The rattle of the blindcord 'gainst that pane,
 And in the morning, just at eight o'clock,
 The clatter of the buckets on the floor,
 And in the long slow watches of the night
 Come groans, and wheels run down the corridors
 Sometimes a motor's fever'd throne purrs up:
 A red light flares outside that window there,
 And low muffled voices bear stretchers in,-
 That's how I came here, so that's why I know.

I never thought a place could be so white,
 This side the Heaven I am hoping for,-
 You saw their bust of Jesus by the door,
 Well I remember passing many times
 And gazing in and thanking God that I
 Had never gone inside that house o' death

A tramp's is a poor life in best o' days.
 It's not the hunger and it's not the cold
 That gnaws the body, heart and soul away
 But it's the longing for the things we see
 That others have, denied us by the world.
 To pass a teashop or a restaurant,
 To smell a savoury dinner at the door,
 It's perfect Hell God knows, and I know too.
 To see sweet fresh clean fruit in windows bright
 As you stand in the gutter begging pence
 Is torment worse than Tantalus the Greek's.
 To wander down a new suburban park
 And watch the windows, warm with lights & fires,
 And hear the cries of children, gramaphones,
 And tinkling of pianos, singing too;
 Prometheus on his rock was happier thus.
 To return there were two places always
 That I went past with high joy in my heart.
 One was this, the other was the gaol,
 That bleak Gibraltar, Lama's capital,
 With great-green heavy ironclanging gate
 And rows of little windows closely bar'd.

I feel that I must thank you once again.
 These other people here have visitors,
 On Sundays ^{their} friends & relations come
 And whisper things that make them sad or glad
 And bring, if they're allowed, black grapes & flowers
 No. I'm not hunting for anything at all.
 I have no claim on you, nor anyone
 For which let God be thanked, or me.
 It's quite enough to see your face & grasp
 A strong cool hand with healing in its grip.
 You don't come and say "I hope yer right wi' God"
 Or burst out crying like that woman there,
 And dabbing red eyes, relate how all's turn'd out
 This one married, that one dead before you.....
 So ansso knockt down, run away to sea.....
 Or caught and put in gaol, tho' innocent.....
 Or joind the army or gone on the dole.....
 Or sail'd on Friday for America

You come and say "Cheer up" & smile at me
 And tell a funny story just to me
 And when I laugh you frown & gravely say
 "Your temperature will rise if you don't stop"

Then I laugh louder till a nurse comes a'er,
with "Remember there are other patients here"

You'll come next week I hope. O yes you will
And bring me please, I'm begging don't you see
no - call me silly, sick man's fancy, so,
A little bunch of white, pink, mauve sweetpea
Why? You don't ask me questions as a rule.
However you've been kind so I'll oblige -
- It means a lot for me to tell you this.

Sweetpea grew in my grandmother's garden.
(That's longer ago than I care to count)
A narrow strip of fresh, damp, softer grass
Than ever barefoot trod on anywhere;
This side, a row of apple trees - say six,
I've seen them in the springtime, thanks to God.
A thick hedge at the bottom cut in shapes
Of peacocks, crescents, like a poodle dog,
All nobs, and blobs, & knots, & rough, & smooth
That side a rosebush by the cottage door,
(A canker always ate the petals up -
What roses came were cream, tho' only buds)

And further down, a strip of rich brown earth;
A line of cords and canes like teacher us'd;
And clinging, climbing, beelining sweetpea,
In gentle shelter of our neighbour's hedge.

~~In short when I was~~

In short, my creed was this, when I was young -
"I believe in buttercups, and daisies,
Greengrass, apples, roses and - sweetpea"

Time's up, so you must go. Goodbye, and thanks

On hearing a Pianist Broadcast.

He flung a handful of notes
Into the air.
I caught them

Dum - dum - dum

Thrum . thrum . thrum . thrum .

la - la - la - la

Ping - Jing - Ting

I caught them! — Crash

Birds, bands, winds I caught.

7 flowers of sound (a dewy bunch)
Pink roses, white roses, red roses,
Roses,
Lovely roses intoxicating,

I smelt them with my ears
When he flung them into the air!

Impressions of Childhood.

1 Feverish feverish

"Your father will die.

Don't cry sonny:

Men never cry =

2

Mumble mumble

"Now he's dead"

Who's that lying

So still in bed?

4

Flowers in the room:

The air is chill

While he lies there

0 so still

The air is heavy,

Choking me

It chokes my eyes

and I can't see

6

Then was silence

For a spell.

Death's just a sleep:

He sleeps well.

Rumble rattle

Grating roar

The undertaker's

at the door.

8

Brass knobs on the

Coffin there:

My father's dead

So I don't care

Another night

But I don't sleep.

All night long

Dark shadows creep.

9

Early next day
The sun shin's bright.
Mother says she
Slept all night

11

Whispering, sobbing,
In a low tone
To the figure
Still as stone.

13

So in I slipt
To see him there,
But mother sat on
The rocking chair.

15

The brass knobs shone
Like finest gold:
I toucht his brow
But it was cold.

10

She told a lie. I
Saw her there
Sitting in the
Rocking chair,

12

For in the dark
I heard a noise.
I thought it was
My father's voice

14

The pale lamplight
From the street
Fell on the bed
Across his feet.

16

Mother did not
See me there
For I took my step
With timorous care.

17

Then back I went
To my own bed,
And dreamt that she
Like him was dead.

19

The house was full;
At murthering thong.
At two o'clock the
Hearse came along

21

Nurse took me in:
I sat on her knee.
A tall man in black
Shook hands with me.

23

The tall man in black,
Coat black as coal,
Said ^{something about}
~~some words~~
about my father's soul

18

So that when I woke
I was quite glad
To see her living
altho' so sad.

20

The wreaths were ^{white}
smell.
With mournful
In the brass knobb'd
Coffin he sleeps well.

22

men all in black,
And women too,
Stood as if they didn't
Know what to do.

24.

About the grass
That withereth
And life that cometh
after death.

25

Something else he
Sadly said
How Jesus Christ
Rose from the dead

27

And carried it out
Without a slip.
The man on the beam
Had a long whip

29

Mother sat without
A sound,
Looking strait on
Never lookt round.

31

More men stood
About the gate
"It's nearly three.
The liftin's late."

26

Nurse held me tight,
And said "Don't cry"
They lifted his coffin
Shoulder high

28

The men in the hall
Put on their hats.
And I saw my Aunt
Straiten the mats.

30

Aunt slipt out
Up the stair.
It wasn't her father
So she didn't care.

32

I wanted to kiss
Mother's brow
They said "Don't bother
Her, sonny, now"

33

I heard the scraping
Of many feet.
The smell of the wreaths
Grew suddenly sweet.

35

I felt like waking
From a dream
When the room's too dark
To even scream

37

Nurse said "Sonny
Don't make a noise.
You can play with the
Quietest of your toys.

39

Play with your soldiers
The ones of lead.
You must know Sonny
Your father's dead"

34

I heard the wheels
Begin to roll
They cut deep notches
Into my soul.

36

They died down still
The road. All was
Mother sat tearless
She'd wept her fill.

38

You mustn't play
With trumpet or drum
Nor shout, nor whistle
Noising or hum."

40

After all I had
Seen and heard
It seem'd a strange
Unreal word;

41

For my father
Used to come
And fire the cannon
And play the drum.

at the End of the Day.

Come, put your white arms about me and
say that you love me still:
For love's like summer weather in garden,
or woodland or hill.

When summer is done the hills turn brown,
leaves fall, and flowers droop low.

Say not there's Autumn in your heart and
~~winter~~ threatening of snow.

Turn now, my love, and look at me with
your dear dark brown eyes
And mark the changes that have come with
a sad mild surprise.

I that was young am old now, am
feeble that was once strong.

Love, is not Time a traitor to work
this grievous wrong?

My years have fled with their sweetness and
all is left undone.

May weep not for me o dearest all things
are gone save one.

You still are left to love me as I have
ever loved you.

Say but the word old lover and prove
God's best gift true.

Yourself are not what once you were : the
years have wrought you shame.
White's the hair I used to smooth, and pales
your cheeks young flame.

The wrinkles tell a ¹(story) sorrowful ²story around
your weary eyes.

Your voice is grown very quiet like to a
dreamer who cries.

Yet we have each other, tho' the years have
made us so old.

Time's furnace has done its duty, driving
the dross from the gold.

Life's been a hard road to travel : but God
has been too good

For us to sigh in the twilight, or in the
shadows to brood.

An Exercise in Proper names.

The pleasant sounding names of English homes
 Have been like music to my tired ear:
 Cotswold, and Mendip, Tonbridge Wells, Carlile,
 Bideford, and Avon, Clester on the Dee.
 But Ulster leads as ever, my own land,
 with magic spells o' faery woven webs -
 Magheramorne, Carrabough, and Lushendal.

Unemployed. Again.

1 The foreman came
 and said to me
 "Ye can put on yer coat
 at half past three.

3

He gave me my pay
 slip there and then
 for I was one of
 the casual men.

5

To go back home
 -and tell my wife
 that I was back
 to the hungry life;

7

to put in the grate
 the last chairleg,
 then out to the streets,
 this time, to beg;

2 For this wee job
 is nearly - done.

There's work to morra
 for only one."

4

I put on my coat:
 went out in the rain.
 my heart was a stone
 dull throbbing with pain

6

to nurse the children,
 quiet and good;
 and tighten my belt
 at thought of food;

8

That's what lay
 before me then
 for I was one of
 the casual men.

9.

So I went down the
shining street,
and felt each muscle
with my feet

11

And every step I
took in the rain
my feet ached back
the dull throb'd pain.

13

I saw chrysanthemums
in the rain
and so I forgot my
heavy pain.

15

"Perhaps like me"
sadly thought I
Those cigarettes are
the last held buy"

10.

(For on tired feet
strong leather is tough
and carboard's cheaper
and good enough.

12

A man stopped me to
ask for a match;
and my eyes lit on
a garden path.

14

The man said "Thank
mate" and went his way
that's what the casuals
always say.

16

Then of a sudden
back again
came the dull throbbing
bitter pain.

Neighbours.

That woman you saw pass here many times,
The tall one with the restless shifting eyes,
Is dead: and won't pass this way any more.
Her name? I heard it once but I forgot.
Married? I never saw a husband there.
She lived in a house (see there) just like this-
Bleak walls, red brick, with yellow splash of stone.
A gruff 'nd grinding gate led up to it:
Michaelmas daisies and a lilac bush,
With white stone garden path, that no one trod.
Curtains, chimneys, windows as like the rest.
As the whole house was in the terrace there.

I never spoke to her, nor she to me;
And twenty years I've liv'd here (far too long)
And Jim, you know was.. No.. Well this is why
I miss her as I look out on the street.

A beggarman once came round selling studs,
I bought one, for dear Christ Jesus' sake.
Jim uses studs, but bone, not brass like those.

So every month the man call'd back with me:
 And I took more.... yes, if you care to look ...
 No, not there but in the middle drawer
 You'll find... no matter. Ten years or maybe twelve.
 He came back here, and does so still with studs.
 He never call'd next door, nor at the Smith's
 Nor yet ^{the} next ~~door~~, nor number thirty six:
 He did at her house - why? he told me so.
 And sometimes he sold soap and mantles too,
 He'd hold them out and say "At thirty eight
 The lady says it's good or awful cheap"
 Or something of that sort, you know quite well.

An old man this and thin, and very weak;
 Yet hangs on to life, and now she's gone.
 He had a son Jim gave a good job to,
 His daughter may work for that lady's friends

 I never spoke to her, nor her to me
 And yet, I miss her sorely, now she's gone.

An Imitation of the 'Metaphysicals'

O Lord beatified in praise
 To Thee I bring,
 Cull'd in the coolness of autumnal eves
 Tho' born mid warmth o' summer days
 A wreath of weeds and speary leaves
 To which dewdrops still cling.

³⁷
 O Lord entwined Thou wilt find
 My dreams and deeds,
 Strivings that fail'd as on the greensward
 Fall arrows caught in playful wind.
 Bound is the bunch with silver cord
 Woven of holy broides,

Such broides ~~are~~ are his garments hem
 O Lord, Thy Son.

Wherefore that Thou wilt only see,
 I trust, O Lord, the gleaming gem
 That holds together all I've done
 And murmur "Tis bound prettily".

Homesickness in the City

As I stood in the line with the workless men
 A farmer's red cart today rumbled by
 And I saw my father's cottage again
 Beneath a clear blue autumn sky.

A man on the top of the hayload lay dreamily.
 Rain an hour back had drenched us where we stood
 So the scent of the hay and raindrops came to me
 And with a frantic passion find my blood.

I saw again the waving fields, heard the reapers pass
 Saw once more the level fields, tall corn stricken down
 I smelt once again the fragrance of the grass,
 The tilted haystacks with rain turn'd brown

The Twilight of the Gods.

A toothless old crone was sitting by the fire
 Nodding her head in time with some old tune,
 A plaintive melody of former days
 Ere chillness of spirit took the place
 Of hearty warmth and universal mirth.
 The firelight flickering fell upon her cheeks
 Showing deep hollows like a crater cold,
 A sunken mouth and creast and pursed lips
 And misty eyes that seemd to see no thing,
 But ever stand into the fire's red heart.
 Two nervous gnarled hands she held out there
 To catch the passing threads of heat and light
 And so it seemd the words she sang were these

"Apollo's gone and Memnon's voice is dumb
 Tithonus chirps no longer in our fields
 Gone are the red nights when Vulcan's forges
 Roard their tremendous blasts into the dark.
 Boarslain Adonis is forgotten now
 And I, astho' of men, as tho' I had not been
 Men turn not on their lips these magic names

The Paphian or the antique Erycine.

And when men see the fresh foam break in splendour
They talk of ships as old Ulysses us'd
And never dream of when I stepped on shore
On that rare day from the dawn-coloured shell
Woe woe the Gods are gone, their day is done

None can our tales save scholars in rare books
And they grow blind of eye before they come
To the bright pages telling of my loves,
And how my white limbs glittered thro' green glades
And how I dreamt on banks of asphodel,
And of the sparkling fountains in the sun
That splashed in splendour all the marble tiles
And trickled shining over ivory feet, [whilst]
And dropt in pearls from shoulders snowy
And made my locks gleam like a black pearl
And how the peacock shriketh approach of rain [mid]
And how the doves in a white wheeling flock
Flash in the sunshine round the temple walls,
As crooning down cool corridors there came,
With swish of robes, sweet voices echoing,

All grace and gentleness is gone from life.

Noise, haste and speed, with clamorous uproar rude
Bespeak the advent of these later gods.

Their altar incense smears the purple skies

In ribbons of long bronze and black and red.

And only when men sleep the stars shine clear
That oldtime strength all our harbour bays

With coronets of gold and silver gems,

As low black galleys laden to the pooh

With odious spices from far Zophalan,

And veils and silks from Nippon's sunfed looms.

And webs enwrought with figures in bright hues.

Recalling our mad escapades of youth -

My Cupid and his Psyche - other's too,
myself. I blush, and those dear ones long lost;

- And parakeets and cockatoos from Fuit,

That lookt like capturd rainbows in a cage

And gambolling apes with faces of old men,

White tufted faces, itching eager hands,

And twitching tails all white fur to the tip..

My memory plays me bitter tricks tonight
And I grow sadder than a God should be

For when all's over am I not divine?
 And Life is sweet and Love still moves in
 Albeit not as we move, Love moves now. [men
 Gone ever are the passionate hot lips:

The wild embrace, the fever'd pleadings gone
 And now they love, are wed and settle down
 To the same small snug lives their fathers
 And yet there are some women of their streets [lived.
 Who have the same old rapture of deep love
 And they are scorn'd and nam'd with names of
 Such names as high Olympus uttered once [so lame
 When I was bound in manacles of steel
 And he so strong who could not break the bond
 That Lamfoot so astutely fashion'd us.

My memory plays me bitter tricks tonight

The Banking of God.

Go leave me now, 'tis better thus to be.
 I am content, all's well, naught's left undone.
 The songs I said I'd make are all set down:
 That novel too, is written - as I would.
 As for that essay bunch of luscious fruit
 Culld from my brain's short summer shell of sun,
 They're ended now. So I will turn to sleep.
 No, stay! for if you go a clergyman will come
 And gnaw and tear at my last nerve's weak strings
 And steal from me my dear contentedness.
 Dear, aye in two ways it is very dear;
 Dear first because 'tis precious to my heart,
 And dear again because it cost so much.
 Well, I'm not whining, never was my way;
 I always was a Stoic: at my birth
 They said, I did not whimper as most do.
 Perhaps it was surprise at Life's strange light
 That held me dumb and blinking with round eyes
 And yet I think it must have been my pain
 At charting from the angel hosts above.

Ah there I go meandering thro' mists.....
 I've often dreamt it was my foul disease,
 The cursed wearin' of my lungs away.....

God seems to me like a tall doctorman,
 Such as told me I had three years to live,
 Glasses to hide the glitter of his eyes,
 And cold cold finger gripping round my wrist,
 And funny earthings, stethoscope I think,
 (God listens that way to the greatworld's heart)
 The only difference is, my doctor had
 Red charts of nervous systems round his walls,
 And god has diagrams of evry soul,
 With this strength underlind or overrul'd,
 A ring round each small portion that's a brain.

When I came home that night I crept to bed,
 But sleep's feet were all manacled and bound
 And evry clank awoke me as I dozd.

Outside the frosty stars shone brightly dead
 As tho' the Muses sat within each sphere!

Here, my pen, quick, I'll make a sonnet now
 — There put that in the little bluebackt book.
 "His last.... on dreaming of a misspent life"
 You'll call it so, yet I won't care one jot

As I lay on that couch of stupid dread
 A thought came to me like a chill windgust
 God says "You'll die and leave your work undone
 He laughs and jeers and points at you in scorn
 And mutters in his distant-thunder tones
 "How poor a thing is man! How little worth!
 See here's a soul I slapt with careful art
 Sensitive as a butterfly's frail wing,
 with sting of venom as a scorpion:
 A mind made equal to the highest known
 With breadth of vision held by none before;
 A perfect poet prophet or archpriest,
 Fitranking brain with Shaksper and that crew.
 A jest. I throw a germ of rapid death
 Into the little soulcase body there!
 And so he'll die, and worms will crawl & writh
 Within the brain none ever saw where like,
 And none will know he had a mind at all;

Or if a little, they will sadly sigh
 "An' had he livid he had done this and this."

That doctor said three years I had to live
 And god was mocking in my very face
 So what was I to do or not to do

There, see my shelf of red and blue backt books
 Three years the doctor said, and yet he lied!
 It is but eighteen hectic months since then
 And I am going out the custard way.

Hush listen again, that's death's grim rattlein'
 The doctor lied to me - you see he did
 And god —

Well he is baubled at anyrate)

Protest and a Plan .

I've never tramped the streets, a workless man:
 A bed was always mine at journey's end,
 Soft pillows and clean cool sheets chill as snow:
 Without a meal I never had to go,
 Nor ever begged from slamming door to door,
 Hawking about bootlaces, pins, or ferns.

I've never seen the fury of mad war.
 My lot was cast far from the smoking line,
 The flaring starshells, or the crackling guns,
 The blue stab of the rifle thro' the night,
 While men with faces smashed into red pulp
 Cry out in pain for light, a guiding light.

I've never climbed about a ship's steel ropes
 As up the channel thro' dank fog she gropes:
 Or held the wheel when bitter sleet and hail
 Lash whistling thro' a dull orchestral gale.

I've never driven hard the grating plow
 With eye firm fist upon that small hill's brow
 Nor ever bared a burnt neck to the sun
 And wished God that the harvesttide were done.

Good food, warm fires, and loving friends are mine
 And books, and peace, and worry vacant nights
 And yet O God, O God I'm not content.
 And tho' I pen my little riming songs
 In praise of this or that that pleaseth me
 My heart's so full of other's damned wrongs
 That I am futile as a man can be.

I never tramped the streets, a workless man;
 Nor bared the bloody fury of mad war:
 And yet I see no other clearer plan
 Of changing for the better things that are
 Than brawling the red honor of mad war.

The Hymn of the Bitter-Hearted

O god, I know I'll go to Hell
 For tortured is my soul:
 Thro' hate and bitterness and spite
 My ranging thoughts do roll.

My heart dare not be calm and pure
 As angelhearts above.
 With hate and bitterness and spite
 I have no time for love.

My hate is for men and their plans,
 Their learning and their laws,
 Their schemes for soiling, smearing over
 What's gript between their paws.

My bitterness is for my kin,
 All weak things'neath the sun,
 'Gainst evry wickedness and wrong
 That to each one is done.

my spite is fact against those priests
 who serve Earth's mammon now,
 And turn their heads, and go their ways
 Despite Christ's Thornton brow.

And yet O God I have a hope
 That I'oult forget my sin:
 And hate and bitterness and spite
 Shall ope and let me in,

So in thy heavenly courts above
 A place be found for me,
 By hate and bitterness and spite
 Redeem'd eternally.

A Soldier of the 'Ancien Régime' to
 Napoleon (circa 1802.)

There, feel that sword sire, strait and keen,
 You'd always know a damascene.

O Watch it bend and whistle back.

Was there ever a sweeter hum?

I stuck it thro' Dane Gustav's neck

And that old boaster soon was dumb!

A tale? which, sire? I know a score
 About this brave old steel, and more.
 Gustav's? Nay sire, you see, he lied.

Warms my blood, I'm too, o' the South.
 God knows, how easily he died,
 With all his folly in his mouth!

A braver one I'd rather tell -
 How from my blade a Briton fell.

'Twas in 'seventy three, methinks

In Paris, sire, when she was France,
 Amid the glasses silver chinks
 Fate dealt good cards; I took my chance

Lebrun, he's dead, and I, and he,
 This cursed stranger o'er the sea,
 Sat down one night at friendly cards
 And play was dull, so we had talk
 Of battles, books, wine, women, bards
 And all the strange roads that men walk.

This English - he laugh'd at every thing -
 He said "Why do ye have a King.
 A King that doth not lide your whim:
 A King that's both a fool and knave:
 O'ds blood, we'd make short work o' him,
 Were he but on our side the wave!"

I rose and struck him in the teeth :
 His hand and mine slift to each sheath.
 The table fell. The cards strew'd round.
 Crash went the lamp, and all was dark.
 Then light was brought, and he was found.
 My sword could never miss its mark.

O glorious days were those for me,
 The dead, past years of monarchy.
 The King heard of my lightning stroke,
 My eager hand, my flashing sword.
 And love and honour did I clutch
 Because he spake the gentle word.

I had a love in { concassone }
 To old Dyon :]
 To Paris I brought her anon.
 And silks and satin were her dress
 That (ever) ^{before} was in muslin clad.
 The laughter in her eyes you'd guess
 When she, and I, and life were glad!

I falter sive - I am afraid
 To so speak more. See this brocade
 Was worn by one in better days, —
 I wou'd to god they'd come again
 When I was worth a Prince's praise,
 I, and my sword, and my Vivienne.

An Exercise in Consonant Rhymes.

Since from my eyes Life's silken veil was torn
 My heart hath had a deepset strident yearn
 To image forth the holy City of God,
 Set sacredly high on the hills of grace,
 Woof woven of the splendour of white cloud,
 Weft tract of the timeless fabric of Peace.
 Its gardens, and fields, and meadows —
 Besprinkt with delicate sunray shadows.
 Bright beautiful streets and ways thro' the town
 Are pav'd with crystal adamantine dawn:
 And children run, and tumble, and jostle,
 Where every house is a kingly castle,
 With arched window and burnish'd turret —
 Lo, these are the dreamings of my spirit.

There day comes over its walls and gables
 And stays to chase the black pirate trouble
 Then passes on, a high old Spanish ship
 That only taries, that never dare stop,
 But eer on the horizon hangs hull down
 Slow ebbing out over the sea's blue lawn,

Or see, this musket, tho' so new,
 Hath done rare deeds behrown to few.—
 O sad thoughts come and gnaw and squeak,
 And I grow fainter than I should;
 And oftentimes I dare not speak,
 Like one that has first sight o' blood.
 Old things are gone away from us,
 All, save my lady's tremulous
 Dear lips and weary-worn grey eyes,
 And my old sword, and this brocade;
 And I, for every thing that dies
 Has died, and left me, old, afraid.

And everyone there that draws gentle breath
 Can whisper nothing save Lord God's own truth
 In the gold casket of each one's bosom
 Blows, time forgotten, the fadeless blossom
 That all men seek for, and none ever find
 Save those who reach that sapphire coasted land

These are the dreamings that my spirit tore
 From the trembling heart of the glowing fire.

Contd. from opposite Page

As coolness hides before the face o' sun.

An Exercise in Assonance.

22

When wandering, dusty, travel-worn feet
 Have east their fret, and travler's heart is still
 And the hands are clasht for a little sleep
 As the stream of the brook is stopt with silt,
 Then the mind freed, forth wanders further on
 Ever seeking for the beckoning tall
 Sun-shatter'd minarets of God's deep peace
 Mortal'd and builded firm of human pleas.
 The soul's feet, for the body's mire not now,
 Have donnd immortal sandals and are prou'd
 To romp and run and race thro' mystic fields
 When the liquid air of dawnshine maketh fleet
 The bounding heart and bosom with chill breath
 About the hour when daybreak's host is met.
 But ere he reach the limit of the snows
 The mists wrap round him and he is alone,
 As one who all men call a madding fool
 Stands in dim woods and watches the white moon
~~With~~ with no stars in the sky nor any wind,
 Come close to trace in black the fork'd limbs
 of the entranced trees with silence hung

V

Adaptation from Heine.

A white hair'd king and very old
 In the twilight of his life
 With his treasures and his gold
 Look to himself a wife,
 Tho' grim years turn the heart's blood cold
 And youth and age spell strife.

There was a page with satin shoon
 To bear the queen's silk train—
 You can recall the olden tune
 Of the pity and the pain,
 And how the roses of last June
 Will never bloom again.

W lines

Annabel Jones (after Crabbe)

See, down the lane, athwart that hedge of brier
 A curling smoke proclaims a cottage fire.
 There lives a noble mother and a wife
 Who, spite of poverty, has led a life
 So virtuous and refined that neighbours say
 She grows more like an angel day by day.
 But slow, her whole tale I will short relate
 If you would lean and linger by this gate.

Her mother died when she was very small,
 A such one as herself belov'd by all.
 Her father Reuben Jones, a drunken sot
 Less careful for his family than his pot,
 One eve, returning from convivial board
 Stumbling fell and drown'd him by the fad.
 They found him there at first pale streaks o' day,
 His clothes all mud and muddied with red clay.
 Weeds hung about the purple bigveined throat,
 And sedge caught in the patches of his coat:
 A ghastly face with matted unkempt hair,
 And eyes fast glassy in a frozen stare.

They bore him home upon a neighbour's door.
 Such is the sad home coming of the poor.
 Six there were left then, Annabel was one,
 All were maidens fair save a baby son.
 The funeral over and the body laid
 Deep in the silent clay by kindly spade
 The trouble was how then were they to live?
 Their friends gave love, 'twas all they had to give.
 A young, a handsome swain then said that day
 "O Annabel, my Annabel I pray
 Come wed me now - and I shall work for all
 For love of you - and for your sisters' sake"
 "O Nay" she cried "The toil wou'd be too great.
 In five years time it will not be too late.
 There's washing to be done, and sewing too.
 What one has done I sure can try to do."
 She sew'd, she wash't, she milkt, she spun
 From dewy day-dawn till red set of sun.
 The years hast, and the harvests, and the springs
 As tho' the kind gods lent them speedy wings.
 Her sisters grew to womanhood and wed,
 Save one now who was counted with the dead;
 So left the only son, a clever boy,

Whom Anna deem'd her heart's delight and joy.
 But one June day while climbing o'er a wall
 His ankle caught a niche, o' dreadful fall.
 The doctor in his accents soft and mild
 Said "Naught but amputation saves the child".
 A cripple now to hobble down the years
 Small wonder Anna's voice was chokt with tears.

The swain return'd and said "O Anna mine,
 The time is come when all I have is thine"
 "O Nay" she cried "None of my mother's brood
 Shall ever eat cold Charity's scant food.
 My hands are strong, my eyes, and work I will
 While any brother needs my aiding skill"
 The swain departed grieved, yet only glad
 That such a noble heart his dear one had"

The village cobbler hearing of the deed
 Sent down to Annabel with fervent speed.
 "I have a vacant place here for a boy
 To learn my craft and live in my employ.
 Your brother as he's lame is fitting well"
 "I was thus he wrote, tho' poorly did he spell.

No need to tell the rest, you know it well.
 List, yonder comes the grim owl's nightly call.
 The moon is rising large behind the trees,
 And freshly whispers now the quickning breeze.
 Nor let us linger longer by this gate -
 Come in and meet my wife, ere 'tis too late!

The Revivalist goes to Nature.

In the dim moonlit wood when clinging boughs
 Stung a sharp sudden pain into my soul
 And black branches swung down to hinder me
 I had a vision vouchsafe none before.

The drowsy wind in the tassels of the pines
 Had sung me into slumbrous discontent
 And all seem'd wrong and careless of its wrong.
 Crisp leaves beneath my feet betray'd the path
 And sucking earth below lipt traitor-mouth.
 While the sad scents and murmurings of old trees
 Mixt with the mystic mutter of the boughs
 Had brought a dream of hopelessness and peace.
 Above the moon, scarf'd in a lonely cloud
 Seem'd hopelesser than I, and cold and still:
 Its filtered even nightwast silver streamers wan
 Called up each knot and knurr on each treebole
 To touch the coldness of my brow my hand
 Stole up when stay'd and thrill'd a gentle touch.
 For dark green leaves shone in the darkblue night
 With whitend points of prickles round each edge

And as the moonlight splash'd a molten net
 I caught the glint of berries red as blood:
 Nothing more. The calm soft acceptancy
 Holding my soul before was rent in twain.
 The jags and prickles of the holly leaves
 Were thorns about Lord Jesus' milkwhite brow.
 The scarlet berries on each clustered spray
 Were but the blood drops on that victor brow.
 I turn'd High up, the moon had now become
 The coin of gold Christ-had to set me free;
 And all the boughs that beckon'd in the dark
 Were but my dead desires, and dreams and deeds.

Additional Poems

1927.

(To the End of July)

26

Somethings I dare not think about,
Wherefore O god I am in doubt.

How every lump of burning coal
May be the headstone for some soul
Lost in the darkness and the gloom
When the dim tunnel turn'd a tomb.

How every slice of meat on plate
Has seen, may hap, the sickening fate
Of someone in the heaving hold
When high tides rose and vessel roll'd,
And cattle rush'd and rush't and ran
Crushing underhoof a man.

How every fish we careful taste
Has seen as wanton bitter waste,
It has come one morning to the shore
Where comes a red saild boat no more.

Only a break in the oily swell,
A floating gull, the pity tell.
Now when I gaze around my room
Three figures shape themselves of gloom.

Two white faces and blood-soakt hair
 And eyes that stare, grim eyes that stare:
 One grey face and tangl'd matted hair,
 Rat-eaten eyes that cannot stare

These things I dare not think about
 Lest life become an endless doubt.

To the Scientists of Today.

You with your million atoms, you with your endless stars,
 Dare to laugh at my angels & their celestial wars?

I will go back to the old things, the dreams my fathers dreamt,
 For at least thro' their airy fancy the God of humanity gleam.

But for your figuid blueprints & stiff mechanic laws
 You shape a silent cypher dubbing it primal cause.

I need a living creature with firm upholding hands
 To share my heavy burdens & bear life's burning bands

Without the Door.

There is no cause I firm believe
 That any one should ever grieve;
 And if a sorrow mar our song
 'Tis god is right and we are wrong.

Yet tho' my heart be full and free
 Of all life's joy and courtesy
 And still a sorrow mar my song,
 Where lies the fault? and whose the wrong?

These days my heart is set afire
 With flame from pity's dying pyre
 And I grow bitter, hard and cold
 And call on Christ as men of old.

Then he and I stand by the door
 Among the blind and weak and poor.
 And tho' we knock and make loud din
 The bolt stays fast, we go not in.

Inside come sounds of joy and mirth
For these are high ones of the Earth.

And then one mutters to his mate
"Go, clear the vagrants from the gate"

So he comes out and bids us hence,
Calls on his god Indifference,
Calls on his angels, Force and Law
This doth his quill, that his sword draw.

So Christ and I and all the poor
Are driven harshly from the door
And be it rain, or be it snow
'Tis he must go and we must go.

O Lord, in days that are to come
When Heart is cold, and voice is dumb
Who stands with Christ without the door
And rubbeth shoulders with the poor
And loudly utters forth a song
Beaten out of bitter wrong?

15 The Passage Perilous and Mansoul's Walls!

About each heart there is a fence
protective, call'd Indifference
to keep Care's yelping dogs at bay
and safely let the spirit play
in the cool garden of Heart's May.

But, pitiful, this fence is high
and often doth obscure the sky,
shutting without the stars and moon,
prevents the butterfly's bright boon
and stays May passing into June.

So while outside chill winds do blow
and cometh rain, hail, sleet, or snow,
when little loves knock on the fence
so steep is this Indifference
they deem it ever lids them hence.

12

A Peasant in the Fields.

Idly rode men jingling by,
 Gold and gleaming in the sun
 So to God I pray'd that I,
 Ere my days were wholly done,
 Should ride as haughtily and high
 Gold and gleaming in the sun

Alack, one eve as down the lane
 With heavy toilworn heart I went,
 I saw those noble knights again
 All wounded, bloody and bespent.
 Since Honour's day was at its wane
 With heavy toilworn heart I went.

24

Recollections of Woodland Dreams: An Experiment in "French rime"

Came once a luted low lament
 From some player murmuring,
 Plucking a string'd instrument
 Whose very name doth ring
 Mildly with soft melody
 Of lovely things that never die.

Faintly thro' the lattic'd spaces
 Down dim tree aisles I could see,
 Weaving quaintly meshed paces
 On the margin of the sea,
 A faery band goes two by two:
 With them I long'd to tread there too.

Lo, even now I hear them sing
 In their dreamy unison
 As they ply their magic dancing
 'Neath the splendour of the sun.
 And when our gutters run with rain
 I seem to feel their mystic reign.

20

The Second Wife of Usher's Well
An allegory.

The Wife:

Sons, follow ye this path
For a year and a year and a day
And ye'll come to a mist hid rath
Where the Faery Queen bides, they say.

First Son:

O Mother I followed the path
For one long summer day
And I only saw a rath
And a field where faeries play!

Second Son:

O Mother I kept to the track
For a year save one short day
And I only turned me back
When faeries bid me stay.

Third Son

O Mother I held to the road
For a year and a year save a day
And by me a spirit strode
The whole of the weary way.

The Mother:

But where is your brother gone?
O sons o'mine will ye say?

The Three Sons:

We have not seen him since that dawn
Last year and past year and a day!

14

City Mysticism

(in Blake's manner)

Every cobblestone in the street
 Bears plain the print of angel feet.
 Every brick in each smoke hid slum
 Cries out in hope for Kingdom come.
 Every spire and lofty steeple
 Points out high heaven to all people.
 Every rainwet gold gleaming roof
 Is of Eternal Splendour proof.
 Each statue in each public place
 Has seen the tears on Jesus' face.
 Every stone in the prison wall
 Loudly doth for mercy call.
 Every jagged rusted railing
 Is moulded out of children's wailing.

16

A Thrush sings on a dull March day.

O Spring has suffer'd repulse today
 for Winter came back in grim array.
 the crocus-bugles of brassy gold
 are silent now, those trumpeters bold.
 Primroses yellow are glist'ly pale
 beneath the cannonade of whistling hail.
 The blue sky banner is furled away,
 the standard supreme is dreary grey.
 A cold wind moans in grief for the slain:
 the only brightness is golden rain.

Yet hope still is / Spring's myriad men
 can drive this enemy / thence agen,
 and cover fields with ^{their} colored tents
 and blithely tune / their instruments
 to such sweet singing / that thrush is
 preluding on my old beechen bough.

To China on the Fall of Shanghai. March '27

The French rose once, the Russians rose in might,
My kinsfolk, Irish, too, have struck shrewd blows.
But all these things were playful overthrows
And timid triflings with the wrong and right.
Never before flam'd freedom to such height
That, daz'd with brightness, a whole race arose
And, casting care to the waiting crowd,
Swept clean their face and scowled it sweetly bright.

When talk is of you and your strange new birth
And how the hope of man is in your hands,
I sadly deem myself of little worth,
And mine most pitiful of Christian land.
In that no she nor I occasion seize
To rise and aid thy struggle, Cantonese.

Singers of Today: a Satire.

Once Byron pennd a scathing sheet of rimes
Against the noted warblers of his times.
Lo now when idle singers have so grown
That I, a reader, seem remote, alone,
There is a graver need that someone should
Point out the weak, the trivial, and the good.
Hence if I call up Byron's shadowy ghost
From his cold wandering round the Grecian coast
You will not deem it strange my words among
To catch glib accents of Don Juan's tongue.

The throne by Jonson held, where Dryden sat
Has grown so steep till few can reach thereat,
Tho' one small poet climbing like a boy
Attain'd the seat and leand back to enjoy
The expanded view and wider open'd ken
And got so hid that never seen of men
He has become a myth, a rumour quaint
While he with looking down has turn'd most faint.

The lyric lord of Poesy is now

A grayhaid ghost with laurels on his brow
 Somewhat the worse for wear, and wither'd brown.
 In sooth, no very enviable crown.
 He came, I think, from distant Liverpool
 So therefore deems he London beautiful
 At least he sings so in one magic song,
 What poet now would dare write what is wrong?
 He made one great piece "Wordsworth's Grave" by name
 And buried there himself and his scant fame.

Tom Hardy, once a novelist I've heard,
 Seems older almost than Methuselah's beard.
 He pens much 'verse' - a courtesy title true,
 But what has that to do with me or you?
 An architect in honest days was he
 Hence built his temple of the greenwood tree -
 That's why it rotted so and waiteth but
 A wholesome breath the final touch to put.
 The critics, noble heads, soft hearts (or stay!)
 Reverse those terms: the truth I mean to say
 Have with compassion pampered this old man
 And blown his frogfame from an infant's span
 To bubble larger than a huge balloon.

So it must burst and scatter very soon.
 He calls one book "The story of a pure
 Woman", and proves himself a bar sure,
 By going to tremendous length of pages
 To catalog her sins at all their stages.
 His verse', that's what we are most concerned with
 Lacketh in naught save in poetic fit.
 Some music too might help to stay awhile
 Th' uneasy lurking of a critic smile.

A soldier man - (let's treat the elders first)
 Quote their best things and clean forgive their worst)
 Most musical and mild, deserves our praise:
 He has not writ a book these forty days.
 You know him well; born in the sweltering east
 He late arrived at the Victorian feast
 And hotfoot, panting from the Orient sands
 Skrill shouted in the jargon of trainbands.
 If he with bombast failed to fill his verse
 He added dashes and supplied a curse.
 The Lord of Hosts is his dear bosom friend
 And for his kin hath destin'd noble end
 Indeed, 'tis whispered Kipling is a Jew

And we the chosen people - deem this
 Because he speaks of all in Christian so
 Who have not fortune to be rightly born
 Under that flag whose name I will not spell
 Lest hungry hearted street bred people yell.
 His lyre methinks is barrel organ's crank
 His metronome the barracks' tramping rank
 Enough of him - his singing is as sweet
 As one could dare to hope from public street
 And yet I know a man of sounder lung
 Who selleth medicine unto old and young
 And not all the clamour of carts and cars
 Can stay his song ascending to the stars.

A sickly sailor whom the saltsea mocks,
A bruiser's ballad, or a whining fox,
 Such were the inspiration of our best
 Who lately now has given us a rest
 From lines too long for rimeing to redeem
 Or short enough mere jingle just to seem.
 His full attention's turn'd to classic prose
 And how hard Harker smote the bandits nose!

Another too. I'll say so to his credit it
 Would have some talent if he did not spread
 I deem he has the best ear for fine phrase
 Of all the penmen in these futile days.
Alas, fine phrasing is supremely vain
If it brings not fine thinking in its train.
 Still he has writ some lines that linger yet
 In our remembrance do we not forget.

A lady let me add is singing too,
 Or rather, chanting dully something new.
 Her language is suberb as shewing clear
 How nigh to foolishness this age doth steer.
 Neglecting the great storehouse of our wit
 And all who working added gems to it
 Making a tongue of beauty and of force
 She turns about and takes another course.
 Do you know aught of Spanish? Throw it in.
 Or French or German? At the end begin,
 Now twist it round or back and if you like
 Cast in some rimes the duller ear to strike!
 Thus all the jingle, babble and uproar
 Methinks there lurk uneasinesses sore

That somehow her singing robe doth not sit well
And in the bright mirror looks not a bit well.

One poet is a gentleman - I mean
Polish'd and mannerid not so very green
As some who think the Poet is true king
And dare forget that high eternal thing,
The Aristocracy with fix'd place
In God's tremendous scheme for human race
He's too polite to whisper even 'Hell'
The best approach he gives is Asphodel
And amaranthine fields of dark Hades:
So if your taste is culturd he will please.

Tramp singers are few - yea even more scarce
Than white horses pulling a skyblue hearse.
We have one now tho' his prime is well past
And few can say how long his fame will last.
If he could rime his chances would improve
Of being a charter in Parnassus' grove.

Another bard, the Coleridge of our times
Wanders afar to dim supernal climes

And then returns with sorrow in his eye
And writhes down an immeodious lie.
He'd mutter from dawn till the twilight fails
Of gnomes and dwarfs and cloud hid nightingales

There's also one would make the fat or thin yawn
So dreary are the verses sign'd L. Binyon.
One line he wrote will last until the end,
The bitterest mockery by man ever penn'd -
You know it well - "At going down o' sun"
Then follows what the nation has not done!

A younger man endeavours well to hide
In tunelessness and noise well magnified
A certain art for picturing the dim
And smoky carnage of the battle ground.
For him there's hope: he turns a useful mill,
And in the satire now has highest skill.

Fred Harvey sang of ducks one fatal day
And since that time he fails to get away;
Try he in dialect, freverse or ode
The ducks still quack after along the road.

Here's Blunden too, the waggoner by name
 Who rescues longlost poets to new fame.
 Plowboys he saves, plowboys he sings - plowboys
 And pigs and rural things with nasty nois.
 I rather think he strives so to regain
 Some credit for the bardlings of his train
 In sympathy for such neglected long
 Hoping thuswise someone retrieve his song
 From darker, deeper, feller far disgrace
 In an antique librarian's browsing place
 Of late he weaves in blander melodies
 Scenes brighter than his loamy country skills
 Alas, these fail a little in their style
 Because he's slow with plodding many mile
 Thro' English mud, and Flanders mud and mud
 Such as no poet's feet have e'er withstood.

Noyes now - and Newbolt - but they sang o'Dreik
 So ill forgive them both for England's sake

My page I shall quit and never leave blanks
 Time to discuss now Graves, Freeman and Shanks.
 I'll say no more since certainly I should

become abusive and extremely rude.
 I turn me then to Erin's singing sons
 For even here poetic striving runs.
 The pride of us - some say of Britain all
 Clears now his throat and speaks in Dublin Dáill,
 And rising to the speaker's warning bell
 Doth mumble platitudes surpassing well
 Observe him close for truly this is he
 Who in the Nineties long'd for Innisfree!
 He found a mine with others of his school
 And brought us out some jewels beautiful
 Of Irish ore ingrained with richest seams
 And sparkling with the most romantic gleams.
 Never before had we such splendour seen
 Since some rogue broke the glass cutting machine.
 Alas, he digs too long, he digs too deep
 Lo! all our admiration's fallen asleep
 monotony, monotony is still
 The greatest danger to poetic skill.

This mate, nay Perithoos, in things sublime
 Rings too, a little tinkling tiresome chime

Of mystic love and opal tinted skies
And things unseen to meat defiled eyes.

While Stephens James had he not husky throat
Cowed sound a fresh revitalising note.

To sum this up : it seems to critic me
The deadeast thing on Earth is Poesy -
Or better, not on Earth, 'tis sure not here
But flown to some celestial singing sphere
With all the musics that to man belong
Since Jubal first plucked at the hummin' thong.

You know how tired you grow ere curtain drops
Of Hamlet and his philosophic stops,
Just as I feel with modern poets now
They spread their hearts & souls for ghoulish show
And of themselves is there most mighty lay
And low they feel or felt on such a day
I long to cry out "Hold! O stop! Enough!"
Full well I know your souls of sorry stuff.
Cry last to this parading of your woes
Cast ye the few rimes out & call it prose

Playmate of the Wind

Or ere I travel'd to the town
I wander'd with the wind at large :
And over acres green and brown
I fled before his scented charge.

But now that I lie sick abed,
Watcht by dull slow hours full of pain,
I dream that after I am dead
I'll wander with the wind again.

And even now afar he calls,
Comes closer still and taps for me ;
And wanders round the four thick walls
Unendingly, unendingly

To Vanzetti and Sacco.
 (April 1927, on hearing of their
 death sentence).

No words of man in these drear hopeless days
 Have set alight my heart's impassion'd fire
 As those you splutter'd at that cursed pyre
 Where justice flicker'd mid a land's disgrace
 And you, O silent brother, with bold gaze
 Stand almost on the threshold of desire
 Where ranked rises freedom's deathless choir
 Each martyr robd and crowned in his place.

Since you must die O brothers, I will weep,
 And in a little while rise strong again,
 Embolden'd and confirm'd my faith to keep
 Despite repulses, sorrows, check or claim;
 For as one Faith rose from a felon's grave
 So shall my comrades' passing make me brave.

. Epitaphs:

I was alone. God gave me John :
 My life was full from dawn to dawn.
 God took back John. They rais'd this stone.
 'Tis sunset and I am alone.

She was old and poor but she us'd to smile
 When I was a tiny boy :
 This cross recalls for a little while
 When I was a tiny boy.

Hale and hearty and sturdy as oak
 He plow'd the land & clear'd the wood.
 'Tis forty years since & I havn't spoke
 With anyone half so good.

Blind for nearly thirty years
 Very long, very slow.
 What's the use of shedding tears;
 'Twas time to go.

I broke my mother's heart
 Long and long and long ago.
 She sed "Such is a mother's part
 Every woman ought to know"
 I have learn'd many things I never knew:
 And I know what my mother sed is true.
 My son lies here.

On the Conservative Anti - Trade Union Bill (May 1927)

In high cabal our tyrant lords have met
 And shaft a scroll with legal skill & art
 To circumscribe the allied worker's part
 In sharing his brave fighting comrades' fret.
 Already strife has cast his cursed net
 And tangld all the toilers of the mart,
 And ~~smothered~~^{smothered} the Nation's mighty heart
 Because the drums a throb, the lists are set.

With lying words they seek to steal away
 The heritage bought by th' undying dead
 And in this brutal parchment dare to say
 "He has not rights who earns his daily bread"

This night must pass as all nights, into day;
 Pray God the dawning be not streakt with red.

Epistle to Paul the Apostle

I write to thee O Paulus by the hand
 Of this my son in Christ Bellerophon
 Known' Simon' to the brethren of the church
 Greeting and peace to thee and to the saints
 And blessing on thy work this new Spring tide
 What saith our Poet? "Now the winter's done
 The rains are over, and the birds do sing"
 I cannot let this season come and go
 Without at least recounting once again
 That which thou knowest and yet cannot know
 As fully as the wonder it demands.

I still am proud, the Lord forgive my boast
 That when the twelve had fled away from him
 I follow'd on - yea even to the end
 And tho' they tore the garment from my back,
 And smote me somewhat with those thorny rods
 I did not cry aloud a cursed lie
 As some did whom I will not shame to name
 As far to graven their names on tablets plain,

'Tis strange, O Paul how I and thou alone
 Have gain'd th' approbation of the Lord
 And wrought the works most mighty of the saints
 And yet we were accounted as the least
 In the close counsels of the Upper Room
 Whatime they chose out Mathias and his mate.
 - Thus are the first made last as Jesus saith.
 And yet alas, I sometimes seem to hear
 In what we write and what we say the same
 Old damned spirit of the proud hard heart.

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225

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228

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The One Man Band

I know a street where
no sun falls
across the bleakness
of blank walls :

1
and faces pale,
and faces wan
are all that I
can look upon;

3
and fetid breath
and sooty air -
no fresh norwesters
blowing there!

4
and children playing
in the street
where sewer and
gutter rudely meet.

5
Grimy houses,
row on row
Pen in the world
these children know.

6
And sometimes of
an afternoon
a man walks by
with a bright bassoon.

7
And sometimes too,
a mangy bear
does antics here,
and antics there,

8
But best of all
a lameman comes
with cornet, cymbals
and two drums.

9
He plays the music
pierrots play,
where fresh winds blow
the foam to spray.

10
and I forgot the
fetid air....
I even forgot
the dancing bear!

11
Because I once
was at the sea
when a mission man
was good to me.

12
and I heard the music
pierrots play
where fresh winds blow
the foam to spray.

44
How Cædmon first sang:
writ out in short by Robert of
Whitby, monk.

Cadmon a keeper of kine in priest castle
Bid me to write out this tale in all truthfulness
This skill have I none in songcraft or singing,
Since beakless I be and most unlike a bird
Being wide at the waist band, a winelover, a drinker.
Monks needs must make merry as Religion is joy-
Faithful to Christ both in fasting and feasting
Enough of myself. now I turn to my telling.

One winter eve after toiling and working
As thound the firehearth the farmers & freemen
Who live in the lealty & leisure of Kirk-lands
Sat jesting and singing & saying the sage oaws
And tuning their throats to the thrusongs of pleasure
Each swain in his turn sang the lay he most
Came turn of my Cadmon a kinekeeper & old [loved
Blushing he beckond the harp to pass by him:
Loudly they clamored and calld for his crowing.
Rose up my Cadmon, & red to the neckveins

Stammerid "I ken none, nor nine of ribaldry."
 Laught they & lookt at him loveless and leering:
 Shyly he stole thence & shut door upon them.
 Bode in a byre he and blam'd his bad breeding
 Groan'd that his gammer taught him no song of glee
 Darkly he lay as a lord in a dungeon.
 Having lay as a pellet to help him to sleep
 Sudden his slumber was shaken & shattered —
 Light lovely & splendid shone sweetly upon him
 "Sing now" cried an Angel sent down from high Heaven
 "I cannot" quoth Cadmus in sad tones & crying
 "Nay now" said the Angel "the Lord of all knoweth
 Thy throat is most tuneful & true him to praise"
 Open'd his mouth then in mighty majestic
 And many-toned melodies making him mad
 With wonder and wakefulness at the strange work
 I sing not his songs since in script are they written
 Read them & love them as I love the Lord
 This Cadmus, my master, cal'd me once to him
 "Robert thou rimer write out my true story"
 Tell to the tribes of the times that are coming
 How God in his glory made gladness to grow

In the heart of a helpless and frogvoiced hind
 So sing I this song then that ye may know it
 To recall in you praying Cadmus, my king
 Remember who read this Robert who wrote it.

Hawthorn Blossom.

Some call it hawthorn,
 Some call it may:
 And it's very unlucky —
 So they say.

When a ^{white} (green) fire burns
 Along the trees
 I catch its perfum'd
 Lethargies.

Its scent makes me sad
 When I should be gay,
 For it's very unlucky —
 So they say.

The Death of Sir Hubert
(Printer's rime)

Sir Hubert turn'd him round about and said;
Most tremulous and slow "And am I paid
By scorn and sneers and name of nothing worth
Who gainst Saladin longsince journey'd forth?
Is this the fame accorded to the brave
Who bear the brunt of battle as I have?
Old now, God help me, very old - nigh death"
And he twitch'd with nervous fingers from its sheath When
The long bright blade, the wonder working sword
Nor any foeman by him spoke a word
But mutely vision'd when this man was great,
And how his days might end in noblefeat.
He spoke again "Already am I blind
With watching long, and harsh salt stinging winds
Yet shall I close my days in striving. Now
Say who is base enough to dare my blow?
Recall of me when I am wholly gone,
And this last fitte f'm finished and done,
How say last fighting - like the singing swan
The best was of my battles as a man".

On Lindbergh's Flight Across
the Atlantic Ocean.

Columbus gone, another in his stead
Has done a deed of daring in these days.
I too will add my little meed of praise
To all the noisy praise unlimited.
I bear no laurel for his brow. His head
Shall ache with no coronal of my bays.
Yet in these times of doubt festring dismays,
When faith has sunk, and aspiration's dead,
And tyrant lord grinds down the toiling man,
And brother slays his brother with sharp sword,
And god is imag'd foreign to my dream,
'Tis good to catch an accent or a word
That shews the slow fulfilment of the Plan,
How Progress flows in reverending stream.

Sonnet : My Art

The world as yet knows nothing of my art:
 I sing, a lonely thrush upon a bough
 In a far glen unknown to spade or plow,
 Unheard save by a wanderer apart
 From city stir & rumble of the mart
 Where men do toil & tremble, pet & bow
 To circumstances tyrannous as tho'
 Some thief had stole their sorranty of heart.

Still there is somewhat in my fervid cry
 Remote from birdsong's calm simplicity
 Like the faint voice behind a prison wall
 Of one who feareth death yet has to die
 Tomorrow when the pale cheek'd sun shall fall
 Alwart his narrow window dismally.

The Cry of the Century.

Come down O Christ from Calvary
 and walk the ways of men with me.
 I cannot wander, Lord, with Thee
 the pleasant paths of Galilee,
 since I must travel up and down
 the dreary streets of London town.

Come not, O Christ, to die again
 for me or for my fellowmen:
 but come to shew how truly we
 may live life more abundantly.

On all Dead Soldiers
(Sonnet in Shakesperian form)

So 'twas in vain, their bloody sacrifice,
And we are halfmen who forget they died.
Beyond the clouds remaineth Paradise,
And Progress falters feebly in her stride.

Bright blades still glitter in the morning sun
Hard words are uttered when the Nations meet
Lo! what is all the Victory we have won
But trivial tattered banners o'er the street.

For he who digs the heart out of the hill,
And he who bids the glowing metal bend,
Tho' kin of his who sold himself to kill,
Are cleanforgotten at this journey's end.

And all their fighting for'd but firmer bars
To fetter their ascension to the stars.

The Agitator in the Dock.

And have I ought to say on my behalf?
Your Worship is so kind - I hardly dare.
The plot is laid my rôle is cast, that's all
And anything I'd say is out of place
Beside these reverend faces and grey wigs
And those smooth pens & that large coat of arms

The Counsel for the Crown believes, I think,
That Moscow sends me bombs by parcel-post,
And cheques and volumes of Karl Marx's works.
At least he says so.. the something? not quite
The jury likewise and those clever men -
Detectives no, spies yes, it's plain to see.
Dangerous and desperate, anarchist - the like
Believes in freeloove, doesn't worship God ...
They hurl these at us when we show we're right.
We ask for argument t' oppose our scheme.
They give us bayonets, guns and fetters too;
And for each jibe I throw back in your face
Not calendars replete with holy names
Of such as went before me on this road,

Lord Christ and Luther, Danton and Lassalle....
 And all those noble names who sound is sweet
 In ears that hear beyond the chink o' coin:
 Not burning towns and guillotines and swords,
 Not tawdry times obscuring threadbare thoughts.
 Just this: - a grimy town, a narrow street-
 A small boy sitting on the filthy kerb-
 I nothing add of details tho' I could
 Draw such a picture as well might make men
 Weep sore that hear it and go hide their heads
 Since such is done in Britain in these days
 This I do say and who dare contradict?
 A small boy in a smoky slum like that
 Is answer to your vaunted claims o' worth,
 Is answer to your flags and bands and blos-
 Is answer to your prisons and the years
 That I shall spend in darkness and slow death
 Because you're in like darkness mentally.

Arnold - I quote (- I see my counsel there
 Look wise and work as tho' to say 'Hast done'
 Well, Arnold had a motto writ in large
 'Twas Swift who wrote it, if I don't mistake.

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"Sweetness and Light" It's rather vague you know
 Here's mine "Sunshine and Milk". You understand
 Because my small slumchild in narrow street
 Has neither is the reason I am here!
 And tell he has my comrades will go down
 To sudden death on shot swept barricade
 Or toil in secret places shunning day
 Till that day break when Heaven comes on Earth
 And I and you - I'm done - My pearls are past

Lyric : Beanfields in Blossom

Beanfields in blossom:
 Poppies in the corn:
 These are the reasons
 I was ever born.

Sunrise on spring mornings:
 Stars in winter sky:
 These are the reasons
 I shall never die.

Railway Musing

We're just like the people
who meet in a train:
together a little,
then never again.

Some sleep the whole journey,
and some read the while,
and some watch the scenery
mile after mile,

and some are concerned with
the speed of the train: —
together a little,
then never again.

Belgium: July 1927

To save the level meadows of thy toil
My brothers sat them down to feast with
Nigh other guests whose names he murmureth [Death]
Who bears the laurels and the salving oil
Now every acre with its blood-bought soil
To busy labour's sickle beckoneth:
And on thy smooth canal, where ne'er a creature
wanders abroad, come ships to share the spoil

'I was not in vain they came & sacrificed
Love, life and all the living joy of light
Yet when I turn me to thy cities' night
Where Wine and Song keep drunken carnival
I dream I see shapes linger by the wall
And in the shadows cry aloud on Christ

2876 lines

excluding Sonnets
& unknown Disciple

Sonnet

Tetragram

In memoriam stanza

heroic couplet

blank verse

Alliterative verse (Saxon)

(Shenonian stanza)

Rime royal

Tetrigram

orthosyllabic couplets

'Christabel' metre