Antrim Idylls
AND OTHER POEMS.

By

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SECOND EDITION
(WITH FIVE NEW POEMS.)

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Antrim Idylls and other Poems.

TO

M. M.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BOOK.
PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

Almost all the poems here published have been composed quite recently; they have helped to occupy a few idle hours, and the pleasure of their composition may be their chief or only reward. Some of them have already appeared in the local Press, in Monthly Magazines, or are in circulation in manuscript for recital at popular entertainments. In the hope of having all the pieces preserved together, in a corrected permanent form, a limited number of volumes is now issued. Most of these "Antrim Idylls and other Poems" refer to incidents of country life or to local scenery in the County of Antrim.—An Idyll being "a short pastoral poem," "or poem descriptive of country life."

The Translations from foreign languages and the International Sonnets give a wider outlook, and form a précis of much of my own study and observation during residence in other countries.

Antrim is in many respects the first County in Ireland: First alphabetically; first geographically, occupying the honoured North-East corner; and as it contains most of the city of Belfast, Antrim is first in population, manufactures, trade, commerce, and probably also in wealth and learning; while its picturesque coast line, including the Giant's Causeway, makes it first also in natural scenery.

But the myths, legends, and traditions of County Antrim, its history and geology and scenery, the customs, habits, manners, dialects, occupations, and daily life of the people, would supply material for many volumes of romantic poetry and prose.—For as the coast tourist here says:

"The region's all alive," said she, "with voices, faces, thought, Romance and song and history, unsung, unsaid, unsought."

Antrim County is not less likely to produce a great poet, nor less susceptible of romantic or poetic treatment than the county of Warwick or of Ayr, or than the Isle of Man—for which
Mr. Hall Caine has done so much. Of course it is not the place or the subjects, but rather the man and the times that are wanting to give full voice to the romance and the poetic possibilities of Antrim and of Ulster. It usually requires great crises to produce, or reveal, great men. The first dramas of Shakespere were almost contemporary with the defeat of the Spanish Armada; the first poems of Burns appeared between the Revolutions in America and France; and the earliest songs of Moore synchronize with the Irish Rebellion. But as Milton reminded Cromwell: “Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war.” And there is already an accumulation of romantic material both of peace and war in Antrim County—if only the expressing genius should arise and breathe the vivifying breath of his own great humanity into the valley of dry bones and make them all come forth and live for ever.

W. CLARKE ROBINSON.

SEA VIEW HOTEL, GLENAIRM,
Co. ANTRIM,
30th November, 1907

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

This Second Edition is long overdue, as the First Edition was nearly all sold out in the first month. But other engagements prevented an earlier issue and a larger number of new Poems—of which just five are here presented. Hardly any change has been made in the first collection.

W. CLARKE ROBINSON.

CARNLOUGH,
Co. ANTRIM.
November, 1917.

CONTENTS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim County</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina Jane—a Tale of Ballygally Bay</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Benighted Indian—a Tale of Ballycastle Moor</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Man better than White—a long Tale briefly told</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quickly’s Courtship</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Doctor and the Lady—a Tragedy</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Girls won’t speak their Minds</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How a Corpse earned Ten Pounds</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Indian Flower Maids</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Things are become New</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Roman Rose</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Belle Aurore</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Presbyterian Assembly Hall</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Tram Rides</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Swala’ an’ the Tramp</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie Smith and the Grogan</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty Rogers, or the Hare Witch</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Poor Blind Rat</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan and the Cushendun Farmer</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenarm—Antrim Coast</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSLATIONS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lorelei</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pine and the Palm</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thou art just as a Flower</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who never ate his Bread with Tears</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Singer’s Curse</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shepherd’s Sabbath Hymn</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kingdom of Heaven</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To M. Du Perrier on the Loss of his Daughter</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are the Snows of Last Year</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song of Provence</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS—Continued.

Ode to the Nightingale .............................................. 86
Birds of Passage ...................................................... 87
Facts and Fancies, or the Wandering Jew ...................... 88

INTERNATIONAL SONNETS.

Ireland ................................................................. 90
England ............................................................... 91
Scotland .............................................................. 92
Wales ................................................................. 93
America ............................................................... 94
France ................................................................. 95
Germany .............................................................. 96
Spain ................................................................. 97
Italy ................................................................. 98
Modern Greece ....................................................... 99
Switzerland ............................................................. 100
Denmark ............................................................... 101
Norway ................................................................. 102
Sweden ............................................................... 103
Russia ................................................................. 104

Skating at Heidelberg .................................................. 105
The Princess of Utopia .................................................. 106
The German Emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II. (A.D. 1907) .......... 107
The German Emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II. (A.D. 1917) .......... 108
Welcome to King Edward VII. ......................................... 109
The Belfast New City Hall .............................................. 109
My Own Country—Everyman’s Sonnet ................................ 110
Royal Belfast Academical Institution ................................ 111
Sir Samuel Ferguson .................................................. 112
The Roses of Drumourne .............................................. 113
Life ................................................................. 114

ANTRIM IDYLLS

AND OTHER POEMS.

ANTRIM COUNTY.

Antrim’s hills and glens and people,
Here I sing on Slemish high;
Here on Antrim’s blue Olympus
Visions rise before my eye.

Here St. Patrick prayed and laboured,
Won the Emerald Isle for God,
Banned the snakes and broke the idols,
Blest the verdant shamrock sod.

Not to other lands or ages
Need our bards romantic turn;
Antrim teems with myths and legends—
Here the human passions burn.

Endless themes for pen or pencil:
Death and life and war and peace,
Love and hate and joy and sorrow—
Same in Antrim as in Greece.

Here’s the story old as Eden:
Lovers toying in the shade,
Loving, marrying, little children—
’Twas for that the earth was made.

Here are humble cottage toilers
Working long and weary hours,
Hoary castles ivy-tangled,
Moonlight mantling round the towers;
Here are pure Castalian fountains,
    Clear as rills of Greece or Rome;
Game and sport in flood and forest,
    And intensest love of home.

See the hundred towns and hamlets,
    Smoking grey in evening air,
Where the mill-girls and mechanics
    Daily to their toil repair;

See the thousand cosy farmsteads
    Dotted white along the plain,
Peeping through the trees and hedges,
    Girt with fields of golden grain.

Thrice ten thousand sheep and cattle
    Graze around the hills serene;
Herds of Erin's noblest horses
    Thunder through the pastures green.

Antrim's sturdy tenant farmers—
    Bone and sinew of the land—
Square their shoulders for the burden,
    Firm of nerve and strong of hand;

They have drained the bogs and marshes,
    Raised the stones and stubbed the whin,
Made the desert places blossom,
    Bringing life and roses in.

See their fairs and shows and races,
    Turning, humming, like a hive,
Cattle, sheep, and swine and horses,
    Buyers, sellers, all alive;

Dogs and poultry, barking, crowing,
    Puffing steam, machinery's din,
While the betting "bookie" yelling
    Takes the country bumpkins in;

Women shouting dulse and apples,
    Hawkers selling bowls and tins;
"Split the difference," cries a "droughty;",
    And the wheel of fortune spins!

Fair below my mountain eyry
    Spreads our famous middle town—
Ballymena's shows and horses
    Well have won their wide renown.

Antrim County's first in Erin;
    Round her borders water laves—
Ocean, lake, and rivers—headlands
    Wash their white feet in the waves.

She has raised the foremost city,
    Spun the finest flax to gold,
Built the largest ships and tonnag,
    And the most tobacco rolled.
She has pushed her trade and commerce
Round the world, both far and near,
And, alas! in slums and factories
Slain her thousands every year.

Antrim's warriors, statesmen, poets,
Form a roll too long to write:
Ferguson, "M'Carty," Buick,
Cowan, Davis, Cairns and White,
Consul Doctor James M'Henry,
"Bard of Larne," and uncle mine—
"Hearts of Steel" and "O'Hall-o-ran"
Show his genius broad and fine.

Yet we wait the grand magician,
Born of heaven and earth combined,
Broad as all the creeds and races,
Bard of universal mind;

One whose songs shall soothe the discords,
Touching hearts where'er he turns,
Whom the nations all shall honour
Like a Shakspere or a Burns.

From the blended blood of Ulster
Such a poet yet shall rise—
Ah! that mist round Slemish curling,
Shuts the vision from my eyes.

Marina Jane:
A Tale of Ballygally Bay.

Along the sounding Ballygally Bay,
One summer morn there drifted in a boat,
With mother dead, and babe scarce aged a day
Beside her, but no other thing of note,

To tell from whence they came, or from what wreck;
"Marina Jane," this babe a coastguard named,
And bore it home, where it should nothing lack,
And where it grew a maiden fair and famed.

A lusty sailor, Parke, with farm of land,
With foreign ways, and gifts above his means,
Then woo'd and wed this changeling of the strand,
And blithe and gay were all the wedding scenes:

The church was filled with girls and farmers' sons,
And some took rights to kiss the fair new-bride—
With cheering, dancing, feasting, firing guns,
And burning bonfire barrels at eventide.

The sailor settled on his native lea,
With frequent voyages to pay his rent;
And thus for years he ploughed the land and sea,
In health and happiness and sweet content.

But once when absent on a voyage strange,
A shadowy dream on Jeanie seem'd to fall:
That ne'er again across the ocean's range
Would he return or answer to her call.
And women's dreams about the things they love
Are oftentimes divine presentiments;
They leap our logic, and all "wireness" move
Quick to the point and goal of their intents.

The wives of Caesar, Pilate, William Tell,
Dreamed just like Jeanie of their husbands' fate;
And other wives have dreamed what ne'er befel
To any husbands, either soon or late!

His vessel, never reaching port, was lost,
And perished as "a mystery of the deep";
Yet Jeanie's wistful eye still watched the coast,
And oft would see him landing in her sleep.

For still the inextinguishable hope
Of her dear sailor's final coming home,
Would buoy her up 'gainst all her fears to cope,
And lead her daily on the beach to roam.

The farm, uncared for, went to waste and weeds,
Though oft a friendly neighbour lent his plough.
Or some came late to reap, or sow her seeds,
Or went to market with her pigs or cow.

But landlords' bailiffs broke at length the latch;
And cast her from the cot and quenched her fire,
Nailed up the door and windows, and the thatch
Tore off, and left her in the road and mire.

Then to be free of landlords, on the beach
She built a hut below the posting track,
With such loose stones as lay within her reach,
And roof'd with driftwood, grass, and wither'd wrack.

And there, without a window or a door,
She squatted rentless by the windy sea,
And daily gathered limpets on the shore,
With one wise little dog for company.

Her doggie, Brinnie, never left her side;
That wise philosopher, with soft black eyes,
Could read her mind and every change of tide,
And all the varying signs of seas and skies.

And this good Brinnie brought new life and cheer
To her in that lone weather-beaten hut;
I hoped its four young puppies there to rear,
And pleased her with the capers which they cut.

The warm wee things lay curl'd upon the bed,
Their noses cold as any balls of snow—
Men's knees, dogs' noses, and girls' hands, 'tis said,
Are always cold, their warm hearts thus to show.

This sea-born Jeanie lived among the stones,
Like the sweet dulse or clinging limpet shell;
The summer waves, the wintry breakers' moans
Alike to her; she could not think nor tell
That all these seeming-simple forces have
A power latent like a lion mild,
And may anon excite themselves and rave
And rend the thing they play'd with as a child.

There came a day suspicious—extra fine!
With a red sunset o'er the winter sea;
And black clouds gathering on the ocean line,
And beasts and birds all drifting to the lee.

And then the trumpets of the sea and sky
Proclaim aloud the lowering storm has come;
The winds and waves in fierce contention vie,
And nature roars while man and beast are dumb.

The waves tumultuous leap upon the land—
Their white teeth reddened with the bleeding earth,
And stones and rocks, as by a demon's hand,
Are heaved around poor Jeanie's hut and hearth.

A neighbour came to take her from the shed,
But left it fearful since she would not go:
"Her trusty sailor might that night come dead,
And she not there her helping hand to show!"

And her brave Brinie looked into her face,
Then looked again upon the rising sea,
And pulled her tattered dress towards the place
Of exit while she still could safely flee.

It could not take her; so it turned and took
One little puppy in its gentle grip,
And bore it inland to a sheltered nook,
And then another on a "swimming trip."

Till all the four wee sightless, whining things
Were safe and silent in their second home;
Meantime the surging water saps and flings
Poor Jeanie's dwelling level with the foam!

Some said a phantom ship that night went by,
Some thought they saw a boat along the shore,
Some heard a voice from out the billows cry,
And then all vanish'd with the ocean's roar!

Next morn they sought her in the hovel poor,
But sign of hut or hovel there was none!
Poor Brinie and her brood were all secure,
But every trace of Jeanie Parke was gone!

The hungry sea had claimed what first it gave;
She doubtless joined him after severance long;
And o'er them both, beyond the broken wave,
The sea wind sings its ever plaintive song.
THE BENIGHTED INDIAN.
A TALE OF BALLYCASTLE MOOR.

Jamie Kendry had to journey
Where his heart forbode sore—
In the night and wintry blackness
O'er a Ballycastle moor.

Road without a hedge or fencing,
   With the bog on either side
Cut away, some ten feet downwards,
   Like a tight rope o'er the tide.

Sometimes winding thro' the heather
   Ran the roadway, lone and drear,
Grey and narrow, like a tether,
   With no human dwelling near.

Coasting-sailor was young Jamie,
   Who with coin was going home,
There to make his lass his wifey,
   And no more again to roam.

But he couldn't help a-thinking
   Of M'Niall there upset—
Drown'd, with carriage men and horses,
   And fish'd out there with a net:

And of Turnley's shepherds beaten,
   And sheep stolen from the run,
And M'Cloy on mountain murder'd,
   Where his bones bleached in the sun.

AND OTHER POEMS.

Not a rick o' hay nor peat stack,
Not a flock o' mountain geese,
Not a pit o' lowland prerties,
That was safe or left in peace.

Under cover of the darkness
Jamie might have less to fear,
For by day the bare, broad moorlands
Watch'd the road from far and near.

But he quaked when sudden footstep
Sprang behind him near the flood—
As in empty house at midnight
Sneaking step will freeze the blood!

Then again he heard it clearer,
   Coming on with stealthy stride,
Till he felt it, near, and nearer,
   Close behind him, then beside,

Then, a-brushing at his elbow
Breathed a big black foreign man!
Not a single word was spoken,
Mile by mile their journey ran.

And the Irish miles, tho' narrow,
   Are a long and stretching thing,
For the first surveyor's chain boy
   Was a dog with woollen string.
When the measuring mile string tighten'd
On the choking doggie's neck,-
Roand he jumped, tail foremost, frighten'd,
Pull'd and jerk'd it, like to crack.

All at once, across the moorland,
Flashed a light from lonely cot!
And the giant nudged at Jamie
To turn down there to the spot.

Like a lamb sweeled to a wolf-dog,
Jamie timorously advanced,
Till they reached the wicker doorway—
Whence the blazing fire danced.

In they walked, but found there no one!
Only two black boiling pots
On the fire, and a basket,
With potatoes in two lots.

Then, a door the giant noticed,
Leading to an inner room—
Stuff'd with straw and wool and feathers,
And he signed the boy to come.

Jamie went with fear and trembling—
But he got no harm or hurt;
There the giant doff'd his jacket,
Showing his old shammy shirt,

With his Indian dirk and girdle,
And his long black, hairy arms;
And among the straw he laid him,
Free and careless of alarms.

But his rest as shortly broken
By three women and two men,
Entering with their mid-night plunder,
To this moorland robber's den.

Jamie, watching thro' the keyhole,
To the Indian whispers calm:
"Here five prowlers have brought with them
Three grey geese, a sheep, and lamb.

And the lamb and the potatoes
In the pots are boiling there."
"When they're ready," says the Indian
"Call me up, we'll have a share;

"But if you are here faint-hearted,
Sure they'll kill you like a hog.
And your clothes will deck their bodies,
While they sink you in the bog."

Soon the robbers dash the pratties
In a basket, brew and all,
Draw the sodden lamb beside it,
And with knives upon it fall.
Then the black, buff-shirted giant,
Dirk in hand, and eyes on fire,
With a yell, like Indian demon,
Leaps upon them in his ire!

These sheep thieves had call'd on Satan—
Cursed the de'il—a thousand times—
Now in conscience there they see him,
Come to kill them for their crimes!

Dropping lamb, and knives, and pratties,
Stumbling, trembling, praying sore,
Every man and woman tumbles
Helter-skelter through the door!!!

Then the huge Calcutta Indian,
From a warship in the bay,
With his mountain trip half famished,
Turns to Jamie, glad and gay—

"Come, my boy, and eat your supper,
You are hungry, so am I,
Now the spoil comes to the victors,
All these prowlers we defy!"

“BLACK MAN BETTER THAN WHITE.”
A LONG TALE BRIEFLY TOLD.

The Bishop of Pown and his negro man,
When going to town, just miss the right van:

They walk all the way, but wander like sheep;
For shelter they pray, wherein they may sleep:

And finding a shed with glimmering fire,
And straw for a bed, to it they retire.

Five wild murd'rous men soon come to the shed,
'Tis plainly their den—they search not the bed;

They count up their cash, they curse, drink, and swear!
Quoth Pown: "We were rash to enter such lair.

"Next time they blaspheme, saying 'Devil' or 'Hell','
"Jump out, Darky, scream! stark naked, and yell."

Darky soon tries it, and those murd'rous men
Bolt off surpris-ed like hares from their den!

Pown picks up the gold—a murd'red man's spoil,
The story he told—their necks got the coil!
QUICKLY'S COURTSHIP.

Edward Quickly was a bachelor,
Owning houses, lands and shares,
Who had never thought of wedding,
While the years passed unawares!
Then he thought to do it sudden,
And he called on Minnie Brown,
Whose reported long engagement
Had been whispered thro' the town.

So, while looming like a lion—
Tho' in heart more like a mouse—
Edward Quickly touched the knocker
At the fair Miss Minnie's house.
"Well, are you engaged?" said Quickly,
"That's what I came here to know."
"Yes, for certain!" said the lady.
"Then," said Quickly, "I must go!"

Now, too short they both had spoken,
But they'd wisdom to repent;
And Miss Minnie told Miss Leaky:
"Oh, I do indeed relent!
But his question seemed so sudden,
That it struck me almost dumb,
Tho' I thought what he was thinking,
And just knew that he would come.

"Getting married's awful solemn—
Leaving home and friends behind;
But to miss, and no' get married—
That's more solemn still, you'll find!
Lonely hours of vacant yearning
For the mate who won't appear,
Sighing for the love unspoken,
Friends departing year by year!

"Love's the only earthly goddess,
Gold and silver are but dross,
They who flout her perish darkly,
Leaving none to mourn their loss!
It was nearer to an offer
Than I ever had before,
And I wish I saw him coming
Here again to rap the door."

Then Miss Leaky told her father—
An old roguish clergyman—
Who knew all the arts of Cupid,
And to Quickly be began:
"So you've gone and 'got the mitten,'
For you went too quick a pace;
Quick proposals, hugs, or kisses,
Often spoil a hopeful case!

"Keep her only still before you,
Your intention she'll see through,
Her own mind will bridge the distance
And prepare her heart for you.
Then call sun and stars to witness—
Since all's fair in war and love—
That you've doted on her always,
She will laugh, and so will Jove!

"Mere high thinking, mere plain living,
Hardly counts with girls at all,
It's assurance, manners, converse,
That impress them, great or small!

Faint heart never won fair lady!
Care too much—then you won't dare!
Other fish, you know, are nibbling!
Dare! and risk it!—wherefore care?

"Don't expect her first to meet you:
Flowers cannot follow bees!
Bees must find and suck the honey—
You must follow if she flies;
Girls don't mind men buzzing round them;
They'll soon see where love begins;
You must press and pluck the blossom—
It's the marrying man that wins!

"So now dress again like Sunday.
And go gentle, firm, and gay;
But the lies of all your lifetime
You must crowd into that day!
You'll be shown into the parlour,
And perhaps the album's there,
And you'll slowly turn the page;
With the lady near your chair.

"And when first you see her photo,
You must pause! and look! and sigh!
And exclaim—'Ah! there's an image
That will haunt me till I die!
If I could but claim the figure,
Whence that sunny shadow came,
Sure myself and my possessions
I would give to change her name!

"Then, your eye with true love beaming,
Look right straight into her face,
And your arms her form enfolding,
Warmly kiss her and embrace;
And, since seldom come such moments,
See you make your wooing good,
And a ring slip on her finger,
While she's in the yielding mood.

"But if once she gives her promise
She'll be true as Swedish steel—
You must then make good your boasting,
And be patient, kind and true."—
This full-dress rehearsal Quickly
Acted out in each detail;
Three weeks later he and Minnie
Stood before the altar rail!
THE DOCTOR AND THE LADY.
(A TRAGEDY: PLACE, BELFAST: TIME, 19TH CENTURY.)

The garden party—graceful, gay
As rainbow hues—had gone its way!
Beneath a tree upon the lawn,
Whose leafy screen was closely drawn,
Remained a lady young and fair,
Reclining on a garden chair,
Reading some book indifferent,
On which her mind was scarcely bent.
Sole daughter of a mansion rare,
Her sire was called "the millionaire."
Some beams of June's declining sun
Shone through the leaves and glinted on
Her golden hair and angel face,
Making new sunshine round the place.
Before her came a student youth
Whose face and form showed love and truth:
Tall, dark, aspiring, noble-browed,
But suffering from some passion-cloud;
He bent his knee upon the grass,
He seized her hand and said "Alas!
"I'm but a student, poor and wild,
And you a sole and peerless child,
But yet I love you more than life,
Some day will you not be my wife?"
She started from the chair amazed,
Let fall the book, and withering gazed:
"Presumptuous boy! still here?" she said,
"Be off!"—and turned her back and fled!
He, stunned and silent, wandered home,
And smarted sore beneath his doom;
But braced his nerves for conquest still,
And studied hard with mind and will;
His medical exam., the last,
With golden honours soon he passed;
His doctor's fame gained wide renown
As foremost expert of the town;
Within ten years his carriage drove
Up to the hall where dwelt his love;
His art was needed there to save
Her father's life from ready grave;
And day by day he went to see
His patient's slow recovery.
The lady still was maiden fair,
No grey among her golden hair;
Time's noiseless darts and chisels fine
Had etched no trace of wrinkled line;

Her manner, frame, step, eye and wit
Showed graceful form more firmly knit;

The glow of youth upon her face
Had crystallised and kept its place.

The doctor, waiting on his charge,
Thro' lawn and garden roamed at large,
And set him down beneath a tree,
One moonlit night for reverie;

Deep stillness hung o'er house and lawn,
Earth listened—with her breath half-drawn!

The shadows of the sombre trees
Crept from the moon; no cloud, no breeze;

Within the house, across the sward,
By window wide, in full regard,

He saw the lady reading there;
Yet here, upon a garden chair,

I know not how, nor yet did he,
But somehow, strange, beneath that tree

He saw her also! Did he sleep?
Dream dreams? see visions past and deep?

Have bodies doubles? can the mind
See soul within the viewless wind?

"Oh! nerves!" you say, "or memories clear,
Somnambulists, not ghosts, appear!"

Ah! but this lady next him here
Arose and spoke, and smiling queer,

Said: "Doctor, this same silver moon
Brings clear to mind one eve in June,

"Ten years precise this very night,
Since here you gave me such a fright!

"I was but young and foolish then,
Arupt, unkind perhaps, with men,

"But now I hope I'm wiser grown,
Since I myself have better known!"

"Ah! mutual love must burn," he sighed,
"Just as the mutual oil's supplied!

"Love flouted, smothered, pinched, must die,
Or turn for life to kindlier sky!

"We make our fate, both man and maid—
We live by what we've done or said;

"Time changes all, new loves entwine!
Our minds have changed—both yours and mine!"
WHY GIRLS WON'T SPEAK THEIR MINDS.

"He loves me? loves me not? loves me?"
The maiden meekly said,
As she plucked the flower's petals free,
With downcast eye and head.

Haphazard was the choice—a whim
Depending on the flower,
Not showing her own love for him,
Nor using her will power.

Why cannot girls employ their lungs,
And speak their love like men?
Have they not hearts and heads and tongues—
Or hands to hold the pen?

Why will they dote on dolls and toys,
Or kiss and talk so free
With babies, dogs and silly boys,
While men of sense they flee?

Why do they kiss each other so
Before the public eye?
When men would treat them thus, you know,
They always seem so shy!

Why will they always run away,
Why shun the man they love?
Why hate him, blame him, say him nay,
Why weep—if he remove?

Why do they ask those questions which
To answer men must lie?
Why, like an oracle or witch,
Won't they give straight reply?

When they attain majority—
That is, when they are wives,
Then they will speak their minds, you'll see,
And chatter half their lives.

Why will a woman scold her man
For all he's done or said?
Yet ever mourn with visage wan
And praise him when he's dead.

Ask rather why the trees grow up,
And why the roots grow down?
Or why the saucer holds the cup,
Or why the tea is brown?

Ask why's a girl unselfish still
And patient, kind and true?
Why she gives up her heart and will,
Her home and name, for you?

And why, when fever racks the brain,
And nerves are jangled sore,
Her nursing care can soothe the pain
And vital health restore?

Ask why, in lonely evening hours—
When weary, worn and sad,
Her sympathy recruits your powers
And makes you strong and glad?
Ask why, where cannon swept the field  
And shells burst o'er the plain,  
That woman's form by night will shield  
The dying 'midst the slain?

Ask why, in foetid slums and lanes,  
Where heaven's sunlight fails,  
She carries flowers and fruits, and deigns  
To visit guarded jails?

Or why when Sol has run his race  
And rests from daily jars,  
The gentle Moon supplies his place  
With all her children stars?

Ask why the blossom crowns the bush?  
Why lilies love the pool?  
Why stars come twinkling in the hush  
Of evening calm and cool?

Ask why the good must still be sought,  
And cannot prank its worth?  
Or why the summer sun has brought  
To life the dormant earth?

Strange things are wrought by Nature's laws—  
All in their various kinds—  
And girls won't speak their minds "because"—  
They will not speak their minds!

HOW A CORPSE EARNED TEN POUNDS.

Robert Jonson and his comrade  
Went one night to an hotel,  
In a certain town in Erin—  
But its name I needn't tell.

In the night he left his comrade  
For a pistol in his pouch,  
And along the darken'd passage,  
He slipped back into their couch.

But in bed he felt his partner  
Had grown cold from head to toes,  
And he lay to him the closer  
And up-wrapp'd him well with clothes.

Then Bob Jonson next discovered  
That he had mista'en his room,  
And the frosty friend beside him  
Was away in kingdom-come!

And before the light o' morning  
Two grave undertakers came,  
With a candle and a coffin,  
To remove the lifeless frame!

Says the one: "You take the ankles,  
And I here will take the head,  
And thus swing it in the coffin  
That I've placed beside the bed."

But our Bob objected strongly  
To be coffined thus alive—  
From his cold companion jumping  
He at both the men let drive.
Called them worse than body-snatchers,
And on them his pistol drew!
Till the two men, sore astonished,
From the room in terror flew!

They had never been so treated—
Not by any corpse before!
To that room, they both asserted,
They would then return no more!

Very anxious was the landlord
For that chilly guest to go,
And before the hours of business—
Ere his living guests should know.

But he vainly begged the stalwarks
To complete their mission there,
And he offered them a "fiver"
But not either man would dare.

Then he called his two night porters,
And still none of them would go,
Though on each of them a "fiver"
He was eager to bestow.

But our medical Bob Jonson
Had now dressed and come down stairs,
Where he heard the landlord’s offers,
And his low beseeching prayers.

So our Jonson did the business—
Screwed his cold companion down;
Then this living corpse and comrade,
With their ten notes left the town.

THE INDIAN FLOWER MAIDENS.

"On his famous expedition into India, Alexander the Great and his Grecian officers came upon a glade in the forest where the flowers were so tall and gorgeous and so pansy-like and freakt with thought, and where the maidens were so fair and graceful and so bedeckt with blossoms, that the army, when dancing with the maidens, seemed to be dancing with the flowers. The maidens, like the flowers, lived a brief summer life and withered away at an early age, like flowers at the breath of winter; but all were confident of resurrection to another life."

OLD INDIAN MYTHIC LEGEND.

"Dort lebt ein heimlich wundersmesses Kingen,
Die Blumen sprechen und die Bäume singen."

—Heine.

I know a tale
Of an Indian vale,
A tale of the land of the Sun,
Where flowers fair
Of a beauty rare
All turn into girls to be won.

King Solomon
In his glory shone
Not ever so brilliant as they,
The rainbow hues
Or the diamond dews
Were never so pure or so gay.

And marching down
From the mountains brown,
Alexander the Great and his men
Met them arrayed
In the forest glade,
And danced with these girls in the glen.
The birds on high
And the waters nigh
And winds at their evening song
Made music sweet
For their fairy feet,
That glowed as they hurried along.

But every night
With the failing light
The maidens then curtailed their eyes,
Like folded flowers
Thro' the sunless hours,
As maids with the morning to rise.

But summer gone,
And the dancing done,
The maidens all bowed and withdrew
To Mother Earth,
Who had given them birth,
And slept till the winter was through.

Their scented bed
She had softly spread,
And wrapped them securely below
With Autumn leaves
And the golden sheaves
And sheets of the sheltering snow.

Through winter drear
Every little ear
Was listening alert for the sound—
For voice and cheer—
Of her lover dear,
To wake her again from the ground.

Departed then
Alexander’s men,
To fight or to die in the war!
But all the slain
Shall return again,
And rule in the regions afar.

When woodlands ring
At the voice of spring
The maidens and flowers arise
From winter’s trance,
Coming forth to dance
And shine in the Indian skies.
ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW!

There is a land in legends old
Where vanished rainbows form again,
Like airy bridges crowned with gold,
'Twixt earth and heaven and main;

Where all the dreams that e'er had birth
Come true to those who trust and love;
Where all the music played on earth
Still sounds thro' realms above;

Where all the flowers that ever bloomed
Still blossom fresh in morning dew;
Where all the poems that illumined
The poets' minds are true;

Where all the songs that e'er were sung
Are singing still from lips of truth;
Where all the children dying young
Still live in endless youth.

MY ROMAN ROSE.

In Caesar's banquet hall at Rome
I pulled a wild and wandering rose,
And bore it to my English home,
Where every month it blows.

On his Imperial cold hearthstone
A pool of stagnant water lay,
His palace walls, with weeds o'ergrown,
Were sunk in dull decay.

The grain of wheat must sink and die
In darkness 'neath the ground and rain.
Before it rise and blossom high,
And future life maintain.

So man with all his glory fades—
He sinks in death and disappears
Beyond the waters and the shades—
To bloom in other spheres.
While making some clever turns on her bicycle on an elevated cup-shaped revolving track at a matinee, June 14th, 1907, in the Belfast Hippodrome, Fraulein Hildegarde Morgenroth, aged 15, of the Aurora Cycle Company, slipped over the rim and was killed on the stage, in the presence of her father and brothers, who took her body home to Germany.

(IN MEMORIAM—HILDEGARD MORGENROTH.)

The day is come for which we longed.
With beauty, wealth, and fashion bright
The Royal Hippodrome is thronged
To see Aurora’s Flight.

She soars around that airy track—
Her wheel on wheels revolving high.
But see! she falls! she’s down! alack!
What? dead! without a sigh!

Oh! Morgenroth! Oh! Belle Aurore!
Oh! Rosy Morn! at matinee—
At dawn of life—thy race is o’er!
Thou bring’st us night for day!

Yet whom the Gods love well die young!
Home to her Fatherland she’s gone!
By heaven’s morning choir she’s sung
As Angel of the Dawn!

THE ASSEMBLY HALL.

(Opened by His Grace the Duke of Argyll, June 5th, 1905.
Assembly addressed by His Excellency the Earl of Aberdeen, June 6th, 1906.)

Tune: OLD HUNDRED.

It smiles serene at conquering Time
In strength, repose and beauty chaste;
Of Gothic roof and tower sublime,
With arches, doors and windows traced—
The dream of thrice a hundred years,
The people’s offerings great and small,
The “Nineteenth Century Fund” uprears—
The Irish Presbyterian Hall!

Love laid the deep foundation plans,
Hope points to heaven the tower that soars,
Faith, rainbow-like, the arches spans,
And charity opens all the doors.

The Ark here finds its place of rest,
The moving tabernacle’s done;
Migration, Persecution, Test
Turn here to songs of victory won.

A thousand churches here unite,
With half a million souls allied,
To serve the Lord and do the right,
And preach a Saviour crucified.
"Ardens sed virens," Zion shines
Like bush that burns, but not consumed;
Make strong the stakes, extend the lines,
Our Zion's from above illumed.

Go conquering forth, our Temple walls
Are broad and high of flowering stone,
With ampler parlours, courts and halls
Than those of wisest Solomon.

Great son-in-law of greatest Queen,
Argyll, of ancient Royal line,
And Viceroy, noblest Aberdeen,
Now here in heart with us combine.

To consecrate this Temple fair—
To God and to His name assigned—
As place of Christian work and prayer,
Good-will and peace to all mankind.

The Smiley Bells chime "peace to all";
To mother Church in Scotland still,
To dear old May Street's hallowed hall,
To Fisherwick, to all "good-will"!

The house we build is great because
The Lord our God is great and kind—
Lift up your hearts, observe His laws,
And keep His goodness still in mind.

Lest we forget the goal, nor strain
For life divine, eternal, free—
This Temple, and ourselves again,
We dedicate, O Lord, to Thee.

FREE TRAM RIDES.
"The Belfast Corporation voted themselves free 'passes' on the new city tramways, on 1st January, 1905."—City Press.

If you want gear, then never fear
To grab and gather pelf;
But mind the penny, one or many,
The pound will mind itself.

Our Councilmen of six times ten,
The trustees of the people,
All sworn to ward our gold, and guard
The town from sewer to steeple,

Have bought in fine the tramway line,
And all its skinny horses;
And ere they die may 'lectrify
The company's old hearses.

But first they've tried and 'lectrified
The people of the city
By issuing "pass" to every ass
In office or committee.

Poor men may toil, and women moil,
Their rags and hunger hiding,
While paying for each councillor
On plush and velvet riding.

Our people work like Jap or Turk
For barely food and clothing;
They're so oppress't they can't protest,
Nor show their silent loathing.
For belted knights and baronites,
   And merchant princes many,
Who take their tram nor care a d—
   Who pays their wretched penny.

They'll pay no more, nor go footsore,
   But show their “pass” and snigger,
And tax the poor, and crowd the car,
   And grin like any nigger!

The horses cheap can hardly creep
   Around from streets to stations,
Yet councillors now load the cars
   With their huge corporations.

No doubt they're great and much elate
   But then it's hardly funny
That they should be so deuced free
   With other people's money!

Great City Fathers! one soon gathers
   How stupid you must think us,
That we should vote and never note
   The way you all can blink us.

But are you not the meanest lot
   That ever ruled a city,
To tax the poor and load the car
   With neither shame nor pity?

THE SWALA' AN' THE TRAMP.

At end o' March, wan sunny morn,
   A pet morn o' the saison,
A landly swala' flu' forlorn,
   Wi' oot a' sense or raison!

"Nae need a big, wairm coat tae weer,"
   A tramp said, "Simmer's cumin',
"For liquor guid—not claes—I'll speer,
   The burds noo a' ir hummin'."

He selt his coat, an' had a spree;
   Nixt day, a' coatless goin',
He shivvert, shelterin' 'neath a tree
   Frac wun', an' rain, an' snowin'.

The swala', frozen on the lea,
   Aside the strame wuz dyin'—
"Ye've waur desaved yersel' nor me!
   Ye're dead," quo' Rake, "for lyin'"!

Wan swala' won't a summer make,
   Nor wan wheel rin a kerridge,
Not iviry bid's a bargain, Rake,
   Nor iviry love a merridge!
ANTRIM IDYLLS

JAMIE SMITH AND THE GROGAN.*

Auld Jamie wuz a wee-bit man,
A hunchback, that wuz patent,
His heicht some three feet an' a span—
Or mair, if he wur straighten'd.

Auld Jamie kerrit aye a rod,
Gaed quate-like, nivir speakin',
In iviry hole he liked tae prod
For eggs an' rebbits sneakin'.

In yon auld Wee-park's broken wa'
He shoved his rod wanst lichtly,
But cudna' get it back a'va—
Seemed somethin' held it tichtly
He tuk haith han's, an' set his neck,
His heel sunk in the soddie—
The hauld let go! an' Jim fell back
Three times right ower the body!

Whan he got up, an' rub't his nase,
He thecht they meened to jeer' him!
Aboon him caw'd a flock o' cra's,
He thocht they meened to jeer him!

Quo' Jim: "The Grogan's tricks I ken!
His hauld I gart him slacken,
He thinks himself a match for men,
But fegs! he's sair mistakkin'!"
THE POOR BLIND RAT.

Wan summer Sunday eve we lay
All silent by the burn:
George, Joe, an' me, on Jamie's brae—
Nae breath the leaves to turn!

A strange procession soon we saw—
Three rats close side by side,
All holdin' in their mouths a straw,
To drink the water hied!

The twa outside wur fat an' sleek,
The middle yin was poor;
They stapt! when we began to speak!
The fat yins fled like stoor!

The poor yin jumpit roon' an' roon',
A hole it cudna' find;
A dog cam' up an' kilt it soon,
For this poor rat was blind.

'Twas being helpt by prosperous frien's,
Its way it cudna' see!
An' yet there's men wi' muckle means
Wud let their poor folks dee!

DAN AND THE CUSHENDUN FARMER.

My brother Dan round Cushendun
One day in March was riding;
And Dan, still up to "larks" and fun,
Was mighty fond of chiding.

In one small field a farmer there
Was ploughing out his praties—
All set in hand-made rigs and square,
For which the labour great is!

He wore a tall silk hat, turned green,
From which the crown had vanished;
His swallow-tailed black coat had seen
Both tails and buttons banished!

His clabber-crueted pants were torn;
His leggings, hay ropes twisted;
His waistcoat red had once been worn
As coat by soldier listed!

His shirt was like a dingy clout,
Without a button flapping;
His knees and elbows all were out;
His boots, untied, went clapping!
Dan proffer'd him a pin to close
His shirt and warm his bare skin—
The man turned up his Irish nose:
"What beat, sir's, in a bare pin?"

The field, that ne'er was cleaned aright,
Was like a scrog that bristles
With switch-grass, tangled green and white,
With dockens, burrs and thistles.

And here he used a wooden plough,
With patched up sock and coater;
To it he yoked his ass and cow—
Dan thought the chap a sloucher!

And where he ploughed the pratties out,
On those same grassy furrows,
He sowed his corn and saw it sprout,
Ere touching it with harrows!

Says Dan: You are a gentleman,
Who must enjoy good weather;
While others sow, you have a plan
To reap and sow together.

Few men get one good single crop
From land in any season—
"But here my spuds, with hay on top,
Show two crops, with good reason!"

Round every field you leave a perch
For thorns and weeds and winding—
"But there my beasts in winter search
For food, while shelter finding."

Your fences all are spoiled by goats,
Those fiends, you couldn't watch them—
"But that saves pruning, and denotes
Strong milk, whence'er we catch them."

Your pasture's choked with fog and whin,
Old benweeds, bracken, thistle—
"But neighbouring cattle, mostly thin,
Chew up the stumps like gristle."

You graze your meadows to the quick
In spring, and spoil their bearing—
"But there my cows and calves can lick
The costly fodder sparing."

I saw you cutting corn one day,
When wind the grain was lashing—
"You saw, too, how we ran away
To catch a hare came dashing."

Your ricks are rotting in the field,
Your pikes unhatched, are battered—
"But rotten hay helps next year's yield,
If o'er the grass it's scattered."
The thatch from all your corn stacks, too,
By hens is torn to tatters—
"But if we get fresh eggs, a few,
For ruined corn what matters?"

Your loanin's like a river bed,
With roots and rolling bowlders—
'That sharpens donkey's eye and head.
And strengthens both his shoulders.'

Your midden—that's "the farmer's bank"—
Leaks out and washes seaward—
'That only makes the smell less rank,
And lighter loads to leeward.'

Your byre and stable's gorged with grime,
Your beasts are dirt all over—
"But cleaning houses wastes much time,
And dirt is warm for cover."

Your harness, harrows, carts and ploughs
You leave to wind and weather—
"But sheds for them or 'blin kit' cows
Would cost their worth together!"

"Care breaks the neck o' bad luck," so
A stitch in time saves nine, sir
"But then, 'care killed the cat,' you know,
And stitching don't look fine, sir!"

Your panes are stuffed with rags and straw,
Your house with smoke is blearing—
"But glass is dear, and chimneys draw,
If wind would stop its veering!"

Your roof's in holes! I see the sky!
It rains in! helter-skelter!—
"But no roof's needed when it's dry,
When wet it gives some shelter!"

Your kitchen floor is mud and dirt,
And round your walls are rat-holes—
"But brown earth's healthy, and don't hurt,
And castles have their bat-holes!"

The hens and ducks and pigs and geese
Run round your hearth and table—
"But Noah's family ark had these,
His house was byre and stable!"

You bear privations oft in life,
No salt, or meal, or candle—
"We then can relish old Lot's wife,
And spuds by peat-light handle!"

Your bed is wretched straw and sticks,
The clothes unwashed for ages—
"That makes the back as hard as bricks,
And hard heads have been sages!"
You sell for "fippence" home-fed pork,
Which shows uncommon swine-sense—
"I buy salt bacon from New York,
Which costs me hardly ninepence!"

In fact at every turn you save,
You must be truly wealthy?—
"Ah! but for coin I do not crave,
'Tis better to be healthy."

Of course your ends you cannot meet,
You do not work for money?
Your pleasure’s not to dress or eat,
Nor save like bees their honey.

Far easier just to loaf and feed,
And sleep twelve hours daily—
But then at all the fairs you need
Some cash to do it gaily?

So if you took your ass and cow,
Your dress and hat and get-up,
Your cottage, too, and field, and plough,
To London town and set-up,

You’d make a hundred pounds a week,
On public exhibition;
Such men as you are far too seek,
So hearken my petition.
GLENARM, ANTRIM COAST.

I.
Of all the glens* on Antrim coast
Glenarm's the glen to see:
Green hills and woods it has to boast,
Blue bay and shining quay,
Bright birds and flowers in sunny bowers,
Sweet river flowing free;
Strange legends old, so long untold;
Fair scenes of festive glee;
The spire, where ancient ivy climbs,
The church 'mid bowering trees,
The tower that peals the evening chimes,
The flag that flouts the breeze;
The chapel, courthouse, fountain, mill,
The school by castle bridge,
The houses clustering up the hill,
The "plantin'" on the ridge.

Then dare you come, my dearest girl,
From city smoke and grime,
Through pleasant country paths to whirl
This glorious summer time?
We'll seek Glenarm and Antrim's caves,
All pure and white and sweet,
Washed by the laughter-loving waves
That ripple round the feet.

---

* Glenarm, Glencloy, Glenariff, Glenann, Glendun, Glentease, Glenshesk, Glenkearn, Glenballymon.

AND OTHER POEMS.

Here Scotia's earliest settlers stood
On Erin's emerald strand—
The Bissets, blamed for Athol's blood,
With feigned crusading band
Made Antrim's glens their Palestine,
And spread along the shore,
Till Margery, last of Bisset's line,
Espoused MacDonnell More,

From whom the Earls of Antrim sprung,
Who reared the castle grey,
Where doughty deeds were seen or sung
That echo till our day;
Round ivy towers, in parks and bowers,
Flit doves and pheasants gay;
The hare and deer sport safely here,
The trout and salmon play.

II.

"But what of legends old," she spoke,
"Of ghosts and fairy lore,
Of country customs, and the folk
Who lived along the shore?"

Ah, dearest, up the shadowy stream,
Borne on the mountain's breath,
Is heard by night the banshee scream,
That tells of coming death;
And fairy thorns in field or fen
   Are passed in silent fright;
While darkling in that yawning glen
   There gleams a quivering light
Where roofless ruined Majey's Mill
   Lurks 'mid the lowering flood,
And nightly ghosts and witches chill
   The lonely traveller's blood.

And youths on Easter morn will rise
   To see the dancing sun,
And gaze until their dazzled eyes
   Believe the dance begun;
And some at Easter or May Eve
   Through meadows green will roam,
Cull buttercups and daisies weave,
   Or bring first catkins home;
Or dye their eggs with bloom of whin,
   And 'trow them high, and watch;
Play "round the ring," "tig out" or "in,"
   And kiss the girls they catch;
And nuts at Hallow Eve they'll burn,
   See apple-duckers dipped,
Or bite at crossing sticks that turn
   With fire and apples tipped.

But blackberries none dare to eat
   When Hallow Eve is past,
For then the Deil (says ancient feer)
   Has worms upon them cast.
And Christmas rhymers then will play
   Saint George or Robin Hood,
And shoot or "shinnies" all the day
   Or light the logs of wood.

Now, can you climb this hanging brae,
   And here, o'er Knockanower,
Gaze out across the breezy bay
   To rock-girt Garron Tower?
Past that white Point lies "Ossian's Grave,"
   Ringed round with nameless stones—
Old Erin's bard, prince, warrior brave,
   Whose band camps round his bones.

Protected snug from mountain breeze,
   Along the Largy shore,
White farmsteads nestle 'mongst the trees,
   The kelp smoke curling o'er
The primrose pale gilds wood and vale—
   Gilds every field's green rim—
The meadowsweet and foxglove meet
   Along the river's brim.
Straidkilly's cottages you'll know,
With woods and willows crowned;
The bulldog "Blackrock" lashed below,
And "wandering" hills around;
By winter's cosy fire is heard
The mother's spinning wheel,
While girls the wool in "rowans" card,
Or turn the winding reel.

By Cloney's wood we'll "shinny" play,
Where lovers all repair;
We'll greet Deerpark, Carnalbana,
Glencloy, and high Bellair:
Whose hopeful toilers day by day
In seasons' ceaseless round,
Still tend their cattle, sheep and hay,
Or till the fruitful ground:

Where shearing-hook in sunburnt hand
Laid low the yellow corn—
The last stalks plaited in a band,
By throwing hooks were shorn;
This "hare," when cut, was proudly borne
And placed above the door,
To show the harvest home or "churn"
Was won, and shearing o'er.

Along the Larn-ward coast you'll sight
The "Madman’s Window" high,
And pendent rocks, piled black on white
That prop the neighbouring sky;
Yon sea-washed cot beneath the hill
The "Grogan" haunted sore—
That wee, brown, hairy man who still
By night oped every door.

We'll greet St. Patrick's old pin-well,
By Wee-park's broken wall;
And every crag and hazel dell
Round Minniss and Fox Hall—
Their fruitful fields and limpid linn,
White hawthorn wreathed like snow,
And yellow hills of golden whin—
That sets the land aglow!

A hungry fox here loved the flocks
A-roost in Grannie's byre!
One night he stole in thro' a hole,
But, full, could not retire!
Stiff on the ground next morn she found
Him stretched along the groop,
She turned about and toss'd him out,
When Reynard bolted! Whoop!
On Sugar Loaf's high bushy crown,
   Bright rowanberries grow,
And hazelnuts in autumn brown,
   Red rasp and downy sloe.
By Cairn-a-nigh's old heathery cairn,
   A golden treasure lies—
"Half Erin's rent"—in battle stern
   Hid from the victors' eyes!

See Ballygally's headland green
   Reared high on "sacks" of stone,
Like lion crouched with threatening mien
   To guard those castles lone—
Where lovelorn maid was reft with grief—
   Immured 'twixt sea and land;
And where O'Halloran, 'Surgent chief,
   By moonlight drilled his band;

The Scat hill, hump'd like camel high,
   Scowls o'er Cairncastle's farms
And fields lil'e quilts hung up to dry,
   Where every picture charms!
And Milltown's houses glinting white,
   And Sallagh's braes and rocks—
O'er Scat poor Matthews perished quite
   While watching Antrim's flocks!

"Ah! there!" she said—"the channel gay
With steamers, sails, and oars
I view afar, each rock and bay,
   All round the shining shores;
Lone Ailsa Craig I there behold,
   Like hayrick 'midst the tide"—
That's "Paddy's Milestone," bare and cold,
   'Twixt Erin and the Clyde.

The Maiden Rocks there meet your eyes—
   Bright "Whillens," sister twins—
Whose lonely lampman nightly plies
   His flashlight, which begins
To warn the mariner by dark
   Of sunken reefs ahead,
Where sailors brave in many a bark
   Have joined the nameless dead.

On this rough sea from Moyle to Man
   (Which once was frozen o'er)
A fairy princess, like a swan,
   Long lived in durance sore,
Till Patrick's bell allayed the storm,
   Broke heathen charms and fears,
And turned again to human form
   'This Royal child of Lir's.
From far Fair Head to Isle Magee—
Stranraer to Campbeltown—
The sunlit hills and silver sea
Flash like a jewelled crown;
O'er ocean's line Scotch mountains shine,
With rainbow colours spread—
Some reaching high to kiss the sky,
Some low on billowy bed.

Behold Argyle's white jagged "teeth,"
The "paps" of Jura's Isle,
Kintyre's long, grey, cloudy wreath,
And Arran's iron smile;
How clear and fair the fields of Ayr
Glance in the setting sun;
And beacons burn and flash in turn
When light of day is done.

"The region's all alive," said she,
"With voices, faces, thought,
Romance, and song, and history,
Unsung, unsaid, unsought;
But now their forms and colours fast
Are fixed within my mind,
Though hills be moved and seas flow past,
Their image rests behind."

Yes, mountains, valleys, rivers, seas,
Have voices, faces, thought—
These are the universities
With weighty wisdom fraught;

The lessons of the years and days
We learn upon their face;
They have their "family histories,"
Older than Adam's race.

The earth, the country is the Lord's
(Tho' Satan build the towns),
And all the thousand hills and herds
And flocks on all the downs;
And every tree and flower and bird,
Or thing that roams the wild,
Is in His special care and guard
As 'twere His only child.

"But while you speak of things apace,
Who, then, will speak for you?"
Methought I read this on her face,
For, fluttered, she withdrew:—
"Oh! rest," I said, "I came for love,
Why should we further stray?"
I kissed her lips; she did not move;
She did not answer "Nay."

Of Antrim's nine fair glens the first!
Glenarm's the glen for me,
For there my sires have all been nursed,
By hill and glen and sea;
And children fair shall flourish there
Around th' ancestral tree,
While bird shall sing, or fountain spring,
Or blossoms woo the bee!
THE LORELEI.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINRICH HEINE.

Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten.

I know not what can be the reason
I feel such coming pain,
An olden tale, out of season,
Is haunting my troubled brain.

The air is cool and the night falls,
And gently flows the Rhine,
On top of the peak the light falls
In 'th evening sun's decline.

There sits high on the mountain
A maiden wondrous fair,
Her jewels flash like a fountain,
She combs out her golden hair.

With a golden comb she is combing,
And lilts the while a lay,
Which floats through the mystic gloaming
With the weirdest melody.

The sailor and skiff may shiver,
O'ercome with the magic thrill!
He sees not the rocks or river,
He sees but the maid on the hill!

The billows will soon have destroyed them—
Both sailor and skiff, I ween!
And Lorelei’s song decoyed them—
Doomed by that elfin queen!

AND OTHER POEMS.

THE PINE AND THE PALM.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINRICH HEINE.

Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam.

A Pine-tree standeth lonely,
Far on a norland height;
It slumbers; and all around it
The ice and snow lie white.
And of a Palm it dreameth,
That in an eastern land
Lonely and silent standeth
Away on the burning sand.

THOU ART JUST LIKE A FLOWER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINRICH HEINE.

Du bist wie eine Blume.

Thou art just like a flower!
So good and pure and fair;
I look on thee and sorrow
Creeps o'er me unaware!
On thy head, if I could serve thee,
Lay both my hands I would,
Praying that God may preserve thee
So pure and fair and good.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE’S WILHELM MEISTER.

Wer nie sein Brodt mit Thraenen ass.

Who never ate his bread with tears,
Who never through nights’ troubled hours
Sat weeping on his bed with fears,
He knows you not, ye heavenly powers!
Ye bring us into life below,
Ye let poor mortals lose their worth,
Then ye deliver them to woe—
For every crime is ‘venge’d on earth.
THE SINGER’S CURSE.
FROM THE GERMAN OF LUDWIG UHLAND.

Es stand in alten Zeiten
Ein Schloss so hoch und heh.

In ancient days a castle,
So high and hoar and grand,
Shone o’er the distant landscape,
Down to the rippling strand;
Around, of fragrant gardens,
Were flowery wreaths entwined,
And crystal streamlets bubbled
Where dancing rainbows shined.

A haughty King there reign-ed,
For lands and wars renowned,
Upon his throne so gloomy
He sat and ever frowned—
He only thought of horrors!
His rage foamed like a flood,
His speech was still of scourgings,
And what he wrote was blood!

A noble minstrel couple
Once went towards this hall;
The one in yellow ringlets,
The other grey and tall;
His harp the grey-beard carried,
His jewelled steed he rode,
The glowing young companion
Beside his master strode.

The old man first then whispered:
“Be ready now, my boy;
Choose out our songs the sweetest,
And sing with blithest joy;
Bring all your strength together,
Employ now all your art,
For we this day must soften
The tyrant’s stony heart.”

Now stand this pair of singers
In that high pillared hall,
The King and Queen enthron-ed
Sit there before them all,
The King in tearful splendour,
Like low e ring northern night,
The Queen all mild and gentle,
Like moonbeams silvery bright.

The old man struck the harp strings,
Struck them so wondrous well
That sweeter, ever sweeter,
The music rose and fell;
Then came in flowing numbers
The youth’s voice to the lyre,
The grey-beard’s silvery accents
Made up the magic choir.
They sang of budding spring time,
Of love and golden youth,
Of freedom, honour, glory,
Of holiness and truth;
They sang of all things noble
That thrill the nerves of men,
They sang of all things lofty
That raise their souls again.

The courtiers crowd in circles,
Forgetting all their scorn,
The King's most haughty warriors
To God confess and mourn;
The Queen, with joy and sadness,
Enraptured and oppressed,
Throws to the noble singers
The rose upon her breast!

"Ye have seduced my people,
Ye now beguile my Queen,"
The King thus shouted frantic,
His visage changed its mien;
His glittering sword he darted
Right thro' the youthful breast!
The golden song there ended,
The young life lay at rest!

Then by the tumult scattered
Fled all the listening swarm,
The youth had there expired
Upon his master's arm;
He wrapt him in his mantle,
Set him upon his steed;
He bound him fast behind him,
And quit the hall with speed.

Yet by the lofty gateway
The old man raised his hand,
And firmly seized his harp there—
The prize of all the land—
Dashed it in fury frantic
Against a pillar tall—
On King and hall and gardens
His curse he then let fall:

"Ye haughty halls accurs-ed!
May music's thrilling sound
Ne'er thro' your chambers echo,
Nor song nor harp be found,
But sighs and nightly wailing
And tread of sullen slave—
Let dust and ashes fill you
And venging spirits rave!
"Accurst! ye fragrant gardens,
In all your May-day light,
See this distorted visage,
Behold this awful sight!
Like this ye soon shall wither,
And all your fountains dry
Shall show to future ages
How desolate ye lie!

"Thou murderer accurs-ed!
Of all who sing the bane!
For honour, glory, power,
Be all thine efforts vain!
Thy name shall be forgotten,
Plunged in eternal night,
Or like a last death's rattle,
Regarded with affright!"

Thus had the old man spoken,
And heaven heard the cry;
The castle walls have fallen,
The halls deserted lie;
One single lofty pillar
Still speaks of splendour past,
And it too, now is tottering
To fall at winter's blast.

Where smiled the spicy gardens
A heath now barren stands,
No tree extends its shadow,
No streamlet cools the sands;
The King is never mentioned
In records or in verse,
He lies ignored and nameless!
That is the Singer's curse!

THE SHEPHERD'S SABBATH HYMN.
FROM THE GERMAN OF LUDWIG UHLAND.
The Lord's own day is here,
I am alone on boundless field;
One single morning bell just pealed;
Now, silence, far and near!
Adoring here I pray;
What inward awe, what holy fear;
How many kneel around me here
Unseen, their prayers to say?

The heavens far and near
Are solemn now, serene and bright,
As if they opened to the sight.
The Lord's own day is here!
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.
FROM THE ANGLO-SAXON POET CYNEWULF (died 780 A.D.)

Reprinted from the author's work on "Our Early English Literature."

Tune: "ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS."

Fatherland supernal! thou shalt stand secure,
And thy joys eternal sinless aye endure.

There they sing the Saviour, lord of love and life,
Girt around with glory, freed from care and strife,

With hosannas welcomed, and as God revered:
There are troops of angels to their Lord endeared!

Leader of the Nations to the realms of light,
Ever and for ever live they Thy delight!

The Almighty Father hath all power on high,
He the legions holy ruleth in the sky.

There is song of angels, raptures of the free
And the dearest Saviour there they ever see;

He is to his ransomed fairer than the sun—
Each and all He bought them, He their triumph won.

AND OTHER POEMS.

Love of the beloved, life without a death,
Throng of men immortal in eternal youth!

Hosts of heavenly armies, health without a scar
Rest for all the righteous, peace without a war!

Kingdoms of the bless-ed, day without a night,
Joy without a sorrow, glory full and bright.

Peace with friends for ever, envy all unknown,
Loving without hatred, saints around the throne!

Thirst and hunger are not in that happy land,
Pain and sleep and sickness enter not its strand.

There the burning sunbeam smiteth not by day,
No complaint nor mourning, coldness nor decay,

But the radiant cohorts in resplendent throngs
Aye and everlanding with their harps and songs.

Laud the King in glory, loud His virtues sing,
While the worlds around them with hosannas ring!
TO M. DU PERRIER, ON THE LOSS OF HIS DAUGHTER ROSELIE

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF MALHERBE.

*Ta douleur, du Perrier, sera done eternelle,*
*Et les tristes discours, etc.*

Your distress, du Perrier, will it last then for ever?
And the sad words and tone,
Which your fatherly love from your mind cannot sever,
But augment your long moan!

The decease of your daughter, now sunk to the tomb,
By a law none evade,
Is't a lab'rinth profound where no reason can come
Or send light to your aid?

I know well with what charms her young life was adorned
And would now never try
To assuage your distress, lest a friend should be scorned
Who would wish your eye dry!

But she was of a world where the best things are doomed
To the worst fate and dower,
And herself but a rose like the roses she bloomed
Just a brief morning hour.

But suppose that the gods had now granted your prayer,
And that she had attained
To her ninetieth year with her thin snowy hair,
What would then have been gained?

AND OTHER POEMS.

Thinkest thou if more old in the mansions of light,
Grander joy she had found?
Or that less she had felt the cold clods of earth's night,
Or the worms of the ground?

To remain unconsol'd, or to shut in one's mind
A consuming slow care,
Is to punish oneself the poor glory to find
Of just loving despair!

With a similar stroke I myself was struck twice—
(For I lost children twain),
And yet reason has twice made me feel it more wise
Just to think it was gain.

Not that I don't bewail what's laid low in the ground—
Ah! to me it was dear!
But a loss, for which never a cure can be found!
Should I waste a salt tear?

Grim Death has its terrors to which naught can compare,
We beseech it in vain,
It is cruel and closes its ears to our prayer,
And just lets us complain!

At the wretch in his hovel, but thinly thatched over,
His dread missile Death flings!
And the guard that keeps watch at the gates of the Louvre,
Cannot save our great kings!

To complain against it, or impatience betray,
Is no use—no release;
But to will what God wills is the only wise way
That can lead us to peace!
WHERE ARE THE SNOWS OF LAST YEAR?

(Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?)

Oh! tell me what regions now hold
The great Queen of Sheba so gay,
And all of the servants and gold
King Solomon saw on that day?
She then was so full of desire,
But now all are vanished, I fear!
Where's Nineveh now? and where's Tyre?
—But where are the snows of last year?

Where's Boadicea, the Queen
Who kept the proud Cesar at bay?
Her chariots and scythes I have seen,
Was she less enduring than they?
Or where is Victoria the Good,
The Queen we all loved to revere?
Or where's our old friend Robin Hood?
—But where are the snows of last year?

Where's she, the gay Belle of Belfast,
In days when my dad was a boy?
I ween that her season soon past!
Age grins at the arts we employ!
The nicks of the chisels of Time
Make wrinkles that soon must appear;
We only are once in our prime—
—And where are the snows of last year?

AND OTHER POEMS.

The glow on the cheek of the child,
The bloom on the fruit of the plum,
The "red" of the blush when she smiled,
The "yes" that she never let come.
The sunset that gilded the hill,
The friends I once cherished so dear,
The water that flowed by the mill,
Are gone! like the snows of last year!

But Time! ah! and Space! are immense!
The dead have new worlds of their own—
More grand than our regions of sense,
This world they have simply outgrown!
The peoples, the thoughts, and the things
Of earth are but transients here—
They come, stay awhile, and take wings,
And fly like the snows of last year!

The snows of last year only change!
They turn the brown hills into green;
Thro' plant, beast or bird they will range
Till man as the outcome is seen.
For naught in the world can be lost,
How can it? it works in some sphere,
Some Eye will perceive where it's toss'd,
And follow the snows of last year!

Since "nothing from nothing can come."
Then nothing to nothing can go—
That's plain as a plain rule of thumb,
And well for us mortals to know.
Since causes have still their effects,
   Effects are new causes, 'tis clear—
So man when he dies lives and acts,
   Though gone like the snows of last year!

The snows and the sunbeams and gales
   Are stored in fruit, flower or bark!
The trees and the rocks could tell tales
   They learnt of men's deeds in the dark!
All's seen, and all's photo'd—and stored!
   All's heard in a phonograph EAR!
All's felt, and each impress and word
   Works on like the snows of last year!

Man's body, his thought, and his soul,
   Are stages ascending from earth,
The higher still gaining control
   And claiming a heavenly birth;
And gravity, ether, and cold,
   And things we can't touch, see, or hear,
Suggest such a Power untold
   As orders the snows of last year!

Man's love may appear as a dream,
   Far more unsubstantial than air!
A thought, word, or form grows supreme,
   And soon his whole family is there!
For thoughts are the roots of our deeds,
   And deeds shall our characters rear,
The Seen from the Unseen proceeds—
   Man lives by the snows of last year!

SONG OF PROVENCE.
   (Written at Nice.)
In my father's garden
   An orange tree of gold
Blossoms fruit-beladen,
   As it bloomed of old!
   Tra-la-la, tra-la-la, tara-la!

There within the shadows
   A friendly nightingale
Sings among the branches,
   Its music fills the vale!
   Tra-la-la, tra-la-la, tara-la!

Hyacinths and roses
   Shall deck my yellow hair,
And when daylight closes
   I'll meet Wald-ér-e there!
   Tra-la-la, tra-la-la, tara-la!

So sang the Princess Hild-e-gund,
   And cured Wald-ér-e of his wound!
   Tra-la-la, tra-la-la, tara-la!
ODE TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

(Written at Florence.)

Far in the depths of the gorgeous East,  
Is the Nightingale's home, I ween,  
In some fragrant isle on the ocean's breast  
On a fairy spray she suspends her nest,  
And sings in the moonlight sheen.

Then to the shadowy forests old  
She enticeth her tuneful brood,  
Where the songs ne'er cease nor the years grow cold,  
Where the rivers sleep on their sands of gold,  
Or flow in a silver flood.

Come, with the vernal sun, blithe bird,  
To enliven our northern light,  
Ere autumn's gales thro' the groves are heard  
Thou wingest thy distant flight.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE.

(Written on the "Campania" in Mid-Atlantic.)

Birds of passage wandering ever,  
Birds of passage flying free,  
Birds of passage stray and sever,  
Passing on o'er land and sea!

Fairer climes we may've beholden,  
Where a sun in prouder might  
Bathes the plains and mountains golden,  
Eve and morn, in purple light.

But an island 'midst the ocean,  
Spun around with mist and foam,  
Thrills our heart with deep emotion,  
In whatever lands we roam.

All the isles in ocean green  
Hail our Erin as their Queen!
FACTS AND FANCIES,
Or, The Wandering Jew.
I've sat on the throne of old England—
Tho' Edward the King never knew—
I've bathed with the Emperor William,
And studied and sipped with him, too;
I've dined with a princess in Scotland—
I'd rather dine, sit, sip with you.

I've sailed on the longest of liners,
As o'er the Atlantic she flew;
I've boarded the biggest of warships,
And talked with the captain and crew;
I've sunk 'neath the sea in torpedoes—
I'd rather fly, sail, talk with you.

I've climbed up Mount Blanc in the sunrise,
And Edelweiss culled where it grew;
I've gazed from the high Himalayas—
All tinged in their heavenly hue;
I've soared with the boldest balloonist—
I'd rather gaze, climb, soar with you.

I've greeted at Rome all the portraits
Of Caesars and Popes there on view;
I've kissed the great toe of St. Peter,
And wandered the Catacombs thro';
I've sketched the old temples in Athens—
I'd rather sketch, greet, kiss with you.

I've kodaked the great Wall of China,
Seen Japanese armies review;
I've camped with Australian bushmen,
And smoked with the Indian Sioux
With pipes from the red pipe-stone quarry—
I'd rather see, smoke, camp with you.

I've been thro' the Spanish Alhambra,
Thro' Mexico, Chili, Peru;
I've fished on the Amazon River,
And sailed up the Nile—White and Blue—
I've heard the hoarse roar of Niagara—
I'd rather hear, fish, be with you.

I've danced in State balls at the White House,
At Paris, Berlin, and at Kew;
I've viewed the kings' tombs at St. Denis,
For I am the Wandering Jew;
I've skated at Moscow and Riga—
I'd rather roam, skate, dance with you.

With you? Who are you? You're a dearie,
All else in the world I eschew;
I've wandered around till I'm weary,
With nothing on earth here to do,
But trying to live and be cheery—
While hoping and seeking for you.
International Sonnets.

IRELAND.

First Isle of Europe, washed by Western foam! 
The grey mist trails along thy verdant hills, 
And spirits whisper from their cloudy home 
A golden hope, that brightens all thy ills.

Green land of lakes, and streams, and mossy plains, 
With quilt-like farms, round towers, and roofless walls—
Where shamrocks wax, and population wanes, 
And hamlets shrink around the lordly halls.

Bright, witty race, to genius near allied—
Where Goldsmith, Burke, O'Connell, Moore were trained—
Unselfish, hasty, easy to divide 
While nursing memories of the things that pained.

Turn from the dark, and greet the dawning light—
Love conquers all, forgive, forget, unite.

ENGLAND.

As Rome once ruled the world, so England thou 
Hast sate as Mistress 'mongst the nations proud! 
Thy smoking steamers cloud all oceans now, 
And continents before thy throne have bowed.

Thy roll of heroes and thy blended breeds—
The best of each who boldly drew the sword 
And came and conquered by their daring deeds—
Have made thy land the Rose-bed of the Lord.

Humaner times with gentler lessons please—
With commerce, science, industry, and art; 
Beware! lest pride, wealth, confidence, and ease 
Unnerve thy hand and tame thy lion heart.

Mother of nations rising round thy knees! 
Thine arms embrace the isles and all the seas!
International Sonnets.

SCOTLAND.

Greece, Palestine and Scotland—little States—
Have made great impress on the human mind—
Not size, nor wealth, nor commerce elevates—
'Tis character and deeds that raise mankind.

Here shines a land in storied verse and prose!
Where preachers, statesmen, travellers, seers are born—
Where Knox and Bruce, Burns, Scott and Wallace rose,
And deeds were done that now the world adorn.

Where deer and sheep and shaggy cattle roam,
And misty mountains o'er the landscape frown;
While smiling gardens bloom round every home,
And church and school the peaceful village crown.

A land of kilts and clans and work and will,
Of self-respect and law and order still.

International Sonnets.

WALES.

Protecting hills! that saved the Druid race,
And nursed King Arthur and the Table Round;
Where hoary Snowdon rears his wrinkled face,
And brave Llewelyn, latest prince, was crowned.

Your treasures lie within the sparkling mine—
The wealth of ages under mountains roll'd;
And mystic legends round your valleys twine
Of future crowns and battles gained of old!

Impassioned, zealous people, keen, elate,
With souls for music, songs, and dreams sublime;
Intent on great reforms in Church and State—
"For Wales and Empire," rings your modern chime!

Loving extremes, as Kelts still first or last—
Before the Future, or behind the Past!
International Sonnets.

AMERICA.

Expansive as the broadest ocean plains,
With energies as restless as the sea!
Great Brotherhood of States! whose brawn and brains
Raise a new world on work and liberty!

For men a workshop of the vastest range,
A play-ground for the children young and old;
A paradise for women—new and strange,
A Mecca for the miser seeking gold.

Bright, hospitable, self-reliant race,
Best blend of breeds, best clad and schooled and fed;
Great record-breaker, who still mends the pace
That older nations have been pleased to tread!

Here every talent wins its golden crown,
Men rise by worth—not by their sires' renown!

FRANCE.

Most ancient, amorous, and ingenious race!
Who long in love and war hast led the van,
Who kings and constitutions canst efface
And bleed and bear for all the rights of man.

Here nations come as to their pleasure ground,
Thy trophies proud and cities fair to view—
Thy restless ease and easy restless round
Of life dramatic and enchantments new.

Thou modern Greece, nurse of the Muses nine,
Thy Sorbonne wreathed me in her laurels green;
Thou blossomed lily, Europe's lady fine,
Who charm'st mankind with every changing mien.

Thy sun, thy soil, thy olives, corn and wine
Have tinged thy blood and made thy genius shine.
International Sonnets.

GERMANY.

With blood and iron Bismarck built the State,  
And brought from France his victor Eagles home,  
Where marshalled millions and new navies wait  
To guard the land or bridge the ocean's foam.

Where sage philosophy expands her wings,  
And robed me in her ample crimson gown,  
While science peers down to the roots of things,  
And art and music win their fair renown.

Her people famed for songs and wars of old,  
Have burst the chains by rigorous nature bound,  
Till plodding toil and care and commerce bold,  
With second youth their efforts now have crowned.

Here social joys and homely pleasure reign,  
While big ambition fires the nation's brain.

AND OTHER POEMS.

SPAIN.

Autumnal Spain! your ancient glory's fixed  
Rich in the colours of a setting sun;  
Iberian blood, with Moors and Romans mixed—  
May English Queen see brighter days begun.

Once mistress of the world—both old and new—  
O'er high Si-er-ras and the Spanish Main,  
Till Inquisitions ate your Empire thro';  
And no Armada could your power retain.

A haughty halo clings around your head,  
Like flauntingivy o'er a mouldering fane;  
Alhambra's ruins tell of mighty dead,  
And dust, the bloom of time, descends amain.

Mother of Nations, who have left your side,  
Your long si-es-ta cease, and be their pride.
International Sonnets.

--

ITALY.

With burnished wing stretched o'er the silver sea
From snowy Alp to southern orange plain,
Like Phoenix from its ashes Italy
Has risen 'mongst the nations once again.

Her pristine power of order, arms, and art,
Her classic past cut deep with iron pen,
Can still their lingering lines of light impart
To point the way and brace the nerves of men.

The hoary olive clothes her castled hills,
And purple vines blow round her warriors' bones,
Her battlefields the peaceful peasant tills,
Or builds his barn of sculptured marble stones.

Still nature triumphs over art and mind—
I plucked the wild-rose where her Cæsars dined.

--

MODERN GREECE.

See the islands, mountains, flashing gulfs and bays,
Slopes of golden orange, fig and vine and corn,
Ruins, shrines and temples—where the wild goat strays!
—Socrates and Plato here are left forlorn!

Seamen now and herdsmen, women olive-faced,
Sunburnt peasant races plough thy fields of fame,
Building sheds of statues with the gods defaced!
Heeding not the glory of thy ancient name!

Restless, eager people, still for something new!
Always democratic, lacking self-control,
Doing and undoing, to no purpose true,
All preferring party—none the greater whole!

Yet you nurse ambition higher rôles to fill?
Well! the sun of Homer shines upon you still!
International Sonnets.

SWITZERLAND.

White roof of Europe! glittering in the sun,
Whose dripping eaves and glaciers moving slow
Start greatest rivers on their course, that run
Thro' mountain lakes and valleys green below.

Thou true Republic, where a king ne'er reigned!
Where Tell, Rousseau, and freedom found their birth!
Where all are equal, humble, self-contained,
And learned in half the languages of earth.

Thy happiness is fixed in homely joys;
The puffing Press leaves thy affairs alone—
The best machinery makes the smallest noise—
And all is silent round this mountain throne.

Mid Alpine snows I culled thy Edelweiss,
And climbed Mount Blanc o'er fields of endless ice.

DENMARK

First English home and oldest Angleland!
Once mistress, too, of England and the Isles,
Thy conquering kings could bid the waves to stand,
And check the courtiers' proud and flattering smiles.

Efficient, democratic, loyal race,
Where prince and people meet as brothers true;
While queenly thrones thy Royal daughters grace,
And spread thy reign o'er distant realms anew.

With schools and technique now thy land is filled,
Where hand and brain alike are trained to do;
Thy fields and farms, like Europe's garden tilled,
Their products pour far as thy ravens flew.

Thy wide dominion now contracted brings
More happiness than all thy conquering kings.
International Sonnets.

NORWAY.

Bare brow of Europe! Land of Midnight Sun!
Sea-finger’d firths and hills of pine and snow!
Where bear and whale and sea-fowl make their run,
And bearded seamen flounder through the floe.

Your hardy Norsemen, Viking heroes bold,
Once ploughed the sea more freely than the land,
And tales of Thor and wandering Odin told,
Or steered their barques to far Atlantic strand.

Brave, sturdy people, hospitable, kind,
So modest, democratic, simple, wise;
Your women fair, your men of loyal mind—
The wood or water still your wealth supplies.

May Haakon, Olaf, “Princess Maud,” as Queen,
Long guide your people, peaceful, brave, serene.

AND OTHER POEMS.

SWEDEN.

Long land of forests, lakes, and snowy range!
Where mills for timber, steel, and iron boom!
Where wooden houses stand, all painted strange,
And costumes gay abound from native loom.

From Odin sprung in oldest heathen time,
Your kings—Gustavus, Charles—in war array
Have placed your name in history’s page sublime,
When half the world was saved from Papal sway!

Your women charm with beauty, health, and grace;
Your children all well-schooled, well-clad, polite;
Your men—a heaven of goodness in their face—
So honest, jolly, hospitable, bright!

Quite democratic, French-like, and refined,
Yet still our Teuton brothers true and kind.
International Sonnets.

RUSSIA.

Slow, suffering huge Colossus of the north!
Mysterious dread to nations near and far,
Till selfish nobles blindly led thee forth
To death and danger in their foreign war.

Great patient people, struggling, toiling, dumb,
To exile, chains and massacres a prey,
Yet dreaming thro' thy sleep that light would come,
And striking in the dark to clear the way.

Trust not in princes; God still helpeth those
Who help themselves; so to thyself be true;
And, like as France and England erst arose,
Rise thou, and from the spoilers claim thy due.*

Slow swims the midnight sun towards the Pole,
But moves with might that Czars cannot control.

* The Russian people have taken this advice.

SKATING AT HEIDELBERG.

The year was waning and the day long past,
The moonbeam struggling with the snowy cloud,
The Neckar frozen, where his bridges cast
Their quivering shadows o'er the skating crowd.

When beauteous "Ikta" went to join the throng,
Among her train an ardent student pressed,
Who first that night had heard her thrilling song,
And felt a kindling flame within his breast.

He fitted to her feet the steely wings,
And locked together o'er the ice they flew,
And warmed, and cooled, and laughed, and talked of things,
And "figured" on the "outside edge" anew.

The poets say love comes with Spring alone,
But Winter oft thus freezes two in one!
THE PRINCESS OF UTOPIA.

My love’s a lady fair and wise and good,
My choicest treasures unto her I bring,
She lives but in my mind, where she was woo’d,
Yet all my heart and hopes around her cling.

How others find her I nor know nor care—
To me she’s ever radiant, kind, and true;
Her face, her form, her voice, her flowing hair,
The rustle of her robes can thrill me through.

She is my “Princess,” Queen, and Empress crowned,
Her thoughts unspoken haste I to fulfil,
The white arms of her love protect me round,
We have one heart, we only have one will.

Alas! on earth things are not what they seem,
For love is blind—My “Princess” was a dream!

THE GERMAN EMPEROR, KAISER WILLIAM II

(On his visit to England in November, 1907.)

Lord of grand armies and of warlike fleets!
Whose reign of peace has made thy land elate!
Old friendly England once again thee greets,
And joys to see thy name and nation great.

Grandson of William and Victoria, two
Of noblest monarchs that the world has known,
And son of parents so benign and true,
Good thou must be in being like thine own!

As class-mate of thy student years at Bonn,
I saw thy zeal and worth and genius rise,
And manhood’s noon approves that glowing dawn,
While future times shall sing thee kind and wise.

Advance, Germania! let thy eagles fly!
Thy Kaiser rules with ever watchful eye.
THE GERMAN EMPEROR, KAISER WILHELM II.

(A.D. 1917.)

I painted once a child—an angel fair;
To paint a devil later I designed;
I sought the prison cells and found him there,
Lo! 'twas the child—debased in form and mind.

I praised the Prince, young William, face to face;
Nor ween'd he yearned to wield the tyrant's rod
As grand assassin of the human race—
By poison, spies, lies, blood and fire and fraud.

"Treaties are paper! laws but ink and pen,
But Might's my Right," says he, "I'll hack my course
With sword in hand to Calais' coast, and then
Meinself und Gott vill rule the world by force!"

Later I see him speechless, chained below,
Gnashing his teeth mid smoke and liquid flame,
Where spectres of his mangled millions show
Their gaping wounds, and widows curse his name!

O war! O woe! the worst the world has known,
No peace on earth while William holds a throne.
THE BELFAST NEW CITY HALL.

(Opened Wednesday, 1st August, 1906, by the Earl of Aberdeen, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.)

With glittering domes and windows glancing sheen,
The columns fair like snowy forests rise!
Where statues proudly view the gardens green,
And millions gaze with keen, admiring eyes!

How bright and glorious all within appears—
Palatial home for councilmen or kings;
Italian marble walls and Grecian piers,
With courts and halls and corridors and wings.

This is the city's centre, this the brain,
Where all the throbbing human life below,
All civic functions, change, or loss or gain
Stand chronicled while endless time shall flow.

Four-square it stands, a pattern for us all!
May all walk worthy of our City Hall!

MY OWN COUNTRY—EVERY MAN'S SONNET.

I love my mother first of women born,
I love my home and family—rich or poor—
My native village I would most adorn,
My schoolday friends are still the most secure.

I love my county, kingdom, empire, race,
I love mankind—for love divine I thirst—
Love joins extremes and brings them face to face—
I live, because my country has me nursed!

The love of home expands to love of State,
And men are brothers wheresoe'er they be;
True to myself, the rest I cannot hate,
So all the rest will then be true to me!

Wide is the world, and all its fields are fair,
But my own country is my sire and heir.
ROYAL BELFAST ACADEMICAL INSTITUTION.

(Founded 1810.)

[Read by the Author in the Belfast New City Hall at the request of the Lord Mayor (Mr. R. J. McMordie) on the occasion of the Grand Banquet celebrating the Centenary of the Institution.]

Dear Alma Mater! stalwart Ulster’s pride,
A century now thy flag has braved the breeze,
And age but brings new offspring to thy side
While children’s children crowd around thy knees.

Ten thousand sons have from thy halls gone forth
To teach and heal and sing and preach and rule,
And bear thy name and fame round all the earth
As Erin’s best—and manhood’s noblest—school.

Where’er their lot is cast—abroad, at home,
At city desks, in far colonial lands,
Mid alien tribes or bridging ocean’s foam
Thy sons obey where duty first commands.

Thy founders builded better than they knew
A house not made with hands—for ever new.

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

(Born in Belfast, 10th March, 1810.)

[Read by the Author at Sir Samuel Ferguson’s grave at Donegore during the Centenary Celebration on 10th March, 1910.]

The lamp of ancient Erin’s lingering light
Illumed thy path and fired thy mind again
Through life’s long cares to that Olympic height
Where thou beginn’st thy second century’s reign.

The poet dies not as do other men—
For thoughts are things more solid far than clay—
His words and music wedded rise again
And live on earth with him immortally.

Grim trade and business fill our hands and minds,
And our dull spirits seldom seek to soar.
Thy “Northern Athens” here no more one finds,
And all the muses fly Ultonia’s shore.

From old Belfast and all of thy compeers
Thy name emerges brightening with the year.
THE ROSES OF DRUMOURNE

A blush is on the landscape
And a musky fragrance borne
Across the fields and meadows,
From the Roses of Drumourne!

Some singly, or in clusters,
Or in gorgeous hanging sprays,
They blow from early summer
Through the winter's darkest days.

The bushes young and growing—
(For the place was long forlorn)—
Now set the hill aglowing
With the Roses of Drumourne.

They climb around the arbours,
Hiding lovers where they cling;
They wave above the willows
Where the birdies build and sing.

And daffodils so proudly
Droop, as if they meant to mourn,
And vie in glory golden
With the Roses of Drumourne.

But all the flowers of Eden
Here can bloom throughout the year;
They come in due succession,
Pass away—and re-appear.

And trees from all the forests—
(Lately saplings pruned and shorn)—
Now lend their spreading shelter
To the Roses of Drumourne.

And figs, and vines and peaches,
You may find if you will look,
All fresh and ripening sweetly
In many a sunny nook.

From all the world come strangers
Seeking blooms so proudly worn,
For all admire the beauty
Of the Roses of Drumourne.
LIFE.

"I sometimes wonder wherefore I was born!"
Exclaimed an ancient sage; was it alone
To eat and sleep and sport from morn to morn
And grow a thing of merely flesh and bone?

"The earthly Goddess, Life's great Pillar, Health,"
Were then my theme; and health is made, or heed'd;
The Blood's the life: for youth and love and wealth
Were joyless gifts, when health is still impaire'd.

You smile, perhaps, at health discuss'd in song?
But wait when illness comes to hear the sigh
Of grim regret for wasted years when strong—
As water's treasured when the well goes dry!

Not dainties from the table of a king,
Nor sumptuous banquets, held by night or day,
No feast, nor fast, nor any extra thing
But jolts the frame and tends to life's decay.

The Hebrew Daniel ran his high career
With pulse and water for his diet spare,
His body plumper and his mind more clear
Than all the courtiers fed on kingly fare.

Would you, like Faust when wither'd, worn, and gray,
Regain your youth and see a century sped—
Then turn the soil and dig and delve the clay,
Arise with larks and with the birds to bed.

The fresh aroma of the fragrant earth
Has balm to soothe the shattered nerves and brain,
The primal, simple life can still draw forth
The milk of youth from Mother Earth again.

And so the sea, the sounding sandy shore—
Whose beaten foam at first engender'd life—
Can breathe ozone and vigour with its roar
And brace the nerves for life's unresting strife.

Its hollow moan and everlasting sigh
For all the brave who sank beneath the waves,
Bespeaks a sympathy with every cry
For lesser ills, that heals the mind and saves.

Let Jenkins, Mead, Old Parr, Desmond, or Keithe*
Show how their years were stretch'd beyond the span,
By moderate, simple, cheerful lives beneath
The open sky at peace with God and man.

And care and science yet shall rear a race
Far longer lived and of a nobler cast,
When knowledge, wisdom, self-control replace
The ignorance and sufferings of the past.

* Lived respectively 169, 152, 146, 133 and 131 years.
Nor do I marvel in their Eastern home
That pre-diluvian heroes lived so long,
With earth and sky for couch and azure dome,
And fresh from God with bodies iron-strong.

The old injunction standeth firm for aye—
For youth or age, the wise man or the fool—
In all you eat or drink or do or say
Let Moderation be your golden rule.

First health, then self-control; then, what you will
Mere flesh and bone—a beast upon the sod—
Or rising higher on from hill to hill,
A soaring angel or an earthly God.

"But life is laughter," says another sage,
It's all a jolly dance, nor comes again;
Enjoy the present, now's your golden age,
Snatch every pleasure, shunning every pain.

While you are here none else can fill your place,
When you are gone the void's soon closed, I wis,
For life and death still run their ceaseless race,
And Life itself's the only thing there is.

Believe not all you see, nor half you're told!
Especially in things of love or war!
For gall and honey from the tongue are roll'd,
And things may seem quite other than they are.
This life's a dome of many colour'd glass,
   Where each man sees his heaven a different hue,
So many men so many minds—they pass
   All growing like the things which they pursue.

Each atom of man's whole environment
   Has tinged a cell or touched responsive chords,
Until he stands a living monument,
   Of all his past, in actions, looks and words.

I am a part of all that I have seen,
   Of all that I have read, or thought, or heard,
Of every land or city where I've been,
   And specially of those I've loved or fear'd.

Know well yourself, what's right to do and say,
   What's most to shun, in what to persevere;
Then hold the even tenor of your way,
   Quite unperturbed by all you see or hear.

Your merry heart will then go all day long,
   And laugh at foibles in all other men,—
So eat and drink and sing your jolly song,
   Enjoy to-day—'twill never come again.

"Nay, life is sad," has not another said?
   This world's a puzzle, men a sorry lot,
We're born in pain; and live in fear, with dread
   Of death or trouble till we die and rot!
And all we’ve done, and all we are and know,
Shall vanish, pass, and be forgotten quite;
There shall be none to tell and naught to show
Of all the things for which we work or fight.

All must submit to this relentless change,
This long prolonged unending Judgment Day,
Where all are doomed, while others new and strange,
Arise and flourish and in turn decay.

For death, the grave, new love, new birth, new life,
Flow on advancing like the watery tide,
With rise and fall, and all the restless strife
But rounds the pebbles by the ocean side.

Why therefore, strive for more than we can use?
To hoard brings hate, and our ambition’s blind,
The pits that bar the goal it never views,
But overlies itself and falls behind.

Our life’s a city that’s besieged by foes—
Revenge, and hate, and anger, envy, fear—
All seeking inroads, oft with heavy blows
At every entrance, and for ever near.

And good is just as bad as bad is good,
And these opponents are for ever nigh,
We do the evil when the good we would,
And only learn to live when we must die!

And thus we tear the leaves from life’s sad Book,
To light the fires of whims and passions new,
Nor pause to count, until surprised we look
To find there are of pages left but few!

I hear another voice cry out on high:
Man’s but a pilgrim here upon the earth,
He’s passing on and upward to the sky,
And death itself is but another birth.

Of all that lives in man alone the heart
Turns like the needle to the pole of heaven:
Were he intended for this earth apart
Such groundless hope would never have been given.

The soul’s a vapoury essence mounting high,
A flame that warms this body cold as clay,—
When this dull frame’s outworn and comes to die,
The soul emerges bright as morning ray.

As tenant from this crumbling house of clay
The soul shall flit to mansions built above,
Though health and body perish and decay,
The soul shall flourish in immortal love.

Then, my beloved, let us use the time
That still remaineth on this earth so fair,
Too soon shall sound the sombre pealing chime,
That separates brief Here from endless There.
Let us enjoy while life and health are ours,
And the warm blood abounds in every vein;
Time flees so fast and saps our earthly powers,
While mysteries of life and death remain.

Let us forget all mutual doubts and fears,
Paint in bright sunrise every hour we live,
With smiling face dispel all sighs or tears,
And earn the bliss of those who all forgive.

The world cares nothing what we say or do;
Some little talk, and then our weal or woe
Rests with ourselves—with little me and you,
For life's the heart, and not an outward show.

Not castle halls, nor spacious grounds and parks,
Not silent dividends nor humming cars,
Not Russian furs, nor flash of diamond sparks,
Can purchase love or heal domestic jars.

Love is the seed of life, the heaven of earth,
In heaven itself the brightest flower there,
If blighted here the heart has endless dearth,
No second blooms are ever half so fair.

All loveless creatures end their own career,
A loveless earth were no fit place to dwell,
A loveless people soon must disappear,
A loveless heaven were a hateful hell.

Much better 'tis to live unknown to fame,
And be by merit worthy of it all,
Than meritless to win the highest name,
Great in the world—in self so mean and small!

Since feet of clay may carry heads of gold,
To make the best of both the worlds were wise;
Yet most have found when life's brief years have roll'd,
They built too low who built beneath the skies.

Then, pilgrim forth, this earth's no home for thee,
Thy history ends not here, 'tis but begun,
Through endless æons thou shalt look and see
How God's good hand has always led thee on.