The Rhyme and Reason of Country Life

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THE FOREST

The Rhyme and Reason

OF

COUNTRY LIFE.

THE BEE. P. 52

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New York:

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1855.

THE

Rhyme and Reason

OF

COUNTRY LIFE:

OR, SELECTIONS FROM

Fields Old and New.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF “RURAL HOURS,”

ETC., ETC.

——“The boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves and garniture of fields—
All that the genial ray of Morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of Even.”

NEW YORK:

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1854.

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TO

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

A TRIBUTE

OF

ADMIRATION FOR HIS GENIUS,

AND

In Grateful Remembrance of a Generous Offering

TO THE

MEMORY OF HIS FRIEND,

These Selections

ARE VERY RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE EDITOR.

Preface.

The selections contained in this volume are such as relate to one subject only—that of country life. But this, in itself, is a very wide sphere, and offers in its many different fields, old and new, all the variety that the most capricious spirit could desire. In collecting the different passages, the editor has allowed herself a wide sweep of the net; it has been her aim to bring together many beautiful passages from the best writers, mingled with others interesting rather from their quaintness and oddity, or their antiquity. With this view, not only have the poets of our own tongue, ancient and modern, English and American, been laid under contribution for the reader's amusement, but translations from a dozen different languages have also been included in the volume. Materials for a work of this nature abound, and the editor would have gladly drawn even more largely from the sources open to her, not only from the older authors, but from many writers of our own day also. It was desirable, however, that the volume should not reach an unwieldy size, as it was intended for pleasant companionship—the summer-seat, under a shady tree, or the chimney corner in winter—rather than for the prouder position allotted to the ponderous quarto on the library shelf. A word of

especial apology is perhaps needed, regarding some of our omissions; “Comus,” the “Allegro and Penseroso,” Gray’s “Elegy” and “Ode to Spring,” with other poems of that class, though peculiarly fitted for a compilation of this kind, will not be found in our table of Contents. But they have already been so often printed and misprinted, quoted and misquoted!

> “Dono infelice di bellezza, ond’ hai
> Funesta dota d’ infiniti guai.”

In this instance their very absence will serve to recall them to the reader’s memory.

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INTRODUCTION.

The ancient classical writers of the world are thought to have shown but little sensibility to that natural beauty with which the earth has been clothed, as with a magnificent garment, by her Almighty Creator. Those of their works which have been preserved to us are declared by critics rarely to bear evidence of much depth of feeling of this kind. The German scholars are understood to have been the first to broach this opinion—the first to point out the fact, and to comment on what appears a singular inconsistency.

"If we bear in mind," says Schiller, "the beautiful scenery with which the Greeks were surrounded, and remember the opportunities possessed by a people living in so genial a climate, of entering into the free enjoyment of the contemplation of nature, and observe how conformable were their mode of thought, the bent of their imaginations, and the habits of their lives to the simplicity of nature, which was so faithfully reflected in their poetic works, we can not fail to remark with surprise how few traces are to be met among them of the sentimental interest with which we in modern times attach ourselves to the individual characteristics of natural scenery. The Greek poet is certainly in the highest degree correct,

faithful, and circumstantial in his descriptions of nature, but his heart has more share in his words than if he were treating of a garment, a shield, or a suit of armor. Nature seems to interest his understanding more than his moral perceptions; he does not cling to her charms with the fervor and the plaintive passion of the poet of modern times."

This passage of Schiller, quoted in "Cosmos," is supported by similar observations of M. de Humboldt himself: "Specific descriptions of nature occur only as accessories, for in Grecian art all things are centered in the sphere of human life." And, again: "The description of nature in its manifold richness of form, as a distinct branch of poetic literature, was wholly unknown to the Greeks. The landscape appears among them merely as the background of the picture, of which human figures constitute the main subject." Touches of description must of course occasionally occur, and whenever these are found, the harmony of Grecian taste gives them the highest beauty possible. The many noble similes and comparisons scattered through the greater poems, form admirable detached pictures; but they occupy the attention very briefly; a rapid glance is thrown upon the hill, the river, or the wood, rather for the purpose of affording greater relief to the figures in the foreground than of enduing the sketch of these features of the earth with any charm or importance in itself. But it is quite impossible to believe for a moment that the Greeks, so fully alive to the spirit of beauty in all its other forms, should have been blind to its effects in the natural world. Other ways of accounting for the apparent inconsistency must be sought for, and the peculiar character and position of the people would seem to suggest these. It was quite consistent with the condition of the world at that

early period, and of the Greeks in particular, that nature and art should not then hold the same relative places which they occupy to-day. Art was still in its youth, and of more importance to them than it is to us. Nature, with all her untold wealth, her unharvested magnificence, lay before them, close at hand, always within reach; there was no fear that she should fail them. But human Art was in its earliest stages of culture; every successive step was watched with most lively interest; every progressive movement became of great importance, while the genius of the Greeks particularly led them to feel extreme delight in every achievement of the kind. In fact, all their highest enjoyments flowed from this source, and into this sphere they threw themselves with their whole soul. Whatever susceptibility to the grandeur and beauty of the inanimate creation was felt among them, sought therefore rather to express itself in forms more positive than the voice of song. What, for instance, was the most noble of their temples but the image in Dorian marble of some grand primeval grove, whose gray, columnar trunks they found reflected in the waves of the Ægean Sea? What were the vase, and the vine wreathed about its lip, but the repetition of living forms of fruits and foliage growing in the vale of Tempe, or at the foot of Hymettus? The Greek mind thus beheld the whole external world chiefly through the medium of human Art. An interesting and very striking instance of this peculiarity occurs in the Iliad; no natural object which has a place in the poem—neither the sea nor the skies, neither the streams nor the mountains, all glowing as these were with the purple light of a Grecian atmosphere—could draw from Homer a description filling half the space allotted by him to the shield of Achilles; nay, more, observe that where

rural life and its accessories appear the most distinctly in his verse, it is not the reality which he shows us; we do not ourselves tread the brown soil of the freshly-tilled fallow; we do not pass along the one narrow path in the vineyard, amid the purple clusters, but we are called upon to behold these objects—“sight to be admired of all!”—as they lie curiously graven by the hand of Vulcan on the bronze buckler of the hero, where he

> * * * “With devices multiform, the disk
> Capacious charged, toiling with skill divine.”[1]

Their very religion was but a work of art, a brilliant web of the human imagination, into which, as on the metal of Vulcan, their poets had wrought

> “Borders beauteous, dazzling bright,”

where Olympic deities passed to and fro, with grace and spirit unequaled, but moving ever by the springs of the most common of human passions. All the inanimate objects of the visible creation had their allotted places in this gorgeous, imaginative tissue, though still appearing under associations purely human. They had, in short, no conceptions of nature independent of man; to them the whole world was but the shield of Achilles.

With the same mythology, the same philosophy as the Greeks, the Romans are admitted to have been essentially plagiarists. They saw the earth, in this sense, with the eyes of the Greeks. Their literature has even been accused of a greater dearth of poetical observation, as regards the natural world, than that of their predecessors. The practical realities of life engrossed their attention more exclusively. A colossal selfishness was their striking national

characteristic—a characteristic which was alike the cause, first, of their political prosperity, and later of their downfall. Rome was their deity; to her daily needs, or interests, or pleasures, all was sacrificed; they cared little for the mountains, and forests, and streams of the earth, provided all the wealth and magnificence of these were brought over Roman ways to swell the triumph of the Forum. It has been remarked that Cæsar could pass the Alps, then comparatively an unknown region, without one allusion to their sublime character. Still, a body of men like the great Latin writers could not, of course, exist devoid of susceptibility to the beauty of the inanimate world, and many passages may be drawn from their poems bearing witness to this fact. Although, says M. de Humboldt, there is no individual rural portraiture in the Æneid, yet "a deep and intimate comprehension of nature is depicted in soft colors. Where, for instance, has the gentle play of the waves, or the stillness of night, been more happily described?" The modern reader, however, is still left to wonder that poets so great should not have delighted more frequently in enlarging upon similar topics, and that even in many of their elegiac works social life should so exclusively fill up the space.[2] We should have rather supposed that when the earth stood in her primitive freshness, in the morning of her existence, her wealth of beauty as yet unsung, that the works of the first great poets would have been filled with the simple reflection of her natural glory. But, as we have seen, such was not the case with the writers of Greece or of Rome; and, as we have already ventured to intimate, it would appear that the great intellectual activity of those races, connected with the period of time filled by them, where so wide a field opened in every

direction, became in itself a prominent cause of this peculiar deficiency of their literature. Whatever admiration they felt for nature expressed itself in positive forms of art, or in an imaginative system of mythology, rather than in song.

But something of a different spirit appears to have actuated the old Asiatic nations. The ancient Indian races, for instance, were more contemplative in character, and more vivid impressions of natural objects are revealed in their writings. The Sanscrit Hymns, and the heroic poems of the same language, are said to contain fine descriptive passages. “The main subject of these writings,” says M. de Humboldt, speaking of the Sanscrit Vedas, “are the veneration and praise of Nature.” A poem, called “The Seasons”—and one starts at the familiar name—with another work, called “The Messenger of the Clouds,” are full, we are told, of the same spirit; they were written by Kalidasa, a cotemporary of Virgil and Horace. It would have given us pleasure to offer the reader a few fragments from writings so ancient and so interesting; one would have liked to compare a passage from the Sanscrit Seasons with those so celebrated and so familiar from our own language and modern time, but no English versions are found within reach. The fact, however, of this characteristic of the Sanscrit poems is placed beyond reasonable doubt by the declarations of many distinguished men of learning, more particularly among the German scholars.

The Chinese, that singular people which for ages have separated themselves from the rest of the earth by impassable barriers of prejudice and mystery, are now found—as glimpses are opening into their interior—to have long shown some partiality for natural beauty. Among other poems, touching more

or less upon subjects of this kind, they have one bearing the simple name of “The Garden,” which was written by Seema-kuang, a celebrated statesman, some eight or nine centuries since, and which is said to contain agreeable descriptive passages; the sketch of a hermitage among rocks and evergreen woods, and a fine, extensive water view over one of their great rivers, are especially referred to. Lieu-schew, another ancient writer of theirs, dwells at length on the subject of pleasure-grounds, for which he gives admirable directions, in the English style, at a period when a really fine garden was not to be found in all Northern Europe; a short translation from a passage of his will be found in the following selections.[3] Gardening, in fact, appears to have been the sphere in which Chinese love of nature has especially sought to unfold itself; that perception of beauty of coloring and of nicety of detail, very general among them, shows itself here in perfection; they have long been great florists, and have delighted in writing verses upon particular flowers and fruit-trees. Garden and song were thus closely connected by them; and if one may judge from brief views received through others, their poetry has very frequently indeed something of a horticultural character. Their busy, practical habits and close inspection of detail would easily incline them in this direction; but as yet nothing grand or very elevated has been given to us by translators.

The Hebrew poets stand alone. Their position is absolutely different from that of all profane writers, and places them at a distance from the usual limits of a mere literary comparison. They only, as priests and prophets of the One Living God, beheld the natural world in the holy light of truth. Small as was the space the children of Israel filled among the nations of the earth, the humblest individual of their tribes

knew that the God of Abraham was the Lord God of Hosts, and that all things visible were but the works of his hands. “The Lord made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and all that in them is;” they bowed the knee to no one object “in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth.” Truth is, of its nature, sublime. No fiction of the human imagination, even in the highest and richest forms which it is capable of assuming, can approach to that majesty which is her inherent prerogative. The views of the earth, open to the children of Israel, had naturally, therefore, a grandeur far beyond what the Greeks, with all the luxuriance of their florid mythology, could attain to. Of this fact—thanks to the translations of the Sacred Writings in the hands of all who speak the English tongue—any one of us is capable of judging; the extreme excellence of the Psalms, merely in the sense of literary compositions, and independently of the far higher claims they have upon mankind, has never failed to impress itself deeply on all minds open to such perceptions. The nineteenth Psalm, with the unequaled grandeur of its opening verses; the twenty-third, with its pastoral sweetness; the hundred and fourth, with the fullness of its natural pictures; the hundred and seventh; the ninety-sixth; the hundred and forty-fifth; the hundred and forty-eighth, with others of a similar character, will recur to every reader. It is generally admitted that, throughout the range of ancient profane writing, nothing has yet been brought to light which can equal these, or other great passages of the Psalms, of the Pentateuch, the Prophets, or the Book of Job. Even for sweetness, also, the old Hebrew writers were very remarkable. The most celebrated author and literary artist of modern Germany, and one little

likely to have been influenced on such a subject by warmth of religious feeling, has left it as his written opinion that the Book of Ruth, usually attributed to the prophet Samuel, is “the loveliest specimen of epic and idyl poetry which we possess.”[4] But the history of Jacob and his family, and the personal story of David in all its details, with other episodes easily pointed out, are almost equally full of this beautiful pastoral spirit. The same inspired pens which have dwelt on the grandest events of which time has any knowledge, have not disdained to move the lesser chords of human sympathies and affections. It was the most honored of the Prophets who so nobly recorded the greatest of all physical facts, the creation of light: “And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.” And on the page immediately following, while still occupied in recording the grand successive stages of the creation, he condescends to note that out of the earth “the Lord God made to grow *every tree that is pleasant to the sight*.” This simple phrase, taken in connection with all its sublime relations of time and place, has a gracious tenderness, a compassionate beneficence of detail which moves the heart deeply; all the delight which the trees of the wood have afforded to men, independently of their uses; the many peaceful homes they have overshadowed; the many eyes they have gladdened; all the festal joys of the race in which their branches have waved, seem to crowd the mind in one grateful picture, and force from our lips the familiar invocation, “O all ye green things upon earth, bless ye the Lord; praise him, and magnify him forever.”

The most ancient writings of the world thus afford evidence that in those remote ages the perception of natural beauty was not wanting in the human heart.

Different races and individual men may have varied greatly in giving expression to the feeling. David and Homer, the Indian and the Roman, may have sung in very different tones, but wherever intellectual life was at all active, there some strain, at least, from the great Hymn was heard.

But very early, in what may be called Christian literature, this feeling began to receive a fresh impulse and a new direction. On the same soil, and among the same races, where, in the height of heathen civilization it had never received adequate expression, both in Italy and in Greece, the eye of the believer was gradually opening to clearer and more worthy views of the creation.

"Look upward," says St. Chrysostom, "to the vault of heaven, and around thee on the open fields in which herds graze by the water-side; who does not despise all the creations of art, when, in the stillness of his spirit, he watches with admiration the rising of the sun, as it pours its golden light over the face of the earth; when, resting on the thick grass beside the murmuring spring, or beneath the somber shade of a thick and leafy tree, the eye rests on the far-receding and hazy distance."

Similar passages may also be gathered from the letters of St. Basil and St. Gregory,[5] fathers of the Greek Church. And still earlier instances of this Christian view of the earth are quoted from the writings of a Roman lawyer, Minucius Felix, who lived in the beginning of the third century; his evening rambles on the shores of the Mediterranean, in the neighborhood of Ostia, were very feelingly described in pages which have been preserved to our own time. The Christian Church possessed a most rich inheritance in the Hebrew literature; and the constant use of the Psalms of the Temple in her

public services would alone suffice to produce in the minds of the people a deep impression of the goodness and majesty of the Divine Creator as revealed in his works. The Canticle of the Three Children, composed before the foundation of Rome, and which from the early ages of Christianity to the present hour has formed a portion of public worship, is an exalted offering of praise with which we are all familiar: “O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord, praise him and magnify him forever!” And in the sublime anthem of the Te Deum we have another earnest, unceasing expression of a feeling inseparable from Christianity: “We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord. Heaven *and earth* are full of the majesty of thy glory!” It is, indeed, revealed truth only which has opened to the human mind views of the creation at all worthy of its dignity. It is from her teaching that we learn to appreciate justly the different works of the Deity, in their distinctive characters, to allot to each its own definite position. There is no confusion in her views. She shows us the earth, and the creatures which people it, in a clear light. She tells us positively that all things are but the works of His holy hands—the visible expression of an Almighty wisdom, and power, and love; and as she speaks, the idle phantoms of the human imagination, the puerile deities of the heathen world, the wretched fallacies of presumptuous philosophy vanish and flee away from the face of the earth, like the mists and shadows of night at the approach of the light of day. Not one of the thousand banners of idolatry, whether unfurled on the mountain-tops, or waving in the groves, or floating on the streams, but falls before her. She points out to man his own position, and that of all about him; he is lord of the earth and of all its

creatures. The herb of the field, the trees of the wood, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea—every living thing that moveth upon earth—all have been given into his hand—all are subject to his dominion—all are the gifts of Jehovah.

But, ere time had enabled Christian civilization and its ennobling lessons to make any positive progress, or to produce any lasting impression on the character of general literature, the Empire was overwhelmed by races wholly barbarous. A period of darkness and disorder ensued, during which the very art of writing seems to have been all but forgotten. A few rude, unfinished sketches were all that could be expected from such an age, and in these man himself would naturally engross the attention. In societies only half civilized, man, as an individual, must always fill a bolder and more prominent position than in those where order, and knowledge, and truth are more widely diffused; he has in such a state of things far greater power for evil over his fellows; every step becomes of immediate importance, for it is associated with a thousand perils; every turn of private passion, unchecked by vital vigor of law or religion, may work out a fatal tragedy, and consequently the individual, either as tyrant, or victim, or champion, excites unceasing fear and flattery, or pity and commiseration, or gratitude and admiration. Wild legends, now warlike, now religious in spirit, naturally belonged to those centuries. No doubt the birds of heaven sang, and the flowers of the field bloomed in those ages; but we have scanty record of their existence; the eye of man was fixed on darker objects; his ear was filled with fiercer sounds.

Slowly, however, civilization and social order—those natural accessories of the Christian faith—were

making progress; but the most striking efforts of reviving intelligence at this period did not assume the shape of letters. That latent poetical spirit, never wholly extinct in the human heart, sought for development during those ages through other channels. Under the hand of the religious architect, pious, though lamentably superstitious, the dignity of the forest was once more embodied in novel and imposing labors of art; scarce a fine effect of the branching woods which was not successfully repeated with great richness of detail in Gothic stone. The beauty of the vegetation, in its noblest forms, must have been deeply impressed on the hearts of the men who, with Teutonic patience, raised those magnificent piles. Every American familiar with the beautiful and varied effects of old forests of blended growth, where fir and pine cross their evergreen branches amid the lighter tracery of deciduous trees, may have often noted some single fir, rising tall and spire-like far above the lesser grove, into the light of sun and star; some similar evergreen, rooted in the soil of Europe, was doubtless the original of that most beautiful of Christian architectural forms, the church spire of the Middle Ages:

> * * * * "Preacher to the wise,
> Less'ning from earth her spiral honors rise,
> Till, as a spear-point rear'd, the topmost spray,
> Points to the Eden of eternal day."[6]

It was about the time when those mediæval churches were rising from the towns of central Europe—slow in their stately growth as the forest whence their forms were drawn—that Troubadour and Trouvère, Minstrel and Minnesinger, began their wanderings in the same region; and amid the strange

medley of human passion and religious superstition to which they gave utterance, some strains of great natural sweetness were heard. It was then that the returning cuckoo was greeted in England with song:

> "Sumer is ycumen in,
> Lhude sing cuccu!"

It was then that merle and mavis, nightingale and lark, were saluted with responsive music by the listening poet; it was then that daisy and lily, *la douce Marguerite* and the *Flower of Light*, were so fondly cherished and so highly honored; it was then that the May-pole was raised in the castle court and on the village green, and that high and low, like Arcite, hurried afield on May-day morning "for to fetch some grene." It was then, in short, that the blossoms and the fowls of Europe were first sung in the modern dialects of the people.

Those old wandering minstrels, troubadour and minnesinger, were, in fact, the heralds of reviving letters; they struck the first sparks of national, indigenous literary feeling in its modern forms. It was from them that Petrarch and Dante learned to speak the language of the living, rather than that of the dead. It was from their example that those great poets took, what was then a very daring step, and, rejecting the Latin, chose their native language as a medium of compositions of the highest order. How they succeeded, the whole world knows; and among the writings of those great Italian masters there are very beautiful descriptive passages, a few of which, in the form of translations, may be found in the later pages of this volume.[7]

Fortunately for all who speak the English tongue, Chaucer, "the morning star" of British verse, as he has been hailed by Denham, followed in the track of

the Italian poets; the fountains of his inspiration flowed fresh and full from his native soil. How keenly alive was he to every detail of natural beauty in the green fields of England; to the sweetness and freshness of the opening daisy; of the growing grass; of the unfolding leaf, with its "glad, light green!" He was followed by others with the same happy instincts, and a love of nature was thus infused into the earliest literature of our language. All the great poets of the sixteenth, and those of the best years of the seventeenth centuries, were more or less under the influence of this spirit—Shakspeare, Jonson, Spenser, Drayton, the Fletchers, Milton, Cowley, Denham, Dryden, Walker, Herbert, Herrick. How long is the noble roll of names of that period, who have all contributed something to our wealth in this way! There came a moment, however, when a colder and more artificial style acquired in England the same influence which long proved so paralyzing in France, when poets were content to copy those who had preceded them; when they trod the London pavement and the coffeehouse floors much more frequently than the narrow paths about the fields. Mr. Wordsworth has remarked, that during a period of sixty years, between the publication of "Paradise Lost" and that of the "Seasons," all the poetry of England, with the exception of a passage or two, does not contain "a single new image of external nature." Poets were courtiers in those times, or they aimed at becoming so; they prided themselves upon a neatly turned compliment, upon a farfetched dedication; they were wits—they were pretty fellows about town; like Horace Walpole's lively old friend, Madame du Deffand, they could very conscientiously avow, "*Je n'aime pas les plaisirs innocents!*"

Mr. Wordsworth dates the dawn of the modern era

in poetry from the appearance of the “Seasons,” which were first published in the year 1726. A single great work will no doubt often produce surprisingly general effects in the literary world, when the atmosphere is prepared for it. And such was the case when Thomson wrote. Many different influences were gradually combining to work out the same result. A high degree of general education, in connection with the prevalence of Christian religious truth, must always naturally dispose the mind to a more just appreciation of the works of the Deity, as compared with the works of man. The wider our views of each, the higher will be our admiration of the first. We say general civilization, however; for where the advantages of education are confined to a small class, that class will usually be found only in the large towns of a country, and its tastes and habits will therefore necessarily be more or less artificial. The rustic population, in such a state of things, will be rude, coarse, and deemed only fit for ridicule and burlesque. The poet of such a period has no sooner tried his strength, than he is eager to turn his back on the fields; he hurries “to town,” to the center of all enlightenment, and soon becomes metamorphosed into a cockney or a courtier. In their day Paris and London have probably thus swallowed up many a man of genius, country born and country bred, who, had he remained in his native haunts, could never have failed in real honest feeling for that natural beauty which, like the mercy of God, is new every morning. Had Cowper lived all his days in Bond Street he never could have written the “Task.” Conceive a man like Crabbe, or Burns, transported for life to Grub Street, and imagine what would be the inevitable effects of the change on a spirit like theirs. But a general diffusion of civilization

produces an entirely different state of things. An intellectual man may now live most of his days in the country without disgrace and without annoyance. He may read and he may write there with pleasure and with impunity. A wide horizon for observation opens about him to-day in the fields, as elsewhere. Science, commerce, painting, sculpture, horticulture—all the higher arts, in fact—are so many noble laborers hourly toiling for his benefit, as well as for that of the townsman. General education is also daily enlarging the public audience, and thus giving more healthful play to diversity of tastes. No single literary class is likely, in such a state of things, to usurp undue authority over others—to impose academical fetters on even the humblest of its cotemporaries. Whatever is really natural and really worthy, may therefore hope in the end for a share of success. But we conceive that it would still be possible for all these circumstances to unite in favoring the literature of the age, without leading it into those views of the natural world which have so decidedly marked its course in our own day, without producing at least results so striking, a change so marked. It is, we believe, the union of Christianity with this general diffusion of a high degree of civilization which has led us to a more deeply felt appreciation of the works of the creation. It has always been from lands blessed with the light of revealed truth that the choir of praise has risen with the greatest fullness. And it would be easy, also, to prove that those individual writers who have sung the natural beauty of the earth with the greatest fervor of feeling and truth of description have been more or less actuated by a religious spirit. Take as examples the poets of our own language; how many of those who have touched upon similar subjects were moved by what

may be called Christian impulses? Go back as far even as Chaucer and Dunbar, Shakspeare and Spenser, Milton and Fletcher; if these were not all what is called religious men, yet the writings of even Chaucer and Shakspeare, though tainted with the grossness of their times, were the works of believing Christian hearts. If we look nearer to our own day, from the period of Thomson and Dyer to the present hour, the fact is self-evident, and needs no repetition of names. There have been instances, no doubt, among the greater English poets of the last fifty years, where success in natural description has been combined with an avowed or implied religious skepticism. But no man can be born and bred in a Christian community, taught in its schools, governed by its laws, educated by its literature, without unconsciously, and, as it were, in spite of himself, imbibing many influences of the prevailing faith. Even the greatest English poets of the skeptical school are forced to resort to what appears to the reader a combination of an imperfect, enfeebled Christianity with an incomplete and lifeless Paganism. Their views of the material world almost invariably assume a Greek aspect; and we must adhere to the opinion, that, in spite of their florid character, their grace of outline, their richness of detail, these fall unspeakably, immeasurably short of the grandeur, the healthful purity, the living beauty, the power and tenderness of feeling which belong to revealed truth. With the Greek, as with so many others, man was, more or less palpably, the great center of all. Not so with the Christian; while Revelation allots to him a position elevated and ennobling, she also reads him the lowliest lessons. No system connects man by more close and endearing ties, with the earth and all its holds, than

Christianity, which leaves nothing to chance, nothing to that most gloomy and most impossible of chimeras, fate, but refers all to Providence, to the omniscient wisdom of a God who is love; but at the same time she warns him that he is himself but the steward and priest of the Almighty Father, responsible for the use of every gift; she plainly proclaims the fact, that even here on earth, within his own domains, his position is subordinate. The highest relation of every created object is that which connects it with its Maker: “For thy pleasure they are, and were created!” This sublime truth Christianity proclaims to us, and there is breadth enough in this single point to make up much of the wide difference between the Christian and the heathen poet. And which of these two views is the most ennobling, each of us may easily decide for himself. Look at the simple flower of the field; behold it blooming at the gracious call of the Almighty, beaming with the light of heavenly mercy, fragrant with the holy blessing, and say if it be not thus more noble to the eye of reason, dearer to the heart, than when fancy dyed its petals with the blood of a fabled Adonis or Hyacinthus? Go out and climb the highest of all the Alps, or stand beside the trackless, ever-moving sea, or look over the broad, unpeopled prairie, and tell us whence it is that the human spirit is so deeply moved by the spectacle which is there unfolded to its view. Go out at night—stand uncovered beneath the star-lit heavens, and acknowledge the meaning of the silence which has closed your lips. Is it not an overpowering, heartfelt, individual humility, blended with an instinctive adoration or acknowledgment in every faculty of the holy majesty of the One Living God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being? And where, at

such a moment, are all the gods with which Homer peopled his narrow world? An additional sense of humiliation for the race to which we belong, and which could so long endure fallacies so puerile, weighs on the spirit at the question, and with a greater than Homer we exclaim: “O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let all the earth stand in awe of Him!”

A distinguished living poet of England, Mr. Keble, has a very pleasing theory in connection with this subject. In his view, the three great divisions of poetry belong naturally to three successive periods of the world: the epic flows from the heroic youth of a race; the drama, with its varied scenes and rival interests, from the ambitious maturity of middle age; while, as civilization advances farther in the cycle of time, the human heart oppressed with the strife of passion, the eye wearied with the restless pageant of vanity, turn instinctively to more simple and more healthful sources of enjoyment, and seeking refreshment from the sweetness and beauty of the natural world, give expression to the feeling in the poetry of rural life. In this sense the verse of the fields—the rural hymn—becomes the last form of song, instead of being the first. Something similar to this has doubtless often been the course of individual life; many of the greatest minds and best hearts of our race have successively gone through these different stages—the aspiring dream of youthful enthusiasm, the struggle in the crowded arena of life, and the placid calm of thoughtful repose and voluntary retirement under the shade of the vine and the fig-tree. Happy will it be for the civilized world, for these latter ages of the earth, if such should indeed prove the general course of the race! Most happy will it be for us, the latest born of the nations,

we who belong to the aged times of the world, if such should be our own direction!

Probably there never was a people needing more than ourselves all the refreshments, all the solace, to be derived from country life in its better forms. The period at which we have arrived is rife with high excitement; the fever of commercial speculations, the agitation of political passions, the mental exertion required by the rapid progress of science, by the ever-recurring controversies of philosophy, and, above all, that spirit of personal ambition and emulation so wearing upon the individual, and yet so very common in America, all unite to produce a combination of circumstances rendering it very desirable that we should turn, as frequently as possible, into paths of a more quiet and peaceful character. We need repose of mind. We need the shade of the trees and the play of healthful breezes to refresh our heated brow. We need the cup of water, pure from the spring, to cool our parched lips; we need the flowers, to soothe without flattery; the birds, to cheer without excitement; we need the view of the green turf, to teach us the humility of the grave; and we need the view of the open heavens, to tell us where all human hopes should center.

Happily, in spite of the eagerness with which our people throw themselves upon every rallying point of excitement, they are by no means wanting in feeling for a country life. It is true they delight in building up towns; but still, a large portion of those who have a choice look forward to some future day when a country roof shall cover their heads. They hurry to the cities to grow rich; but very many take pleasure in returning at a later hour to their native village, or at least put up a suburban cottage, with a garden and grass-plat of their own. The rural aspect which has

been given to our villages and smaller country towns, and which is often preserved with some pains —the space between the buildings, the trees lining the streets and shading every wall, with the little door-yard of flowers—all these are evidences of healthful instincts. But another, and very striking proof of the existence of the love of nature in our people may be found in the character of American verse. A very large proportion of the poetical writing of the country partakes of this spirit; how many noble passages, how many pleasing lines, will immediately recur to the mind as the remark suggests itself; scarce a poet of note among us who has not contributed largely to our national riches in this way; and one often meets, in some village paper or inferior magazine, with very pleasing verses of this kind, from pens quite unknown. Probably if an experienced critic were called upon to point out some general characteristic of American poetry, more marked than any other, he would, without hesitation, declare it to be a deeply-felt appreciation of the beauty of the natural world.

But although as a people we have given ample evidence of an instinctive love of nature, yet we have only made a beginning in these pleasant paths. There still remains much for us to do. This natural taste, like all others, is capable of much healthful cultivation; it would be easy to name many steps by which, both as individuals and as communities, it lies in our power to advance the national progress in this course; but to do so would carry us beyond the limits allotted to our present task. It is hoped, however, that we may be forgiven for detaining the reader a moment longer, while we allude at least to one view of the subject which is not altogether without importance. The social condition of

Christendom has, in many respects, very materially changed within the last fifty years. Town and country no longer fill what for ages seemed the unalterable relative position of each. A countryman is no longer inevitably a boor, nor a townsman necessarily a cockney; all have, in their turn, trod the pavement and the green turf. This is especially the case in America; the life, the movement in which our people delight, is constantly bringing all classes into contact, one with another, and diffusing the same influences throughout the entire population. Something of that individuality which gives interest and variety to the face of society is lost in this way; but, on the other hand, we gain many facilities for general improvement by these means. The interchange between town and country has become rapid, ceaseless, regular, as the returns of dawn and dusk. But yet, in spite of the unbroken communication, the perpetual intermingling, there still remains to each a distinctive, inalienable character; the moving spirit of the town must always continue artificial, while that of the country is, by a happy necessity, more natural. We believe that the moment has come when American civilization may assume, in this respect, a new aspect. The wonderful increase of commercial and manufacturing luxury, which is characteristic of the age, must inevitably produce a degree of excess in the cities; all the follies of idle ostentation and extravagant expenditure will, as a matter of course, flourish in such an atmosphere, until, as they expand right and left, they overshadow many things of healthier growth, and give a false glare of coloring to the whole society which fosters them. There are many reasons why our own towns are especially in danger from this state of things; they have no Past; they lack Experience; Time for

them has no individual teachings beyond those of yesterday; there are no grave monuments of former generations standing in the solemn silence of a thousand warning years along their streets.

Probably there never has been a social condition in which the present is more absolutely absorbing, more encroaching, in fact, than in our American towns. The same influences may extend into the country; but it is impossible for them to be equally powerful in the open fields, where they are weakened by the want of concentration, and by many counteracting circumstances. The situation of the countryman is in this sense favorable; he is surrounded by great natural teachers, by noble monitors, in the works of the Deity; many are the salutary lessons to be learned on the mountain-tops, within the old groves beside the flowing stream. The

everlasting hills—the ancient woods—these are his monuments—these tell him of the past, and not a seed drops from his hand but prophesies of the future. The influences which surround the countryman are essentially ennobling, elevating, civilizing, in fact. Strange as the remark might have appeared a hundred years ago, we shall venture deliberately to repeat it at the present hour: We conceive that the spirit which pervades country life to-day, to be more truly civilizing in its nature than that which glitters in our towns. All that is really desirable of the facilities of life may now be readily procured in the fields, while the excesses of luxury and frivolous fashion are more easily avoided there. Many different elements are blended in the composition of true elegance, and some of these are of a very homely, substantial nature; plain common sense, and even a vein of sterner wisdom are requisite; that moderation which avoids excess is absolutely indispensable; order and harmony of combination are needed; dignity and self-respect are essentials; natural feeling must be there, with all its graceful shades of deference and consideration for the rights and tastes of others; intellectual strength, which has no sympathy with the merely vapid and frivolous, is a matter of course; and while cheerfulness and gayety, easy and unforced as the summer breezes, should not fail, yet a spirit of repose is equally desirable; it is evident, also, that a healthful moral tone is requisite, since, where this is wanting, the semblance of it is invariably assumed; and to all these must be added that high finish of culture which years and reflection can alone give. What element is there among these which may not be readily fostered in country life? On the other hand, that very concentration which was formerly so

favorable to the progress of the towns, is now producing injurious effects by leading to excesses, and perversion of healthful tastes. The horizon of the townsman becomes fictitiously narrowed; he needs a wider field for observation—greater space for movement—more leisure for reflection. He learns to attach too much importance by far to the trappings of life; he has forgotten, in short, the old adage: "*Non è l'abito che fà il monaco!*" It can scarcely, therefore, be an error of judgment to believe that while in past generations the country has received all its wisdom from the town, the moment has come when in American society many of the higher influences of civilization may rather be sought in the fields, when we may learn there many valuable lessons of life, and particularly all the happy lessons of simplicity.

I.
The Flower and the Leaf.

This charming fairy tale of Chaucer has never yet, it is believed, been reprinted entire in America. The poem, complete, in its quaint, original garb, has been placed among these selections with the hope that its intrinsic beauty and its rarity may alike prove sources of interest to the reader. Unfortunately there is much of Chaucer which will not bear to be generally read—much against which we are justly cautioned. But the grossness with which he is reproached must have been rather the fault of the age to which he belonged, than of the man himself, for the passages open to us are full of sweetness and delicacy, so fresh and original, so quaintly fanciful, so altogether delightful, that one can never cease to deplore that all his pages should not be equally fair and clean. Here, however, we have a complete work of the old master quite free from objection; in this instance the delicacy of the fancy appears to have shielded him from the prevailing coarseness of the period in which he wrote. The uncouth old spelling need not deprive any one of the pleasure of enjoying the poem, as a few minutes' practice will accustom the eye and the ear to the strangeness of the orthography and rhythm. It would have been very

easy to obviate those last obstacles entirely by giving the reader Dryden's version, instead of the original; but there are a thousand charming touches in Chaucer quite peculiar to himself, and which Dryden, with all his higher polish, could never really improve. Every original work of a man of genius, even when imperfect and faulty, must always possess a life and reality which no imitation, even the most finished, can hope to equal; and in this, as in every other instance, we have preferred carrying our bucket to the fountain head. Let us hope the reader will enjoy the draught offered to him from

"Dan Chaucer, well of English undefiled."

THE FLOWER AND THE LEAF.

ARGUMENT.

A gentlewoman out of an arbour in a grove, seeth a great companie of knights and ladies in a daunce upon the greene grasse: the which being ended, they all kneele downe, and do honour to the daisie, some to the flower, and some to the leafe. Afterward this gentlewoman learneth by one of these ladies the meaning hereof, which is this: They which honour the flower, a thing fading with every blast, are such as looke after beautie and worldly pleasure. But they that honour the leafe, which abideth with the root, notwithstanding the frosts and winter stormes, are they which follow vertue and during qualities, without regard of worldly respects.

Whan that Phebus his chair of golde so hie,
Had whirled up the sterry sky aloft,
And in the Boole was entred certainly,
When shoures sweet of raine descended soft,

Causing the ground fele times and oft,
Up for to give many an wholsome aire,
And every plaine was clothed faire

With new greene, and maketh small floures
To springen here and there in field and in mede,
So very good and wholsome be the shoures,
That it renueth that was old and dede,
In winter time; and out of every sede
Springeth the hearbe, so that every wight
Of this season wexeth glad and light,

And I so glad of the season swete
Was happed thus upon a certaine night,
As I lay in my bed, sleepe full unmete
Was unto me, but why that I ne might
Rest, I ne wist: for there n'as earthly wight
As I suppose had more herts ease
Than I; for I n'ad sicknesse nor disease.

Wherefore I mervaile greatly of my selfe,
That I so long withouten sleepe lay,
And up I rose three houres after twelfe,
About the springing of the daye;
And I put on my geare and my arraye,
And to a pleasaunt grove I gan passe,
Long er the bright Sunne up risen was.

In which were okes great, streight as a line,
Under the which the grasse so fresh of hew,
Was newly sprong, and an eight foot or nine
Every tree well fro his fellow grew,
With branches brode, laden with leves newe
That sprongen out ayen the sunne-shene
Some very red, and some a glad light grene.

Which as me thought was right a pleasant sight,
And eke the briddes songe for to here,
Would have rejoiced any earthly wight,
And I that couth not yet in no manere,
Heare the nightingale of all the yeare,

Ful busily herkened with herte and with eare,
If I her voice perceive coud any where.

And, at the last, a path of little brede
I found, that greatly had not used be,
For it forgrowen was with grasse and weede.
That well unneth a wighte might it se:
Thought I, this path some winder goth, pardè;
And so I followed, till it me brought
To right a pleasaunt herber well ywrought,

That benched was, and with turfes new
Freshly turved, whereof the grene gras,
So small, so thicke, so shorte, so fresh of hew,
That most like unto green wool wot I it was:
The hegge also that yede in compas,
And closed in all the greene herbere,
With sicamour was set and eglatere;

Wrethen in fere so well and cunningly,
That every branch and leafe grew by mesure,
Plaine as a bord, of an height by and by,
I sie never thing I you ensure,
So well done; for he that tooke the cure
It to make ytrow, did all his peine
To make it passe all tho that men have seine.

And shapen was this herber roof and all,
As a prety parlour; and also
The hegge as thicke as a castle wall,
That who that list without, to stond or go,
Though he would all day prien to and fro,
He should not see if there were any wight
Within or no; but one within well might

Perceive all tho thot yeden there without
In the field, that was on every side
Covered with corn and grasse, that out of doubt,
Though one would seeke all the world wide,
So rich a fielde coud not be espide
On no coast, as of the quantity,

For of all good thing there was plenty.

And I that all this pleasaunt sight sie,
Thought sodainly I felt so sweet an aire
Of the eglentere, that certainely,
There is no hert, I deme, in such dispaire,
Ne with thoughts froward, and contraire,
So overlaid, but it should soon have bote,
If it had ones felt this savour sote.

And as I stood and cast aside mine eie,
I was ware of the fairest medler tree,
That ever yet in all my life I sie,
As full of blossomes as it might be,
Therein a goldfinch leaping pretile
Fro bough to bough; and, as him list, he eet
Here and there of buds and floures sweet.

And to the herber side was joyning
This faire tree, of which I have you told,
And at the last the bird began to sing,
Whan he had eaten what he eat wold;
So passing sweetly, that by manifold
It was more pleasaunt than I coud devise,
And whan his song was ended in this wise,

The nightingale with so merry a note,
Answered him, that all the wood rong
So sodainly, that as it were a sote,
I stood astonied, so was I with the song
Thorow ravished, that till late and long,
I ne wist in what place I was, ne where;
And ayen, me thought, she song ever by mine ere.

Wherefore I waited about busily
On every side, if I her might see;
And, at the last, I gan full well aspy
Where she sat in a freshe grene laurer tree,
On the further side even right by me,
That gave so passing a delicious smell,
According to the eglentere full well.

Whereof I had so inly great pleasure,
That, as me thought, I surely ravished was
Into Paradise, where my desire
Was for to be, and no ferther passe,
As for that day, and on the sote grasse
I sat me downe, for as for mine entent,
The birdes song was more convenient,

And more pleasaunt to me by many fold,
Than meat or drinke, or any other thing,
Thereto the herber was so fresh and cold,
The wholesome savours eke so comforting,
That, as I demed, sith the beginning
Of the world was never seene er than
So pleasaunt a ground of none earthly man.

And as I sat the birds hearkening thus,
Me thought that I heard voices sodainly,
The most sweetest and most delicious
That ever any wight I trow truly
Heard in their life, for the armony
And sweet accord was in so good musike,
That the voice to angels most was like.

At the last, out of a grove even by,
That was right goodly and pleasaunt to sight,
I sie where there came singing lustily,
A world of ladies; but, to tell aright
Their great beauty, it lieth not in my might,
Ne their array; neverthelesse I shall
Tell you a part, though I speake not of all.

The surcotes white of velvet wele sitting,
They were in cladde; and the semes echone,
As it were a manere garnishing,
Was set with emerauds one and one,
By and by; but many a riche stone
Was set on the purfiles, out of dout,
Of colors, sleves, and traines round about.

As great pearles round and orient,

Diamonds fine, and rubies red,
And many another stone of which I went
The names now; and everich on her head
A rich fret of gold, which without dread
Was full of stately riche stones set,
And every lady had a chapelet

On her head of branches fresh and grene,
So wele wrought and so marvelously
That it was a noble sight to sene,
Some of laurer, and some full pleasauntly
Had chapelets of woodbind, and sadly
Some of *agnus castus* were also
Chapelets fresh; but there were many of tho

That daunced and eke song full soberly,
But all they yede in manner of compace,
But one there yede in mid the company,
Sole by herselfe, but all followed the pace
That she kepte, whose heavenly figured face
So pleasaunt was, and her wele shape person,
That of beauty she past hem everichon.

And more richly beseene, by many fold,
She was also in every maner thing,
On her head full pleasaunt to behold,
A crowne of golde rich for any king,
A braunch of *agnus castus* eke bearing
In her hand; and to my sight truly,
She lady was of the company.

And she began a roundell lustely,
That "*Suse le foyle, devers moy*," men call,
"*Siene et mon joly couer est endormy*,"
And than the company answered all
With voices sweet entuned, and so small,
That me thought it the sweetest melody
That ever I heard in my life soothly.

And thus they came, dauncing and singing,
Into the middes of the mede echone,

Before the herber where I was sitting,
And, God wot, me thought I was wel bigone,
For than I might avise hem one by one,
Who fairest was, who coud best dance and sing,
Or who most womanly was in all thing.

They had not daunced but a little throw,
When that I hearde ferre off sodainly,
So great a noise of thundering trumpes blow,
As though it should have departed the skie;
And after that within a while I sie
From the same grove where the ladies came out,
Of men of armes comming such a rout,

As all men on earth had been assembled
In that place, wele horsed for the nones,
Stering so fast, that all the earth trembled:
But for to speake of riches, and of stones,
And men and horse, I trow the large wones,
Of Pretir John, ne all his tresory,
Might not unneth have boght the tenth party

Of their array: who so list heare more,
I shall rehearse, so as I can, a lite.
Out of the grove, that I spake of before,
I sie come first of all in their clokes white,
A company, that ware for their delite,
Chapelets fresh of okes seriall.
Newly sprong, and trumpets they were all.

On every trumpe hanging a broad banere
Of fine tartarium were full richely bete;
Every trumpet his lords armes bere
About their neckes with great pearles sete
Collers brode, for cost they would not lete,
As it would seem, for their schochones echone,
Were set about with many a precious stone.

Their horse harneis was all white also,
And after them next in one company,
Came kings of armes, and no mo

In clokes of white cloth of gold richly;
Chapelets of greene on their heads on hie,
The crowns that they on their scochones bere,
Were set with pearle, ruby, and saphere,

And eke great diamonds many one,
But all their horse harneis and other geare,
Was in a sute according everichone,
As ye have heard the foresaid trumpets were;
And by seeming they were nothing to lere,
And their guiding they did so manerly,
And after hem came a great company

Of heraudes and pursevauntes eke,
Arraied in clothes of white velvet,
And hardily they were nothing to seke,
How they on them should the harneis set;
And every man had on a chapelet,
Scochones and eke harneis indede,
They had in sute of hem that 'fore hem yede.

Next after hem came in armour bright,
All save their heades, seemely knightes nine,
And every claspe and naile, as to my sight,
Of their harneis were of red golde fine,
With cloth of gold, and furred ermine
Were the rich trappoures of their stedes strong,
Wide and large, that to the ground did hong.

And every bosse of bridle and paitrell
That they had, was worth, as I would wene,
A thousand pound; and on their heades well
Dressed were crownes of laurer grene,
The best made that ever I had sene,
And every knight had after him riding
Three henchemen on him awaiting.

Of which every first on a short tronchoun
His lordes helme bare, so richly dight,
That the worst was worthe the ransoun
Of any king; the second a shield bright

Bare at his backe; the thred bare upright
A mighty spere, full sharpe ground and kene,
And every childe ware of leaves grene

A fresh chapelet upon his haires bright;
And clokes white of fine velvet they ware,
Their steeds trapped and raied right
Without difference as their lordes were,
And after hem on many a fresh corsere,
There came of armed knights such a rout,
That they bespread the large field about.

And all they ware after their degrees,
Chapelets newe made of laurer grene,
Some of the oke, and some of other trees,
Some in their honds bare boughes shene,
Some of laurer, and some of okes keene,
Some of hauthorne, and some of the woodbind,
And many mo which I had not in mind.

And so they came, their horses freshly stering,
With bloody sownes of hir trompes loud;
There sie I many an uncouth disguising
In the array of these knightes proud,
And at the last as evenly as they coud,
They took their places in middes of the mede,
And every knight turned his horses hede

To his fellow, and lightly laid a spere
In the rest; and so justes began
On every part about here and there;
Some brake his spere, some drew down hors and man,
About the field astray the steedes ran;
And to behold their rule and governaunce,
I you ensure it was a great pleasaunce.

And so the justes last an houre and more;
But tho, that crowned were in laurer grene,
Wan the prise; their dints was so sore,
That there was none ayent hem might sustene,
And the justing all was left off clene,

And fro their horse the ninth alight anone,
And so did all the remnant everichone.

And forth they yede togider, twain and twain,
That to behold it was a worthy sight,
Toward the ladies on the greene plain,
That song and daunced as I said now right:
The ladies as soone as they goodly might,
They brake of both the song and dance,
And yede to meet hem with ful glad semblaunce.

And every lady took full womanly
By the hond a knight, and forth they yede
Unto a faire laurer that stood fast by,
With levis lade the boughes of great brede;
And to my dome there never was indede
Man, that had seene halfe so faire a tre;
For underneath there might it well have be

A hundred persons at their owne plesaunce,
Shadowed fro the heat of Phebus bright,
So that they should have felt no grevaunce
Of raine ne haile that hem hurte might,
The savour, eke, rejoice would any wight
That had be sicke or melancolious;
It was so very good and vertuous.

And with great reverence they enclined low
To the tree so soot and faire of hew;
And after that, within a little throw,
They began to sing and daunce of new,
Some song of love, some plaining of untrew,
Environing the tree that stood upright;
And ever yede a lady and a knight.

And at the last I cast mine eye aside,
And was ware of a lusty company
That come roming out of the field wide,
Hond in hond a knight and a lady;
The ladies all in surcotes, that richely
Purfiled were with many a rich stone,

And every knight of green ware mantles on,

Embrouded well so as the surcotes were,
And everich had a chapelet on her hed,
Which did right well upon the shining here,
Made of goodly floures white and red;
The knightes eke that they in honde led,
In sute of hem ware chapelets everichone,
And before hem went minstrels many one,

As harpes, pipes, lutes, and sautry,
Alle in greene; and on their heades bare
Of divers floures made full craftely,
All in a sute goodly chapelets they ware;
And so dauncing into the mede they fare
In mid the which they found a tuft that was
All oversprad with floures in compas.

Whereto they enclined everichone
With great reverence, and that full humbly;
And, at the last, there began, anone,
A lady for to sing right womanly,
A bargeret in praising the daisie;
For as me thought among her notes swete,
She said "*Si douce est la Margarete*."

Than they alle answered her in fere,
So passingly well, and so pleasauntly,
That it was a blisful noise to here,
But I n'ot how it happed, suddainly,
As about noone, the Sunne so fervently
Waxe hote, that the prety tender floures
Had lost the beauty of hir fresh coloures.

Forshronke with heat, the ladies eke to-brent,
That they ne wist where they hem might bestow;
The knightes swelt for lack of shade nie shent,
And after that, within a little throw,
The wind began so sturdily to blow,
That down goeth all the floures everichone,
So that in all the mede there left not one;

Save such as succoured were among the leves
Fro every storme that might hem assaile,
Growing under the hegges and thicke greves;
And after that, there came a storme of haile,
And raine in fere, so that withouten faile,
The ladies ne the knightes n'ade o threed
Drie on them, so dropping was hir weed.

And whan the storm was cleane passed away,
Tho in white that stood under the tree,
They felt nothing of the great affray,
That they in greene without had in ybe
To them they yede for routh and pite,
Them to comfort after their great disease,
So faine they were the helplesse for to ease.

Than I was ware how one of hem in grene
Had on a crowne rich and well sitting,
Wherefore I demed well she was a quene,
And tho in grene on her were awaiting;
The ladies then in white that were comming
Toward them, and the knights in fere,
Began to comfort hem, and make hem chere.

The queen in white, that was of great beauty,
Took by the hond the queen that was in grene,
And said, "Suster, I have right great pity
Of your annoy, and of the troublous tene,
Wherein ye and your company have bene
So long, alas! and if that it you please
To go with me, I shall do you the ease,

"In all the pleasure that I can or may;"
Whereof the other humbly as she might,
Thanked her; for in right ill array
She was with storm and heat I you behight,
And every lady then anone right
That were in white, one of them took in grene
By the hond, which whan the knights had sene,

In like wise ech of them tooke a knight

Cladde in greene, and forth with hem they fare,
To an hegge, where they anon right
To make their justs they would not spare
Boughes to hew down, and eke trees square,
Wherwith they made hem stately fires great,
To dry their clothes that were ringing weat.

And after that of hearbes that there grew,
They made for blisters of the Sunne brenning,
Very good and wholesome ointments new,
Where that they yede the sick fast anointing;
And after that they yede about gadering
Pleasaunt salades which they made hem eat,
For to refresh their great unkindly heat.

The lady of the Leafe than began to pray
Her of the Floure (for so to my seeming
They should be as by their array)
To soupe with her, and eke for any thing,
That she should with her all her people bring;
And she ayen in right goodly manere,
Thanked her of her most friendly cheare,

Saying plainely, that she would obay
With all her hert, all her commaundement;
And then, anon, without lenger delay
The lady of the Leafe hath one ysent,
For a palfray, after her intent,
Arrayed well and faire in harneis of gold,
For nothing lacked, that to him long shold.

And after that to all her company
She made to purvey horse and every thing
That they needed, and than full lustily,
Even by the herber where I was sitting
They passed all so pleasantly singing,
That it would have comforted any wight;
But then I sie a passing wonder sight.

For then the nightingale, that all the day
Had in the laurer sate, and did her might

The whole service to sing longing to May,
All sodainly began to take her flight;
And to the lady of the Leafe forthright
She flew, and set her on her hond softly,
Which was a thing I marveled of greatly.

The goldfinch eke, that fro the medler tree
Was fled for heat into the bushes cold,
Unto the lady of the Flower gan flee,
And on her hond he sit him as he wold,
And pleasauntly his winges gan to fold;
And for to sing they pained hem both as sore,
As they had do of all the day before.

And so these ladies rode forth a great pace,
And all the rout of knightes eke in fere;
And I that had seen all this wonder case,
Thought I would assay in some manere,
To know fully the trouth of this matere;
And what they were that rode so pleasantly:
And whan they were the herber passed by,

I drest me forth, and happed to mete, anone,
Right a faire lady, I do you ensure;
And she came riding by herselfe alone,
Alle in white, with semblance ful demure,
I salued her, and bad good aventure
Might her befall, as I coud most humbly;
And she answered, “My doughter, gramercy!”

“Madame,” quoth I, “if that I durst enquere
Of you, I would faine of that company
Wite what they be that past by this arbere?”
And she ayen answered right friendly;
“My faire doughter, all tho that passed hereby
In white clothing, be servaunts everichone
Unto the Leafe, and I my selfe am one.”

“See ye not her that crowned is,” quoth she,
“All in white?”—“Madame,” quoth I, “yes:”
“That is Diane, goddesse of chastite,

And for because that she a maiden is,
In her hond the braunch she beareth this,
That *agnus castus* men call properly,
And all the ladies in her company,

“Which ye se of that hearbe chapelets weare
Be such as han kept alway hir maidenheed:
And all they that of laurer chapelets beare,
Be such as hardy were, and manly in deed,
Victorious name which never may be dede!
And all they were so worthy of hir hond,
In hir time that none might hem withstond.

“And tho that weare chapelets on their hede
Of fresh woodbind, be such as never were
To love untrue in word, thought, ne dede,
But aye stedfast, ne for pleasaunce, ne fere,
Though that they should their hertes all to-tere,
Would never flit but ever were stedfast,
Till that their lives there asunder brast.”

“Now fair madame,” quoth I, “yet I would pray
Your ladiship, if that it mighte be,
That I might knowe by some maner way,
Sith that it hath liked your beaute,
The trouth of these ladies for to tell me,
What that these knightes be in rich armour,
And what tho be in grene and weare the flour?

“And why that some did reverence to that tre,
And some unto the plot of floures faire?”
“With right good will my fair doughter,” quoth she
“Sith your desire is good and debonaire,
Tho nine crowned, be very exemplaire,
Of all honour longing to chivalry,
And those certaine be called the Nine Worthy,

“Which ye may see now riding all before,
That in hir time did many a noble dede,
And for their worthines full oft have bore
The crown of laurer leaves on their hede,

As ye may in your old bookes rede;
And how that he that was a conquerour,
Had by laurer alway his most honour.

“And tho that beare boughes in their hond
Of the precious laurer so notable,
Be such as were, I woll ye understond,
Noble knightes of the round table,
And eke the Douseperis honourable,
Which they beare in signe of victorye;
It is witnesse of their deeds mightily.

“Eke there be knightes old of the garter,
That in hir time did right worthily,
And the honour they did to the laurer,
Is for by it they have their laud wholly,
Their triumph eke, and martiall glory;
Which unto them is more parfite richesse,
Than any wight imagine can or guesse.

“For one leafe, given of that noble tree
To any wight that hath done worthily,
And it be done soe as it ought to be,
Is more honour than any thing earthly.
Witnes of Rome that founder was truly
Of all knighthood and deeds marvelous,
Record I take of Titus Livius.

“And as for her that crowned is in greene,
It is Flora, of these floures goddesse,
And all that here on her awaiting beene,
It are such folk that loved idlenesse,
And not delite in no businesse,
But for to hunt and hauke, and pley in medes,
And many other suchlike idle dedes.

“And for the great delite and pleasaunce
They have to the floure, and so reverently
They unto it do such obeisaunce,
As ye may se.”—“Now faire Madame,” quoth I,
“If I durst aske what is the cause and why,

That knightes have the ensigne of honour,
Rather by the leafe than the flour?”

“Soothly doughter,” quod she, “this is the trouth;
For knightes ever should be persevering,
To seeke honour without feintise or slouth;
Fro wele to better in all manner thing;
In signe of which with leaves aye lasting,
They be rewarded after their degre,
Whose lusty green May may not appaired be,

“But aie keping their beautie fresh and greene,
For there n’is storme that may hem deface,
Haile nor snow, winde nor frosts keene,
Wherfore they have this property and grace;
And for the floure, within a little space
Woll be all lost, so simple of nature
They be, that they no greevance may endure.

“And every storme will blow them soone away,
Ne they last not but for a season;
That is the cause, the very trouth to say,
That they may not by no way of reason
Be put to no such occupation.”
“Madame,” quoth I, “with all mine whole servise
I thanke you now, in my most humble wise.

“For now I am ascertained throughly,
Of every thing that I desired to know.”
“I am right glad that I have said sothly,
Ought to your pleasure, if ye will me trow,”
Quod she ayen, “but to whom do ye owe
Your service? And which will ye honour,
Tel me I pray, this yere? the Leafe or the Flour?”

“Madame,” quoth I, “though I least worthy,
Unto the Leafe I owe mine observaunce:”
“That is,” quod she, “right well done certainly;
And I pray God to honour you avaunce,
And kepe you fro the wicked remembraunce
Of Malebouch, and all his crueltie,

And all that good and well conditioned be.

"For here may I no lenger now abide,
I must follow the great company,
That ye may see yonder before you ride."
And forth as I couth most humbly,
I tooke my leve of her, as she gan hie,
After them as fast as ever she might,
And I drow homeward, for it was nigh night,

And put all that I had seene in writing,
Under support of them that lust it to rede.
O little booke, thou art so unconning,
How darst thou put thy self in prees for drede?
It is wonder that thou wexest not rede!
Sith that thou wost full lite who shall behold
Thy rude langage, full boistously unfold.

GEOffREY
CHAUCER,
1328–
1399.

II.
The Bee.

“A bee among the flowers in spring is one of the cheerfullest things that can be looked upon. Its life appears to be all enjoyment: so busy, and so pleased.” Any one who has wandered about the fields during the warmer months will assuredly agree with this opinion of Paley. The very hum of the bee, as it flies past us on its pleasant errand, in quest of some sweet flower, or returning with its dainty load, is one of the most cheery of the voices of summer. The movement of the little creature, also, is full of meaning, and attracts the eye as curiously characteristic of its nature; it generally flies in lines more or less direct; we see here nothing of the idle, roaming, vagrant flutter of the gaudy butterfly, and nothing of the doubtful, hesitating, over-cautious pause of the plodding ant. The instincts of the bee are all lively and vigorous; it seems conscious that wherever grass grows, there some blossom will be found to reward its search, and it moves steadily onward until a head of clover, or perchance a prouder flower, offers the precious drop. And, alighting to gather its grateful harvest, how skillfully its work is carried on; other insects may show as much cleverness in attaining their end, but there are

few indeed which accomplish their task so pleasantly. The wise little bee does no mischief; no violence marks her labors; the freshness of the flower remains unsullied by her passage; she leaves the gay petals and the green foliage alike uninjured; no plant suffers from her visits! There is nothing unsightly, nothing repelling or painful in any of her measures; all is order, nicety, and harmony. If we may believe Milton, to watch the bee at her task was a pleasure worthy of Paradise. Adam, when he awakens Eve, invites her to prune her vines, to prop her flowers, and to mark

> . . . . "How the bee
> Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweets."

As a poetical accessory of rural life, the bee was much honored by the ancient writers, receiving at their hands far more notice than has fallen to her share in later times. The reader is already aware that the Fourth Georgic of Virgil, relating wholly to bees, takes the first rank among the most beautiful and perfect of Latin poems. Extracts from Sotheby's translations of this Georgic are given among the following Selections. It is amusing to note some of the errors and misconceptions of the master regarding the habits of those little creatures; and yet it is generally admitted, that from the great attention paid to them, the ancients had more correct notions regarding the bee than on any other subject of natural history.

TO THE BEES.

FROM THE GREEK OF ZONAS.

Ye nimble, honey-making bees,
  The flowers are in their prime;
Come, now, and taste the little buds
  Of sweetly breathing thyme;
Of tender poppies all so fair,
  Or bits of raisin sweet,
Or down that decks the apple tribe,
  Or fragrant violet:
Come, nibble on, your vessels store
  With honey while you can,
In order that the hive-protecting,
  Bee-preserving Pan
May have a tasting for himself;
  And that the hand so rude,
That cuts away the combs, may leave
  For yourselves a little food.

Translation of W. HAY

ON A BEE'S NEST.

FROM THE GREEK OF ANTIPHILUS.

O beautiful bee homestead,
  With many a waxen cell,
Self-built—for hanging, so it seems—
  That airy citadel!
An unbought blessing to man's life,
  Which neither plow nor hoe,
Nor axe nor crooked sickle,
  Is needed to bestow;
A tiny vessel—and no more—
  Wherein the busy bee
From its small body liquid sweets
  Distilleth lavishly.
Rejoice, ye blessed creatures!
  Regaling while ye rove,
Winged workers of nectareous food,

On all the flowers ye love.

Translation of
JOHN
WILSON.

THE BEE.

FROM THE GREEK OF NICIAS, 280 B. C.

Many-colored, sunshine-loving,
  Spring-betokening bee!
Yellow bee, so mad for love
  Of early-blooming flowers—
Till thy waxen cell be full.
  Fair fall thy work and thee,
Buzzing round the sweetly-smelling
  Garden plots and bowers.

Anonymo
Tr

MANAGEMENT OF BEES.

FROM THE FOURTH GEORGIC OF VIRGIL.

* * * * *

First, seek a station where no ruthless gale
Dares the still hive and sheltered bees assail:
Lest as they homeward droop, o'erdone with toil,
Inclement blasts their loaded flight despoil;
Far from the sheep that wasted earth devour,
The wanton bird that bounds from flower to flower;
Heifers whose roving steps the meadow bruise,
And dash from springing herbs nectareous dews.
There let no lizard, armed with burnished scale,
Merops, or bird of prey, their wall assail,
Nor Progne haunt, whose conscious plumes attest

The blood-stained hand imprinted on her breast.
These widely waste, and, seiz'd upon the wing,
To feed their nest, the bee in triumph bring.
But there let pools invite with moss array'd,
Clear fount and rill that purls along the glade,
Palms o'er their porch a grateful gloom extend,
And the wild olive's shelt'ring boughs defend.
There where new kings the swarms at spring-tide lead,
And bursting myriads gladden all the mead,
Dim banks at noon may lure to cool repose,
And trees with hospitable arms inclose.
If sleep the stagnant pools, or currents flow,
Huge stones and willows 'mid the water throw;
That if a breeze across their passage sweep,
And headlong drive the loiterer to the deep,
On many a bridge the bee may safely stand,
And his wet plumes to summer suns expand.
There all her sweets let savory exhale,
Thyme breathe her soul of fragrance on the gale
In dulcet streams her roots green casia lave,
And beds of violets drink at will the wave.
Alike, if hollow cork their fabric form,
Or flexile twigs inclose the settled swarm;
With narrow entrance guard the shelter'd cell,
And summer suns and winter blasts repel.
Dire each extreme; or winter cakes with cold,
Or summer melts the comb to fluid gold.
Hence not in vain the bees their domes prepare,
And smear the chinks that open to the air;
With flowers and fucus close each pervious pore
With wax cement, and thicken o'er and o'er.
Stor'd for this use they hive the clammy dew,
And load their garners with tenacious glue,
As birdlime thick, or pitch that slow distils
In loitering drops on Ida's pine-crowned hills
And oft, 'tis said, they delve beneath the earth,
And nurse in gloomy caves their hidden birth,
Amid the crumbling stone's dark concave dwell,
Or hang in hollow trees their airy cell.
Thou aid their toil! with mud their walls o'erlay,

And lightly shade the roof with leafy spray.
There let no yew its baleful shadow cast,
Nor crabs on glowing embers taint the blast.
Far from their roof deep fens that poison breathe,
Thick fogs that float from bed of mud beneath,
Caves from whose depth redoubled echoes rise,
And rock on rock in circling shout replies.
Now when the sun beneath the realms of night
Dark winter drives, and robes the heavens with light.
The bees o'er hill and dale, from flow'r to flow'r,
In grove and lawn the purple spring devour,
Sip on the wing, and, lightly bursting, lave
Their airy plumage in its undimpled wave.

* * * * *

Ah, fav'rite scenes! but now with gather'd sail
I seek the shore, nor trust th' inviting gale;
Else had my song your charms at leisure trac'd,
And all the garden's varied arts embrac'd;
Sung, twice each year, how Pæstan roses blow,
How endive drinks the rill that purls below,
How twisting gourds pursue their mazy way,
Swell as they creep, and widen into day;
How verdant celery decks its humid bed,
How late-blown flow'rets round narcissus spread;
The lithe acanthus, and the ivy hoar,
And myrtle blooming on the sea-beat shore.
Yes, I remember where Galæsus leads
His flood dark-winding through the golden meads,
Where proud Œbalia's tow'rs o'erlook the plain,
Once I beheld an old Corcyrian swain;
Lord of a little spot, by all disdain'd,
Where never lab'ring yoke subsistence gain'd,
Where never shepherd gave his flock to feed,
Nor Bacchus dar'd to trust th' ungrateful mead,
He there with scanty herbs the bushes crown'd,
And planted lilies, vervains, poppies round;
Nor envied kings, when late, at twilight close,
Beneath his peaceful shed he sought repose,
And cull'd from earth, with changeful plenty stor'd,

Th’ unpurchas’d feasts that pil’d his varied board.
At spring-tide first he pluck’d the full-blown rose,
From autumn first the ripen’d apple chose;
And e’en when winter split the rocks with cold,
And chain’d the o’erhanging torrent as it roll’d,
His blooming hyacinths, ne’er known to fail,
Shed scents unborrow’d of the vernal gale,
As 'mid their rifled beds he wound his way,
Chid the slow sun, and zephyr’s long delay.
Hence first his bees new swarms unnumber’d gave,
And press’d from richest combs the golden wave;
Limes round his haunts diffus’d a grateful shade,
And verdant pines with many a cone array’d;
And every bud that gemm’d the vernal spray,
Swell’d into fruit beneath th’ autumnal ray.
He lofty elms, transpos’d in order, plac’d,
Luxuriant pears at will his alleys grac’d,
And grafted thorns that blushing plumes display’d,
And plains that stretch’d o’er summer feasts their shade.
Ah! fav’rite scenes! to other bards resign’d,
I leave your charms, and trace my task assign’d.

* * * * *

To each his part; age claims th’ entrusted care
To rear the palace, and the dome repair;
The young, returning home at dead of night,
Faint, droop beneath the thyme that loads their flight.
Where’er a willow waves, or arbute grows,
Or casia scents the gale, or crocus glows,
Or hyacinth unfolds its purple hue,
Flow’r, shrub, and grove, for them their sweets renew.
Alike they labor, and alike repose;
Forth from their gates each morn the nation flows;
And when pale twilight, from the wasted mead,
Bids the tir’d race, o’ercharg’d with spoil, recede,
They seek their roof, their drooping frame revive,
And shake with ceaseless hum the crowded hive.
Deep calm succeeds, each laid within his cell,
Where sleep and peace without a murmur dwell.

If tempests low’r, or blustering Eurus sound,
Prescient they creep their city walls around,
Sip the pure rill that near their portal springs,
And bound their wary flight in narrower rings,
And with light pebbles, like a balanc’d boat,
Pois’d through the air on even pinions float.

* * * * *

Not Lydia’s sons, nor Parthia’s peopled shore
Mede, or Egyptian, thus their king adore.
He lives and moves through all th’ accordant soul—
He dies, and by his death dissolves the whole;
Rage and fierce war their wondrous fabric tear,
Scatter their combs, and waste in wild despair.
He guards their works, his looks deep rev’rence draws,
Crowds swarm on crowds, and hum their loud applause,
Bear 'mid the press of battle on their wing,
And, proud to perish, die around their king.
Hence to the bee some sages have assign’d
A portion of the God, and heavenly mind;
For God goes forth, and spreads throughout the whole—
Heaven, earth, and sea, the universal soul;
Each at its birth from him all beings share,
Both man and brute, the breath of vital air.
There all returns, and loos’d from earthly chain,
Fly whence they sprung, and rest in God again,
Spurn at the grave, and fearless of decay,
Live 'mid the host of heaven, and star th’ ethereal way.

* * * * *

If wintry dearth thy prescient fears create,
Or rouse thy pity for their ruin’d state;
With thymy odors scent their smoking halls,
And fill th’ unpeopled cells that load their walls.
There oft, unseen, dark newts insidious prey,
The beetle there, that flies the light of day—
There feasts th’ unbidden drone—there ring the alarms

Of hornets battling with unequal arms;
Dire gnaws the moth, and o'er their portals spread
The spider watches her aërial thread.
Yet still, when most oppress'd, they mostly strive,
And tax their strength to renovate the hive;
Contending myriads urge exhaustless powers,
Fill every cell, and crowd the comb with flowers.

Translation of W. SOTHEBY. PUBLIUS VIRGILIUS MARO, 70–19 B. C.

FROM SHAKSPEARE.

So work the honey-bees;
Creatures that, by a rule in nature, teach
The art of order to a peopled kingdom.
They have a king, and officers of sorts;
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home:
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad:
Others, like soldiers, armed in their sting,
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds,
Which pillage they with merry march bring home
To the tent royal of their emperor—
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys
The singing masons building roofs of gold;
The civil citizens kneading up the honey;
The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate;
The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum,
Delivering o'er to executors pale
The lazy, yawning drone.

Henry V., Act I., S. 2.

THE DRONE.

FROM "THE FEMININE MONARCHY, OR THE HISTORY OF BEES."

The drone is a gross, stingless bee, that spendeth his time in gluttony and idleness; for howsoever he brave it with his round, velvet cap, his side gown, his full paunch, and his loud voice, yet is he but an idle companion, living by the sweat of others' brows. He worketh not at all, either at home or abroad, and yet spendeth as much as two laborers; you shall never find his man without a good drop of the purest nectar. In the heat of the day he flieth abroad, aloft, and about, and that with no small noise, as though he would do some great act; but it is only for his pleasure, and to get him a stomach, and then returns he pleasantly to his cheer.

CHARLES BUTLER, 1634.

MEMORY OF THE BEE.

Hark! the bee winds her small but mellow horn,
Blithe to salute the sunny smile of morn,
O'er thymy downs she bends her busy course,
And many a stream allures her to its source.
'Tis noon, 'tis night. That eye so finely wrought,
Beyond the reach of sense, the soar of thought,
Now vainly asks the scenes she left behind,
Its orb so full, its vision so confined!
Who guides the patient pilgrim to her cell?
Who bids her soul with conscious triumph swell?
With conscious truth retrace the mazy clue
Of varied scents, that charm'd her as she flew?
Hail, memory, hail! thy universal reign
Guards the least link of being's glorious chain.

THE DEATH OF THE BEE.

FROM "SALMONIA."

Phys. * * * Let me now call your attention to that Michaelmas daisy. A few minutes ago, before the sun sunk behind the hill, its flowers were covered with varieties of bees, and some wasps, all busy in feeding on its sweets. I never saw a more animated scene of insect enjoyment. The bees were most of them humble-bees, but many of them new varieties to me, and the wasps appeared different from any I have seen before.

Hal. I believe this is one of the last autumnal flowers that insects of this kind haunt. In sunny days it is their constant point of resort, and it would afford a good opportunity to the entomologist to make a collection of British bees.

Poict. I neither hear the hum of the bee, nor can I see any on its flowers. They are now deserted.

Phys. Since the sun has disappeared, the cool of the evening has, I suppose, driven the little winged plunderers to their homes; but see! there are two or three humble-bees which seem languid with the cold, and yet they have their tongues still in the fountain of honey. I believe one of them is actually dead, yet his mouth is still attached to the flower. He has fallen asleep, and probably died while making his last meal of ambrosia.

SIR HUMPHREY DAVY.

SONNET.

The honey-bee, that wanders all day long,
  The field, the woodland, and the garden o'er,
  To gather in his fragrant winter store,
Humming in calm content his quiet song,
    Seeks not alone the rose's glowing breast,
The lily's dainty cup, the violet's lips—
But from all rank and noxious weeds he sips
    The single drop of sweetness closely press'd
  Within the poison chalice. Thus, if we
    Seek only to draw forth the hidden sweet,
    In all the varied human flowers we meet,
  In the wide garden of humanity;
And like the bee, if home the spoil we bear,
Hived in our hearts, it turns to nectar there.

A

III.
Spring.

Giles Fletcher is one of the old English poets but little known to the general reader in America. And yet he was the author of a poem of high merit. He was born about twenty years after Shakspeare, or in 1588, and came of a family marked by great poetical talent. John Fletcher, the celebrated dramatist and fellow-laborer of Beaumont, was a cousin, and it was his elder brother, Phineas Fletcher, who wrote "The Purple Island," that singular and elaborate poetical allegory, carried out through twelve cantos, and relieved by much occasional beauty of thought and style. The father also, Dr. Giles Fletcher, has been ranked among the good poets of his day. The only work of Giles Fletcher, the son, which has been published, is of a religious character, "Christ's Victory and Triumph," a poem in four parts. It has never been reprinted entire in America, though full of fine passages, and marked throughout with originality and beauty. The subjects are of course very much of the same nature as those of "Paradise Regained;" a comparison of the two poems, however, by no means diminishes our admiration for the work of Fletcher, especially when we bear in mind that he wrote half a century before Milton. In fact, "Christ's

Victory and Triumph" was, at the time it appeared, the finest sacred poem of any length in our language; it is full of a jubilant poetical eloquence and the earnest expression of strong religious feeling connected with the subject. Giles Fetcher, like his brother Phineas, was a clergyman of the Church of England, and led an uneventful life in his country parish of Alderton, Suffolk, where he died in 1623.

A description of Spring at Easter will, it is hoped, give the reader pleasure.

THE RETURN OF SPRING IN GREECE.

FROM THE GREEK OF MELEAGER, 100 B. C.

Hush'd is the howl of wintry breezes wild;
The purple hour of youthful spring has smiled:
A livelier verdure clothes the teeming earth;
Buds press to life, rejoicing in their birth;
The laughing meadows drink the dews of night,
And fresh with opening roses glad the sight:
In song the joyous swains responsive vie;
Wild music floats and mountain melody.
  Adventurous seamen spread the embosomed sail
O'er waves light heaving to the western gale;
While village youths their brows with ivy twine,
And hail with song the promise of the vine.
  In curious cells the bees digest their spoil,
When vernal sunshine animates their toil,
And little birds, in warblings sweet and clear,
Salute thee, Maia, loveliest of the year:
Thee, on their deeps, the tuneful halcyons hail,
In streams the swan, in woods the nightingale.
  If earth rejoices with new verdure gay,
And shepherds pipe, and flocks exulting play,
And sailors roam, and Bacchus leads his throng,
And bees to toil, and birds awake to song,

Shall the glad bard be mute in tuneful spring,
And, warm with love and joy, forget to sing?

Translation of
ROBERT
BLAND.

SPRING.

FROM THE GREEK OF ANACREON.

Behold the young, the rosy spring,
Gives to the breeze her scented wing,
While virgin graces, warm with May,
Fling roses o'er her dewy way.
The murmuring billows of the deep
Have languished into silent sleep.
And mark! the flitting sea-birds lave
Their plumes in the reflecting wave;
While cranes from hoary winter fly
To flutter in a kinder sky.
Now the genial star of day
Dissolves the murky clouds away,
And cultured field and winding stream
Are freshly glittering in his beam.
  Now the earth prolific swells
With leafy buds and flow'ry bells;
Gemming shoots the olive twine,
Clusters bright festoon the vine;
All along the branches creeping,
Through the velvet foliage peeping,
Little infant fruits we see
Nursing into luxury.

Translation of
T.
MOORE.

DESCRIPTION OF SPRING.

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
  With green hath clad the hill, and eke the vale,
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
  The turtle to her mate hath told her tale.
Summer is come, for every spray now springs;
  The hart hath hung his old head on the pale,
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings;
  The fishes flete with new repaired scale;
The adder all her slough away she flings;
  The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale;
The busy bee her honey now she mings;
  Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.
And thus I see among these pleasant things
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

HENRY HOWARD, Earl of Surrey, 1516–1547.

SPRING.

FROM THE "THISTLE AND THE ROSE."

Quhen Merche wes with variand windis past,
And Appryll had with hir silver shouris
Tane leif at Nature, with ane orient blast,
And lusty May, that muddir is of flouris,
Had maid the birdis to begyn thair houris,
Amang the tendir odouris reid and quhyt
Quhois harmony to heir it was delyt:
In bed at morrow sleiping as I lay,
Methocht Aurora, with her crystall ene
In at the window lukit by the day,
And halsit me with visage pale and grene;
On quhois hand a lark sang, fro the splene,
"Awak, luvaris, out of your slemering,
Se how the lusty morrow dois upspring!"

Methocht fresche May befoir my bed upstude,
In weid depaynt of mony diverse hew,
Sober, benyng, and full of mansuetude,
In bright atteir of flouris forgit new,
Hevinly of color, quhyt, reid, brown, and blew,
Balmit in dew, and gilt with Phebus' bemys;
Quhil al the house illumynit of her lemys.

WILLIAM DUNBAR
1465–1530.

ON SPRING.

Sweet Spring, thou com'st with all thy goodly train,
Thy head with flames, thy mantle bright with flow'rs,
The zephyrs curl the green locks of the plain,
The clouds for joy in pearls weep down their show'rs.
Sweet Spring, thou com'st—but, ah! my pleasant hours
And happy days with thee come not again;
The sad memorials only of my pain
Do with thee come, which turns my sweets to sours.
Thou art the same which still thou wert before,
Delicious, lusty, amiable, fair;
But she whose breath embalm'd thy wholesome air
Is gone; nor gold, nor gems, can her restore.
Neglected virtues, seasons go and come,
When thine forgot lie closed in a tomb.

What doth it serve to see the sun's bright face,
And skies enamell'd with the Indian gold?
Or the moon in a fierce chariot roll'd,
And all the glory of that starry place?
What doth it serve earth's beauty to behold,
The mountain's pride, the meadow's flow'ry grace,
The stately comeliness of forests old,
The sport of floods which would themselves embrace?
What doth it serve to hear the sylvans' songs,
The cheerful thrush, the nightingale's sad strains,

Which in dark shades seem to deplore my wrongs?
For what doth serve all that this world contains,
  Since she for whom those once to me were dear,
  Can have no part of them now with me here?

WILLIAM DRUMMON
1585–1649.

SONNET ON SPRING.

FROM THE FRENCH.

Now Time throws off his cloak again
Of ermined frost, and cold, and rain,
And clothes him in the embroidery
Of glittering sun, and clear, blue sky.
With beast and bird the forest rings,
Each in his jargon cries or sings;
And Time throws off his cloak again
Of ermined frost, and cold, and rain.
River and fount, and tinkling brook,
    Wear in their dainty livery
    Drops of silver jewelry;
In new-made suit they merry look;
And Time throws off his cloak again
Of ermined frost, and cold, and rain.

CHARLES, DUKE OF ORLEANS, 1391.

SPRING, AT EASTER.

FROM "CHRIST'S TRIUMPH AND VICTORY."

But now the second morning from her bower,
Began to glister in her beams; and now
The roses of the day began to flower
In the Eastern garden; for heaven's smiling brow,
Half insolent for joy, began to show:
The early sun came dancing lively out,
And the brag lambs ran wantoning about,
That heaven and earth might seem in triumph both to shout.

The engladdened Spring, forgetful now to weep,
Began to eblazon from her leafy bed;
The waking swallow broke her half-year's sleep,
And every bush lay deeply purpured
With violets; the woods' late wintry head
Wide flaming primroses set all on fire,
And his bald trees put on their green attire,
Among whose infant leaves the joyous birds conspire.

And now the taller sons, whom Titan warms,
Of unshorn mountains, blown with easy winds,
Dandled the morning's childhood in their arms;
And, if they chanced to slip the prouder pines,
The under corylass[8] did catch the shines,
To gild their leaves: saw ne'er happier year
Such triumph and triumphant cheer,
As though the aged world anew created were.

Say, Earth, why hast thou got thee new attire,
And stick'st thy habit full of daisies red?
Seems that thou dost to some high thought aspire,
And some new-found-out bridegroom mean'st to wed:
Tell me, ye trees, so fresh apparelled—
So never let the spiteful canker waste you,
So never let the heavens with lightning blast you!
Why go you now so trimly drest, or whither haste you?

Answer me, Jordan, why thy crooked tide
So often wanders from his nearest way,
As though some other way thy streams would slide,

And join salute the place where something lay?
And you, sweet birds, that, shaded from the ray,
Sit carolling, and piping grief away,
The while the lambs to hear you dance and play—
Tell me, sweet birds, what is it you so fain would say?

And thou, fair spouse of Earth, that every year
Gett'st such a numerous issue of thy bride,
How chance thou hotter shin'st, and draw'st more near?
Sure thou somewhere some worthy sight hast spied,
That in one place for joy thou canst not bide:
And you, dead swallows, that so lively now,
Through the slit air your winged passage row;
How could new life into your frozen ashes flow?

Ye primroses and purple violets,
Tell me, why blaze ye from your leafy bed,
And woo men's hands to rent you from your sets,
As though you would somewhere be carried,
With fresh perfumes and velvets garnished?
But ah! I need not ask; 'tis surely so;
You all would to your Saviour's triumph go:
There would you all await, and humble homage do.

There should the Earth herself, with garlands new,
And lovely flowers embellish'd adore:
Such roses never in her garland grew;
Such lilies never in her breast she wore;
Like beauty never yet did shine before.
There should the Sun another Sun behold,
From whence himself borrows his locks of gold,
That kindle Heaven and Earth with beauties manifold.

There might the violet and primrose sweet,
Beams of more lively and more lovely grace,
Arising from their beds of incense, meet;
There should the swallow see new life embrace
Dead ashes, and the grave unvail his face,
To let the living from his bowels creep,

Unable longer his own dead to keep;
There Heaven and Earth should see their Lord awake
from sleep.

* * * * *

"Toss up your heads, ye everlasting gates,
And let the Prince of Glory enter in!
At whose brave volley of sidereal states,
The sun to blush, and stars grow pale, were seen;
When leaping first from earth, he did begin
To climb his angel wings: then open hang
Your crystal doors!" so all the chorus sang
Of heavenly birds, as to the stars they nimbly sprang.

Hark! how the floods clap their applauding hands,
The pleasant valleys singing for delight;
The wanton mountains dance about the lands,
The while the fields, struck with the heavenly light,
Set all their flowers a smiling at the sight;
The trees laugh with their blossoms, and the sound
Of the triumphant shout of praise, that crown'd
The flaming Lamb, breaking through heaven, hath
passage found.

GILES
FLETCHE
1588–
1623.

THE AIRS OF SPRING.

Sweetly breathing, vernal air,
That with kind warmth doth repair
Winter's ruins; from whose breast
All the gums and spice of th' East
Borrow their perfumes; whose eye
Gilds the morn, and clears the sky;
Whose disheveled tresses shed

Pearls upon the violet bed;
On whose brow, with calm smiles drest,
The halcyon sits and builds her nest;
Beauty, youth, and endless spring,
Dwell upon thy rosy wing!

Thou, if stormy Boreas throws
Down whole forests when he blows,
With a pregnant, flowery birth,
Canst refresh the teeming earth.
If he nip the early bud;
If he blast what's fair or good;
If he scatter our choice flowers;
If he shake our halls or bowers;
If his rude breath threaten us,
Thou canst stroke great Æolus,
And from him the grace obtain,
To bind him in an iron chain.

THOMA
(
1

RETURN OF SPRING.

FROM THE FRENCH.

God shield ye, heralds of the spring,
Ye faithful swallows, fleet of wing,
    Houps, cuckoos, nightingales,
Turtles, and every wilder bird,
That make your hundred chirpings heard
    Through the green woods and dales.

God shield ye, Easter daisies all,
Fair roses, buds, and blossoms small,
    And he whom erst the gore
Of Ajax and Narciss did print,
Ye wild thyme, anise, balm, and mint,
    I welcome ye once more.

God shield ye, bright embroider'd train
Of butterflies, that on the plain,
Of each sweet herblet sip;
And ye, new swarms of bees, that go
Where the pink flowers and yellow grow
To kiss them with your lip.

A hundred thousand times I call—
A hearty welcome on ye all:
This season how I love!
This merry din on every shore,
For winds and storms, whose sullen roar
Forbade my steps to rove.

0*Anonymous Translation.* PIERRE RONSARD, 1524–1586.

ODE TO SPRING.

Sweet daughter of a rough and stormy sire,
Hoar Winter's blooming child—delightful Spring!
Whose unshorn locks with leaves
And swelling buds are crown'd;

From the green islands of eternal youth,
Crown'd with fresh blooms and ever-springing shade,
Turn, thither turn thy step,
O thou whose powerful voice,

More sweet than softest touch of Doric reed,
Or Lydian flute, can soothe the madding wind,
And through the stormy deep
Breathe thine own tender calm.

Thee, best beloved! the virgin train await
With songs, and festal rites, and joy to rove
Thy blooming wilds among,
And vales and dewy lawns,

With untired feet; and cull thy earliest sweets

To weave fresh garlands for the glowing brow
Of him, the favored youth,
That prompts their whispered sigh.

Unlock thy copious stores—those tender showers
That drop their sweetness on the infant buds;
And silent dews that swell
The milky ear's green stem,

And feed the flowering osier's early shoots;
And call those winds which through the whispering boughs
With warm and pleasant breath
Salute the blowing flowers.

Now let me sit beneath the whitening thorn,
And mark thy spreading tints steal o'er the dale;
And watch with patient eye,
Thy fair, unfolding charms.

O nymph, approach! while yet the temperate sun
With bashful forehead through the cold, moist air,
Throws his young maiden beams,
And with chaste kisses woos

The earth's fair bosom; while the streaming vail
Of lucid clouds, with kind and frequent shade
Protects thy modest blooms
From his severer blaze.

Sweet is thy reign, but short; the red dog-star
Shall scorch thy tresses; and the mower's scythe
Thy greens, thy flowerets all,
Remorseless shall destroy,

Reluctant shall I bid thee then farewell;
For O, not all that Autumn's lap contains
Nor Summer's ruddiest fruits
Can aught for thee atone,

Fair Spring! whose simplest promise more delights
Than all their largest wealth, and through the heart

Each joy and new-born hope
With softest influence breathes.

ANNE LETITIA BARBAULD, 1743–1825.

THE FLOWER.

How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean
Are thy returns! ev'n as the flow'rs in spring;
To which, besides their own demean,
The late past frost's tributes of pleasure bring:
Grief melts away,
Like snow in May,
As if there were no such cold thing.

Who would have thought my shrivel'd heart
Could have recover'd greenness? It was gone
Quite under ground, as flowers depart
To see their mother-root, when they have blown;
Where they together,
All the hard weather,
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

These are thy wonders, Lord of power!
Thrilling and quick'ning, bringing down to hell,
And up to heaven in an hour;
Making a chiming of a passing bell.
We say amiss,
This or that is:
Thy word is all, if we would spell.

Oh, that I once past changing were
Fast in thy Paradise, where no flow'r can wither!
Many a spring I shot up fair,
Offering at heav'n, growing and groaning thither:
Nor doth my flower
Want a spring-shower,

My sins and I joining together.

But while I grow in a straight line,
Still upward bent, as if heav'n were mine own,
Thy anger comes, and I decline:
What frost to that? What pole is not the zone,
Where all things burn,
When thou dost turn,
And the least frown of thine is shown?

And now in age I bud again;
After so many deaths I live and write,
I once more smell the dew and rain,
And relish versing. O, my only light,
It can not be,
That I am he,
On whom thy tempests fell all night!

These are thy wonders, Lord of love!
To make us see we are but flow'rs that glide;
Which, when we once can find and prove,
Thou hast a garden for us, where to bide.
Who would be more,
Swelling through store,
Forfeit their Paradise by their pride,

GEORGE HERBERT
1598–1632.

ODE.

FROM THE TURKISH.

Hear! how the nightingales on every spray,
Hail, in wild notes, the sweet return of May:
The gale, that o'er yon waving almond blows,
The verdant bank with silver blossoms strews;
The smiling season decks each flowery glade.

Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

What gales of fragrance scent the vernal air!
Hills, dales, and woods their loveliest mantles wear,
Who knows what cares await that fatal day,
When ruder guests shall banish gentle May?
E'en death, perhaps, our valleys will invade.
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

The tulip now its varied hue displays,
And sheds, like Ahmed's eye, celestial rays.
Ah! nature, ever faithful, ever true,
The joys of youth, while May invites, pursue!
Will not these notes your timorous minds persuade?
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

The sparkling dew-drops o'er the lilies play,
Like orient pearls, or like the beams of day.
If love and mirth your idle thoughts engage,
Attend, ye nymphs! a poet's words are sage.
While thus you sit beneath the trembling shade,
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

The fresh-blown rose, like Zeineb's cheek appears,
When pearls, like dew-drops, glitter in her ears.
The charms of youth at once are seen and past,
And Nature says, "They are too sweet to last."
So blooms the rose, and so the blushing maid—
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

See! yon anemones their leaves unfold,
With rubies gleaming, and with living gold:
While crystal showers from weeping clouds descend,
Enjoy the presence of thy tuneful friend:
Now, while the wines are brought, the sofa's laid,
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

The plants no more are dried, the meadow dead;
No more the rose-bud hangs her pensive head;
The shrubs revive in valleys, mead, and bowers,
And every stalk is garland'd with flowers;

In silken robes each hillock stands arrayed—
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

Clear drops, each morn, impearl the rose's bloom,
And from its leaf the zephyr drinks perfume;
The dewy buds expand their lucid store:
Be this our wealth; ye damsels ask no more,
Though wise men envy, and though fools upbraid,
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

The dew-drops sprinkled by the musky gale,
Are changed to essence ere they reach the dale;
The mild, blue sky a rich pavilion spreads,
Without our labor, o'er our favor'd heads.
Let others toil in war, in arts, in trade—
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

Late gloomy winter chilled the sullen air,
Till Soliman arose, and all was fair.
Soft in his reign, the notes of love resound,
And pleasure's rosy cup goes freely round.
Here on the bank which mantling vines o'ershade,
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!

May this rude lay, from age to age remain,
A true memorial of this lovely train.
Come, charming maid, and hear thy poet sing,
Thyself the rose, and he the bird of spring;
Love bids him sing, and love will be obey'd.
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade!
Translation of SIR WILLIAM JONES. *From the Turkish of* MESIHI.

TO SPRING.

Alas, delicious Spring! God sends thee down
To breathe upon his cold and perish'd works
Beauteous revival; earth should welcome thee—
Thee and the west wind, thy smooth paramour,

With the soft laughter of her flowery meads;
Her joys, her melodies, the prancing stag
Flutters the shivering fern; the steed shakes out
His mane, the dewy herbage, silver-webb'd,
With frank step trampling; the wild goat looks down
From his empurpling bed of heath, where break
The waters deep and blue, with crystal gleams
Of their quick-leaping people; the fresh lark
Is in the morning sky; the nightingale
Tunes evensong to the dropping waterfall.
Creation lives with loveliness—all melts
And trembles into one mild harmony.

TO SPRING.

FROM THE DANISH.

Thy beams are sweet, beloved spring!
  The winter-shades before thee fly;
The bough smiles green, the young birds sing,
  The chainless current glistens by,
Till countless flowers like stars illume
The deepening vale and forest gloom.

O welcome, gentle guest from high,
  Sent to cheer our world below,
To lighten sorrow's faded eye,
  To kindle nature's social glow!
O, he is o'er his fellows blest
Who feels thee in a guiltless breast!

Peace to the generous heart essaying
  With deeds of love to win our praise!
He smiles, the spring of life surveying,
  Nor fears her cold and wintry days:
To his high goal with triumph bright
The calm years waft him in their flight.

Thou glorious goal, that shin'st afar,
  And seem'st to smile us on our way,
Bright is the hope that crowns our war,
  The dawn-blush of eternal day;
There shall we meet, this dark world o'er,
And mix in love for evermore.

Translation of W. S. WALKER. THOMAS THAARUP, 1749–1821.

SPRING.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Look all around thee! How the spring advances!
  New life is playing through the gay green trees;
See how, in yonder bower, the light leaf dances
  To the bird's tread, and to the quivering breeze!
How every blossom in the sunlight glances!
  The winter frost to his dark cavern flees,
And earth, warm-wakened, feels through every vein
The kindly influence of the vernal rain.
Now silvery streamlets, from the mountains stealing,
  Dance joyously the verdant vales along;
Cold fear no more the songster's voice is sealing;
  Down in the thick dark grove is heard his song;
And, all their bright and lovely hues revealing,
  A thousand plants the field and forest throng;
Light comes upon the earth in radiant showers,
And mingling rainbows play among the flowers.

Translation of C. T. BROOKS. LUDWIG TIECK.

ODE.

FROM THE SPANISH.

  'Tis sweet, in the green spring,
To gaze upon the wakening fields around;

Birds in thicket sing,
Winds whisper, waters prattle from the ground;
A thousand odors rise,
Breathed up from blossoms of a thousand dyes.

Shadowy, and close, and cool,
The pine and poplar keep their quiet nook;
For ever fresh and full,
Shines at their feet the thirst-inviting brook;
And the soft herbage seems
Spread for a place of banquets and of dreams.

Thou, who alone art fair,
And whom alone I love, art far away:
Unless thy smile be there,
It makes me sad to see the earth so gay:
I care not if the train
Of leaves, and flowers, and zephyrs go again!

Translation of W. C. BRYANT. ESTEVAN MANUEL DE VILLEGAS, 1595–1669.

THE AWAKENING YEAR.

The blue-birds and the violets
Are with us once again,
And promises of summer spot
The hill-side and the plain.

The clouds along the mountain-tops
Are riding on the breeze,
Their trailing azure trains of mist
Are tangled in the trees.

The snow-drifts, which have lain so long,
Haunting the hidden nooks,
Like guilty ghosts have slipped away,
Unseen, into the brooks.

The streams are fed with generous rain,

They drink the wayside springs,
And flutter down from crag to crag,
Upon their foamy wings.

Through all the long wet nights they brawl,
By mountain-homes remote,
Till woodmen in their sleep behold
Their ample rafts afloat.

The lazy wheel that hung so dry
Above the idle stream,
Whirls wildly in the misty dark,
And through the miller's dream.

Loud torrent unto torrent calls,
Till at the mountain's feet
Flashing afar their spectral light,
The noisy waters meet.

They meet, and through the lowlands sweep,
Toward briny bay and lake,
Proclaiming to the distant towns
"The country is awake!"

SPRING SCENE.

Winter is past; the heart of Nature warms
Beneath the wreck of unresisted storms;
Doubtful at first, suspected more than seen,
The southern slopes are fringed with tender green;
On sheltered banks, beneath the dripping eaves,
Spring's earliest nurslings spread their glowing leaves,
Bright with the hues from wider pictures won,
White, azure, golden—drift, or sky, or sun:
The snowdrop, bearing on her radiant breast

The frozen trophy torn from winter's crest;
The violet, gazing on the arch of blue
Till her own iris wears its deepened hue;
The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mold,
Naked and shivering, with his cup of gold.
Swelled with new life, the darkening elm on high
Prints her thick buds against the spotted sky;
On all her boughs the stately chestnut cleaves
The gummy shroud that wraps her embryo leaves;
The house-fly, stealing from his narrow grave,
Drugged with the opiate that November gave,
Beats with faint wing against the snowy pane,
Or crawls tenacious o'er its lucid plain;
From shaded chinks of lichen-crusted walls
In languid curves the gliding serpent crawls;
The bog's green harper, thawing from his sleep
Twangs a hoarse note, and tries a shortened leap.
On floating rails that face the softening noons
The still, shy turtles range their dark platoons,
Or toiling, aimless, o'er the mellowing fields,
Trail through the grass their tesselated shields.
At last young April, ever frail and fair,
Wooed by her playmate with the golden hair,
Chased to the margin of receding floods,
O'er the soft meadows starred with opening buds,
In tears and blushes sighs herself away,
And hides her cheek beneath the flowers of May.

SPRING.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF PETRARCH.

The soft west wind, returning, brings again
  Its lovely family of herbs and flowers;
Progne's gay notes, and Philomela's strain

Vary the dance of spring-tide's rosy hours;
And joyously o'er every field and plain,
Glows the bright smile that greets them from above,
And the warm spirit of reviving love
Breathes in the air and murmurs from the main.
But tears and sorrowing sighs, which gushingly
Pour from the secret chambers of my heart,
Are all that spring returning brings to me;
And in the modest smile, or glance of art,
The song of birds, the bloom of heath and tree,
A desert's rugged tract and savage forms I see.

Translation of G. W. GREENE. FRANCESCO PETRARCA, 1304–1374.

IV.
Morning.

The morning song of Bellman, commencing, “Up, Amaryllis!” is one of the most celebrated of the lyrical poems of Sweden. We are told that nothing can exceed the enthusiasm with which it is sung in that country by high and low, old and young, alike. The translation inserted in the ensuing pages has been taken from the interesting work of the Howitts, on the “Literature of Northern Europe.”

MORNING MELODIES.

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
  The wild brook babbling down the mountain side;
The lowing herd, the sheepfold’s simple bell;
  The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
  In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
  The hollow murmur of the ocean tide;
The hum of bees, the linnet’s lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove
The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark;
  Crown’d with her pail the tripping milk-maid sings;
The whistling plowman stalks afield; and hark!
  Down the rough slope the ponderous wagon rings;

Through rustling corn the hare, astonish'd, springs;
Slow tolls the village clock the drowsy hour—
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequester'd bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aërial tour.

JAMES BEATTI
1735–
1803.

MORNING WALK.

The morning hath not lost her virgin blush,
Nor step, but mine, soil'd the earth's tinsel'd robe.
How full of Heaven this solitude appears—
This healthful comfort of the happy swain,
Who from his hard but peaceful bed roused up,
In morning's exercise saluted is
By a full choir of feather'd choristers,
Wedding their notes to the enamor'd air!
There Nature, in her unaffected dress,
Plaited with valleys, and emboss'd with hills,
Enlaced with silver streams, and fring'd with woods,
Sits lovely in her native russet.

WILLIAM CHAMBERLAYN
1619–
1689.

HYMN.

BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald, awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arne and Aveyron at thy base

Rove ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines
How silently! Around thee and above,
Deep in the air and dark, substantial, black—
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer,
I worshiped the Invisible alone.

Yet like some sweet, beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life, and life's own secret joy;
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused
Into the mighty vision passing—there,
As in her natural form, swelled vast to heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks, and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!
Grim vales and icy cliffs all join my hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky, or when they sink,
Companion of the morning-star, and of the dawn.
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents, fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,

Forever shattered, and the same forever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder, and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came),
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven,
Beneath the keen, full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?
God! Let the torrent, like a shout of nations,
Answer, and let the ice-plains echo God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal pool!
Ye wild goats, sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the elements!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!
Thou too, hoar mount! with the sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depths of clouds, that vail thy breast—
Thou too, again, stupendous mountain! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow traveling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemed, like a vapory cloud,
To rise before me—rise, O ever rise—
Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth!
Thou kingly spirit, throned among the hills,

Thou dread ambassador from earth to heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God!

S.

MORNING.

Wish'd morning's come; and now upon the plains
And distant mountains, where they feed their flocks,
The happy shepherds leave their homely huts,
And with their pipes proclaim the new-born day!
The lusty swain comes with his well-fill'd stoup
Of healthful viands, which, when hunger calls,
With much content and appetite he eats,
To follow in the field his daily toil,
And dress the grateful glebe that yields him fruits.
The beasts, that under the warm hedges slept,
And weather'd out the cold, bleak night, are up,
And, looking toward the neighboring pastures, raise
Their voice, and bid their fellow-brutes good-morrow!
The cheerful birds, too, on the tops of trees,
Assemble all in choirs, and with their notes
Salute and welcome up the rising sun.

THOMAS OTWA
1651–1685.

SPRING MORNING IN ITALY.

The sun is up, and 'tis a morn of May,
Round old Ravenna's clear-shown towers and bay;
A morn, the loveliest which the year has seen—

Last of the spring, yet fresh with all its green;
For a warm eve, and gentle rains at night,
Have left a sparkling welcome for the light;
And there's a crystal clearness all about;
The leaves are sharp; the distant hills look out;
A balmy briskness comes upon the breeze;
The smoke goes dancing from the cottage trees;
And when you listen, you may hear a coil,
Of bubbling springs about the grassy soil;
And all the scene, in short—sky, earth, and sea—
Breathes like a bright-eyed face, that laughs out openly.

'Tis nature full of spirits, waked and springing;
The birds to the delicious time are singing,
Darting with freaks and snatches up and down,
Where the light woods go seaward from the town;
While happy faces striking through the green
Of leafy roads at every town are seen.
And the far ships, lifting their sails of white,
Like joyful hands, come up with scattery light—
Come gleaming up, true to the wished-for day,
And chase the whistling brine and swirl into the bay.
Already in the streets the stir grows loud,
Of expectation and a bustling crowd;
With feet and voice the gathering hum contends,
The deep talk heaves, the ready laugh ascends;
Callings, and clapping doors, and curs unite,
And shouts from mere exuberance of delight;
And armed bands, making important way,
Gallant and grave, the lords of holiday;
And nodding neighbors, greeting as they run;
And pilgrims chanting in the morning sun.

UP, AMARYLLIS!

SWEDISH.

Waken, thou fair one! up, Amaryllis!
Morning so still is;
Cool is the gale:
The rainbows of heaven,
With its hues seven,
Brightness hath given
To wood and dale.
Sweet Amaryllis, let me convey thee;
In Neptune's arms naught shall affray thee;
Sleep's god no longer power has to stay thee,
Over thy eyes and speech to prevail.

Come out a-fishing; nets forth are carrying;
Come without tarrying—
Hasten with me.
Jerkin and vail in—
Come for the sailing,
For trout and grayling:
Baits will lay we.
Awake, Amaryllis! dearest, awaken;
Let me not go forth by thee forsaken;
Our course among dolphins and sirens taken,
Onward shall paddle our boat to the sea.

Bring rod and line—bring nets for the landing;
Morn is expanding,
Hasten away!
Sweet! no denying,
Frowning, or sighing—
Could'st thou be trying
To answer me nay?
Hence, on the shallows, our little boat leaving,
Or to the Sound where green waves are heaving,
Where our true love its first bond was weaving,
Causing to Thirsis so much dismay.

Step in the boat, then! both of us singing,
Love afresh springing,
O'er us shall reign.
If the storm rages,
If it war wages,

Thy love assuages
Terror and pain.
Calm 'mid the billows' wildest commotion,
I would defy on thy bosom the ocean,
Or would attend thee to death with devotion:
Sing, O ye sirens, and mimic my strain!
Translation of MRS. HOWITT. CARL MICHAEL BELLMANN, 1740–1795.

THE MORNING WALK.

FROM THE DANISH.

To the beech-grove, with so sweet an air,
It beckoned me;
O Earth! that never the plowshare
Had furrowed thee!
In their dark shelter the flowerets grew,
Bright to the eye,
And smiled, at my feet, on the cloudless blue
Which decked the sky.

* * * * *

O lovely field, and forest fair,
And meads grass-clad!
Her bride-bed Freya everywhere
Enameled had;
The corn-flowers rose in azure bond
From earthly cell;
Naught else could I do but stop, and stand,
And greet them well.

"Welcome on earth's green breast again,
Ye flowerets dear!
In Spring how charming, 'mid the grain,
Your heads ye rear!
Like stars 'midst lightning's yellow ray
Ye shine red, blue:

O how your Summer aspect gay
Delights my view!”

“O poet, poet, silence keep,
God help thy case!
Our owner holds us sadly cheap,
And scorns our race;
Each time he sees he calls us scum,
Or worthless tares,
Hell-weeds, that but to vex him come
'Midst his corn-ears.”

“O wretched mortals! O wretched man!
O wretched crowd!
No pleasures ye pluck, no pleasures ye plan,
In life’s lone road—
Whose eyes are blind to the glories great
Of the works of God,
And dream that the mouth is the nearest gate
To joy’s abode!

“Come, flowers! for we to each other belong,
Come, graceful elf,
And around my lute in sympathy strong
Now wind thyself;
And quake as if moved by zephyr’s wing,
'Neath the clang of the chord;
And a morning song with glee we’ll sing
To our Maker and Lord.”

Anonymous Translation. ADAM GOTTLOB OCHLENSHLAGER, 1779.

DANISH MORNING SONG.

From eastern quarters now
The sun’s up wandering;
His rays on the rock’s brow,
And hill-side squandering.
Be glad, my soul! and sing amid thy pleasure;

Fly from the house of dust,
Up with thy thanks, and burst
To heaven's azure.

O, countless as the grains
Of sand so tiny—
Measureless as the main's
Deep waters briny;
God's mercy is which he upon me showeth!
Each morning in my shell,
A grace immeasurable
To me down-poureth.

Thou best does understand,
Lord God! my needing,
And placed is in thy hand,
My fortune's speeding.
And thou foreseest what is for me most fitting;
Be still, then, O my soul!
To manage in the whole,
Thy God permitting!

May fruit the land array,
And even for eating!
May truth e'er make its way,
With justice meeting!
Give Thou to me my share with every other,
Till down my staff I lay,
And from this world away
Wend to another!

Translation of H. W. LONGFELLOW. THOMAS KINGO, 1634–1728.

SUMMER MORNING SONG.

FROM THE DUTCH.

Up, sleeper! dreamer, up! for now
There's gold upon the mountain's brow—

There's light on forests, lakes, and meadows:
The dew-drops shine on floweret bells;
The village clock of morning tells.
Up, man! Out, cattle! for the dells
And dingles teem with shadows.

Up! out! o'er furrow and o'er field!
The claims of toil some moments yield,
For morning's bliss and time is fleeter
Than thought; so out! 'tis dawning yet;
Why twilight's lovely hour forget?
For sweet though be the workman's sweat,
The wanderer's sweat is sweeter.

Up! to the fields! through shine and stour!
What hath the dull and drowsy hour
So blest as this—the glad heart leaping,
To hear morn's early song sublime?
See earth rejoicing in its prime!
The summer is the waking time,
The winter, time for sleeping.

O fool! to sleep such hours away,
While blushing nature wakes to day,
Or down through summer morning soaring!
'Tis meet for thee the winter long,
When snows fall fast, and winds blow strong,
To waste the night amid the throng,
Their vinous poisons pouring.

The very beast that crops the flower
Hath welcome for the dawning hour:
Aurora smiles; her beckonings claim thee.
Listen! look round! the chirp, the hum,
Song, low, and bleat—there's nothing dumb—
All love, all life! Come slumberer, come!
The meanest thing shall shame thee.

We come—we come—our wanderings take
Through dewy field, by misty lake,
And rugged paths, and woods pervaded

By branches o’er, by flowers beneath,
Making earth odorous with their breath;
Or through the shadeless gold-gorze heath,
  Or 'neath the poplars shaded.

Were we of feather, or of fin,
How blest to dash the river in,
  Thread the rock-stream, as it advances—
Or, better, like the birds above,
Rise to the greenest of the grove,
And sing the matin song of love,
  Amid the highest branches!

O thus to revel, thus to range,
I’ll yield the counter, bank, or 'Change—
  The busier crowds all peace destroying:
The toil with snow that roofs our brains,
The seeds of care which harvests pains;
The wealth for more which strains and strains,
  Still less and less enjoying!

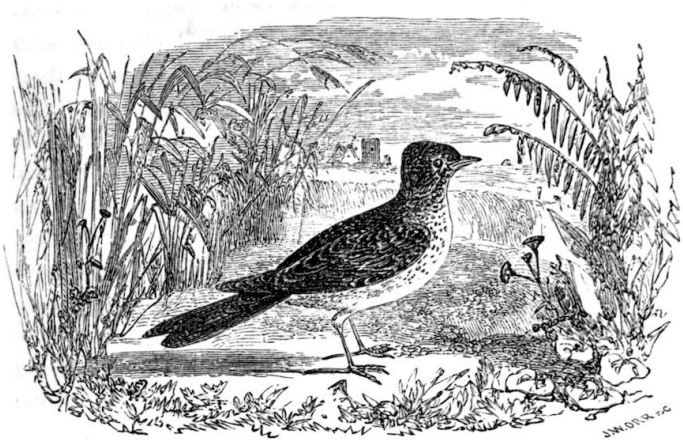
O, happy who the city’s noise,
Can quit for nature’s quiet joys—
  Quit worldly sin and worldly sorrow;
No more 'midst prison walls abide,
But in God’s temple, vast and wide,
Pour praises every eventide,
  Ask mercies every morrow!

No seraph’s flaming sword hath driven
That man from Eden or from Heaven—
  From earth’s sweet smiles and winning features;
For him by toils and troubles toss’d,
By wealth and wearying cares engross’d,
For him a Paradise is lost,
  But not for happy creatures!

Come—though a glance it may be—come—
Enjoy, improve; then hurry home,
  For life strong urgencies must bind us!
Yet mourn not; morn shall wake anew,

And we shall wake to bless it new.
Homewards! the herds that shake the dew,
We'll leave in peace behind us!

Anonymous Translation. H. TOLLENS, 1778.



V.
Lark and Nightingale.

The voices of these two noblest of the singing-birds of the Old World may be heard, in echoing accompaniment, throughout the prolonged choir of European poets, from the earliest dawn of civilization to the present hour. There are few poems of any length, in either of the languages of Europe, in which some allusion to one or the other has not a place. The noblest poets of the earth were born companions to these birds; beneath skies saluted by the lark, among groves haunted by the nightingale. These little creatures sung with Homer and Sappho among the isles of Greece—for Virgil and Horace on the plains of Italy; they cheered Dante in his lifelong wandering exile, and Petrarch in his solitary hermitage. Conceive also the joy with which Chaucer, and Shakspeare, and Spenser listened, each in his day, among the daisied fields of England, to music untaught, instinctive like their own! What pure delight, indeed, have these birds not given to the heart of genius during thousands of springs and summers! How many generations have they not charmed with their undying melodies! They would almost seem by their sweetness to have soothed the inexorable powers of Time and Death. Were an old

Greek or an ancient Roman to rise from the dust this summer's day—were he to awaken, after ages of sleep, to walk his native soil again, scarce an object on which his eye fell would wear a familiar aspect; scarce a sound which struck his ear but would vibrate there most strangely; yet with the dawn, rising from the plain of Marathon, or the Latin Hills, he would hear the same noble lark which sung in his boyhood; and with the moon, among the olives and ilexes shading the fallen temple, would come the same sweet nightingale which entranced his youth.

THE NOTE OF THE NIGHTINGALE.

A LETTER OF CHARLES JAMES FOX.

DEAR GREY—In defense of my opinion about the nightingales, I find Chaucer—who of all poets seems to have been the fondest of the singing of birds—calls it a merry note; and though Theocritus mentions nightingales six or seven times, he never mentions their note as plaintive or melancholy. It is true he does not call it anywhere merry, as Chaucer does, but by mentioning it with the song of the blackbird, and as answering it, he seems to imply that it was a cheerful note. Sophocles is against us; but he says, "*lamenting Itys*," and the comparison of her to Electra is rather as to perseverance, day and night, than as to sorrow. At all events, a tragic poet is not half so good authority in this question as Theocritus and Chaucer. I can not light upon the passage in the "Odyssey," where Penelope's restlessness is compared to the nightingale, but I am sure it is only as to restlessness that he makes the comparison. If you will read the last twelve books of the "Odyssey" you will certainly find it, and I am sure you will be paid for your hunt, whether you find it or not. The passage in Chaucer is in the "Flower and Leaf." The one I particularly allude to in Theocritus is in

his "Epigrams," I think in the fourth. Dryden has transferred the word *merry* to the goldfinch, in the "Flower and the Leaf"—in deference, may be, to the vulgar error. But pray read his description of the nightingale there; it is quite delightful. I am afraid that I like these researches as much better than those that relate to Shaftesbury and Sunderland, as I do those better than attending the House of Commons.

Yours affectionately, C. J. FOX

The nightingale with so *merry a note*
  Answered him, that all the wood rong
So sodainly, that as it were a sote,
  I stood astonied, so was I with the song
  Thorow ravished, that till late and long
I ne wist in what place I was, ne where;
And ayen, me thought, she song ever by mine ear.

CHAUCER'S "*Flower and Leaf*."

A goldfinch there I saw, with gaudy pride
Of painted plumes, that hopp'd from side to side,
Still perching as she pass'd; and still she drew
The sweets from every flower, and sucked the dew:
Suffic'd at length, she warbled in her throat,
And tun'd her voice to many *a merry note*,
But indistinct, and neither sweet nor clear.
Her short performance was no sooner tried,
When she I sought, the nightingale, replied:
So sweet, so shrill, so variously she sung,
That the grove echoed, and the valleys rung;
And I so ravish'd with her heavenly note,
I stood entranc'd, and had no room for thought;
But all o'erpower'd with an ecstasy of bliss,
Was in a pleasing dream of Paradise.

DRYDEN'S "*Flower and Leaf*."

As when the months are clad in flowery green,
Sad Philomel, in bowery shades unseen,

To vernal airs attunes her varied strains,
And Itylus sound warbling o'er the plains.
Young Itylus! his parent's darling joy,
Whom chance misled the mother to destroy,
Now doom'd a wakeful bird to wail the beauteous boy.
So in nocturnal solitude forlorn,
A sad variety of woes I mourn.

Odyssey,
Bool
XIX.

SONNET.

O, nightingale, that on yon bloomy spray,
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes, that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love; O if Jove's will
Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh.
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the muse or love call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

APRIL, 1798.

No cloud, no relic of the sunken day,
Distinguishes the west; no long, thin slip
Of sullen light—no obscure, trembling hues.

Come; we will rest on this old mossy bridge!
You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
But hear no murmuring; it flows silently
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still—
A balmy night! and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
And hark! the nightingale begins its song,
"Most musical, most melancholy" bird!
A melancholy bird! Oh, idle thought!
In nature there is nothing melancholy.
* * * 'Tis the merry nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast, thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His lone chant, and disburden his full soul
Of all its music!
I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass—
Thin grass, and king-cups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew
So many nightingales; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove
They answer, and provoke each other's song
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical, and swift jug-jug,
And one low, piping sound, more sweet than all,
Stirring the air with such a harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost
Forget it was not day! On moonlit bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half disclosed,
You may, perchance, behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes—their eyes both bright and full,
Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade

Lights up her love-torch.
A most gentle maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home,
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a lady, vowed and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove),
Glides through the pathways; she knows all their notes,
That gentle maid! and oft a moment's space,
What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence; till the moon
Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
With one sensation, and these wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
A hundred airy harps! and she hath watched
Many a nightingale perched giddily
On blossoming twig still swinging from the breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song,
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

SAMUEL
TAYLC
COLER

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-ward sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,
Than thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.
Oh for a draught of vintage,
Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burned mirth!

Oh for a beaker full of the warm South,
  Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
      And purple-stained mouth,
  That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim.

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
  What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret;
  Here, where men sit and hear each other groan—
Where palsy shakes a few sad, last gray hairs—
  Where youth grows pale, and specter-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow,
      And leaden-eyed despairs;
  Where beauty can not keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
  Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of poesy,
  Though the dull train perplexes and retards;
Already with thee tender is the night,
  And haply the queen-moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry fays;
      But here there is no light,
  Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I can not see what flowers are at my feet,
  Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
  Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
  White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets, covered up in leaves,
      And mid-May's oldest child,
  The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of bees on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time

I have been half in love with easeful death,
Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now, more than ever, seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight, with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad,
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn:
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell,
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy can not cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision or a waking dream?
Fled is that music—do I wake or sleep?

JOHN
KEA
179
182

THE NIGHTINGALE.

FROM THE DUTCH.

Prize thou the nightingale,
Who soothes thee with his tale,
And wakes the woods around;
A singing feather, he—a winged and wandering sound:

Whose tender carroling
Sets all ears listening
Unto that living lyre,
Whence flow the airy notes his ecstasies inspire;

Whose shrill, capricious song,
Breathes like a flute along,
With many a careless tone—
Music of thousand tongues, formed by one tongue alone.

O charming creature rare,
Can aught with thee compare?
Thou art all song—thy breast
Thrills for one month o' th' year—is tranquil all the rest.

Thee wondrous we may call—
Most wondrous this of all,
That such a tiny throat
Should wake so loud a sound, and pour so loud a note.

MARIA TESSELSCHADE VISSCHER—*Born in the 16th century.*

Translation of DR. BOWRING.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

The rose looks out in the valley,
And thither will I go!
To the rosy vale, where the nightingale
Sings his song of woe.

The virgin is on the river side,
  Culling the lemons pale:
Thither—yes! thither will I go,
  To the rosy vale, where the nightingale
    Sings his song of woe.

The fairest fruit her hand hath cull'd,
  'Tis for her lover all:
Thither—yes! thither will I go,
  To the rosy vale, where the nightingale
    Sings his song of woe.

In her hat of straw, for her gentle swain,
  She has placed the lemons pale:
Thither—yes! thither will I go,
  To the rosy vale, where the nightingale
    Sings his song of woe.

Translation of JOHN BOWRING. GIL VICENTE, 1480–1557.

THE MOTHER BIRD.

SIMILE FROM "DIVINA COMMEDIA."

Like as the bird who on her nest all night
  Had rested, darkling with her tender brood,
'Mid the loved foliage, longing now for light,
  To gaze on their dear looks, and bring them food:
Sweet task! whose pleasures all its toil repay—
  Anticipates the dawn, and through the wood
Ascending, perches on the topmost spray;
  There, all impatience, watching to descry
The first faint glimmer of approaching day:
  Thus did my lady toward the southern sky,
Erect and motionless, her visage turn;
  The mute suspense that filled her wistful eye,
Made me like one who waits a friend's return,
Lives on this hope, and will no other own.

Translation of F. C. GRAY. DANTE ALIGHIERI, 1265–1321.

THE MOTHER NIGHTINGALE.

FROM THE SPANISH.

I have seen a nightingale,
On a sprig of thyme bewail,
Seeing the dear nest, which was
Hers alone, borne off, alas!
By a laborer. I heard,
For this outrage, the poor bird
Say a thousand mournful things
To the wind, which, on its wings,
From her to the guardian of the sky,
Bore her melancholy cry—
Bore her tender tears. She spake
As if her fond heart would break:
One while, in a sad, sweet note,
Gurgled from her straining throat;
She enforced her piteous tale,
Mournful prayer, and plaintive wail;
One while with the shrill dispute,
Quite outwearied, she was mute;
Then afresh for her dear brood,
Her harmonious shrieks renewed.
Now she winged it round and round;
Now she skimmed along the ground;
Now, from bough to bough, in haste,
The delighted robber chased,
And, alighting in his path,
Seemed to say, 'twixt grief and wrath,
"Give me back, fierce rustic rude—
Give me back my pretty brood!"
And I saw the rustic still
Answered, "That I never will!"

Translation of T. ROSCOE. ESTEVAN MANUEL DE VILLEGAS, 1595–1669.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

FROM THE DUTCH.

Soul of living music, teach me—
  Teach me, floating thus along!
Love-sick warbler, come and reach me
  With the secrets of thy song!

How thy beak, so sweetly trembling,
  On one note long lingering tries;
Or a thousand tones assembling,
  Pour the rush of harmonies!

Or when rising shrill and shriller,
  Other music dies away—
Other songs grow still and stiller,
  Songster of the night and day!

Till—all sunk to silence round thee—
  Not a whisper—not a word—
Not a leaf-fall to confound thee—
  Breathless all—thou only heard.

Tell me, thou who failest never,
  Minstrel of the songs of spring!
Did the world see ages ever,
  When thy voice forgot to sing?

Is there in your woodland history
  Any Homer, whom ye read?
Has your music aught of mystery?
  Has it measure, cliff, and creed?

Have ye teachers who instruct ye—
  Checking each ambitious strain—
Learned parrots to conduct ye,
  When ye wander back again?

Smiling at my dreams, I see thee,
  Nature, in her chainless will,

Did not fetter thee, but free thee—
  Pour thy hymns of rapture still!

Plumed in pomp, and pride prodigious,
  Lo! the gaudy peacock rears;
But his grating voice so hideous,
  Shocks the soul and grates the ears.

Finches may be trained to follow
  Notes which dexterous arts combine;
But those notes sound vain and hollow
  When compared, sweet bird, with thine.

Classic themes no longer courting—
  Ancient tongues I'll cast away,
And with nightingales disporting,
  Sing the wild and woodland lay!

Anonymous Translation. LOOTS, *a living Dutch Poet.*

NEST OF THE NIGHTINGALE.

Up this green woodland side let's softly rove,
And list the nightingale; she dwells just here.
Hush! let the wood-gate softly clap, for fear
The noise might drive her from her home of love;
For here I've heard her many a merry year—
At morn, at eve—nay, all the live-long day,
As though she lived on song. This very spot,
Just where the old-man's-beard all wildly trails
Rude arbors o'er the road, and stops the way;
And where the child its blue-bell flowers hath got,
Laughing and creeping through the mossy rails;
There have I hunted like a very boy,
Creeping on hands and knees through matted thorn,
To find her nest, and see her feed her young,
And vainly did I many hours employ:
All seemed as hidden as a thought unborn;
And where those crumpling fern-leaves ramp among
The hazel's under-boughs, I've nestled down

And watch'd her while she sang; and her renown
Hath made me marvel that so famed a bird
Should have no better dress than russet brown.
Her wings would tremble in her ecstasy,
And feathers stand on end, as 'twere with joy;
And mouth wide open to release her heart
Of its out-sobbing songs. The happiest part
Of summer's fame she shared, for so to me
Did happy fancy shapen her employ.
But if I touched a bush, or scarcely stirred,
All in a moment stopt. I watched in vain:
The timid bird had left the hazel bush,
And oft in distance hid to sing again.
Lost in a wilderness of listening leaves,
Rich ecstasy would pour its luscious strain,
Till envy spurred the emulating thrush
To start less wild and scarce inferior songs;
For while of half the year care him bereaves,
To damp the ardor of his speckled breast,
The nightingale to summer's life belongs,
And naked trees, and winter's nipping wrongs
Are strangers to her music, and her rest.
Her joys are ever green—her world is wide!
Hark! there she is, as usual; let's be hush;
For in this black-thorn clump, if rightly guessed,
Her curious house is hidden. Part aside
Those hazel branches in a gentle way,
And stoop right cautious 'neath the rustling boughs,
For we will have another search to-day,
And hunt this fern-strewn thorn-clump round and round;
And where this reeded wood-grass idly bows,
We'll wade right through; it is a likely nook.
In such like spots, and often on the ground
They'll build, where rude boys never think to look.
Ay! as I live! her secret nest is here,
Upon this white-thorn stump! * * *
We will not plunder music of its dower,
Nor turn this spot of happiness to thrall,
For melody seems hid in every flower

That blossoms near thy home. These blue-bells all
Seem bowing with the beautiful in song;
And gaping cuckoo-flower, with spotted leaves,
Seems blushing of the singing it has heard.
How curious is the nest! No other bird
Uses such loose materials, or weaves
Its dwelling in such spots! Dead oaken leaves
Are placed without, and velvet moss within;
And little scraps of grass, and scant and spare,
What hardly seem materials, down and hair;
For from men's haunts she nothing seems to win.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

SONNET.

Sweet bird, that sing'st away the early hours
  Of winters past or coming—void of care,
  Well pleased with delights which present are;
Fair seasons, budding sprays, sweet-smelling flowers;
To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy bowers,
  Thou thy Creator's goodness dost declare,
  And what dear gifts on thee he did not spare;
A stain to human sense in sin that lowers.
What soul can be so sick, which by thy songs,
  Attir'd in sweetness, sweetly is not driven
Quite to forget earth's turmoils, spites, and wrongs,
  And lift a reverent eye and thought to heaven?

WILLIAM DRUMMON
1585–1649.

THE LARK.

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise—
His steeds to water at those springs,
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With every thing that pretty bin—
My lady sweet, arise!

W

FROM THE "COMPLETE ANGLER."

At first the lark, when she means to rejoice, to cheer herself and those that hear her, she then quits the earth, and sings as she ascends higher into the air; and having ended her heavenly employment, grows then mute and sad, to think she must descend to the dull earth, which she would not touch but for necessity,

How do the blackbird and throssel, with their melodious voices, bid welcome to the cheerful spring, and in their fixed mouths warble forth such ditties as no art or instrument can reach to!

Nay, the smaller birds also do the like in their particular seasons, as, namely, the laverock, the titlark, the little linnet, and the honest robin, that loves mankind, both alive and dead.

But the nightingale—another of my airy creatures—breathes such sweet, loud music out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think miracles are not ceased. He that at midnight, when the very laborer sleeps securely, should hear—as I have very often—the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling

and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth, and say, "Lord, what music hast thou provided for the saints in heaven, when thou afforded bad men such music on earth?"

IZAAK WALTON, 1593–1683.

TO THE SKYLARK.

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wer't,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher,
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the setting sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale, purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad daylight,
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.
Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,

As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud,
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow-clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden,
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden,
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wing'd thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was

Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass,

Teach no sprite or bird
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphant chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear, keen joyance
Languor can not be:
Shades of annoyance
Never come near thee:
Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking, or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream;
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;

If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound;
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

PERCY
BY:
SH

A LARK SINGING IN A RAINBOW.

Fraught with a transient, frozen shower
If a cloud should haply lower,
Sailing o'er the landscape dark,
Mute, on a sudden, is the lark;
But when gleams the sun again
O'er the pearl-besprinkled plain,
And from behind his watery vail
Looks through the thin descending hail;
She mounts, and, lessening to the sight,
Salutes the blithe return of light,
And high her tuneful track pursues
Through the rainbow's melting hues.

THOMAS
WARTO
1728–
1790.

THE SKYLARK.

FROM "THE FARMER'S BOY."

When music waking, speaks the skylark nigh,
Just starting from the corn, he cheerly sings,
And trusts with conscious pride his downy wings;
Still louder breathes, and in the face of day
Mounts up, and calls on Giles to mark his way.
Close to his eyes his hat he instant bends,
And forms a friendly telescope, that lends
Just aid enough to dull the glaring light,
And place the wandering bird before his sight,
That oft beneath a light cloud sweeps along,
Lost for a while, yet pours the varied song.
The eye still follows, and the cloud moves by;
Again he stretches up the clear blue sky.
His form, his motion, undistinguish'd quite,
Save when he wheels direct from shade to light;
E'en then the songster a mere speck become,
Gliding like fancy's bubbles in a dream,
The gazer sees * * * *

ROBERT
BLOOMfiELI
1766–
1823.

THE MOORS OF JUTLAND.

FROM THE DANISH.

I lay on my heathery hills all alone,
  The storm-winds rush'd o'er me in turbulence loud;
My head rested lone on the gray moorland stone,
  My eyes wandered starward from cloud unto cloud.

There wandered my eyes, but my thoughts onward passed,
  Far, far beyond cloud-track or tempests' career;

At times I hummed songs, and the desolate waste
Was the first the sad chimes of my spirit to hear.

Gloomy and gray are the moorlands, where rest
My fathers, yet there doth the wild heather bloom;
And amid the old cairns the lark buildeth her nest,
And sings in the desert, o'er hill-top, and tomb!

Translation of MRS. HOWITT. BLICKER.

THE RISING OF THE LARK.

For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and, soaring upward, sing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more and more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over, and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below: so is the prayer of a good man.

JEREMY TAYLOR, 1613–1667.

THE LARK.

Bird of the wilderness,
Blithesome and cumberless,
Sweet be thy matins o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—

O to abide in the desert with thee!
Wild is thy lay, and loud,
Far in the downy cloud;
Love gives it energy—love gave it birth:
Where, on thy dewy wing—
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven—thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!
Then, when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms,
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
O to abide in the desert with thee!

LARK.

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler! that love-prompted strain
('Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain;
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine;
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with rapture more divine;
Type of the wise who soar but never roam;
Twin to the kindred points of Heaven and home.

LINES.

So when the lark, poor bird! afar espyeth
Her yet unfeathered children, whom to save
She strives in vain—slain by the fatal scythe,
Which from the meadow her green locks do shave,
That their warm nest is now become their grave.
The woful mother up to heaven springs,
And all about her plaintive notes she flings,
And their untimely fate most pitifully sings.

GILES FLETCHE
1588–
1623.

VI.
May.

What, alas! will become of those luckless wights—the future poets of Caffreland and New Zealand, of Patagonia and Pitcairn's Island—when they suddenly awake to the miserable reality that there is no May in their year. May! The very word in itself is charming; pleasing to the eye, falling sweetly on the ear, gliding naturally into music and song, dowered with innumerable images of beauty and delight, imaginary bliss, and natural joy. What, we ask again, will be the melancholy consequences to the southern hemisphere when they become fully conscious that they have lost the "merry month," the "soote season," from their calendar—that with them January must forever linger in the lap of May. Conceive of Hottentot elegies and Fejee sonnets enlarging upon the balmy airs and soft skies of November; raving about the tender young blossoms of December, and the delicate fruits of January. Will the world ever become really accustomed to such a change of key? We doubt it. After all, there is something in primogeniture; it naturally gives all the honors of precedence. Those writers who first caught the ear of the listening earth will always have the best of it; their successors must fain be content to

yield a certain homage to long-established privileges. It will be a great while yet—at least a thousand years or so—before the Dryden of Port Sidney or the Camoens of Paraguay shall venture to say hard things of May!

MAY MORNING.

SONG.

Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flow'ry May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
    Hail bounteous May, that dost inspire
    Mirth, and youth, and warm desire;
    Woods and groves are of thy dressing;
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long!

EMILIA ON MAY DAY.

FROM "PALAMON AND ARCITE."

Thus year by year they pass, and day by day,
Till once, 'twas on the morn of cheerful May,
The young Emilia, fairer to be seen
Than the fair lily on the flowery green—
More fresh than May herself in blossoms new—
For with the rosy color strove her hue—
Waked, as her custom was, before the day,
To do th' observance due to sprightly May:
For sprightly May commands our youth to keep
The vigils of her nights, and breaks their sluggard sleep.

Each gentle breath with kindly warmth she moves;
Inspires new flames, revives extinguished loves.
In this remembrance, Emily, ere day,
Arose, and dress'd herself in rich array;
Fresh as the month, and as the morning fair,
Adown her shoulders fell her length of hair;
A ribbon did the braided tresses bind,
The rest was loose, and wanton'd in the wind,
Aurora had but newly chas'd the night,
And purpled o'er the sky with blushing light,
When to the garden walk she took her way
To sport and trip along in cool of day,
And offer maiden vows in honor of the May.
  At every turn she made a little stand,
And thrust among the thorns her lily hand,
To draw the rose; and every rose she drew,
She shook the stalk, and brush'd away the dew;
Then parti-colored flowers of white and red
She wove, to make a garland for her head:
This done, she sung and carrol'd out so clear,
That men and angels might rejoice to hear:
Our wandering Philomel forgot to sing,
And learned from her to welcome in the spring.

SALUTATION OF MAIA.

FROM THE "MASQUE OF THE PENATES."

If every pleasure were distilled
Of every flower in every field,
And all that Hybla's hives do yield,
Were into one broad mazer filled;
If thereto added all the gums
And spice that from Panchaïs comes,
The odor that Hydaspes lends,
Or Phœnix proves before she ends;
If all the air my Flora drew,
Or spirit that Zephyr ever blew,
Were put therein; and all the dew
That every rosy morning knew;
Yet all diffused upon this bower,
To make one sweet detaining hour,

Were much too little for the grace
And honor you vouchsafe the place;
But if you please to come again,
We vow we will not then with vain
And empty pastimes entertain
Your so desired, though grieved, pain;
For we will have the wanton fawns,
That frisking skip about the lawns,
The Panisks and the Sylvans rude,
Satyrs, and all that multitude,
To dance their wilder rounds about,
To cleave the air with many a shout,
As they would hunt poor Echo out
Of yonder valley, who doth flout,
Their rustic noises, to visit whom,
You shall behold whole bevies come
Of gaudy nymphs, whose tender calls
Well tuned unto the many falls
Of sweet and several sliding rills,
That stream from tops of those less hills,
Like so many silver quills,
When Zephyr them with music fills.
For them Favonius here shall blow
New flowers, that you shall see to grow—
Of which each hand a part shall take,
And for your heads fresh garlands make,
Wherewith, while they your temples round,
An air of several birds shall sound
An Io Pæon, that shall drown
The acclamation at your crown.
All this, and more than I have give gift of saying,
May vows, so you will oft come here a Maying.

BEN
JON
157
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SONG

FROM THE GERMAN OF THE MINNESINGERS.

Up, up! let us greet
The season so sweet,
  For winter is gone,
And the flowers are springing,
And little birds singing,
Their soft notes ringing,
  And bright is the sun!
Where all was dressed
In a snowy vest;
There grass is growing,
With dew-drops glowing,
  And flowers are seen
  On beds of green.
All down in the grove,
Around, above,
  Sweet music floats;
As now loudly vying,
Now softly sighing,
The nightingale's plying
  Her tuneful notes;
And joyous at spring,
Her companions sing,
Up, maidens, repair
To the meadows so fair,
  And dance we away,
  This merry May.

Translation of E. TAYLOR. GOTTFRIED VON NIFEN, *about 1200*.

MAY.

FROM THE GERMAN MINNESINGERS.

May, sweet May, again is come—
May, that frees the land from gloom;
Children, children, up and see
All her stores of jollity!

On the laughing hedgerow's side
She hath spread her treasures wide;
She is in the greenwood shade,
Where the nightingale hath made
Every branch and every tree
Ring with her sweet melody;
Hill and dale are May's own treasures.
Youths, rejoice! In sportive measures
  Sing ye! join the chorus gay!
  Hail this merry, merry May!

Up, then, children! we will go
Where the blooming roses grow;
In a joyful company
We the bursting flowers will see:
Up; your festal dress prepare!
Where gay hearts are meeting—there
May hath pleasures most inviting,
Heart, and sight, and ear delighting.
Listen to the bird's sweet song;
Hark! how soft it floats along!
Courtly dames our pleasures share!
Never saw I May so fair;
Therefore dancing will we go.
Youths, rejoice! the flowerets blow!
  Sing ye! join the chorus gay!
  Hail this merry, merry May!

Our manly youths, where are they now?
Bid them up and with us go,
To the sporters on the plain:
Bid adieu to care and pain,
Now, thou pale and wounded lover!
Thou thy peace shalt soon recover,
Many a laughing lip and eye
Speaks the light heart's gayety;
Lovely flowers around we find,
In the smiling verdure twined;
Richly steeped in May-dews glowing.
Youths, rejoice! the flowers are blowing!
  Sing ye! join the chorus gay!

Hail this merry, merry May!

O, if to my love restored—
To her, o'er all her sex adored—
What supreme delight were mine!
How would care her sway resign?
Merrily in the bloom of May
Would I weave a garland gay.
Better than the best is she,
Purer than all purity;
For her spotless self alone,
I will praise this changeless one:
Thankful, or unthankful, she
Shall my song, my idol be.
Youths, then join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry, merry May!

Translation of EDGAR TAYLOR. CONRAD V. KIRCHBERG, *about 1170*.

SONG.

FROM "ANGLING REMINISCENCES."

Sing, sweet thrushes, forth and sing!
Meet the morn upon the lea;
Are the emeralds of the spring
On the angler's trysting-tree?
Tell, sweet thrushes, tell to me!
Are there buds on our willow-tree?
Buds and birds on our trysting-tree?

Sing, sweet thrushes, forth and sing!
Have you met the honey bee,
Circling upon rapid wing,
'Round the angler's trysting-tree?
Up, sweet thrushes, up and see!
Are there bees at our willow-tree?
Birds and bees at the trysting-tree

Sing, sweet thrushes, forth and sing!
Are the fountains gushing free?
Is the south wind wandering
Through the angler's trysting-tree?
Up, sweet thrushes, tell to me!
Is there wind up our willow-tree?
Wind or calm at our trysting-tree?

Sing, sweet thrushes, forth and sing!
Wile us with a merry glee;
To the flowery haunts of spring—
To the angler's trysting-tree.
Tell, sweet thrushes, tell to me!
Are there flowers 'neath our willow-tree?
Spring and flowers at the trysting-tree?

MAY.

I feel a newer life in every gale;
The winds that fan the flowers,
And with their welcome breathings fill the sail,
Tell of serener hours—
Of hours that glide unfelt away,
Beneath the sky of May.

The spirit of the gentle south-wind calls
From his blue throne of air;
And where his whispering voice in music falls,
Beauty is budding there.
The bright ones of the valley break
Their slumbers, and awake.

The waving verdure rolls along the plain,
And the wide forest weaves,
To welcome back its playful mates again,
A canopy of leaves;
And from its darkening shadow floats,
A gush of trembling notes.

Fairer and brighter spreads the reign of May;
The tresses of the woods,
With the light dallying of the west-wind play,
And the full-brimming floods,
As gladly to their goal they run,
Hail the returning sun.

JAMES

VII.
The Flock.

Dyer's poem of "The Fleece," though little read now-a-days, has found warm admirers among the great poets of England. Akenside once remarked that he should regulate his opinion of the public taste by the reception of "The Fleece;" for if it were not to succeed, "he should think it no longer reasonable to expect fame from excellence." And Mr. Wordsworth appears to have been very much of the same opinion:

> "Bard of 'The Fleece,' whose skillful genius made
> That work a living landscape, fair and bright,
>
> * * * * *
>
> Though party Fame hath many a chaplet culled
> For worthless brows, while in the pensive shade
> Of cold neglect she leaves thy head ungraced,
> Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts meek and still,
> A grateful few shall love thy modest lay,
> Long as the shepherd's bleating flock shall stray
> O'er naked Snowdon's wide aerial waste—
> Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar Hill."

Dyer is one of those writers whose higher efforts have been little heeded, while his lesser works have been much liked. "Grongar Hill" and "The Country

Walk" have been always read with pleasure, while the "Ruins of Rome" and "The Fleece" lie on the shelf unopened. The saucy critic, who on hearing, shortly after the publication of "The Fleece," that Dyer was growing old, exclaimed, "He will be buried in woolen!" has proved at least a true seer. The world never forgives a man of approved talent, who, having once fixed its attention agreeably, fails in some higher and later aim. The game of authorship is, in this sense, like many other games, where, if the last throw is a blank, you lose all that has been previously won from the pool of fame and fortune. The public has very little patience. But, on the other hand, we can not always adhere implicitly to the opinion of some wiser judge, though he be of the higher court, who may desire to revoke the earlier general decision. The literary man usually makes up his mind regarding a book upon very different grounds from the general reader; the public decides rapidly, from first impressions, from general views; it has neither time nor ability to waste on analysis; the critic delights in looking very closely at his subject, and his enjoyment of perfection of detail is often too great. The public is, no doubt, the best judge of the interest of a work, since it considers little else. The man of letters holds the best gauge of talent; he appreciates more justly excellency of workmanship and accuracy of finish. But a really great book is not written for one class only—it should satisfy the best of all classes; it must have more than one kind of merit—it must possess interest for the careless reader, skill and good workmanship for the critic, power and inspiration to strike the spark from kindred genius. There is quite a large class of poetical works especially, which, while they meet with more or less approbation from the critic, fail to

please generally; they lack interest; the writer has had talent enough to introduce much that is good, or, perhaps, even admirable passages, at intervals; but he has not been endowed with the genius which grasps, and controls, and shapes, and vivifies every subject which it handles. Among this class may be placed "The Fleece." The writer, John Dyer, was a Welshman of respectable parentage, born in 1700, who first studied law, then became a painter, and finally took orders in the Church of England. The extract we have given from "The Fleece" scarcely does justice to the merits of the poem, but we have selected it from its predictions regarding our own country; not only do Virginia and Massachusetts appear on the scene, but even California figures in these verses, written more than a hundred years ago.

ON A RURAL IMAGE OF PAN.

FROM THE GREEK OF PLATO.

Sleep, ye rude winds! Be every murmur dead
On yonder oak-crowned promontory's head!
Be still, ye bleating flocks—your shepherd calls.
Hang silent on your rocks, ye waterfalls!
Pan on his oaten pipe awakes the strains,
And fills with dulcet sounds the pastoral plains.
Lured by his notes, the nymphs their bowers forsake,
From every fountain, running stream, and lake,
From every hill and ancient grove around,
And to symphonious measures strike the ground.

Translation of J. H. MERIVALE.

PASTORAL SCENE FROM "THE

ARCADIA.”

There were hills which garnished their proud heights with stately trees; humble valleys whose base estate seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers; meadows enameled with all sorts of eye-pleasing flowers; thickets which, being lined with most pleasant shade, were witnessed so by the cheerful disposition of many well-tuned birds; each pasture stored with sheep feeding with sober security, while the pretty lambs, with bleating oratory, craved the dam’s comfort; here a shepherd’s boy piping, as though he should never be old; there a young shepherdess knitting, and withal singing, and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice-music.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, 1554–1586.

FROM THE “FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS.”

Shepherds all, and maidens fair,
Fold your flocks up, for the air
'Gins to thicken, and the sun
Already his great course hath run.
See the dew-drops, how they kiss
Every little flower that is
Hanging on their velvet heads,
Like a rope of crystal beads;
See the heavy clouds low-falling,
And bright Hesperus down calling
The dead night from underground;
At whose rising, mists unsound,
Damps and vapors fly apace,
Hovering o’er the wanton face
Of those pastures where they come,
Striking dead both bud and bloom.

Therefore, from such danger lock
Every one his loved flock;
And let your dogs lie loose without,
Lest the wolf come as a scout
From the mountain, and, ere day,
Bear a lamb or kid away;
Or the crafty, thievish foe
Break upon your simple flocks.
To secure yourself from these,
Be not too secure in ease;
Let one eye his watches keep,
While the other eye doth sleep;
So you shall good shepherds prove,
And for ever hold the love
Of our great God. Sweetest slumbers,
And soft silence, fall in numbers
On your eyelids! so farewell!
Thus I end my evening knell!

JOHN FLETCH
1576–
1625.

THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE.

Thrice, oh thrice happy, shepherd's life and state,
When courts are happiness' unhappy pawns!
His cottage low, and safely humble gate
Shuts out proud Fortune, with her scorns and fawns;
No feared treason breaks his quiet sleep:
Singing all day, his flocks he learns to keep;
Himself as innocent as are his simple sheep.

No Serian worms he knows, that with their thread
Draw out their silken lives; nor silken pride:
His lambs' warm fleece well fits his little need,
Not in that proud Sidonian tincture dyed:
No empty hopes, no courtly fears him fright;
Nor begging wants his middle fortune bite:

But sweet content exiles both misery and spite.

Instead of music and base flattering tongues,
Which wait to first salute my Lord's uprise;
The cheerful lark wakes him with early songs,
And birds' sweet whistling notes unlock his eyes:
In country plays is all the strife he uses,
Or sing, or dance unto the rural Muses;
And, but in music's sports, all difference refuses.

His certain life, that never can deceive him,
Is full of thousand sweets and rich content:
The smooth-leaved beeches in the field receive him
With coolest shades, till noon-tide's rage is spent:
His life is neither tost in boist'rous seas
Of troublous world, nor lost in slothful ease;
Pleas'd and full bless'd he lives, when he his God can please.

His bed of wool yields safe and quiet sleeps,
While by his side his faithful spouse hath place:
His little son into his bosom creeps,
The lively picture of his father's face:
Never his humble house or state torment him;
Less he could like, if less his God had sent him;
And when he dies, green turfs with grassy tomb content him.

PHINEAS FLETCHER, 1584–1650.

THE SHEPHERD'S ADDRESS TO HIS MUSE.

Good Muse, rocke me aslepe
With some swete harmony:
This wearie eyes is not to kepe
Thy wary company.

Sweete Love, begone a while,
  Thou seest my heavinesse;
Beautie is borne but to beguyle
  My harte of happinesse.

See how my little flocke,
  That lovde to feede on highe,
Doe headlonge tumble downe the rocke,
  And in the valley dye.

The bushes and the trees,
  That were so freshe and greene,
Doe all their daintie colors leese,
  And not a leafe is seene.

The blacke bird and the thrushe,
  That made the woodes to ringe,
With all the rest, are now at hushe,
  And not a note they singe.

Swete Philomele, the birde
  That hath the heavenly throte,
Doth nowe, alas! not once afforde
  Recordinge of a note.

The flowers have had a frost,
  The herbes have lost their savoure;
And Phillada the faire hath lost
  For me her wonted favour.

Thus all these careful sights
  So kill me in conceit,
That now to hope upon delights
  It is but mere deceite.

And therefore my sweete muse,
  That knoweth what helpe is best,
Doe nowe thy heavenlie cunning use
  To sett my harte at rest.

And in a dream bewraie
  What fate shall be my friende;

Whether my life shall still decaye,
  Or when my sorrowes ende.

NICHOLAS BRETON,
about 1570.

PHILLIDA AND CORYDON.[9]

In the merrie moneth of Maye,
In a morne by break of daye,
With a troope of damsells playing,
Forth I yode forsooth a maying;

Where anon by a wood side,
Where as May was in his pride,
I espied all alone
Phillida and Corydon.

Much adoe there was, God wot;
He wold love, and she wold not.
She sayde never man was trewe;
He sayes none was false to you.

He sayde hee had lovde her longe:
She sayes love should have no wronge.
Corydon wold kisse her then:
She sayes maids must kisse no men,

Tyll they doe for good and all.
When she made the shepperde call
All the heavens to wytnes truthe,
Never lov'd a truer youthe.

Then with many a prettie othe,
Yea, and naye, and faithe and trothe;
Such as seelie shepperdes use
When they will not love abuse;

Love that had bene long deluded
Was with kisses swete concluded;

And Phillida with garlands gaye
Was made the ladye of the Maye.

SHEARING TIME.

FROM "THE FLEECE."

If verdant elder spreads
Her silver flowers; if humble daisies yield
To yellow crowfoot and luxuriant grass,
Gay shearing-time approaches. First, howe'er,
Drive to the double fold, upon the brim
Of a clear river; gently drive the flock,
And plunge them one by one into the flood.
Plunged in the flood, not long the struggler sinks,
With his white flakes, that glisten through the tide;
The sturdy rustic, in the middle wave
Awaits to seize him rising; one arm bears
His lifted head above the limpid stream,
While the full, clammy fleece the other laves
Around, laborious with repeated toil,
And then resigns him to the sunny bank,
Where, bleating loud, he shakes his dripping locks.

Now to the other hemisphere, my muse!
A new world found, extend thy daring wing.
Be thou the first of the harmonious nine
From high Parnassus, the unwearied toils
Of industry and valor, in that world
Triumphant, to reward with tuneful song.

Happy the voyage o'er the Atlantic brine,
By active Raleigh made, and great the joy
When he discern'd, above the foaming surge,
A rising coast, for future colonies,
Opening her bays, and figuring her capes,
E'en from the northern tropic to the pole.

No land gives more employment for the loom,
Or kindlier feeds the indigent; no land
With more variety of wealth rewards
The hand of labor: thither, from the wrongs
Of lawless rule, the free-born spirit flies;
Thither affliction, thither poverty,
And arts and sciences; thrice happy clime,
Which Britain makes th' asylum of mankind.
  But joy superior far his bosom warms,
Who views those shores in every culture dressed;
With habitations gay, and numerous towns
On hill and valley; and his countrymen
Formed into various states, powerful and rich,
In regions far remote; who from our looms
Take largely for themselves, and for those tribes
Of Indians, ancient tenants of the land,
In amity conjoin'd, of civil life
The comforts taught, and various new desires
Which kindle arts, and occupy the poor,
And spread Britannia's flocks o'er every dale.
  Ye, who the shuttle cast along the loom,
The silkworm's thread inweaving with the fleece,
Pray for the culture of the Georgian track,
Nor slight the green savannas and the plains
Of Carolina, where thick woods arise
Of mulberries, and in whose watered fields
Upsprings the verdant blade of thirsty rice.
Where are the happy regions which afford
More implements of commerce and of wealth?
  Fertile Virginia, like a vigorous bough,
Which overshades some crystal river, spreads
Her wealthy cultivations wide around,
And, more than many a spacious realm, rewards
The fleecy shuttle: to her growing marts
The Iroquese, Cheroquese, and Oubaches come,
And quit their feathery ornaments uncouth
For woolly garments; and the cheers of life—
The cheers, but not the vices, learn to taste.
Blush, Europeans! whom the circling cup
Of luxury intoxicates; ye routs,

Who, for your crimes, have fled your native land;
And ye voluptuous idle, who in vain
Seek easy habitations, void of care:
The sons of Nature with astonishment
And detestation mark your evil deeds,
And view, no longer aw'd, your nerveless arms,
Unfit to cultivate Ohio's banks.
  See the bold emigrants of Acadie
And Massachuset, happy in those arts
That join the politics of trade and war,
Bearing the palm in either; they appear
Better exemplars; and that hardy crew
Who, on the frozen beach of Newfoundland,
Hang their white fish amid the parching winds;
The kindly fleece, in webs of Duffield woof,
Their limbs, benumb'd, infold with cheerly warmth;
And frieze of Cambria, worn by those who seek
Through gulfs and dales of Hudson's winding bay
The beaver's fur, though oft they seek in vain;
While Winter's frosty rigor checks approach
E'en in the fiftieth latitude. Say why
(If ye, the travel'd sons of commerce, know),
Wherefore lie bound their rivers, lakes, and dales
Half the sun's annual course in chains of ice,
While the Rhine's fertile shore, and Gallic realms,
By the same zone encircled, long enjoy
Warm beams of Phœbus, and, supine, behold
Their plains and hillocks blush with clustering vines?
  Must it be ever thus? or may the hand
Of mighty labor drain their gusty lakes,
Enlarge the brightening sky, and, peopling, warm
The opening valleys and the yellowing plains?
Or, rather, shall we burst strong Darien's chain,
Steer our bold fleets between the cloven rocks,
And through the great Pacific every joy
Of civil life diffuse? Are not her isles
Numerous and large? Have they not harbors calm,
Inhabitants, and manners? Haply, too,
Peculiar sciences, and other forms
Of trade, and useful products, to exchange

For woolly vestures? * * *

* * * * *

A day will come, if not too deep we drink
The cup which luxury, on careless wealth,
Pernicious gift! bestows. A day will come,
When, through new channels sailing, we shall clothe
The Californian coast, and all the realms
That stretch from Anian's straits to proud Japan.

DYER'S *Fleece*, 1700–1758.

A FAYRE AND HAPPY MILK-MAID.

Is a countrey wench, that is so farre from making her selfe beautifull by art, that one looke of hers is able to put *all face physicke* out of countenance. She knowes a faire looke is but a *dumbe orator* to commend virtue, therefore minds it not. All her

excellencies stand in her so silently, as if they had stolne upon her without her knowledge. The lining of her apparall (which is her selfe) is farre better than outsides of tisseu; for though she be not arraied in the spoile of the silke-worme, shee is deckt in *innocency*, a farre better wearing. She doth not, with lying long abed, spoile both her *complexion* and *conditions*. Nature hath taught her too immoderate sleepe is rust to the soule; she rises, therefore, with *chaunticleare*, her dame's cock, and at night makes the *lambe* her *curfew*. In milking a cow, a-straining the *teats* through her fingers, it seems that so sweete a milk-presse makes the milk the whiter or sweeter; for never came *almond glove*, or *aromatique oyntment* on her palme to taint it. The golden eares of corne fall and kisse her feet when she reapes them, as if they wisht to be bound, and led prisoners by the same hand that fell'd them. Her breath is her own, which scents all the yeare long of *June*, like a new-made hay-cocke. She makes her hand hard with labour, and her heart soft with pity; and when winter evenings fall early (sitting at her mery wheele) she sings a defiance to the giddy *wheele of fortune*. She doth all things with so sweet a grace, it seems *ignorance* will not suffer her to do ill, being her mind is to doe well. She bestowes her yeare's wages at next faire; and in chusing her garments, counts no bravery i' the world like decency. The *garden* and *bee-hive* are all her physick and chyrurgerye, and shee lives the longer for't. She dares goe alone, and unfold sheepe i' the night, and feares no manner of ill, because she meanes none; yet to say truth, she is never alone, for she is still accompanied with *old songs*, *honest thoughts*, and *prayers*, but short ones; yet they have their efficacy, in that they are not pauled with ensuing idle cogitations. Lastly: her dreams are

so chaste, that she dare tell them; only a Fridaie's dream is all her *superstition*: that shee conceales for feare of anger. Thus lives she, and all her care is that she may die in the *spring-time*, to have store of flowers stucke upon her winding-sheet.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY, 1581–1613.

SHEEP-PASTURES.

The Teviot takes its course through wide valleys of smooth, extended pasturage, sloping down to it in all directions, and in general forming beautiful lines, though otherwise void of all those circumstances, and that variety of objects, particularly of wood, which give beauty to landscape. In some parts these valleys are also contracted, but in a different manner from those of the Esk. The same breadth of feature is still preserved which we had in the more open parts, only it is here brought nearer to the eye. Though the lofty skreens rush down precipitately to the river, and contract the valleys, you see plainly they are the parts of a large-featured country, and in a style of landscape very different from those little irriguous valleys which we had left.

The downy sides of all these valleys are covered with sheep, which often appear to hang upon immense green walls. So steep is the descent in some parts, that the eye from the bottom scarce distinguishes the slope from a perpendicular. Several of these mountainous slopes (for some of them are very lofty) are finely tinted with mosses of different hues, which give them a very rich surface. This, however, is probably the garb which nature wears only in the summer months. She has a variety of dresses for all seasons, and all so becoming, that

when she deposits one, and assumes another, she is always adorned with beauties peculiar to herself.

GILPIN'S "*Highlands of Scotland.*"

THE SPINNER'S SONG.

Turn, busy wheel, turn, busy wheel,
And pile upon the circling reel
    A thread as fine and free
As that the insect artist weaves,
In autumn mornings, 'midst the leaves,
    Of yon old apple-tree,
    The moss-grown apple-tree,
    The dewy, filmy apple-tree!

Turn, busy wheel, turn swiftly round,
And blend with my wild song thy sound
    Of peaceful industry;
Such sound as loads the summer breeze,
When, gathering their sweet store, the bees
    Crowd yon broad linden-tree,
    The flowery, shadowy linden-tree!

MAI

SONG FOR THE SPINNING-WHEEL.

FOUNDED UPON A BELIEF PREVALENT AMONG THE PASTORAL VALES OF WESTMORELAND.

Swiftly turn the murmuring wheel!
  Night has brought the welcome hour,
When the weary fingers feel
  Help as if from fairy power;
Dewy night o'ershades the ground,
Turn the swift wheel round and round.

Now beneath the starry sky
  Rest the widely-scattered sheep;
Ply the pleasant labor, ply,
  For the spindle, while they sleep,
With a motion smooth and fine,
Gathers up a trustier line.

Short-lived likings may be bred
  By a glance of feeble eyes;
But true love is like the thread
  Which the kindly wool supplies,
When the flocks are all at rest,
Sleeping on the mountain's breast.

WILLIA
V

WURTHA.

Through the autumn mists so red
  Shot the slim and golden stocks
Of the ripe corn; Wurtha said,
  "Let us cut them for our flocks."

Answered I, "When morning leaves
  Her bright footprints on the sea,
As I cut and bind the sheaves,
  Wurtha, thou shalt glean for me."

"Nay; the full moon shines so bright,
  All along the vale below,
I could count our flocks to-night;
  Haco, let us rise and go;
For when bright the risen morn
  Leaves her footprints on the sea,
Thou may'st cut and bind the corn,
  But I can not glean for thee."

And as I my reed so light
  Blowing sat, her fears to calm,

Said she, “Haco, yesternight,
In my dream, I missed a lamb;
And as down the misty vale
Went I pining for the lost,
Something shadowy and pale
And phantom-like my pathway crossed—
Saying, 'In a chilly bed,
Low and dark, but full of peace,
For your coming, softly spread,
Is the dead lamb’s snowy fleece.’”

Passed the sweetest of all eves—
Morn was breaking for our flocks;
“Let us go and bind the sheaves,
All the slim and golden stocks;
Wake, my Wurtha, wake”—but still
Were her lips as still could be,
And her folded hands too chill
Ever more to glean for me.

TO MEADOWS.

Ye have been fresh and green,
Ye have been filled with flowers;
And ye the walks have been
Where maids have spent their hours.

Ye have beheld where they
With wicker arks did come,
To kiss and bear away
The richer cowslips home.

You’ve heard them sweetly sing,
And seen them in a round;
Each virgin, like the spring,
With honeysuckles crowned.

But now we see none here
   Whose silvery feet did tread,
And with disheveled hair
   Adorned this smoother mead.

Like unthrifts, having spent
   Your stock, and needy grown,
You're left here to lament
   Your poor estates alone.

ROBERT
HE
15

FRENCH SONG.

Dear the felicity,
   Gentle, and fair, and sweet,
Love and simplicity,
   When tender shepherds meet:
Better than store of gold,
Silver and gems untold,
Manners refined and cold,
   Which to our lords belong!
We, when our toil is past,
Softest delight can taste,
While summer's beauties last,
   Dance, feast, and jocund song;
And in our hearts a joy
No envy can destroy.

Translated by LOUISA COSTELLO. MARTIAL D'AUVERGNE, 1440–1508.

VIII.
The Garland.

Among the pieces in the following group will be found some old verses of Gawain Douglas, bishop of Dunkeld. This ancient Scottish poet and Church dignitary was a son of the famous Archibald, earl of Argus, surnamed Bell-the-Cat, from his share in one of the peculiar conspiracies of that strange period—a conspiracy which resulted in hanging a number of the royal favorites of James III., chiefly architects and musicians, ennobled by that prince. James was in this respect too liberal in his tastes to please the fierce old barons surrounding his throne, though doubtless his favor was often weakly lavished upon those in whose society he took pleasure. But one would hardly have expected to find the leader of such a conspiracy the father of a distinguished poet; such, however, was the fact. Bishop Gawain was a great clerk in his day. He wrote a metrical version of the Æneid in the Scottish dialect, and many lesser poetical works, admitted to possess great merit. Sir Walter Scott has introduced both father and son in Marmion. He makes old Bell-the-Cat appear in his true character:

"A letter forged! Saint Jude to speed!

Did ever knight so foul a deed!
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the king praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line;
So swore I, and I swear it still—
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill."

And in another passage we have the poet-bishop himself:

"Amid that dim and smoky light,
Checkering the silver moonshine bright—
A bishop by the altar stood,
A noble lord of Douglas' blood.
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.
Yet show'd his meek and thoughtful eye,
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that in a barbarous age
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld."

Bishop Gawain was compelled by the troubles in Scotland to flee from his native country, and to take refuge at the court of Henry VIII., where he lived for years an honored exile, dying in 1522, at London, of the plague. He was born in 1474. Each canto of his translation of Virgil was preceded by an original prologue; the address to Spring—whence the extract on flowers is taken—is one of the most pleasing of these, and forms his introduction to the 12th Canto of the Æneid. Far from regretting the Scotticisms of his style, the bishop only mourned that his verses were still so English in their aspect: a defect which

will not be likely to strike the modern reader. But in spite of the obsolete words and rugged style, the touch of a poetical spirit, and something of the freshness of the natural blossoms still lingers about Bishop Gawain's Spring chaplet.

FLOWERS.

Through their beauty, and variety of coloure, and exquisite forme, they do bringe to a liberal and gentle minde the remembrance of honestie, comelinesse, and all kinds of virtues; for it would be an unseemly thing (as a certain wise man saith) for him that doth look upon and handle faire and beautiful things, and who frequenteth and is conversant in faire and beautiful places, to have his minde not faire also.

JOHN GERARDE, 1545–1607.

SPRING-FLOWERS.

And blissful blossoms in the bloomed sward,
Submit their heads in the young sun's safeguard;
Ivy-leaves rank o'erspread the barkmekyn wall;
The bloomed hawthorn clad his pykis all
Forth of fresh burgeons; the wine-grapis ying,
Endlong the twistis did on trestles hing.
The locked buttons on the gummed trees,
O'erspreadant leaves of nature's tapestries;
Soft, grassy verdure, after balmy showers,
On curland stalkis smiland to their flowers,
Beholdant them so maine devirs hue:
Some pers, some pale, some burnet, and some blue;
Some gray, some gules, some purpure, some sanguene,
Blanchet, or brown, fauch-colour many one—

Some heavenly-coloured in celestial gré,
Some watery-hued, as the haw-waly sea;
And some depeint in freckles red and white;
Some bright as gold, with aureate levis lite.
The daisie did unbraid her crownal small,
And every flower unlapped in the dale.
The flower-de-luce forth spread out his heavenly hue,
Flower-damas, and columbo black and blue,
Sere downis smale on dandelion sprung,
The young green-bloomed strawberry leaves among;
Gimp gilliflowers their own leaves unshet
Fresh primrose, and the purpure violet.
The rose-knobbis tetand forth their heads.
Gen chip and kyth their vernal lippis red,
Crisp scarlet leaves sheddant baith at aines,
Cast fragrant smell amid from golden grains.
Heavenly lilies with lockerand toppis white
Opened, and shew their crestis redemite,
The balmy vapour from their silver croppis
Distilland wholesome sugared honey-droppis,
So that ilke burgeon, scion, herb, or flower
Wose all embalmed of the sweet liquore
And bathed did in dulce humoures flete
Whereof the beeis wrought their honey sweet.

GAWAIN DOUGLAS, *Bishop of Dunkeld*.

Barmekyn, barbican; *pers*, light blue; *burnet*, brownish; *gules*, scarlet; *fauch-colour*, fawn; *celestial gre*, sky-blue; *haw-waly*, dark-waved; *lite*, little; *flower-damas*, damask rose; *rose-knobbis tetand*, rose-buds peeping; *kyth*, show; *locherand*, curling; *redemite*, crowned; *croppis*, heads.

ARRANGEMENTS OF A BOUQUET.

Here damask roses, white and red,
  Out of my lap first take I,
Which still shall run along the thread
  My chiefest flower this make I.

Among these roses in a row,
  Next place I pinks in plenty,
These double pansies then for show,
  And will not this be dainty?

The pretty pansy then I'll tie
  Like stones some chain enchasing;
And next to them, their near ally,
  The purple violet placing.

The curious choice clove July flower,
  Whose kind hight the carnation,
For sweetness of most sovereign power,
  Shall help my wreath to fashion;

Whose sundry colors of one kind,
  First from one root derived,
Them in their several suits I'll bind:
  My garland so contrived.

A course of cowslips then I'll stick,
  And here and there (so sparely)
The pleasant primrose down I'll prick,
  Like pearls that will show rarely;

Then with these marigolds I'll make
  My garland somewhat swelling,
These honeysuckles then I'll take,
  Whose sweets shall help their smelling.

The lily and the fleur-de-lis,
  For color much contending,
For that I them do only prize,
  They are but poor in scenting;

The daffodil most dainty is,
  To match with these in meetness;
The columbine compared to this,
  All much alike for sweetness.

These in their natures only are
  Fit to emboss the border,
Therefore I'll take especial care
  To place them in their order:

Sweet-williams, campions, sops-in-wine,
  One by another neatly:

Thus have I made this wreath of mine,
  And finished it featly.

MICHAEL
DRAYTON
1563–
1631.

HEART'S-EASE.

* * * * * * * I saw,
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd; a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal throned in the west.
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts.
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon.
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.
The juice of it, on sleeping eyelids laid,
Will make a man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.

W.
SHAKSP
1564–
1616.

THE GARLAND.

The pride of every grove I chose,
  The violet sweet, the lily fair,
The dappled pink and blushing rose,

To deck my charming Chloe's hair.

At morn the nymph vouchsafed to place
Upon her brow the various wreath;
The flowers less blooming than her face,
The scent less fragrant than her breath.

The flowers she wore along the day;
And every nymph and shepherd said,
That in her hair they look'd more gay
Than glowing in their native bed.

Undress'd at evening, when she found
Their odors lost, their colors past,
She changed her look, and on the ground
Her garland and her eye she cast.

That eye dropp'd sense distinct and clear,
As any Muse's tongue could speak,
When from its lid a pearly tear
Ran trickling down her beauteous cheek.

Dissembling what I knew too well,
"My love, my life," said I, "explain
This change of humor; pr'ythee tell:
That falling tear—what does it mean?"

She sigh'd; she smiled: and to the flowers
Pointing, the lovely moralist said—
"See, friend, in some few fleeting hours,
See yonder, what a change is made!"

Ah me! the blooming pride of May,
And that of beauty, are but one:
At morn both flourish bright and gay;
Both fade at evening, pale, and gone.

At dawn poor Stella danced and sung,
The amorous youth around her bow'd:
At night her fatal knell was rung;
I saw and kiss'd her in her shroud.

Such as she is, who died to-day,
  Such I, alas! may be to-morrow;
Go, Damon, bid the Muse display
  The justice of thy Chloe's sorrow.

MATTHEW
PRIOR,
1664–
1721.

TO PRIMROSES

FILLED WITH MORNING DEW.

Why do ye weep, sweet babes? Can tears
  Speak grief in you,
    Who were but born
    Just as the modest morn
  Teem'd her refreshing dew!
  Alas! ye have not known that shower
  That mars a flower;
    Nor felt the unkind
    Breath of a blasting wind;
  Nor are ye worn with years;
  Or warp'd as we,
  Who think it strange to see
Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
Speaking by tears before ye have a tongue.

Speak, whimpering younglings, and make known
  The reason why
    Ye droop and weep;
    Is it for want of sleep,
  Or childish lullaby?
  Or that ye have not seen as yet
  The violet?
    Or brought a kiss
    From that sweetheart to this?
  No, no; this sorrow shown,
  By your tears shed,

Would have this lecture read:
That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
Conceived with grief are, and with tears brought forth.

ROBERT
HE
15

TO THE NARCISSUS.

Arise, and speak thy sorrows, Echo, rise;
Here, by this fountain, where thy love did pine,
Whose memory lives fresh to vulgar fame,
Shrined in this yellow flower, that bears his name.

ECHO.

His name revives, and lifts me up from earth;
See, see the mourning fount, whose springs weep yet
Th' untimely fate of that too beauteous boy,
That trophy of self-love, and spoil of nature,
Who (now transform'd into this drooping flower)
Hangs the repentant head back from the stream;
As if it wish'd—would I had never look'd
In such a flattering mirror! O, Narcissus!
Thou that wast once (and yet art) my Narcissus,
Had Echo but been private with thy thoughts,
She would have dropped away herself in tears
Till she had all turn'd waste, that in her
(As in a true glass) thou might'st have gazed,
And seen thy beauties by more kind reflection.
But self-love never yet could look on truth
But with blear'd beams; slick flattery and she
Are twin-born sisters, and do mix their eyes,
As if you sever one, the other dies.
Why did the gods give thee a heavenly form,
And earthly thoughts to make thee proud of it?

Why do I ask? 'Tis now the known disease
That beauty hath, to bear too deep a sense
Of her own self-conceived excellence.
O hadst thou known the worth of Heaven's rich gift,
Thou wouldst have turn'd it to a truer use,
And not (with starved and covetous ignorance)
Pined in continual eyeing that bright gem,
The glance whereof to others had been more
Than to thy famish'd mind the wide world's store.

BEN
JON
157
163

THE ROSE.

Go, lovely rose!
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired;
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die, that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee;
How small a part of time they share

That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

Yet, though thou fade,
From thy dead leaves let fragrance rise;
And teach the maid
That goodness Time's rude hand defies;
That virtue lives when beauty dies.

EDMUND
WALLEI
1605–
1687.

ANCIENT SERVIAN SONG.

O my fountain, so fresh and cool,
O my rose, so rosy red!
Why art thou blown out so early?
None have I to pluck thee for!
If I plucked thee for my mother—
Ah, poor girl, I have no mother.
If I plucked thee for my sister—
Gone is my sister with her husband.
If I plucked thee for my brother—
To the war my brother's gone.
If I plucked thee for my lover—
Gone 's my lover far away!
Far away, o'er three green mountains,
Far away, o'er three cool fountains!

Translated
by
TALVI.

TO BLOSSOMS.

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past

But you may stay yet here awhile,
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What were ye born to be,
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity nature brought ye forth,
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave;
And after they have shown their pride,
Like you awhile they glide,
Into the grave.

ROBERT
HE
15

CHILDREN'S POSIES.

FROM "JOURNAL OF A NATURALIST."

The amusements and fancies of children, when connected with flowers, are always pleasing, being generally the conceptions of innocent minds unbiased by artifice or pretense; and their love of them seems to spring from a genuine feeling and admiration—a kind of sympathy with objects as fair as their own untainted minds; and I think it is early flowers which constitute their first natural playthings; though summer presents a greater number and variety, they are not so fondly selected. We have our daisies strung and wreathed about our dress; our coronals of orchises and primroses, our cowslip balls, etc.; and one application of flowers at

this season I have noticed, which, though perhaps it is local, yet it has a remarkably pretty effect, forming, for the time, one of the gayest little shrubs that can be seen. A small branch or long spray of the whitethorn, with all its spines uninjured, is selected; and on these, its alternate thorns, a white and blue violet, plucked from their stalks, are stuck upright in succession, until the thorns are covered, and when placed in a flower-pot of moss, it has perfectly the appearance of a beautiful vernal flowering dwarf shrub, and as long as it remains fresh is an object of surprise and delight.

J. L. Knapp.

LOVE'S WREATH.

When Love was a child, and went idling round
  Among flowers the whole summer's day,
One morn in the valley a bower he found,
  So sweet, it allured him to stay.

O'erhead from the trees hung a garland fair,
  A fountain ran darkly beneath;
'Twas Pleasure that hung the bright flowers up there,
  Love knew it and jump'd at the wreath.

But Love did not know—and at his weak years,
  What urchin was likely to know?—
That sorrow had made of her own salt tears,
  That fountain which murmur'd below.

He caught at the wreath, but with too much haste,
  As boys when impatient will do;
It fell in those waters of briny taste,
  And the flowers were all wet through.

Yet this is the wreath he wears night and day;
  And though it all sunny appears

With Pleasure's own luster, each leaf, they say,
  Still tastes of the fountain of tears.

TO DAFFODILS.

Fair daffodils, we weep to see
    You haste away so soon;
As yet, the early-rising sun
    Has not attain'd its noon.
        Stay, stay,
    Until the hastening day
        Has run
    But to the even song;
And having pray'd together, we
    Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,
    We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
    As you or any thing.
        We die,
    As your hours do, and dry
        Away,
    Like to the summer's rain,
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
    Ne'er to be found again.

ROBERT
HE
15

THE LILY.

The stream with languid murmur creeps
  In Lumin's flow'ry vale:
Beneath the dew the lily weeps,

Slow waving to the gale.

"Cease, restless gale!" it seems to say,
"Nor wake me with thy sighing;
The honors of my vernal day
On rapid wings are flying.

"To-morrow shall the traveler come
Who late beheld me blooming;
His searching eye shall vainly roam
The dreary vale of Lumin."

SAMUEL
TAYLC
COLER

WILD FLOWERS.

I stood tiptoe upon a little hill;
The air was cooling, and so very still,
That the sweet buds which with a modest pride
Fell droopingly in slanting curve aside,
Their scanty-leaved and finely tapering stems
Had not yet lost their starry diadems,
Caught from the early sobbings of the morn.
The clouds were pure and white as flocks new shorn.
And fresh from the clear brook; sweetly they slept
On the blue fields of heaven, and then there crept
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves;
For not the faintest motion could be seen
Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.
There was wide wandering for the greediest eye,
To peer about upon variety;
Far round the horizon's crystal air to skim,
And trace the dwindled edgings of its brim;
To picture out the quaint and curious bending
Of a fresh woodland alley never-ending:
Or by the bowery clefts and leafy shelves,
Guess where the jaunty streams refresh themselves.

I gazed awhile, and felt as light and free
As though the fanning wings of Mercury
Had play'd upon my heels: I was light-hearted,
And many pleasures to my vision started;
So I straightway began to pluck a posy
Of luxuries bright, milky, soft, and rosy.
A bush of May-flowers with the bees about them;
Ah, sure no tasteful nook could be without them;
And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,
And let long grass grow round the roots, to keep them
Moist, cool, and green; and shade the violets,
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.
  A filbert-edge with wild-brier overtwined,
And clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind
Upon their summer thrones; there too should be
The frequent checker of a youngling tree,
That with a score of bright-green brethren shoots
From the quaint mossiness of aged roots:
Round which is heard a spring head of clear waters.
Prattling so wildly of its lovely daughters,
The spreading blue-bells: it may haply mourn
That such fair clusters should be rudely torn
From their fresh beds, and scattered thoughtlessly
By infant hands left on the path to die.
Open afresh your round of starry folds,
Ye ardent marigolds!
Dry up the moisture from your golden lids,
For great Apollo bids
That in these days your praises should be sung
On many harps, which he has lately strung;
And when again your dewiness he kisses,
Tell him, I have you in my world of blisses:
So haply when I rove in some far vale,
His mighty voice may come upon the gale.
  Here are sweet-peas, on tiptoe for a flight,
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,
And taper fingers catching at all things,
To bind them all about with tiny rings.
What next? a turf of evening primroses,
O'er which the mind may hover till it dozes;

O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep,
But that 'tis ever startled by the leap
Of buds into ripe flowers.

TO THE SWEET-BRIER.

Our sweet autumnal western-scented wind
Robs of its odor none so sweet a flower,
In all the blooming waste it left behind,
As that sweet-brier yields it; and the shower
Wets not a rose that buds in beauty's bower
One half so lovely; yet it grows along
The poor girl's pathway; by the poor man's door.
Such are the simple folks it dwells among;
And humble as the bud, so humble be the song.

I love it, for it takes its untouch'd stand
Not in the vase that sculptors decorate;
Its sweetness all is of my native land;
And e'en its fragrant leaf has not its mate
Among the perfumes which the rich and great
Bring from the odors of the spicy East.
You love your flowers and plants, and will you hate
The little four-leaved rose that I love best,
That freshest will awake, and sweetest go to rest?

J.

THE WILD HONEYSUCKLE.

Fair flower, that dost so comely grow,
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,

Untouch'd thy honeyed blossoms blow,
  Unseen thy little branches greet:
    No roving foot shall crush thee here,
    No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white array'd,
  She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
  And sent soft waters murmuring by;
    Thus quietly thy summer goes,
    Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms that must decay,
  I grieve to see your future doom;
They died—nor were those flowers more gay
  The flowers that did in Eden bloom;
    Unpitying frosts and Autumn's power
    Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
  At first thy little being came:
If nothing once, you nothing lose,
  Or when you die you are the same;
    The space between is but an hour—
    The frail duration of a flower.

PHILIP FRENEAU
1752–1832.

WILD FLOWERS.

I dreamed that, as I wander'd by the way,
  Bare winter suddenly was changed to spring,
And gentle odors led my steps astray,
  Mix'd with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
  Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,

But kiss'd it and then fled, as thou mightest in a dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
  Daisies, those pearl'd Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
  Faint oxlips; tender blue-bells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
  Green cowbind and the moonlight-color'd May,
And cherry blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
  Was the bright dew yet drain'd not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
  With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray,
And flowers azure, black, and streak'd with gold;
Fairer than any waken'd eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
  There grew broad flag-flowers, purple prankt with white,
And starry river buds among the sedge,
  And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
  With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
  I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues which in their natural bowers
  Were mingled or opposed, the like array
Kept these imprison'd children of the hours
  Within my hand—and then, elate and gay,
I hasten'd to the spot whence I had come,
That I might there present it!—oh, to whom?

P.

BEAU AND THE LILY.

"I must tell you a feat of my dog Beau. Walking by the river side, I observed some water-lilies floating at a little distance from the bank. They are a large white flower, with an orange-colored eye, very beautiful. I had a desire to gather one, and, having your long cane in my hand, by the help of it endeavored to bring one of them within my reach. But the attempt proved vain, and I walked forward. Beau had all the while observed me very attentively. Returning soon after toward the same place, I observed him plunge into the river, while I was about forty yards distant from him; and, when I had nearly reached the spot, he swam to land, with a lily in his mouth, which he came and laid at my feet."

W. COWPER *to Lady Hesketh, June 27th, 1788*.

FLOWERS.

We are the sweet flowers,
Born of sunny showers,
(Think, whene'er you see us, what our beauty saith;)
Utterance, mute and bright,
Of some unknown delight,
We fill the air with pleasure, by our simple breath:
All who see us love us—
We befit all places:
Unto sorrow we give smiles—and unto graces, races

Mark our ways, how noiseless
All, and sweetly voiceless,
Though the March-winds pipe, to make our passage clear;
Not a whisper tells
Where our small seed dwells,

Nor is known the moment green, when our tips appear.
We thread the earth in silence,
In silence build our bowers—
And leaf by leaf in silence show, till we laugh a-top, sweet flowers.

The dear lumpish baby,
Humming with the May-bee,
Hails us with his bright star, stumbling through the grass;
The honey-dropping moon,
On a night in June,
Kisses our pale pathway leaves, that felt the bridegroom pass.
Age, the wither'd clinger,
On us mutely gazes,
And wraps the thought of his last bed in his childhood's daisies.

See (and scorn all duller
Taste) how heav'n loves color;
How great Nature, clearly, joys in red and green;
What sweet thoughts she thinks
Of violets and pinks,
And a thousand flushing hues, made solely to be seen:
See her whitest lilies
Chill the silver showers,
And what a red mouth is her rose, the woman of her flowers.

Uselessness divinest,
Of a use the finest,
Painteth us, the teachers of the end of use;
Travelers, weary eyed,
Bless us, far and wide;
Unto sick and prison'd thoughts we give sudden truce:
Not a poor town window
Loves its sickliest planting,
But its wall speaks loftier truth than Babylonian vaunting.

Sagest yet the uses,
Mix'd with our sweet juices,
Whether man or May-fly, profit of the balm,
As fair fingers heal'd
Knights from the olden field
We hold cups of mightiest force to give the wildest calm.
Ev'n the terror, poison,
Hath its plea for blooming;
Life it gives to reverent lips, though death to the presuming.

And oh! our sweet soul-taker,
That thief, the honey maker,
What a house hath he, by the thymy glen!
In his talking rooms
How the feasting fumes,
Till the gold cups overflow to the mouths of men!
The butterflies come aping
Those fine thieves of ours,
And flutter round our rifled tops, like tickled flowers with flowers.

See those tops, how beauteous!
What fair service duteous
Round some idol waits, as on their lord the Nine
Elfin court 'twould seem;
And taught, perchance, that dream
Which the old Greek mountain dreamt, upon nights divine.
To expound such wonder
Human speech avails not;
Yet there dies no poorest weed, that such a glory exhales not.

Think of all these treasures,
Matchless works and pleasures,
Every one a marvel, more than thought can say;
Then think in what bright showers
We thicken fields and bowers,
And with what heaps of sweetness half stifle wanton

May:
Think of the mossy forests
By the bee-birds haunted,
And all those Amazonian plains, lone lying as enchanted.

Trees themselves are ours;
Fruits are born of flowers;
Peach, and roughest nut, were blossoms in the spring;
The lusty bee knows well
The news, and comes pell-mell,
And dances in the gloomy thicks with darksome antheming.
Beneath the very burden
Of planet-pressing ocean,
We wash our smiling cheeks in peace—a thought for meek devotion.

Tears of Phœbus—missings
Of Cytherea's kissings,
Have in us been found, and wise men find them still;
Drooping grace unfurls
Still Hyacinthus' curls,
And Narcissus loves himself in the selfish rill:
Thy red lip, Adonis,
Still is wet with morning;
And the step, that bled for thee, the rosy brier adorning.

O! true things are fables,
Fit for sagest tables,
And the flowers are true things—yet no fables they;
Fables were not more
Bright, nor loved of yore—
Yet they grew not, like the flowers, by every old pathway:
Grossest hand can test us;
Fools may prize us never:
Yet we rise, and rise, and rise—marvels sweet for ever.

Who shall say, that flowers

Dress not heaven's own bowers?
Who its love, without us, can fancy—or sweet floor?
Who shall even dare
To say, we sprang not there—
And came not down that Love might bring one piece of heaven the more?
O! pray believe that angels
From those blue dominions,
Brought us in their white laps down, 'twixt their golden pinions.

ALPINE FLOWERS.

Meek dwellers 'mid yon terror-stricken cliffs!
With brows so pure, and incense-breathing lips,
Whence are ye? Did some white-winged messenger
On mercy's missions trust your timid germ
To the cold cradle of eternal snows?
Or, breathing on the callous icicles,
Bid them with tear-drops nurse ye?
—Tree nor shrub
Dare that drear atmosphere; no polar pine
Uprears a veteran front; yet there ye stand,
Leaning your cheeks against the thick-ribb'd ice,
And looking up with brilliant eyes to Him
Who bids you bloom unblanch'd amid the waste
Of desolation. Man, who, panting, toils
O'er slippery steeps, or, trembling, treads the verge
Of yawning gulfs, o'er which the headlong plunge
Is to eternity, looks shuddering up,
And marks ye in your placid loveliness—
Fearless, yet frail—and, clasping his still hands,
Blesses your pencil'd beauty. 'Mid the pomp
Of mountain summits rushing on the sky,
And chaining the rapt soul in breathless awe,
He bows to bind you drooping to his breast,

Inhales your spirit from the frost-wing'd gale
And freer breathes of heaven.

LYDIA
I
S

TO THE BRAMBLE FLOWER.

Thy fruit full well the schoolboy knows,
  Wild bramble of the brake!
So, put thou forth thy small white rose;
  I love it for his sake.
Though woodbines flaunt and roses glow
  O'er all the fragrant bowers,
Thou need'st not be ashamed to show
  Thy satin-threaded flowers;
For dull the eye, the heart is dull
  That can not feel how fair,
Amid all beauty, beautiful
  Thy tender blossoms are!
How delicate thy gauzy frill!
  How rich thy branchy stem!
How soft thy voice, when woods are still,
  And thou sing'st hymns to them!
While silent showers are falling slow,
  And, 'mid the general hush,
A sweet air lifts the little bough,
  Lone whispering through the bush!
The primrose to the grave is gone;
  The hawthorn flower is dead;
The violet by the moss'd gray stone
  Hath laid her weary head;
But thou, wild bramble! back dost bring,
  In all their beauteous power,
The fresh green days of life's fair spring,
  And boyhood's blossomy hour.
Scorn'd bramble of the brake! once more
  Thou bidd'st me be a boy,
To rove with thee the woodlands o'er,

In freedom and in joy.

EBEN

THE PAINTED CUP.

The fresh savannas of the Sagamon,
Here rise in gentle swells, and the long grass
Is mixed with rustling hazels. Scarlet tufts
Are glowing in the green, like flakes of fire;
The wanderers of the prairie know them well,
And call that brilliant flower the Painted Cup.

Now, if thou art a poet, tell me not
That these bright chalices were tinted thus
To hold the dew for fairies, when they meet
On moonlight evenings in the hazel bowers,
And dance till they are thirsty. Call not up,
Amid this fresh and virgin solitude
The faded fancies of an elder world;
But leave these scarlet cups to spotted moths
Of June, and glistening flies, and humming-birds,
To drink from, when on all these boundless lawns
The morning sun looks hot. Or let the wind
O'erturn in sport their ruddy brims, and pour
A sudden shower upon the strawberry plant,
To swell the reddening fruit that even now
Breathes a slight fragrance from the sunny slope.
  But thou art of a gayer fancy. Well—
Let then the gentle Manitou of flowers,
Lingering amid the blooming waste he loves,
Though all his swarthy worshipers are gone—
Slender and small his rounded cheek all brown
And ruddy with the sunshine; let him come
On summer mornings, when the blossoms wake,
And part with little hands the spiky grass;
And touching with his cherry lips the edge
Of these bright beakers, drain the gathered dew.

THE WREATH OF GRASSES.

The royal rose—the tulip's glow—
  The jasmine's gold are fair to see;
But while the graceful grasses grow,
  Oh, gather them for me!

The pansy's gold and purple wing,
  The snowdrop's smile may light the lea;
But while the fragrant grasses spring,
  My wreath of them shall be!

FRANC

DIVINATION.

When a daffodil I see
Hanging down his head toward me,
Guess I may what I may be:
First, I shall decline my head;
Secondly, I shall be dead;
Lastly, safely buried.

ROBERT
HE
15

GRASS.

Is all grass? Make you no distinction? No; all is grass; or if you will have some other name, be it so. Once, this is true, that all flesh is grass; and if that

glory which shines so much in your eyes must have a difference, then this is all that it can have—it is but the flower of that same grass; somewhat above the common grass in gayness, a little comelier and better appareled than it, but partakes of its frail and fading nature. It hath no privilege nor immunity that way; yea, of the two is less durable, and usually shorter lived; at the last it decays with it. "The grass withereth; and the flower thereof fadeth away."

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON, 1613–1684.

DAFFODILS.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company;
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye,
Which is the bliss of solitude,

And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

W

IX.
Medley.

GRONGAR HILL.

Silent nymph, with curious eye!
Who, the purple evening, lie
On the mountain's lonely van,
Beyond the noise of busy man;
Painting fair the form of things,
While the yellow linnet sings;
Or the tuneful nightingale,
Charms the forest with her tale;
Come, with all thy various hues,
Come, and aid thy sister Muse;
Now, while Phœbus riding high,
Gives luster to the land and sky!
Grongar Hill invites my song,
Draw the landscape bright and strong;
Grongar, in whose mossy cells,
Sweetly musing Quiet dwells;
Grongar, in whose silent shade,
For the modest Muses made,
So oft I have, the evening still,
At the fountain of a rill,
Sat upon a flowery bed,
With my hand beneath my head,
While stray'd my eyes o'er Towy's flood,
Over mead and over wood,

From house to house, from hill to hill,
Till Contemplation had her fill.
  About his checker'd sides I wind,
And leave his brooks and meads behind,
And groves and grottoes where I lay,
And vistas shooting beams of day.
Wide and wider spreads the vale,
As circles on a smooth canal.
The mountains round, unhappy fate!
Sooner or later, of all height,
Withdraw their summits from the skies,
And lessen as the others rise.
Still the prospect wider spreads,
Adds a thousand woods and meads;
Still it widens, widens still,
And sinks the newly-risen hill.
  Now I gain the mountain's brow,
What a landscape lies below!
No clouds, no vapors intervene,
But the gay, the open scene,
Does the face of Nature show
In all the hues of heaven's bow!
And, swelling to embrace the light,
Spreads around beneath the sight.
  Old castles on the cliffs arise,
Proudly tow'ring in the skies!
Rushing from the woods, the spires
Seem from hence ascending fires!
Half his beams Apollo sheds
On the yellow mountain heads!
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks,
And glitters on the broken rocks!
  Below me trees unnumbered rise,
Beautiful in various dyes:
The gloomy pine, the poplar blue,
The yellow beach, the sable yew,
The slender fir that taper grows,
The sturdy oak with broad-spread boughs,
And beyond the purple grove,
Haunt of Phyllis, queen of love!

Gaudy as the opening dawn
Lies a long and level lawn,
On which a dark hill, steep and high,
Holds and charms the wandering eye!
Deep are his feet in Towy's flood,
His sides are cloth'd with waving wood,
And ancient towers crown his brow,
That cast an awful look below;
Whose ragged walls the ivy creeps,
And with her arms from falling keeps;
So both, a safety from the wind,
On mutual dependence find.
'Tis now the raven's bleak abode;
'Tis now th' apartment of the toad;
And there the fox securely feeds;
And there the poisonous adder breeds;
Concealed in ruins, moss, and weeds;
While, ever and anon, there falls,
Huge heaps of hoary molder'd walls.
Yet Time has seen, that lifts the low,
And level lays the lofty brow—
Has seen this broken pile complete,
Big with the vanity of state;
But transient is the smile of Fate!
A little rule, a little sway,
A sunbeam in a winter's day,
Is all the proud and mighty have
Between the cradle and the grave.
  And see the rivers how they run,
Through woods and meads, in shade and sun,
Sometimes swift, sometimes slow—
Wave succeeding wave, they go
A various journey to the deep,
Like human life to endless sleep!
Thus is Nature's vesture wrought,
To instruct our wandering thought;
Thus she dresses green and gay,
To disperse our cares away.
  Ever charming, ever new,
When will the landscape tire the view!

The fountain's fall, the river's flow,
The woody valleys, warm and low;
The windy summit, wild and high,
Roughly rushing on the sky!
The pleasant seat, the ruin'd tower,
The naked rock, the shady bower;
The town and village, dome and farm,
Each gives each a double charm,
As pearls upon an Ethiop's arm.
  See on the mountain's southern side,
Where the prospect opens wide,
Where the evening gilds the tide;
How close and small the hedges lie!
What streaks of meadow cross the eye!
A step, methinks, may pass the stream,
So little distant dangers seem;
So we mistake the Future's face,
Ey'd through Hope's deluding glass;
As yon summits soft and fair,
Clad in colors of the air,
Which to those who journey near,
Barren, brown, and rough appear;
Still we tread the same coarse way,
The present's still a cloudy day.
  O may I with myself agree,
And never covet what I see;
Content me with an humble shade,
My passions tamed, my wishes laid;
For while our wishes wildly roll,
We banish quiet from the soul:
'Tis thus the busy beat the air,
And misers gather wealth and care.
  Now, ev'n now, my joys run high,
As on the mountain-turf I lie;
While the wanton Zephyr sings,
And in the vale perfumes his wings;
While the waters murmur deep;
While the shepherd charms his sheep;
While the birds unbounded fly,
And with music fill the sky,

Now, ev'n now, my joys run high.
  Be full, ye courts; be great who will;
Search for Peace with all your skill:
Open wide the lofty door,
Seek her on the marble floor.
In vain you search; she is not here!
In vain you search the domes of Care!
Grass and flowers, Quiet treads,
On the meads and mountain-heads,
Along with Pleasure, close allied,
Ever by each other's side;
And often, by the murmuring rill,
Hears the thrush, while all is still
Within the groves of Grongar Hill.

JOHN
DY
17
17

LETTER ON CERTAIN TREES.

TO THOMAS PENNANT, ESQ.

FROM REV. GILBERT WHITE, OF SELBORNE.

In the court of Norton farm-house, a manor farm to the northwest of the village, on the White Malms, stood within these twenty years a broad-leaved elm, or wych hazel, *ulmus folio latissimo scabro*, of Ray, which, though it had lost a considerable leading bough in the great storm in the year 1703, equal to a moderate tree, yet, when felled, contained eight loads of timber; and, being too bulky for a carriage, was sawn off at seven feet above the butt, where it measured near eight feet in diameter. This elm I mention to show to what a bulk planted elms may attain, as this tree must certainly have been such from its situation.

In the center of the village, and near the church, is a square piece of ground, surrounded by houses, and commonly called the Plestor. Sir Adam Gurdon, in conjunction with his wife Constantia, in the year 1271, granted to the prior and convent of Selborne all his right and claim to a certain place, *placea*, called *La Pleystow*, in the village aforesaid, "*in liberam, puram, et perpetuam elimosinam*." This Pleystow, *locus ludorum*, or play-place, is a level area, near the church, of about forty-four yards by thirty-six, and is known now by the name of the Plestor. It continues still—as it was in old times—to be the scene of recreation for the youths and children of the neighborhood, and impresses an idea on the mind that this village, even in Saxon times, could not be the most abject of places, when the inhabitants thought proper to assign so spacious a spot for the sports and amusements of its young people. In the midst of this spot stood in old times a vast oak, with a short, squat body, and huge horizontal arms extending almost to the extremity of the area. This venerable tree, surrounded with stone steps, and seats above them, was the delight of old and young, and a place of much resort in summer evenings, where the former sat in grave debate, while the latter frolicked and danced before them. Long might it have stood had not the amazing tempest in 1703 overturned it at once, to the infinite regret of the inhabitants and the vicar, who bestowed several pounds in setting it in its place again; but all his care could not avail; the tree sprouted for a time, then withered and died. This oak I mention to show to what a bulk planted oaks also may arrive; and planted this tree must certainly have been, as appears from what is known concerning the antiquities of the village.

On the Blackmoor estate there is a small wood, called Losel's, of a few acres, that was lately furnished with a set of oaks of a peculiar growth and great value; they were tall and taper like firs, but, standing near together, had very small heads—only a little brush, without any large limbs. About twenty years ago the bridge at the Toy, near Hampton Court, being much decayed, some trees were wanted for the repairs that were fifty feet long without a bough, and would measure twelve inches diameter at the little end. Twenty such trees did a purveyor find in this little wood, with this advantage, that many of them answered the description at fifty feet. These trees were sold for £20 a piece.

In the center of this grove there stood an oak, which, though shapely and tall on the whole, bulged out into a large excrescence about the middle of the stem. On this a pair of ravens had fixed their residence for such a series of years, that the oak was distinguished by the title of the Raven-tree! Many were the attempts of the neighboring youths to get at this eyry; the difficulty whetted their inclinations, and each was ambitious of surmounting the arduous task; but when they arrived at the swelling, it jutted out so in their way, and was so far beyond their grasp, that the most daring lads were awed, and acknowledged the undertaking to be too hazardous. So the ravens built on, nest upon nest, in perfect security, till the fatal day arrived in which the wood was to be leveled. It was in the month of February, when these birds usually sit. The saw was applied to the butt; the wedges were inserted into the opening; the woods echoed to the heavy blows of the beetle or mallet; the tree nodded to the fall; but still the dam sat on. At last, when it gave way, the bird was flung from her nest; and though her parental affection

deserved a better fate, was whipped down by the twigs, which brought her dead to the ground.

GILBERT WHITE, 1720–1793.

A SKETCH.

The rush-thatch'd cottage on the purple moor,
Where ruddy children frolic round the door;
The moss-grown antlers of the aged oak,
The shaggy locks that fringe the colt unbroke;
The bearded goat, with nimble eyes that glare
Through the long tissue of his hoary hair,
As with quick foot he climbs some ruined wall,
And crops the ivy which prevents its fall;
With rural charms the tranquil mind delight,
And form a picture to th' admiring sight.

ERASMUS DARWIN 1721–1802.

AN ENGLISH PEASANT'S COTTAGE.

The prettiest cottage on our village green is the little dwelling of Dame Wilson. It stands in a corner of the common, where the hedge-rows go curving off into a sort of bay round a clear bright pond, the earliest haunt of the swallow. A deep, woody green lane, such as Hobbima or Ruysdael might have painted—a lane that hints of nightingales, forms one boundary of the garden, and a sloping meadow the other; while the cottage itself, a low, thatched, irregular building, backed by a blooming orchard, and covered with honeysuckle and jessamine, looks like the chosen abode of snugness and comfort. And

so it is.

MARY R. MITFORD.

RUTH.

She stood breast high amid the corn,
Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush
Deeply ripened: such a blush,
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell;
But long lashes vail'd a light
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim:
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure I said, Heav'n did not mean
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
Lay thy sheaf adown and come—
Share my harvest and my home.

SIMPLE PLEASURES.

Say, why does man, while to his opening sight
Each shrub presents a source of chaste delight,

And Nature bids for him her pleasures flow,
And gives to him alone his bliss to know,
Why does he pant for Vice's deadly charms?
Why clasp the syren Pleasure to his arms?
And suck deep draughts of her voluptuous breath,
Though fraught with ruin, infamy, and death!
Could he who thus to vile enjoyment clings,
Know what calm joy from purer sources springs;
Could he but feel how sweet, how free from strife
The harmless pleasures of a harmless life,
No more his soul would pant for joys impure;
The deadly chalice would no more allure;
But the sweet potion he was wont to sip
Would turn to poison on his conscious lip.

H.
K.
Whit
1785
1806

FROM "THE COMPLETE ANGLER."

Ven. On my word, master, this is a gallant trout; what shall we do with him?

Pisc. Marry, e'en eat him to supper: we'll go to my hostess, from whence we came; she told me, as I was going out of door, that my brother Peter, a good angler, and a cheerful companion, had sent word he would lodge there to-night, and bring a friend with him. My hostess has two beds, and I know you and I may have the best. We'll rejoice with my brother Peter and his friend, tell tales, or sing ballads, or make a catch, or find some harmless sport to content us, and pass away a little time without offense to God or man.

Ven. A match, good master: let's go to that house, for the linen looks white, and smells of lavender, and

I long to lie in a pair of sheets that smell so. Let's be going, good master, for I am hungry again with fishing.

Pisc. Nay, stay a little, good scholar; I caught my last trout with a worm. Now I will put on a minnow, and try a quarter of an hour about yonder trees for another, and so walk toward our lodging. Look you, scholar, thereabout we shall have a bite presently, or not at all. Have with you, sir, o' my word I have hold of him. Oh, it is a great loggerheaded chub; come, hang him upon that willow twig, and let's be going. But turn out of the way a little, good scholar, toward yonder high honeysuckle hedge; there we'll sit and sing while this shower falls so gently upon the teeming earth, and gives yet a sweeter smell to the lovely flowers that adorn these verdant meadows.

Look! under that broad beach-tree I sat down when I was last this way a fishing, and the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill; there I sat viewing the silver streams glide silently toward their center, the tempestuous sea, yet sometimes opposed by rugged roots and pebble-stones, which broke their waves and turned them into foam; and sometimes I beguiled time by viewing the harmless lambs—some leaping securely in the cool shade, while others sported themselves in the cheerful sun; and saw others craving comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams. As I thus sat, these and other sights had so fully possessed my soul with content, that I thought, as the poet has happily expressed it,

> "I was for that time lifted above earth,
> And possess'd joys not promis'd in my birth."

As I left this place, and entered into the next field, a second pleasure entertained me; it was a handsome milk-maid, that had not yet attained so much age and wisdom as to load her mind with any fears of many things that will never be, as too many men too often do; but she cast away all care, and sung like a nightingale: her voice was good, and the ditty fitted for it; it was that smooth song which was made by Kit Marlow, now at least fifty years ago; and the milk-maid's mother sung an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his younger days.

They were old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good —I think much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion in this critical age. Look yonder! on my word, yonder they both be, a milking again. I will give her the chub, and persuade them to sing those two songs to us.

God speed you, good woman! I have been a fishing, and am going to Bleak-Hall to my bed, and having caught more fish than will sup myself and my friend, I will bestow this upon you and your daughter, for I use to sell none.

Milk-W. Marry, God requite you, sir, and we'll eat it cheerfully; and if you come this way a fishing two months hence, o' grace of God, I'll give you a syllabub of new verjuice, in a new-made hay-cock for it, and my Maudlin shall sing you one of her best ballads; for she and I both love all anglers, they be such honest, civil, quiet men. In the mean time, will you drink a draught of red cow's milk? you shall have it freely.

Pisc. No, I thank you; but I pray do us a courtesy that shall stand you and your daughter in nothing, and yet we will think ourselves still something in your debt: it is but to sing us a song that was sung by

your daughter when I last passed over this meadow about eight or nine days since.

Milk-M. What song was it, I pray? Was it, “Come, Shepherds, Deck your Heads?” or “As at Noon Dulcina Rested?” or “Phillida, Flout me?” or “Chevy Chase?” or “Johnny Armstrong?” or “Troy Town?”

Pisc. It is none of those; it is a song that your daughter sung the first part, and you sung the answer to it.

Milk-W. O, I know it now; I learned the first part in my golden age, when I was about the age of my poor daughter; and the latter part—which indeed fits me best now—but two or three years ago, when the cares of the world began to take hold of me; but you shall, God willing, hear them both, and sung as well as we can, for we both love anglers. Come, Maudlin, sing the first part to the gentlemen with a merry heart, and I’ll sing the second when you have done:

THE MILK-MAID’S SONG.

THE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE.

Come live with me, and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That hills and valleys, dale and field,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

There will we sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses
With a thousand fragrant posies;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle,
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the fairest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Slippers lined choicely for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw, and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing,
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

CHRISTOPHER
MARLO
1593.

Ven. Trust me, master, it is a choice song, and sweetly sung by honest Maudlin. I now see it was not without cause that our good Queen Elizabeth did so often wish herself a milk-maid all the month of May, because they are not troubled with fears and cares, but sing sweetly all the day, and sleep securely all the night; and without doubt honest, innocent, pretty Maudlin does so. I'll bestow Sir Thomas Overbury's milk-maid's wish upon her, "That she may die in the spring, and, being dead, may have good store of flowers stuck round about her winding-sheet."

THE MILK-MAID'S MOTHER'S ANSWER.

THE NYMPH'S REPLY.

If that the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move,
To live with thee and be thy love.

But time drives flocks from field to fold,
When rivers rage, and rocks grow cold,
And Philomel becometh dumb,
And all complain of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yield;
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten—
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw, and ivy buds,
Thy coral clasps, and amber studs;
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee, and be thy love.

But could youth last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then those delights my mind might move
To live with thee, and be thy love.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, 1552–1618.

Pisc. Well sung, good woman; I thank you. I'll give you another dish of fish one of these days, and then beg another song of you.

IZAAK WALTON, 1593–1683.

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

Behold her single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland lass!

Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
So sweetly to reposing bands
Of travelers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian lands.
No sweeter voice was ever heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird—
Breaking the silence of the seas,
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago;
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;
I listened—motionless and still,
And as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

W

THE HUSBANDMAN.

Earth of man the bounteous mother,

Feeds him still with corn and wine;
He who best would aid a brother,
Shares with him these gifts divine.

Many a power within her bosom,
Noiseless, hidden, works beneath;
Hence are seed, and leaf, and blossom,
Golden ear and cluster'd wreath.

These to swell with strength and beauty
Is the royal task of man;
Man's a king; his throne is duty,
Since his work on earth began.

Bud and harvest, bloom and vintage—
These, like man, are fruits of earth;
Stamp'd in clay, a heavenly vintage,
All from dust receive their birth.

Barn and mill, and wine-vat's treasures,
Earthly goods for earthly lives;
These are Nature's ancient pleasures—
These her child from her derives.

What the dream, but vain rebelling,
If from earth we sought to flee?
'Tis our stored and ample dwelling—
'Tis from it the skies we see.

Wind and frost, and hour and season,
Land and water, sun and shade,
Work with these, as bids thy reason,
For they work thy toil to aid.

Sow thy seed, and reap in gladness!
Man himself is all a seed;
Hope and hardship, joy and sadness—
Slow the plant to ripeness lead.

JOHN
S
18

X.
The Garden.

THE GARDEN.

FROM "THE HERBAL."

Among the manifold creatures of God that have in all ages diversely entertained many excellent wits, and drawne them to the contemplation of the Divine Wisdome, none have provoked men's studies more, or satisfied their desires so much, as plants have done, and that upon just and worthy causes; for what greater delight is there than to behold the earth appareled with plants as with a robe of embroidered worke, set with orient pearles, and garnished with great diversity of rare and costly jewels. But the principal delighte is in the minde, singularly enriched with the knowledge of these visible things, setting forth to us the invisible wisdome and admirable workmanship of Almighty God!

JOHN GERARDE, 1545–1607.

OF GARDENS.

The earth is the garden of nature, and each fruitful

country a Paradise. The Turks, who pass their days in gardens here, will have gardens also hereafter, and delighting in flowers on earth, must have lilies and roses in heaven. The delightful world comes after death, and Paradise succeeds the grave. The verdant state of things is the symbol of the resurrection; and to flourish in the state of glory, we must first be sown in corruption.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE, 1605–1682.

A GARDEN.

Where does the Wisdom and the Power Divine
In a more bright and sweet reflection shine?
Where do we finer strokes and colors see,
Of the Creator's real Poetry,
Than when we with attention look
Upon the third day's volume of the Book?
If we could open and intend our eye,
We all, like Moses, should espy
Even in a bush the radiant Deity.
But we despise these, His inferior ways
(Though no less full of miracle and praise),
Upon the flowers of Heaven we gaze;
The stars of earth no wonder in us raise.

ABRAHAM COWLEY 1618–1667.

THE GARDEN OF ALCINOUS.

FROM HOMER.

Close to the gates a spacious garden lies,
From storms defended and inclement skies:

Four acres was th' allotted space of ground,
Fenced with a green inclosure all around,
Tall thriving trees confessed the fruitful mold;
The redd'ning apple ripens here to gold.
Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,
With deeper red the full pomegranate glows;
The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,
And verdant olives flourish round the year.
The balmy spirit of the western gale
Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail:
Each dropping pear a following pear supplies,
On apples apples, figs on figs arise;
The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,
The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.
  Here ordered vines in equal ranks appear,
With all th' united labors of the year;
Some to unload the fertile branches run,
Some dry the black'ning clusters in the sun,
Others to tread the liquid harvest join,
The groaning presses foam with floods of wine.
Here are the vines in early flower descried,
Here grapes discolor'd on the sunny side,
And there in autumn's richest purple dyed.
  Beds of all various herbs, forever green,
In beauteous order terminate the scene.
Two plenteous fountains the whole prospect crown'd—
This through the gardens leads its streams around,
Visits each plant and waters all the ground;
While that in pipes beneath the palace flows,
And thence its current on the town bestows;
To various use their various streams they bring,
The people one, and one supplies the king.

Translation of POPE.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

In this pleasant soil,

His far more pleasant garden, God ordain'd;
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste,
And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and next to life
Our death, the Tree of Knowledge, grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden mold, high rais'd
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth, with kindly thirst up drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
In beds and curious knot, but Nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
Imbrown'd the noontide bow'rs. Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various views;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste.
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
Or palmy hillock; or the flow'ry lap

Of some irriguous valley spread her store—
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; meanwhile murm'ring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd,
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their choir apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours, in dance,
Led on th' eternal spring.

JOHN
MILT
1608
1674

OF GARDENS.

God Almighty first planted a garden; and, indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures; it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man; without which buildings and palaces are but gross handiwork; and as men shall ever see, that, when ages grow to civility and elegancy, men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely, as if gardening were the greater perfection. I do hold it in the royal ordering of gardens, there ought to be gardens for all the months in the year, in which, severally, things of beauty may be in season.

And because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes, like the warbling of music) than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit

for that delight than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air. Roses, damask and red, are fast flowers of their smells, so that you may walk by a whole row of them, and find nothing of their sweetness; yea, though it be in a morning's dew. Bays, likewise, yield no smell as they grow; rosemary little, nor sweet marjoram; that which above all others yields the sweetest smell in the air is the violet, which comes twice a year, about the middle of April, and about Bartholomew-tide. Next to that is the musk rose; then the strawberry leaves dying, with a most excellent cordial smell; then the flower of the vines—it is a little dust, like the dust of a bent, which grows upon the cluster in the first coming forth; then sweet-brier, then wall-flowers, which are very delightful to be set under a parlor or lower chamber window; then pinks and gilliflowers, especially the matted pink and clove gilliflowers; then the honeysuckles, so that they be somewhat afar off. Of bean-flowers I speak not, because they are field-flowers; but those which perfume the air most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being trodden upon and crushed, are three, that is, burnet, wild thyme, and water-mints; therefore you are to set whole alleys of them, to have the pleasure when you walk or tread.

For gardens (speaking of those which are indeed prince-like, as we have done of buildings), the contents ought not well to be under thirty acres of ground, and to be divided into three parts: a green in the entrance, a heath or desert in the going forth, and the main garden in the midst, besides alleys on both sides; and I like well that four acres of ground be assigned to the green, six to the heath, four and four to either side, and twelve to the main garden. The green hath two pleasures: the one, because

nothing is more pleasant to the eye than green grass kept finely shorn; the other, because it will give you a fair alley in the midst, by which you may go in front upon a stately hedge, which is to inclose the garden; but because the alley will be long, and, in great heat of the year, or day, you ought not to leave the shade in the garden by going in the sun through the green, therefore you are, of either side the green, to plant a covert alley upon carpenter's work, about twelve foot in height, by which you may go in shade into the garden. As for the making of knots or figures with divers colored earths, that they may lie under the windows of the house on that side which the garden stands, they be but toys; you may see as good sights many times in tarts.

LORD BACON, 1561–1624.

GARDENING.

For my own part, as the country life, and this part of it more particularly (namely, gardening), were the inclination of my youth itself, so they are the pleasure of my age; and I can truly say, that among many great employments that have fallen to my share, I have never asked or sought for any one of them, but often endeavored to escape from them, into the ease and freedom of a private scene, where a man may go his own way and his own pace in the common paths or circles of life.

The measure of choosing well is, whether a man likes what he has chosen, which, I thank God, has befallen me; and though among the follies of my life building and planting have not been the least, and have cost me more than I have the confidence to own, yet they have been fully recompensed by the

sweetness and satisfaction of this retreat, where, since my resolution taken of never entering again into any public employments, I have passed five years without ever going once to town, though I am almost in sight of it, and have a house there always ready to receive me. Nor has this been any sort of affectation, as some have thought it, but a mere want of desire or humor to make so small a remove.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE, 1628–1696.

FLOWERS AND ART.

FROM "JOURNAL OF A NATURALIST."

No portion of creation has been resorted to by mankind with more success for the ornament and decoration of their labors than the vegetable world. The rites, emblems, and mysteries of religion; national achievements, eccentric masks, and the capricious visions of fancy, have been wrought by the hand of the sculptor on the temple, the altar, or the tomb; but plants, their foliage, flowers, or fruits, as the most graceful, varied, and pleasing objects that meet our view, have been more universally the object of design, and have supplied the most beautiful, and perhaps the earliest, embellishments of art. The pomegranate, the almond, and flowers were selected, even in the wilderness by divine appointment, to give form to the sacred utensils; the rewards of merit, the wreath of the victor, were arboraceous. In later periods the acanthus, the ivy, the lotus, the vine, the palm, and the oak flourished under the chisel or in the loom of the artist; and in modern days the vegetable world affords the almost exclusive decorations of ingenuity and art. The cultivation of flowers is, of all the amusements of

mankind, the one to be selected and approved as the most innocent in itself, and most perfectly devoid of injury or annoyance to others; the employment is not only conducive to health and peace of mind, but probably more good-will has arisen and friendships been founded by the intercourse and communication connected with this pursuit than from any other whatsoever; the pleasures, the ecstasies of the horticulturist are harmless and pure; a streak, a tint, a shade, becomes his triumph, which, though often obtained by chance, are secured alone by morning care, by evening caution, and the vigilance of days—an employ which in its various grades excludes neither the opulent nor the indigent, and, teeming with boundless variety, affords an unceasing excitement to emulation, without contempt or ill-will.

J. L. Knapp.

CHINESE GARDENING.

What is it that we seek in the possession of a pleasure-garden? The art of laying out gardens consists in an endeavor to combine cheerfulness of aspect, luxuriance of growth, shade, solitude, and repose in such a manner that the senses may be deluded by an imitation of rural nature. Diversity, which is the main advantage of free landscape, must therefore be sought in a judicious choice of soil, an alternation of chains of hills and valleys, gorges, brooks, and lakes covered with aquatic plants. Symmetry is wearying, and ennui and disgust will soon be excited in a garden where every part betrays constraint and art.

LIEU-TSCHEN, *an ancient Chinese writer—taken from* HUMBOLDT'S "*Cosmos*."

EMPLOYMENT.

If as a flower doth spread and die,
  Thou wouldst extend me to some good,
Before I were by frost's extremity,
    Nipt in the bud—

The sweetness and the praise were thine;
  But the extension and the room
Which in thy garland I should fill, were mine
    At thy great doom.

For as thou dost impart thy grace,
  The greater shall our glory be;
The measure of our joys is in this place,
    The stuff with thee.

Let me not languish then, and send
  A life as barren to thy praise
As is the dust, to which that life doth tend,
    But with delays.

All things are busy; only I
  Neither bring honey with the bees,
Nor flowers to make that, nor the husbandry
    To water these.

I am no link of thy great chain,
  But all my company is as a weed:
Lord place me in thy concert—give one strain
    To my poor reed.

GEORGE HERBERT
1593–1632.

THE GARDEN.

When the light flourish of the blue-bird sounds,
And the south wind comes blandly; when the sky
Is soft in delicate blue, with melting pearl
Spotting its bosom, all proclaiming Spring,
Oh with what joy the garden spot we greet,
Wakening from wintry slumbers. As we tread
The branching walks, within its hollow'd nook
We see the violet by some lingering flake
Of melting snow, its sweet eye lifting up,
As welcoming our presence; o'er our heads
The fruit-tree buds are swelling, and we hail
Our grateful task of molding into form
The waste around us. The quick delving spade
Upturns the fresh and odorous earth; the rake
Smooths the plump bed, and in their furrow'd graves
We drop the seed. The robin stops his work
Upon the apple-bough, and flutters down
Stealing, with oft check'd and uplifted foot
And watchful gaze bent quickly either side,
Toward the fall'n wealth of food around the mouth
Of the light paper pouch upon the earth.
But, fearful of our motions, off he flies,
And stoops upon the grub the spade has thrown
Loose from its den beside the wounded root.
Days pass along. The pattering shower falls down
And then the warming sunshine. Tiny clifts
Tell that the seed has turn'd itself, and now
Is pushing up its stem. The verdant pea
Looks out; the twin-leaf'd scallop'd radish shows
Sprinkles of green. The sturdy bean displays
Its jaws distended wide and slightly tongued.
The downy cucumber is seen; the corn
Upshoots its close-wrapp'd spike, and on its mound
The young potato sets its tawny ear.
Meanwhile the fruit-trees gloriously have broke
Into a flush of beauty, and the grape,
Casting aside in peels its shrivel'd skin,
Shows its soft furzy leaf of delicate pink,

And the thick midge-like blossoms round diffuse
A strong, delicious fragrance. Soon along
The trellis stretch the tendrils, sharply prong'd,
Clinging tenacious with their winding rings,
And sending on the stem. A sheet of bloom
Then decks the garden, till the summer glows,
Forming the perfect fruit. In showery nights
The fire-fly glares with its pendent lamp
Of greenish gold. Each dark nook has a voice,
While perfume floats on every wave of air.
The corn lifts up its bandrols long and slim;
The cucumber has overflow'd its spot
With massy verdure, while the yellow squash
Looks like a trumpet 'mid its giant leaves;
And as we reap the rich fruits of our care,
We bless the God who rains his gifts on us—
Making the earth its treasures rich to yield
With slight and fitful toil. Our hearts should be
Ever bent harps, to send unceasing hymns
Of thankful praise to One who fills all space,
And yet looks down with smiles on lowly man.

A

THE GARDENER.

AN OLD SCOTCH BALLAD.

A maiden stude in her bouir door,
  As jimp as a willow wand;
When by there came a gardener lad
  Wi' a primrose in his hand.

"O ladye, are ye single yet,
  Or will ye marry me?
Ye'se get a' the flouirs in my garden,
  To be a weed[10] for thee."

"I love your flouirs," the ladye said,

"But I winna marry thee;
For I can live without mankind,
And without mankind I'll dee."

"You shall not live without mankind,
But you shall marry me:
And among the flouirs in my garden,
I'll shape a weed for thee.

"The lilye flouir to be your smock;
It becomes your bodie best;
Your head shall be bushit wi' the gellye-flouir;
The primrose in your breist.

"Your gown sall be o' the sweet-william
Your coat o' the cammovine;
Your apron o' the seel of downs—
Come smile, sweetheart o' mine!

"Your gloves shall be o' the green clover,
All glitterin to your hand;
Weil spread ower wi' the blue blawort
That grows among corn-land.

"Your stockings shall be o' the cabbage-leaf,
That is baith braid and lang;
Narrow, narrow at the kute,[11]
And braid, braid at the braune.[A*]

"Your shoon shall be o' the gude rue red,
I trow it bodes nae ill;
The buckles o' the marygold—
Come smile, sweetheart, your fill!"

"Young man, ye've shapit a weed for me
Amang the simmer flouirs;
Now I will shape anither for thee
Amang the winter showirs.

"The snaw so white shall be your shirt,
It becomes your body best;
The cold east wind shall wrap your heid,

And the cold rain on your breist.

"The steed that you shall ride upon
Shall be the weather snell;
Weil bridled wi' the northern wind,
And cold, sharp shouirs o' hail.

"The hat you on your heid shall wear
Shall be o' the weather grey;
And aye when ye come into my sicht,
I'll wish ye were away."

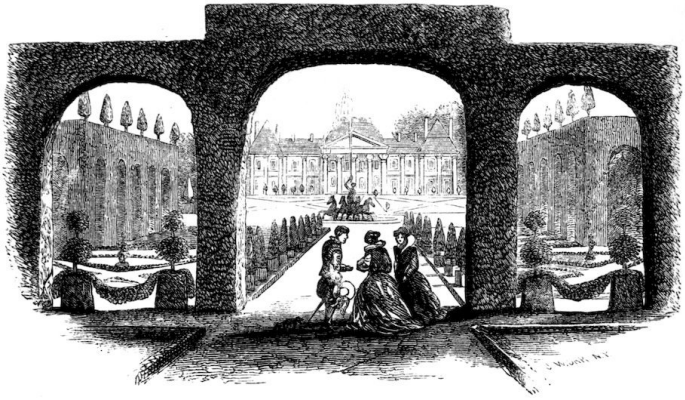
LINES.

Sweetly breathing vernal air,
That with kind warmth doth repair
Winter's ruins; from whose breast
All the gums and spice of th' East
Borrow their perfumes; whose eye
Gilds the morn and clears the sky;
Whose disshevel'd tresses shed
Pearls upon the violet-bed;
On whose brow, with calm smiles drest,
The halcyon sits and builds her nest;
Beauty, youth, and endless spring,
Dwell upon thy rosy wing!

Thou, if stormy Boreas throws
Down whole forests when he blows,
With a pregnant, flowery birth,
Canst refresh the teeming earth;
If he nip the early bud;
If he blast what's fair and good;
If he scatter our choice flowers;
If he shake our halls and bowers;
If his rude breath threaten us,
Thou canst strike great Æolus,
And from him the grace obtain,

To bind him in an iron chain.

THOMAS
CAREW,
about
1600.



XI.
Summer.

SAXON SONG OF SUMMER.

MODERN VERSION.

Summer is a coming in.
    Loud sing, cuckoo;
Groweth seed, and bloweth mead,
And springeth the wood new.
    Sing, cuckoo, cuckoo!

Ewe bleateth after lamb;
  Loweth calf after cow;
Bullock starteth, buck departeth;
    Merry sing, cuckoo;
    Cuckoo, cuckoo;
Well singeth the cuckoo—
Sing ever, stop never,
    Cuckoo, cuckoo;
    Sing, cuckoo!

Anonymou
abo
12

LINES

FROM THE ANGLO-SAXON OF KING ALFRED.

When the sun
Clearest shines
Serenest in the heaven,
Quickly are obscured
Over the earth
All other stars;
Because their brightness is not
Brightness at all
Compared with
The sun's light.
When mild blows
The southwestern wind
Under the clouds,
Then quickly grow
The flowers of the field,
Joyful that they may.
But the stark storm,
When it comes strong
From north and east,
It quickly takes away
The beauty of the rose.
And also the northern storm,
Constrained by necessity,
That it is strongly agitated,
Lashes the spacious sea
Against the shore.
Alas! that our earth
Aught of permanent
Work in the world
Does not ever remain!

REV. S. FOX'S *version, 800.*

THE SUMMER MONTHS.

They come! the merry summer months of beauty, love,

and flowers;
They come! the gladsome months that bring thick leafiness to bowers.
Up, up, my heart! and walk abroad, fling work and care aside;
Seek silent hills, or rest thyself where peaceful waters glide;
Or underneath the shadow vast of patriarchal trees,
See through its leaves the cloudless sky in rapt tranquillity.

The grass is soft; its velvet touch is grateful to the hand,
And, like the kiss of maiden love, the breeze is sweet and bland;
The daisy and the butter-cup are nodding courteously;
It stirs their blood with kindest love to bless and welcome thee.
And mark how with thine own thin locks, they now are silvery gray—
That blissful breeze is wantoning, and whispering “Be gay!”

There is no cloud that sails along the ocean of yon sky
But hath its own winged mariners to give it melody.
Thou see’st their glittering fans outspread, all gleaming like red gold,
And hark! with shrill pipe musical, their merry course they hold.
God bless them all, these little ones, who, far above this earth,
Can make a scoff of its mean joys, and vent a nobler mirth.

But soft! mine ear upcaught a sound—from yonder wood it came;
The spirit of the dim green glade did breathe his own glad name.
Yes, it is he! the hermit bird, that apart from all his kind,
Slow spells his beads monotonous to the soft western winds.

Cuckoo! cuckoo! he sings again—his notes are void of art,
But simplest strains do soonest sound the deep founts of the heart.

Good Lord! it is a gracious boon for thought-crazed wight like me,
To smell again these summer flowers beneath this summer tree!
To suck once more in every breath, their little souls away,
And feed my fancy with fond dreams of youth's bright summer day;
When rushing forth, like untamed colt, the reckless truant boy—
Wandered through green woods all day long, a mighty heart of joy!

I'm sadder now—I have had cause; but O I'm proud to think
That each pure joy-fount loved of yore I yet delight to drink;
Leaf, blossom, blade, hill, valley, stream, the calm unclouded sky,
Still mingle music with my dreams, as in the days gone by.
When summer's loveliness and light fall round me dark and cold,
I'll bear indeed life's heaviest curse, a heart that hath waxed old.

WILLIAM MOTHERWEL
1797–1835.

VIRTUE.

Sweet day! so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky;

The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die.

Sweet rose! whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;
Thy root is ever in the grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring! full of sweet days and roses—
A box where sweets compacted lie—
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

GEORGE HERBERT
1593–1632.

FROM THE "HOLY DYING."

But as when the sun approaches toward the gates of the morning, he first opens a little eye of heaven, and sends away the spirits of darkness, and gives light to a cock, and calls up the lark to matins, and by-and-by gilds the fringes of a cloud, and peeps over the eastern hills, thrusting out his golden horns—like those which decked the brows of Moses, when he was forced to wear a vail, because himself had seen the face of God; and still, while a man tells the story, the sun gets up higher till he shows a fair face and full light, and then he shines one whole day, under a cloud often, and sometimes weeping great and little showers, and sets quickly: so is a man's reason and his life.

BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR.

SIMILE.

As when the cheerful sun elamping wide,
  Glads all the world with his uprising ray,
And woos the widowed earth afresh to pride,
  And paints her bosom with the flowery May—
  His silent sister steals him quite way.
Wrapp'd in a sable cloud, from mortal eyes
The hasty stars at noon begin to rise,
And headlong to his early roost the sparrow flies.

But soon as he again disshadowed is,
  Restoring the blind world his blemish'd sight—
As though another world were newly his;
  The cozened birds busily take their flight,
  And wonder at the shortness of the night,
So Mercy once again herself displays,
Out from her sister's cloud, and open lays
Those sunshine looks, whose beams would dim a thousand days.

GII

THE SUN

But yonder comes the powerful King of Day,
Rejoicing in the east. The lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow,
Illum'd with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad. Lo! now apparent all,
Aslant the dew-bright earth, and colored air,
He looks in boundless majesty abroad,
And sheds the shining day, that burnish'd plays
On rocks, and hills, and towers, and wandering streams,

High-gleaming from afar. Prime cheerer, light!
Of all material beings, first and best!
Efflux divine! Nature's resplendent robe!
Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapp'd
In unessential gloom; and thou, O Sun,
Soul of surrounding worlds! in whom best seen
Shines out thy Maker! may I sing of thee?

* * * * *

The vegetable world is also thine,
Parent of Seasons! who the pomp precede
That waits thy throne, as through thy vast domain,
Annual, along the bright ecliptic road,
In world-rejoicing state, it moves sublime.
Meantime th' expecting nations, circled gay
With all the various tribes of foodful earth,
Implore thy bounty, or send grateful up
A common hymn; while 'round thy beaming car,
High seen, the seasons lead in sprightly dance.
Harmonious limit; the rosy-finger'd hours,
The zephyrs floating loose, the timely rains,
Of bloom ethereal the light-footed dews,
And, softened into joy, the surly storms.
Here, in successive turn, with lavish hand
Shower every beauty, every fragrance shower,
Herbs, flowers, and fruits; till, kindling at thy touch,
From land to land is flush'd the vernal year.

JAMES THOMS
1700–1748.

THE SUN

* * * * *

Thou lookest on the earth, and then it smiles;

Thy light is hid, and all things droop and mourn.
Laughs the wild sea around her budding isles,
When through their heaven thy changing car is borne;
Thou wheel'st away thy flight, the woods are shorn
Of all their waving locks, and storms awake—
All that was once so beautiful is torn
By the wild winds which plow the lonely lake,
And in their maddening rush the crested mountains shake.

The earth lies buried in a shroud of snow;
Life lingers and would die, but thy return
Gives to their gladden'd hearts an overflow
Of all the power that brooded in the urn
Of their chill'd frames, and then they proudly spurn
All bands that would confine, and give to air
Hues, fragrance, shapes of beauty, till they burn,
When, on a dewy morn, thou dartest there
Rich waves of gold to wreathe with fairer light the fair.

The vales are thine; and when the touch of spring
Thrills them, and gives them gladness in thy light,
They glitter as the glancing swallow's wing
Dashes the water in his winding flight,
And leaves behind a wave that crumbles bright,
And widens outward to the pebbled shore—
The vales are thine; and when they wake from night,
The dews that bend the grass-tips, twinkling o'er
Their soft and oozy beds, look upward, and adore.

The hills are thine; they catch the newest beam,
And gladden in thy parting, where the wood
Flames out in every leaf, and drinks the stream
That flows from out thy fullness, as a flood
Bursts from an unknown land, and rolls the food
Of nations in its waters; so thy rays
Flow and give brighter tints than ever bud,
When a clear sheet of ice reflects a blaze
Of many twinkling gems, as every gloss'd bough plays.

Thine are the mountains, where they purely lift
  Snows that have never wasted in a sky
Which hath no stain; below the storm may drift
  Its darkness, and the thunder-gust roar by;
  Aloft in thy eternal smile they lie,
Dazzling, but cold; thy farewell glance looks there;
  And when below thy hues of beauty die,
Girt round them, as a rosy belt, they bear
Into the high, dark vault a brow that still is fair.

JAMES

DELIGHT IN GOD.

I love, and have some cause to love, the earth;
  She is my Maker's creature, therefore good.
She is my mother, for she gave me birth.
  She is my tender nurse; she gives me food.
  But what's a creature, Lord, compar'd to thee?
  Or what's my mother or my nurse to me?

I love the air; her dainty sweets refresh
  My drooping soul, and to new sweets invite me;
Her shrill-mouth'd choir sustains me with their flesh,
  And with their polyphonian notes delight me.
  But what's the air, or all the sweets that she
  Can bless my soul withal, compar'd to thee?

I love the sea; she is my fellow-creature—
  My careful purveyor; she provides me store;
She walls me round; she makes my diet greater;
  She wafts my treasure from a foreign shore.
  But, Lord of oceans, when compar'd with thee,
  What is the ocean, or her wealth to me?

To heaven's high city I direct my journey,
  Whose spangled suburbs entertain mine eye;
Mine eye, by contemplation's great attorney,

Transcends the crystal pavement of the sky.
But what is heav'n, great God, compar'd to thee?
Without thy presence, heaven's no heaven to me.

Without thy presence, earth gives no reflection;
Without thy presence, sea affords no treasure;
Without thy presence, air's a rank infection;
Without thy presence, heav'n's itself no pleasure;
If not possess'd, if not enjoy'd in thee,
What's earth, or sea, or air, or heav'n to me?

The highest honors that the world can boast
Are subjects far too low for my desire;
The brightest beams of glory are, at most,
But dying sparkles of thy living fire.
The loudest flames that earth can kindle, be
But nightly glow-worms if compar'd to thee.

Without thy presence, wealth is bags of cares;
Wisdom, but folly; joy, disquiet—sadness:
Friendship is treason, and delights are snares;
Pleasures but pain, and mirth but pleasing madness.
Without thee, Lord, things be not what they be,
Nor have they being, when compar'd with thee.

In having all things, and not thee, what have I?
Not having thee, what have my labors got?
Let me enjoy but thee, what further crave I?
And having thee alone, what have I not?
I wish nor sea, nor land, nor would I be
Possess'd of heav'n, heav'n unpossess'd of thee!

FRANCIS QUARLES, 1592–1664.

NOON.

FROM THE SPANISH.

The sun, 'midst shining glory now concealed
  Upon heaven's highest seat,
Darts straightway down upon the parched field,
  His fierce and burning heat;

And on revolving noonday calls, that he
  His flushed and glowing face
May show the world, and, rising from the sea,
  Aurora's reign displace.

The wandering wind now rests his weary wings,
  And, hushed in silence, broods;
And all the vocal choir of songsters sings
  Among the whispering woods.

And sweetly warbling on his oaten pipe,
  His own dear shepherd-maid,
The herd-boy leads along his flock of sheep
  To the sequestered shade;

Where shepherd youths and maids in secret bowers,
  In song and feast unite
In joyful band, to pass the sultry hours
  Of their siesta light.

The sturdy hunter, bathed in moisture well,
  Beneath an oak-tree's boughs,
Beside his faithful dog, his sentinel,
  Now yields him to repose.

All, all is calm, is silent. O how sweet,
  On this enameled ground,
At ease recumbent, from its flowery seat,
  To cast your eyes around!

The busy bee, that round your listening ear
  Murmurs with drowsy hum;
The faithful turtles, perched on oak-trees near,
  Moaning their mates' sad doom.

And ever in the distance her sweet song
  Murmurs lorn Philomel;

While the hoar forest's echoing glades prolong
  Her love and music well.

And 'midst the grass slow creeps the rivulet,
  In whose bright limpid stream
The blue sky and the world of boughs are met,
  Mirrored in one bright gleam.

And of the elm the hoar and silvery leaves,
  The slumbering winds scarce blow,
Which, pictured in the bright and tremulous waves,
  Follow their motion slow.

These airy mountains, and this fragrant seat,
  Bright with a thousand flowers;
These interwoven forests, where the heat
  Is tempered in their bowers!

The dark umbrageous woods, the dense array
  Of trunks, through which there peers
Perchance the town, which, in the glow of day,
  Like crystal light appears!

These cooling grottoes! O retirement blest!
  Within thy calm abode
My mind alone can from her troubles rest,
  With solitude and God.

Thou giv'st me life, and liberty, and love,
  And all I now admire,
And from the winter of my soul dost move
  The deep enthusiast fire.

O bounteous Nature, 'tis thy healing womb
  Alone can peace procure!
Thither all ye, the weary, laden, come,
  From storms of life secure.

Anonymous Translation. JUAN MELENDEZ VALDES, 1754–1817.

SUMMER DREAM.

FROM THE GERMAN MINNESINGERS.

’Twas summer; through the spring grass
  The joyous flowers upsprang;
The birds in all their different tribes
  Loud in the woodlands sang:
Then forth I went, and wandered far
  The wide, green meadow o’er—
Where cool and clear the fountain play’d—
  There strayed I in that hour.

Roaming on, the nightingale
  Sang sweetly in my ear;
And by the greenwood’s shady side,
  A dream came to me there.
Fast by the fountain, where bright flowers
  Of sparkling hue we see;
Close sheltered from the summer heat,
  That vision came to me.

All care was banished, and repose
  Came o'er my wearied breast;
And kingdoms seemed to wait on me,
  For I was with the blest.

Yet while it seemed as if away,
  My spirit soared on high,
And in the boundless joys of heaven
  Was rapp'd in ecstasy;
E'en then my body revel'd still
  In earth's festivity;
And surely never was a dream
  So sweet as this to me.

Thus I dreamed on, and might have dwelt
  Still on that rapturous dream,
When hark! a raven's luckless note—
  (Sooth 'twas a direful scream!)
Broke up the vision of delight.
  Instant my joy was past;
O had a stone but met my hand,
  That hour had been his last!

Translation of E. TAYLOR. WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE, *about 1150*.

SUMMER.

The spring's gay promise melted into thee,
  Fair summer! and thy gentle reign is here;
The emerald robes are on each leafy tree;
  In the blue sky thy voice is rich and clear;
And the free brooks have songs to bless thy reign—
They leap in music midst thy bright domain.

The gales that wander from the unclouded west
  Are burden'd with the breath of countless fields;
They teem with incense from the green earth's breast,
  That up to heaven its grateful odor yields,
Bearing sweet hymns of praise from many a bird,

By nature's aspect into rapture stirr'd.

In such a scene the sun-illumin'd heart
  Bounds like a prisoner in his narrow cell,
When through its bars the morning glories dart,
  And forest anthems in his hearing swell;
And like the heaving of the voiceful sea,
His panting bosom labors to be free.

Thus, gazing on thy void and sapphire sky,
  O summer! in my inmost soul arise
Uplifted thoughts, to which the woods reply,
  And the bland air with its soft melodies;
Till basking in some vision's glorious ray,
I long for eagle's plumes to flee away.

I long to cast this cumbrous clay aside,
  And the impure, unholy thoughts that cling
To the sad bosom, torn with care and pride;
  I would soar upward, on unfetter'd wing,
Far through the chambers of the peaceful skies,
Where the high fount of summer brightness lies!

WILLIS GAYLORD CLARK, 1810–1841.

PORTUGUESE CANZONET.

OF CAMOENS.

Flowers are fresh, and bushes green,
  Cheerily the linnets sing;
Winds are soft, and skies serene;
  Time, however, soon shall throw,
    Winter's snow,
  O'er the buxom breast of spring!

Hope that buds in lover's heart,
  Lives not through the scorn of years;
Time makes love itself depart;
  Time and scorn congeal the mind—
    Looks unkind—
  Freeze affection's warmest tears.

Time shall make the bushes green;
  Time dissolve the winter snow;
Winds be soft, and skies serene;
  Linnets sing their wonted strain.
    But again,
  Blighted love shall never blow!

Translated by VISCOUNT STRANGFORD. LUIS DE CAMÕENS, 1524–1579.

XII.
The Forest.

FROM "EVANGELINE."

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of old, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

H.

SONG.

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;

There shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleas'd with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
There shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

A GROVE.

FROM "BRITANNIA'S PASTORAL."

There stood the elme, whose shade so mildly dim
Doth nourish all that groweth under him;
Cipresse that like piramids rune topping,
And hurt the least of any by their dropping,
The alder whose fat shadow nourisheth,
Each plant set neere to him long flourisheth.
The heavy-headed plane-tree, by whose shade
The grasse grows thickest, men are fresher made.
The oake, that best endures the thunder-shocks;
The everlasting ebene, cedar, boxe;
The olive that in wainscot never cleans;
The amorous vine which in the elme still weaves;
The lotus, juniper, where worms ne'er enter;
The pyne, with whom men through the ocean venter;
The war-like yeugh, by which (more than the lance)
The strong-arm'd English spirits conquer'd France.
Among the rest the tamariske there stoode
For huswife's besoms only knowne most goode.
The cold-place-loving birch, and servis-tree;
The walnut loving vales, the mulberry.
The maple, ashe, that doe delight in fountains,

Which have their currents by the side of mountains.
The laurell, mirtle, ivy, date, which hold
Their leaves all winter, be it ne'er so cold.
The firre, that often times doth rosins drop;
The beach that scales the welkin with his top.
All these, and thousand more, within this grove,
By all the industry of nature strove
To frame an arbour that might keep within it,
The best of beauties that the world hath in it.

WILLIAM BROWNE
1590–1645.

OF THE SEMINARY, AND OF TRANSPLANTING.

FROM "THE SILVA.'

Qui Vineas vel Arbustum constituere volet, Seminaria prius facere debebit, was the precept of Columella (de Arb., cap. 1), speaking of vineyards and fruit-trees; and doubtless we can not pursue a better course for the propagation of timber-trees. For though it seem but a trivial design, that one should make a nursery of foresters; yet it is not to be imagined, without the experience of it, what prodigious numbers a very small spot of ground, well-cultivated, and destined for this purpose, would be able to furnish toward the sending forth of yearly colonies into all the naked quarters of a lordship, or demesne; being, with a pleasant industry, liberally distributed among the tenants, and disposed about the hedge-rows, and other waste and uncultivated places for timber, shelter, fuel, and ornament, to an incredible advantage. This being a cheap and laudable work, of

so much pleasure in the execution, and so certain a profit in the event, when once well done (for, as I affirmed, a very small plantarium, or nursery, will, in a few years, stock a vast extent of ground), has made me sometimes in admiration at the universal negligence; as well as raised my admiration, that seeds and plants of such different kinds, should, like so many tender babes and infants suck and thrive at the same breasts; though there are some, indeed, will not so well prosper in company, requiring peculiar juices. But this niceness is more conspicuous in flowers and the herbaceous offspring, than in foresters, which require only diligent weeding and frequent cleansing, till they are able to shift for themselves; and as their vessels enlarge and introduce more copious nourishment, they often starve their neighbors.

JOHN EVELYN, 1628–1706.

WINDSOR FOREST.

The groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in description and look green in song;
These, were my breast inspir'd with equal flame,
Like them in beauty, should be like in fame.
Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,
Here earth and water seem to strive again!
Not chaos-like, together crush'd and bruis'd,
But as the world, harmoniously confus'd;
Where order in variety we see,
And where, though all things differ, all agree.
Here waving groves a checker'd scant display,
And part admit, and part exclude the day;
As some coy nymph her lover's warm address,
Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress.
There interspers'd in lawns and op'ning glades,

Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades;
There, in full light, the russet plains extend;
There, wrapt in clouds, the bluish hills extend.
Ev'n the wild heath displays her purple dyes,
And 'midst the desert fruitful fields arise,
That, crown'd with tufted trees and fringing corn,
Like verdant isles, the sable waste adorn.
Let India boast her plants, nor envy we
The weeping amber or the balmy tree,
While by our oaks the precious loads are borne
And realms commanded which those trees adorn.
Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,
Though gods assembled grace his tow'ring height,
Than what more humble mountains offer here,
Where, in their blessings, all those gods appear.
See Pan, with flocks, with fruits Pomone crown'd;
There blushing Flora paints th' enamel'd ground,
Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,
And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand;
Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,
And peace and plenty tell a Stuart reigns.

ALEXANDER POPE, 1688–1744.

FAIRLOP.

In a glade of Hainhault forest, in Essex, about a mile from Barkinside, stands an oak, which has been known through many centuries by the name of Fairlop. The traditions of the country trace it half way up the Christian era. It is still a noble tree, though it has now suffered greatly from the depredations of time. About a yard from the ground, where its rough, fluted stem is thirty-six feet in circumference, it divides into eleven arms; yet not in the horizontal manner of an oak, but rather in that of

a beech. Beneath its shade, which overspreads an area of three hundred feet in circuit, an annual fair has long been held, on the 2d of July; and no booth is suffered to be erected beyond the extent of its boughs. But as their extremities are now become sapless, and age is yearly curtailing their length, the liberties of the fair seem to be in a desponding condition. The honor however is great. But honors are often accompanied with inconveniences; and Fairlop has suffered from its distinctions. In the feasting that attends the fair, fires are often necessary; and no places seemed so proper to make them in, as the hollow cavities formed by the heaving roots of the tree. This practice has brought a speedier decay on Fairlop than it might otherwise have suffered.

WILLIAM GILPIN, 1724–1807.

AN OLD OAK.

FROM COWPER'S LETTERS.

Since your departure I have twice visited the oak, with an intention of pushing my inquiries a mile beyond it, where it seems I should have found another oak, much larger, and much more respectable than the former; but once I was hindered by the rain, and once by the sultriness of the day. This latter oak has been known by the name of "Judith" many ages, and is said to have been an oak at the time of the Conquest. If I have not an opportunity to reach it before your arrival here, we will attempt that exploit together, and even if I should have been able to visit it ere you come, I shall yet be glad to do so, for the pleasure of extraordinary sights, like all other pleasures, is doubled by the

participation of a friend.

W. COWPER.—*Letter to S. Rose, Esq., Sept. 11, 1788.*

YARDLEY OAK.

Survivor sole, and hardly such, of all
That once lived here, thy brethren, at my birth,
(Since which I number threescore winters past),
A shatter'd veteran, hollow-trunk'd perhaps,
As now, and with excoriate forks deform,
Relics of ages! Could a mind, imbued
With truth from Heaven, created thing adore,
I might with rev'rence kneel, and worship thee.

It seems idolatry with some excuse,
When our forefather Druids in their oaks,
Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet
Unpurified by an authentic act
Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
Lov'd not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
Of fruit proscrib'd, as to a refuge, fled.

Thou wast a bauble once; a cup-and-ball,
Which babes might play with; and the thievish jay
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down
Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs,
And all thy embryo vastness, at a gulp.
But Fate thy growth decreed; autumnal rains
Beneath thy parent tree mellow'd the soil
Design'd thy cradle; and a skipping deer,
With pointed hoof, nibbling the glebe, prepar'd
The soft receptacle, in which, secure,
Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through.

So Fancy dreams. Disprove it if ye can
Ye reas'ners broad awake, whose busy search

Of argument employ'd too oft amiss,
Sifts half the pleasure of short life away!

Thou fill'st nature; and in the loamy clod,
Swelling with vegetative force instinct,
Didst burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled Twins,
Now stars; two lobes protruding, pair'd exact;
A leaf succeeded, and another leaf,
And, all the elements thy puny growth
Fost'ring propitious, thou becam'st a twig.

Who liv'd when thou wast such? O couldst thou speak
As in Dodona once, thy kindred trees,
Oracular, I would not curious ask
The future, best unknown, but at thy mouth
Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past.

By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,
The clock of History, facts and events
Timing more punctual, unrecorded facts
Recov'ring, and misstated, setting right—
Desp'rate attempt, till trees shall speak again!

Time made thee what thou wast, king of the wood;
And Time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in. Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign; and the numerous flocks
That graz'd it stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe-shelter'd from the storm.
No flocks frequent thee now. Thou hast outlived
Thy popularity, and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten as the foliage of thy youth.

While thus through all the stages thou hast push'd
Of treeship—first a seedling, hid in grass;
Then twig; then sapling; and as cent'ry roll'd
Slow after century, a giant-bulk
Of girth enormous, with moss-cushion'd root
Upheav'd above the soil, and sides emboss'd

With prominent wens globose—till at the last
The rottenness, which time is charged to inflict
On other mighty ones, found also thee.

* * * * *

WILLIAM
COWPER
1731–
1800.

THE GROANING ELM OF BADESLEY.

The history of the Groaning Tree is this. About forty years ago, a cottager, who lived near the center of the village (Badesley, near Lymington), heard frequently a strange noise behind his house, like that of a person in extreme agony. Soon after it caught the attention of his wife, who was then confined to her bed. She was a timorous woman, and being greatly alarmed, her husband endeavored to persuade her that the noise she heard was only the bellowing of the stags in the forest. By degrees, however, the neighbors on all sides heard it, and the thing began to be much talked of. It was by this time plainly discovered that the groaning noise proceeded from an elm, which grew at the end of the garden. It was a young, vigorous tree, and, to all appearance, perfectly sound.

In a few weeks the fame of the groaning tree was spread far and wide, and people from all parts flocked to it. Among others, it attracted the curiosity of the late Prince and Princess of Wales,[12] who resided, at that time for the advantage of a sea-bath, at Pilewell, the seat of Sir James Worsley, which stood within a quarter of a mile of the groaning tree.

Though the country people assigned many superstitious causes for this strange phenomenon, the naturalist could assign no physical one that was in any degree satisfactory. Some thought that it was owing to the twisting and friction of the roots. Others thought it proceeded from water, which had collected in the body of the tree—or perhaps from pent air. But no cause that was alleged appeared equal to the effect. In the mean time the tree did not always groan—sometimes disappointing its visitants; yet no cause could be assigned for its temporary cessations, either from seasons or weather. If any difference was observed, it was thought to groan least when the weather was wet, and most when it was clear and frosty; but the sound at all times seemed to arise from the root.

Thus the groaning tree continued an object of astonishment during the space of eighteen or twenty months, to all the country around; and for the information of distant parts a pamphlet was drawn up containing a particular account of all the circumstances relating to it.

At length the owner of it, a gentleman of the name of Forbes, making too rash an experiment to discover the cause, bored a hole in its trunk. After this it never groaned. It was then rooted up, with a further view to making a discovery; but still nothing appeared which led to any investigation of the cause. It was universally, however, believed that there was no trick in the affair, but that some natural cause really existed, though never understood.

WILLIAM GILPIN, 1724–1807.

YEW-TREES.

There is a yew-tree, pride of Horton Vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore,
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy, ere they marched
To Scotland's heaths; or those that crossed the sea
And drew their sounding bows at Agincour,
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or at Poitiers.
Of vast circumference and gloom profound
This solitary tree! a living thing
Produced too slowly ever to decay;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;
Huge trunks! and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibers serpentine,
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved—
Nor uninformed with phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane; a pillared shade,
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
By sheddings from the piny umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked
With unrejoicing berries, ghostly shapes
May meet at noontide: Fear and trembling Hope,
Silence and Foresight—Death the skeleton,
And Time the shadow—here to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scattered o'er
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
United worship; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

WILLIA
V

LINES.

FROM THE ICELANDIC EDDA.

I know an ash,
Named *Ygg-drasill*,
A stately tree,
With white dust strewed.
Thence come the dews
That wet the dales;
It stands aye green
O'er Urda's well.

Thence come the maids
Who much do know;
Three from the hall
Beneath the tree;
One they named *Was*,
And *Being* next,
The third *Shall be*,
On the shield they cut.

HENDERSON'S
"*Iceland*."

LIME-TREES.

At Niestad,[13] in the duchy of Wurtemburg, stood a lime, which was for many ages so remarkable that the city frequently took its denomination from it, being often called *Neustadt an der grossen Linden*, or Niestad near the Great Lime. Scarce any person passed near Niestad without visiting this tree; and many princes and great men did honor to it by building obelisks, columns, and monuments of various kinds around it, engraved with their arms and names, to which the dates were added, and often some device. Mr. Evelin, who procured copies of several of these monumental inscriptions, tells us there were two hundred of them. The columns on which they were fixed served also to bear up the vast limbs of the tree, which began through age to

become unwieldy. Thus this mighty plant stood many years in great state, the ornament of the town, the admiration of the country, and supported, as it were, by the princes of the empire. At length it felt the effects of war. Niestad was surrounded by an enemy, and the limbs of this venerable tree were mangled in wantonness by the besieging troops. Whether it still exists, I know not; but long after these injuries it stood a noble ruin, discovering, by the foundations of the several monuments, which formerly propped its spreading boughs, how far its limits had once extended.

* * * I shall next celebrate the Lime of Cleves. This, also, was a tree of great magnificence. It grew in an open plain, just at the entrance of the city, and was thought an object worthy to exercise the taste of the magistracy. The burgomaster of his day had it surveyed with great accuracy, and trimmed into eight broad, pyramidal faces. Each corner was supported by a handsome stone pillar; and in the middle of the tree, among the branches, was cut a noble room, which the vast space contained within easily suffered, without injuring the regularity of any of the eight faces. To crown all, the top was curiously clipped into some kind of head, and adorned artificially, but in what manner, whether with the head of a lion, or a stag, a weather-cock, or a sun-dial, we are not told. It was something, however, in the highest style of Dutch taste. This tree was long the admiration and envy of all the states of Holland.

WILLIAM GILPIN, 1724–1807.

THE BIRCH-TREE.

Rippling through thy branches goes the sunshine,
Among thy leaves that palpitate forever;
Ovid in thee a pining Nymph had prisoned,
The soul once of some tremulous, inland river,
Quivering to tell her woe, but, ah! dumb, dumb forever!

While all the forest, witched with slumberous moonshine,
Holds up its leaves in happy, happy silence;
Waiting the dew, with breath and pulse suspended—
I hear afar thy whispering, gleamy islands,
And track thee wakeful still amid the wide-hung silence.

Upon the brink of some wood-nestled lakelet,
Thy foliage, like the tresses of a Dryad,
Dripping about thy slim white stem, whose shadow
Slopes quivering down the water's dusky quiet,
Thou shrink'st, as on her bath's edge would some strolled Dryad.

Thou art the go-between of rustic lovers;
Thy white bark has their secrets in its keeping;
Reuben writes here the happy name of Patience,
And the lithe boughs hang murmuring and weeping
Above her, as she steals the mystery from thy keeping.

Thou art to me like my beloved maiden,
So frankly coy, so full of trembly confidences;
Thy shadow scarce seems shade, thy pattering leaflets
Sprinkle their gathered sunshine o'er my senses,
And Nature gives me all her summer confidences.

Whether my heart with hope or sorrow tremble,
Thou sympathized still; wild and unquiet,
I fling me down; thy ripple, like a river,
Flows valley-ward, where calmness is, and by it
My heart is floated down into the land of quiet.

THE HEMLOCK-TREE.

FROM THE GERMAN.

O hemlock-tree! O hemlock-tree! how faithful are thy branches!
Green not alone in summer time,
But in the winter's frost and rime!
O hemlock-tree! O hemlock-tree! how faithful are thy branches!

O maiden fair! O maiden fair! how faithless is thy bosom!
To love me in prosperity,
And leave me in adversity
O maiden fair! O maiden fair! how faithless is thy bosom!

The nightingale! the nightingale thou tak'st for thine example!
So long as summer laughs she sings,
But in the autumn spreads her wings;
The nightingale! the nightingale thou tak'st for thine example!

The meadow-brook, the meadow-brook is mirror of thy falsehood!
It flows so long as falls the rain;
In drought its springs soon dry again;
The meadow-brook, the meadow-brook is mirror of thy falsehood!

Anonymous. *Translation of* H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE OAK.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF METASTASIO.

The tall oak, towering to the skies,
The fury of the wind defies;
From age to age, in virtue strong,
Inured to stand, and suffer wrong.

O'erwhelmed at length, upon the plain
It puts forth wings, and sweeps the main;
The self-same foe undaunted braves,
And fights the winds upon the waves.

JAME

ON AN ANCIENT OAK.

FROM THE GREEK OF ANTIPHILUS.

Hail, venerable boughs, that in mid sky
Spread broad and deep your leafy canopy!
Hail, cool, refreshing shade, abode most dear
To the sun-wearied traveler, wand'ring near!
Hail, close inwoven bow'rs, fit dwelling-place
For insect tribes, and man's imperial race!
Me, too, reclining in your green retreat,
Shield from the blazing day's meridian heat.

Translation of J. H.
MERIVALE.

WOOD NOTES.

And such I knew a forest seer,
A minstrel of the natural year,
Foreteller of the vernal ides,
Wise harbinger of spheres and tides—
A lover true, who knew by heart,
Each joy the mountain dales impart;
It seemed that Nature could not raise

A plant in any secret place;
In quaking bog, or snowy hill.
Beneath the grass that shades the rill,
Under the snow, between the rocks,
In damp fields, known to bird and fox;
But he would come in the very hour
It opened in its virgin bower,
As if a sunbeam showed the place,
And tell its long-descended race.
It seemed as if the breezes brought him;
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him;
As if by secret sight he knew
Where, in far fields, the orchis grew.
Many haps fall in the field,
Seldom seen by wistful eyes;
But all her shows did Nature yield,
To please and win this pilgrim wise.
He saw the partridge drum in the woods,
He heard the woodcock's evening hymn;
He found the tawny thrush's broods;
And the sky-hawk did wait for him.
What others did at distance hear,
And guessed within the thicket's gloom,
Was showed to this philosopher,
And at his bidding seemed to come.

In unplowed Maine he sought the lumberer's gang,
Where from a hundred lakes young rivers sprang;
He trod the unplanted forest floor, whereon
The all-seeing sun for ages hath not shone;
Where feeds the moose and walks the surly bear,
And up the tall mast runs the woodpecker.
He saw beneath dim aisles, in odorous beds,
The slight Linnea hang its twin-born heads;
And blessed the monument of the man of flowers,
Which breathes his sweet fame through the northern bowers.
He heard, when in the grove, at intervals,
With sudden roar the aged pine-tree falls—
One crash, the death-hymn of the perfect tree,

Declares the close of its green century.
Low lies the plant to whose creation went
Sweet influence from every element;
Whose living towers the years conspired to build—
Whose giddy top the morning loved to gild.
Through these green tents, by eldest Nature dressed,
He roamed, content alike with man and beast.
Where darkness found him he lay glad at night;
There the red morning touched him with its light.
Three moons his great heart him a hermit made,
So long he roved at will the boundless shade.
The timid it concerns to ask their way,
And fear what foe in caves and swamps can stray;
To make no step until the event is known,
And ills to come, as evils past, bemoan.
Not so the wise; no coward watch he keeps,
To spy what danger on his pathway creeps.
Go where he will, the wise man is at home—
His hearth the earth, his hall the azure dome;
Where his clear spirit leads him, there his road,
By God's own light illumined and foreshowed.

R.

A PINE-FOREST.

Those who have only lived in forest countries, where vast tracts are shaded by a dense growth of oak, ash, chestnut, hickory, and other trees of deciduous foliage, which present the most pleasing varieties of verdure and freshness, can have but little idea of the effect produced on the feelings by aged forests of pine, composed in great degree of a single species, whose towering summits are crowned with one dark-green canopy, which successive seasons find unchanged, and nothing but death causes to

vary. Their robust and gigantic trunks rise a hundred or more feet high in purely proportioned columns before the limbs begin to diverge; and their tops, densely clothed with long, bristling foliage, intermingle so closely as to allow of but slight entrance to the sun. Hence the undergrowth of such forests is comparatively slight and thin, since none but shrubs and plants that love the shade can flourish under this perpetual exclusion of the animating and invigorating rays of the great exciter of the vegetable world. Through such forests, and by the merest foot-paths in great part, it was my lot to pass many miles almost every day; and had I not endeavored to derive some amusement and instruction from the study of the forest itself, my time would have been as fatiguing to me as it was certainly quiet and solemn. But wherever Nature is, and under whatever form she may present herself, enough is always proffered to fix attention and to produce pleasure, if we will condescend to observe with carefulness. I soon found that even a pine-forest was far from being devoid of interest.

JOHN M. GODMAN, 1795–1829.

A WOOD IN WINTER.

FROM THE ITALIAN.

Sweet, lonely wood, that like a friend art found
To soothe my weary thoughts that brood on woe,
While through dull days and short the north winds blow,
Numbing with winter's breath the air and ground
Thy time-worn, leafy locks seem all around,
Like mine, to whiten with old age's snow,
Now that thy sunny banks, where late did grow

The painted flowers, in frost and ice are bound.
As I go musing on the dim, brief light
That still of life remain, then I, too, feel
The creeping cold my limbs and spirits thrill;
But I with sharper frost than thine congeal;
Since ruder winds my winter brings, and nights
Of greater length, and days more scant and chill.
Anonymous Translation. GIOVANNI DELLA CASA, 1503–1556.

"LEAVES HAVE THEIR TIME TO FALL."

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, oh! Death.

Day is for mortal care;
Eve for glad meetings round the joyous hearth;
Night for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer—
But all for thee, thou mightiest of the earth.

The banquet hath its hour,
Its feverish hour of mirth, and song, and wine;
There comes a day of grief's overwhelming power,
A time for softer tears—but all are thine.

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at thee—but thou art not of those
That wait the ripened bloom to seize their prey.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set, but all—
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, oh! Death.

We know when moons shall wane—
When summer-birds from far shall cross the sea—

When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain—
But who shall teach us when to look for thee?

Is it when spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie?
Is it when roses in our path grow pale?
They have one season—all are ours to die!

Thou art where billows foam—
Thou art where music melts upon the air;
Thou art around us in our peaceful home,
And the world calls us forth to meet thee there.

Thou art where friend meets friend,
Beneath the shadow of the elm, at rest;
Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend
The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set, but all—
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, oh! Death.

FEI

SONNET.

Thrice happy he who by some shady grove,
Far from the clamorous world, doth live his own;
Though solitary, who is not alone,
But doth converse with that Eternal Love.
O how more sweet is bird's harmonious moan,
Or the hoarse sobbings of the widow'd dove,
Than those smooth whisperings near a prince's throne,
Which good make doubtful, do the ill approve!
O how more sweet is zephyr's wholesome breath,
And sighs embalm'd, which new-born flowers unfold,
Than that applause vain honor doth bequeath!
How sweet are streams, to poisons drank in gold!

The world is full of horrors, troubles, slights;
Woods' harmless shades have only true delights.

WILLIAM DRUMMON
1585–
1649.

XIII.
Birds.

LINES

FROM "FAREWELL TO THE VANITIES OF THE WORLD."

Welcome, pure thoughts, welcome, ye silent groves—
These guests, these courts, my soul most dearly loves:
Now the wing'd people of the sky shall sing
My cheerful anthems to the gladsome spring.

SIR HENRY WOTTON, 1568–1639.

FLIGHT OF CRANES.

A SIMILE FROM HOMER.

As when of many sorts the long-neck'd fowl
  Unto the large and flowing plain repair,
Through which Cayster's waters gently roll,
  In multitudes—high flying in the air,
Now here, now there fly, priding on their wing,
  And by-and-by at once light on the ground,
And with their clamor make the air to ring,

And th' earth whereon they settle to resound;
So when the Achaians went up from the fleet,
And on their march were to the towers of Troy,
The earth resounded loud with hoofs and feet.
But on Scamander's flowery bank they stray,
In number like the flowers of the field,
Or leaves in spring, or multitude of flies
In some great dairy, round the vessels filled,
Delighted with the milk, dance, fall, and rise.

Translated by HOBBES.

THE SWALLOW AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

FROM THE GREEK, 450 B. C.

Attic maiden—honey-fed—
Chirping warbler, bear'st away
Thou the chirping grasshopper,
To thy callow young a prey?
Warbling thou—a warbler seize,
Winged-one with lovely wings!
Guest thyself—by summer brought—
Fellow-guest, whom summer brings!
Will not quickly let it drop?
'Tis not fair—indeed, 'tis wrong,
That the ceaseless songster should
Die by mouth of ceaseless song!

Translation of G. TREVOR.

THE SAME

ANOTHER TRANSLATION.

Attic maiden, breathing still
  Of the fragrant flowers that blow
On Hymettus' purple hill,
  Whence the streams of honey flow.
Wherefore thus a captive bear
To your nest the grasshopper?

Noisy prattler, cease to do
  To your fellow-prattler wrong;
Kind should not its kind pursue—
  Least of all the heirs of song.
Prattler, seek some other food
For your noisy, prattling brood.

Both are ever on the wing,
  Wanderers both in foreign bowers;
Both succeed the parting spring,
  Both depart with summer hours.
Those who love the minstrel lay
Should not on each other prey.

Translation of G. MERIVALE.

SONG OF THE SWALLOW.

FROM THE GREEK.

Sung by the Children, passing from Door to Door, at the Return of the Swallow.

  The swallow is come!
  The swallow is come!
He brings us the season of vernal delight,
With his back all of sable, and belly of white.
  Have you nothing to spare,
  That his palate would please—
  A fig, or a pear,
  Or a slice of rich cheese?
  Mark, he bars all delay:

At a word, my friend, say,
Is it yes, is it nay?
Do we go? do we stay?
One gift, and we're gone:
Refuse, and anon,
On your gate and your door
All our fury we pour;
Or our strength shall be tried
On your sweet little bride;
From her seat we will tear her,
From her home we will bear her;
She is light, and will ask
But small hands for the task.
Let your bounty then lift
A small aid to our mirth,
And whate'er the gift,
Let its size speak its worth.
The swallow, the swallow,
Upon you doth wait;
An alms-man and suppliant,
He stands at your gate;
Let him in then, I say,
For no gray-beards are we,
To be foiled in our glee;
But boys who will have our own way.

Translation of
MITCHELL.

SWALLOWS.

FROM "SALMONIA."

Hal. While we have been conversing, the May-flies, which were in such quantities, have become much fewer; and I believe the reason is, that they have been greatly diminished by the flocks of swallows which everywhere pursue them. I have seen a single swallow take four, in less than a quarter of a minute,

that were descending to the water.

Poict. I delight in this living landscape! The swallow is one of my favorite birds, and a rival of the nightingale; for he cheers my sense of seeing as much as the other does my sense of hearing. He is the glad prophet of the year—the harbinger of the best season: he lives a life of enjoyment among the loveliest forms of Nature. Winter is unknown to him; and he leaves the green meadows of England, in autumn, for the myrtle and orange groves of Italy, and for the palms of Africa. He has always objects of pursuit, and his success is secure. Even the beings selected for his prey are poetical, beautiful, and transient. The ephemeræ are saved by his means from a slow and lingering death in the evening, and killed in a moment, when they have known nothing of life but pleasure. He is the constant destroyer of insects—the friend of man; and, with the stork and ibis, may be regarded as a sacred bird. This instinct, which gives him his appointed seasons, and teaches him always when and where to move, may be regarded as flowing from a Divine Source; and he belongs to the Oracles of Nature, which speak the awful and intelligible language of a present Deity.

SIR HUMPHREY DAVY.

LINES

FROM "THE POLYOLBION."

When Phœbus lifts his head out of the winter's wave,
No sooner doth the earth her flowery bosom brave;
At such time as the year brings on the pleasant spring,
But hunts-up to the morn the feather'd sylvans sing;
And in the lower grove, as on the rising knole,
Upon the highest spray of every mounting pole

Those choristers are perch'd, with many a speckled breast;
Then from her burnish'd gate the goodly glittering East
Gilds every lofty top, which late the humorous night
Bespangled had with pearl, to please the morning's sight;
On which the mirthful choirs, with their clear, open throats,
Unto the joyful morn so strain their warbling notes,
That hills and valleys ring, and even the echoing air
Seems all composed of sounds about them everywhere.

MICHAEL DRAYTON
1563–1631.

THE BLACK COCK.

Good-morrow to thy sable beak,
And glossy plumage, dark and sleek—
Thy crimson moon and azure eye—
Cock of the heath, so wildly shy!
I see thee slowly cowering through
That wiry web of silver dew,
That twinkles in the morning air,
Like casement of my lady fair.

A maid there is in yonder tower,
Who, peeping from her early bower,
Half shows, like thee, with simple wile,
Her braided hair and morning smile.
The rarest things, with wayward will,
Beneath the covert hide them still;
The rarest things, to light of day
Look shortly forth, and break away.

One fleeting moment of delight
I warmed me in her cheering sight,
And short, I ween, the time will be

That I shall parley hold with thee.
Through Snowdon's mist red beams the day;
The climbing herd-boy chants his lay;
The gnat-flies dance their sunny ring;
Thou art already on the wing.

JO.

TO THE MOCKING-BIRD.

Wing'd mimic of the woods! thou motley fool,
  Who shall thy gay buffoonery describe?
Thine ever-ready notes of ridicule
  Pursue thy fellows still with jest and gibe:
  Wit, sophist, songster, Yorick of thy tribe,
Thou sportive satirist of Nature's school,
  To thee the palm of scoffing we ascribe,
Arch mocker, and mad Abbot of Mis-Rule!
  For such thou art by day—but all night long
Thou pour'st a soft, sweet, pensive, solemn strain,
  As if thou didst in this thy moonlight song
Like to the melancholy Jacques complain—
  Musing on falsehood, folly, vice, and wrong,
And sighing for thy motley coat again.

RICHARI
H
W

THE BOB-O-LINKUM.

Thou vocal sprite—thou feathered troubadour!
  In pilgrim weeds through many a clime a ranger,
Com'st thou to doff thy russet suit once more,
  And play in foppish trim the masking stranger?
Philosophers may teach thy whereabout and nature,
  But, wise as all of us, perforce, must think 'em,
The school-boy best hath fix'd thy nomenclature,

And poets, too, must call thee “Bob-o-linkum!”

Say, art thou long 'mid forest glooms benighted,
So glad to skim our laughing meadows over—
With our gay orchards here so much delighted,
It makes thee musical, thou airy rover?
Or are those buoyant notes the pilfer’d treasure
Of fairy isles, which thou hast learn’d to ravish
Of all their sweetest minstrelsy at pleasure,
And, Ariel-like, again on men to lavish?

They tell sad stories of thy mad-cap freaks,
Wherever o’er the land thy pathway ranges;
And even in a brace of wandering weeks,
They say alike thy song and plumage changes;
These both are gay; and when the buds put forth,
And leafy June is shading rock and river,
Thou art unmatch’d, blithe warbler of the North,
While through the balmy air thy clear notes quiver.

Joyous, yet tender, was that gush of song,
Caught from the brooks, where 'mid its wild flowers smiling,
The silent prairie listens all day long,
The only captive to such sweet beguiling;
Or didst thou, flitting through the verdurous halls,
And column’d isles of western groves symphonious,
Learn from the tuneful woods rare madrigals,
To make our flowering pastures here harmonious?

Caught’st thou thy carol from Ottawa maid,
Where through the liquid fields of wild rice plashing—
Brushing the ears from off the burden’d blade,
Her birch canoe o’er some lone lake is flashing?
Or did the reeds of some savanna South,
Detain thee while thy northern flight pursuing,
To place those melodies in thy sweet mouth,
The spice-fed winds had taught them in their wooing?

Unthrifty prodigal! is no thought of ill
  Thy ceaseless roundelay disturbing ever?
Or doth each pulse in choiring cadence still
  Throb on in music till at rest forever?
Yet now in 'wilder'd maze of concord floating,
  'Twould seem that glorious hymning to prolong,
Old Time, in hearing thee, might fall a-doating,
  And pause to listen to thy rapturous song!

CHARLES
FEN
HOf

THE OWL.

High rides the moon amid the fleecy clouds,
That glisten as they float athwart her disk;
Sweet is the glimpse that for a moment plays
Among these mouldering pinnacles; but hark
That dismal cry! it is the wailing owl,
Night long she mourns, perched in some vacant niche,
Or time-rent crevice; sometimes to the woods
She bends her silent, slowly-moving wing,
And on some leafless tree, dead of old age,
Sits watching for her prey; but should the foot
Of man intrude into her solemn shades,
Startled, he hears the fragile, breaking branch
Crash as she rises; farther in the gloom
To deeper solitude she wings her way.

REV.

EXTRACT.

FROM "JOURNAL OF A NATURALIST."

Rural sounds, the voices, the language of the wild

creatures, as heard by the naturalist, belong to, and are in concord with, the country only. Our sight, our smell may perhaps be deceived for an interval by conservatories, horticultural arts, and bowers of sweets; but our hearing can in no way be beguiled by any semblance of what is heard in the grove or the field. The hum, the murmur, the medley of the mead, is peculiarly its own, admits of no imitation, and the voices of our birds convey particular intimation, and distinctly notify the various periods of the year with an accuracy as certain as they are detailed in our calendars. The season of spring is always announced as approaching by the notes of the rookery, by the jingle or wooing accents of the dark frequenters of the trees; and that time having passed away, these contentions and cadences are no longer heard. The cuckoo then comes and informs us that spring has arrived; that he has journeyed to see us, borne by gentle gales in sunny days; that fragrant flowers are in the copse and the mead, and all things telling of gratulation and of joy; the children mark this well-known sound, spring out, and cuckoo! cuckoo! as they gambol down the lane; the very plow-boy bids him welcome in early morn. It is hardly spring without the cuckoo's song; and, having told his tale, he has voice for no more—is silent or away. Then comes the dark, swift-winged marten, glancing through the air, that seems afraid to visit our uncertain clime; he comes, though late, and hurries through his business here eager again to depart, all day long in agitation and precipitate flight. The bland zephyrs of the spring have no charms for them; but basking and careering in the sultry gleams of June and July, they associate in throngs, and, screaming, dash round the steeple or the ruined tower, to serenade their nesting mates; and glare and

heat are in their train. When the fervor of summer ceases, this bird of the sun will depart. The evening robin, from the summit of some leafless bough or projecting point, tells us that autumn is come, and brings matured fruits, chilly airs, and sober hours; and he, the lonely minstrel that now sings, is understood by all. These four birds thus indicate a separate season, have no interference with the intelligence of the other, nor could they be transposed without the loss of all the meaning they convey, which no contrivance of art could supply; and, by long association, they have become identified with the period, and in peculiar accordance with the time.

J. L. KNAPP.

THE PATTICHAP'S NEST.

Well! in my many walks I've rarely found
A place less likely for a bird to form
Its nest; close by the rut-gulled wagon-road,
And on the almost bare foot-trodden ground,
With scarce a clump of grass to keep it warm,
Where not a thistle spreads its spears abroad,
Or prickly bush to shield it from harm's way;
And yet so snugly made, that none may spy
It out, save peradventure. You and I
Had surely passed it in our walk to-day,
Had chance not led us by it! Nay, e'en now,
Had not the old bird heard us trampling by,
And fluttered out, we had not seen it lie
Brown as the roadway side. Small bits of hay
Pluck'd from the old prop'd haystack's pleachy brow,
And withered leaves, make up its outward wall,
Which from the gnarled oak-dotterel yearly fall,
And in the old hedge-bottom rot away.
Built like an oven, through a little hole,

Scarcely admitting e'en two figures in,
Hard to discern, the bird's snug entrance win.
'Tis lined with feathers, warm as silken stole,
Softer than seats of down for painless ease,
And full of eggs scarce bigger ev'n than pease.
Here's one most delicate, with spots as small
As dust, and of a faint and pinky red.

* * * * *

A grasshopper's green jump might break the shells;
Yet lowing oxen pass them morn and night,
And restless sheep around them hourly stray.

A THOUGHT.

UPON OCCASION OF A RED-BREAST COMING INTO HIS CHAMBER.

Pretty bird, how cheerfully dost thou sit and sing, and yet knowest not where thou art, nor where thou shalt make thy next meal; and at night must shroud thyself in a bush for lodging! What shame is it for me, that see before me so liberal provisions of my God, and find myself sit warm under my own roof, yet am ready to droop under a distrustful and unthankful dullness. Had I so little certainty of my harbor and purveyance, how heartless should I be, how careful; how little list should I have to make music to thee or myself. Surely thou comest not hither without a Providence. God sent thee not so much to delight, as to shame me, but all in a conviction of my sullen unbelief, who, under more apparent means, am less cheerful and confident; reason and faith have not done so much in me, as in thee mere instinct of nature; want of foresight makes

thee more merry, if not more happy here, than the foresight of better things maketh me.

O God, thy providence is not impaired by those powers thou hast given me above these brute things; let not my greater helps hinder me from a holy security and comfortable reliance on thee!

BISHOP HALL, 1574–1656.

THE BIRDS OF PASSAGE.

FROM THE SWEDISH.

Behold! the birds fly
From Gauthiod's strand,
And seek with a sigh
Some far foreign land.
The sounds of their woe
With hollow winds blend:
"Where now must we go?
Our flight whither tend?"
'Tis thus unto heaven that their wailings ascend.

"The Scandian shore
We leave in despair,
Our days glided o'er
So blissfully there:
We there built our nest
Among bright blooming trees;
There rock'd us to rest
The balm-bearing breeze;
But now to far lands we must traverse the sea.

"With rose-crown all bright
On tresses of gold,
The midsummer night
It was sweet to behold:
The calm was so deep,
So lovely the ray,

We could not then sleep,
  But were tranced by the spray,
Till wakened by beams from the bright car of day.

"The trees gently bent
  O'er the plains in repose;
With dew-drops besprent
  Was the tremulous rose;
The oaks now are bare;
  The rose is no more;
The zephyr's light air
  Is exchanged for the roar
Of storms, and the May-fields have mantles of hoar.

"Then why do we stay
  In the North, where the sun
More dimly each day
  His brief course will run?
And why need we sigh—
  We leave but a grave,
To cleave through the sky
  On the wings which God gave;
Then, Ocean, we welcome the roar of thy wave!"

Of rest thus bereaved,
  They soar in the air,
But soon are received
  Into regions more fair;
Where elms gently shake
  In the zephyr's light play,
Where rivulets take
  Among myrtles their way,
And the groves are resounding with Hope's happy lay.

When earth's joys are o'er
  And the days darkly roll,
When autumn winds roar—
  Weep not, O my soul!
Fair lands o'er the sea
  For the birds brightly bloom;
A land smiles for thee,

Beyond the dark tomb,
Where beams never fading its beauties illume.
Anonymous Translation. ERIC JOHAN STAGNELIUS,
1793–1823.

THE DOVE.

RUSSIAN.

On an oak-tree sat,
Sat a pair of doves;
And they bill'd and coo'd,
And they heart to heart,
Tenderly embraced
With their little wings;
On them suddenly
Darted down a hawk.

One he seized and tore,
Tore the little dove,
With his feathered feet,
Soft, blue little dove;
And he pour'd his blood,
Streaming down the tree;
Feathers too were strewed
Widely o'er the field;
High away the down
Floated in the air.

Ah, how wept and wept,
Ah, how sobb'd and sobb'd
The poor doveling then
For her little dove.

"Weep not, weep not so,
Tender little bird!"
Spake the light young hawk
To the little dove.

"O'er the sea away,
O'er the far blue sea,
I will drive to thee
Flocks of other doves;
From them choose thee then,
Choose a soft and blue,
With his feathered feet,
Better little dove."

"Fly, thou villain! not
O'er the far blue sea,
Drive not here to me
Flocks of other doves.
Ah! of all thy doves
None can comfort me,
Only he, the father
Of my little ones."

Translated by J. G. PERCIVAL.

THE DYING SWAN.

The plain was grassy, wild, and bare,
Wide, wild, and open to the air,
Which had built up everywhere
  An under-roof of doleful gray.
With an inner voice the river ran,
Adown it floated a dying swan,
  Which loudly did lament.
  It was the middle of the day.
    Ever the weary wind went on
  And shook the reed-tops as it went.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
And white against the cold-white sky
Shone out their crowning snows.
  One willow over the river wept,
And shook the wave as the wind did sigh;
Above in the wind was the swallow,

Chasing itself at its own wild will,
And far through the marish green and still
  The tangled water-courses slept,
Shot over with purple, and green, and yellow.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul
  Of that waste place with joy
Hidden in sorrow; at first to the ear
The warble was low, and full, and clear;
  And floating about the under-sky,
Prevailing in weakness, the coronach stole
Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear;
  But anon her awful jubilant voice,
With a music strange and manifold,
Flowed forth on a carol free and bold;
  As when a mighty people rejoice
With shawms, and with cymbals, and harps of gold,
And the tumult of their acclaim is rolled
Through the open gates of the city afar,
To the shepherd who watcheth the evening star.
And the creeping mosses and clambering weeds,
  And the willow-branches hoar and dank,
And the wavy swell of the soughing reeds,
  And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,
And the silvery marish flowers that throng,
The desolate creeks and pools among,
Were flooded over with eddying song.

ALF

THE TWA CORBIES.

OLD SCOTTISH BALLAD.

As I gaed doun by yon house-en',
Twa corbies there were sittand their lane.
The tane unto the tother sae,
"O where shall we gae dine to-day?"

"O down beside yon new-faun birk,
There lies a new-slain knicht,
Nae livin kens that he lies there,
But his horse, his hounds, and his lady fair.

"His horse is to the huntin gone,
His hounds to bring the wild deer hame;
His lady's taen another mate;
Sae we may make our dinner swate.

"O we'll sit on his bonnie briest-bane,
And we'll pyke out his bonnie grey e'en;
Wi ae lock o' his gowden hair
We'll theek our nest when it blaws bare.

"Mony a ane for him maks mane,
But nane sail ken where he is gane;
Ower his banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair!"

Anonymous
abou
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THE RED-BREAST IN SEPTEMBER.

The morning mist is clear'd away,
Yet still the face of heaven is gray,
Nor yet th' autumnal breeze has stirr'd the grove,
Faded, yet full, a paler green
Skirts soberly the tranquil scene,
The red-breast warbles round this leafy cove.

Sweet messenger of calm decay,
Saluting sorrow as you may,
As one still bent to make, or find the best,
In thee, and in this quiet mead
The lesson of sweet peace I read,
Rather in all to be resign'd than blest.

’Tis a low chant, according well
With the soft solitary knell,
As homeward from some grave belov’d we turn,
Or by some holy death-bed dear,
Most welcome to the chasten’d ear
Of her whom Heaven is teaching how to mourn.

O cheerful, tender strain! the heart
That duly bears with you its part,
Singing so thankful to the dreary blast,
Though gone and spent its joyous prime,
And on the world’s autumnal time
'Mid withered hues, and sere, its lot be cast,

That is the heart for thoughtful seer,
Watching, in trance nor dark nor clear,
Th’ appalling Future as it nearer draws;
His spirit calm’d the storm to meet,
Feeling the Rock beneath his feet,
And tracing through the cloud th’ eternal Cause.

XIV.
The Butterfly.

The “Fate of the Butterfly” is one of the most charming of Spenser’s lesser poems; and as it is seldom met with on American bookshelves, it has been inserted entire, or at least with the exception of a verse or two, in the present volume.

Familiar as we are with them, we seldom bear in mind how much the more pleasing varieties of the insect race add to the beauty and interest of the earth. Setting aside the important question of their different uses, and the appropriate tasks allotted to each—forgetting for the moment what we owe to the bee, and the silkworm, and the coral insect, with others of the same class—we are very apt to underrate them even as regards the pleasure and gratification they afford us. The utter absence of insect life is one of the most striking characteristics of our Northern American winters. Let us suppose for a moment that something of the same kind were to mark one single summer of our lives—that the hum of the bee, the drone of the beetle, the chirrup of cricket, locust, and katydid, the noiseless flight of gnat, moth, and butterfly, and the flash of the firefly, were suddenly to cease from the days and nights of June—suppose a magic sleep to fall upon them all;

let their tiny but wonderful forms vanish from their usual haunts; let their ceaseless, cheery chant of day and night be hushed, should we not be oppressed with the strange stillness? Should we not look wistfully about for more than one familiar creature? The gardens and the meadows would in very sooth scarce seem themselves without this lesser world of insect life, moving in busy, gay, unobtrusive variety among the plants they love; and we may well believe that we should gladly welcome back the lowliest of the beetles, and the most humble of the moths which have so often crossed our path.

MUIOPOTMOS;

OR, THE FATE OF THE BUTTERFLIE.

DEDICATED TO THE MOST FAIRE AND VERTUOUS LADIE,
THE LADIE CAREY.

I sing of deadly dolorous debate,
Stir'd up through wrathfull Nemesis despight,
Betwixt two mightie ones of great estate,
Drawne into armes, and proofe of mortall fight,
Through prowd ambition and hart-swelling hate,
Whilst neither could the others greater might
And sdeignfull scorne endure; that from small iarre
Their wraths at length broke into open warre.

The roote whereof and tragicall effect,
Vouchsafe, O thou the mournfulst Muse of nyne,
That wont'st the tragick stage for to direct,
In funerall complaints and wailefull tyne,
Reveale to me, and all the meanes detect,
Through which sad Clarion did at last decline
To lowest wretchednes: And is there then
Such rancour in the harts of mightie men?

Of all the race of silver-winged Flies

Which doo possesse the empire of the aire,
Betwixt the centred earth, and azure skies,
Was none more favourable, nor more faire,
Whilst heaven did favour his felicities,
Than Clarion, the eldest sonne and heire
Of Muscaroll, and in his fathers sight
Of all alive did seeme the fairest wight.

With fruitfull hope his aged breast he fed
Of future good, which his young toward yeares,
Full of brave courage and bold hardyhed
Above th' ensample of his equall Peares,
Did largely promise, and to him fore-red,
(Whilst oft his heart did melt in tender teares,)
That he in time would sure prove such an one,
As should be worthie of his fathers throne.

The fresh young Flie, in whom the kindly fire
Of lustful yongth began to kindle fast,
Did much disdaine to subiect his desire
To loathsome sloth, or houres in ease to wast,
But ioy'd to range abroad in fresh attire,
Through the wide compas of the ayrie coast;
And, with unwearied wings, each part t' inquire
Of the wide rule of his renowned sire.

For he so swift and nimble was of flight,
That from this lower tract he dar'd to stie
Up to the clowdes, and thence with pineons light
To mount aloft unto the cristall skie,
To view the workmanship of heavens hight:
Whence down descending he along would flie
Upon the streaming rivers, sport to finde;
And oft would dare to tempt the troublous winde.

So on a summers day, when season milde
With gentle calme the world had quieted,
And high in heaven Hyperion's fierie childe
Ascending did his beames dispred,
Whiles all the heavens on lower creatures smilde;
Young Clarion, with vauntfull lustiehed,

After his guize did cast abroad to fare;
And thereto gan his furnitures prepare.

His breast-plate first, that was of substance pure,
Before his noble heart he firmely bound,
That mought his life from yron death assure,
And ward his gentle corps from cruell wound:
For by it arte was framed, to endure
The bit of balefull steele and bitter stownd,
No lesse than that which Vulcane made to shield
Achilles life from fate of Troyan field.

And then about his shoulders broad he threw
An hairie hide of some wild beast, whom hee
In salvage forrest by adventure slew,
And reft the spoyle his ornament to bee;
Which, spredding all his backe with dreadfull view,
Made all, that him so horrible did see,
Thinke him Alcides with the Lyons skin,
When the Næméan conquest he did win.

Upon his head his glistering burganet,
The which was wrought by wonderous device,
And curiously engraven, he did set:
The metall was of rare and passing price;
Not Bilbo steele, nor brasse from Corinth fet,
Nor costly oricalche from strange Phœnice;
But such as could both Phœbus arrowes ward,
And th' hayling darts of heaven beating hard.

Therein two deadly weapons fixt he bore,
Strongly outlaunced towards either side,
Like two sharpe speares, his enemies to gore:
Like as a warlike brigandine, applyde
To fight, layes forth her threatfull pikes afore,
The engines which in them sad death doo hyde:
So did this Flie outstretch his fearfull hornes,
Yet so as him their terrour more adornes.

Lastly his shinie wings as silver bright,
Painted with thousand colours passing farre

All painters skill, he did about him dight:
Not halfe so manie sundrie colours arre
In Iris bowe; ne heaven doth shine so bright,
Distinguished with manie a twinckling starre;
Nor Iunoes bird, in her ey-spotted traine,
So many goodly colours doth containe.

Ne (may it be withouten perill spoken)
The Archer god, the sonne of Cytheree,
That ioyes on wretched lovers to be wroken,
And heaped spoyles of bleeding harts to see,
Beares in his wings so manie a changefull token.
Ah! my liege Lord, forgive it unto mee,
If ought against thine honour I have tolde;
Yet sure those wings were fairer manifolde.

Full many a Ladie faire, in Court full oft
Beholding them, him secretly envide,
And wisht that two such fannes, so silken soft,
And golden faire, her Love would her provide;
Or that, when them the gorgeous Flie had doft,
Some one, that would with grace be gratifide,
From him would steal them privily away,
And bring to her so precious a pray.

Report is that dame Venus on a day,
In spring when flowres doo clothe the fruitfull ground,
Walking abroad with all her nymphes to play,
Bad her faire damzels flocking her arownd
To gather flowres, her forhead to array:
Emongst the rest a gentle Nymph was found,
Hight Astery, excelling all the crewe
In curteous usage and unstained hewe.

Who beeing nimbler ioynted then the rest,
And more industrious, gathered more store
Of the fields honour, than the others best;
Which they in secret harts envying sore,
Tolde Venus, when her as the worthiest
She praisd, that Cupide (as they heard before)
Did lend her secret aide, in gathering

Into her lap the children of the Spring.

Whereof the goddesse gathering iealous feare,
Not yet unmindfull, how not long agoe
Her sonne to Psyche secret love did beare,
And long it close conceal'd, till mickle woe
Thereof arose, and manie a rufull teare;
Reason with sudden rage did overgoe;
And, giving hastie credit to th' accuser,
Was led away of them that did abuse her.

Eftsoones that Damzell, by her heavenly might,
She turn'd into a winged Butterflie,
In the wide aire to make her wandring flight;
And all those flowres, with which so plenteouslie
Her lap she filled had, that bred her spight,
She placed in her wings, for memorie
Of her pretended crime, though crime none were:
Since which that Flie them in her wings doth beare.

Thus the fresh Clarion, being readie dight,
Unto his iourney did himselfe addresse,
And with good speed began to take his flight:
Over the fields, in his franke lustinesse,
And all the champaine o're he soared light;
And all the countrey wide he did possesse,
Feeding upon their pleasures bounteouslie,
That none gainsaid, nor none did him envie.

The woods, the rivers, and the meadowes greene,
With his aire-cutting wings he measured wide,
Ne did he leave the mountaines bare unseene,
Nor the ranke grassie fennes delights untride.
But none of these, how ever sweet they beene,
Mote please his fancie, nor him cause t' abide:
His choicefull sense with every change doth flit.
No common things may please a wavering wit.

To the gay gardins his unstaid desire
Him wholly caried, to refresh his sprights:
There lavish Nature, in her best attire,

Powres forth sweete odors and alluring sights;
And Arte, with her contending, doth aspire,
T' excell the naturall with made delights:
And all, that faire or pleasant may be found,
In riotous excesse doth there abound.

There he arriving, round about doth flie,
From bed to bed, from one to other border;
And takes survey, with curious busie eye,
Of every flowre and herbe there set in order;
Now this, now that, he tasteth tenderly,
Yet none of them he rudely doth disorder,
Ne with his feete their silken leaves deface;
But pastures on the pleasures of each place.

And evermore with most varietie,
And change of sweetnesse, (for all change is sweete,)
He casts his glutton sense to satisfie,
Now sucking of the sap of herbe most meet
Or of the deaw, which yet on them does lie,
Now in the same bathing his tender feete:
And then he pearcheth on some braunch thereby,
To weather him, and his moyst wings to dry.

And then againe he turneth to his play,
To spoyle the pleasures of that Paradise;
The wholesome saulge, and lavender still gray,
Ranke smelling rue, and cummin good for eyes,
The roses raigning in the pride of May,
Sharpe isope good for greene wounds remedies,
Faire marigoldes, and bees-alluring thime,
Sweet marioram, and daysies decking prime:

Coole violets, and orpine growing still,
Embathed balme, and chearfull galingale,
Fresh costmarie, and breathfull camomill,
Dull poppy, and drink-quickning setuale,
Veyne-healing verven, and hed-purging dill,
Sound savorie, and bazil hartie-hale,
Fat colworts, and comforting perseline,
Cold lettuce, and refreshing rosmarine.

And whatso else of vertue good or ill
Grewe in this Gardin, fetcht from farre away,
Of everie one he takes, and tastes at will,
And on their pleasures greedily doth pray.
Then when he hath both plaid, and fed his fill,
In the warme sunne he doth himselfe embay,
And there him rests in riotous suffisaunce
Of all his gladfulnes, and kingly ioyaunce.

What more felicitie can fall to creature
Then to enioy delight with libertie,
And to be lord of all the workes of Nature,
To raigne in th' aire from th' earth to highest skie,
To feed on flowres and weeds of glorious feature,
To take what ever thing doth please the eie?
Who rests not pleased with such happines,
Well worthy he to taste of wretchednes.

But what on earth can long abide in state?
Or who can him assure of happy day?
Sith morning faire may bring fowle evening late,
And least mishap the most blisse alter may!
For thousand perills lie in close awaite
About us daylie, to worke our decay;
That none, except a God, or God him guide,
May them avoyde, or remedie provide.

And whatso heavens in their secret doome
Ordained have, how can frail fleshly wight
Forecast, but it must needs to issue come?
The sea, the aire, the fire, the day, the night,
And th' armies of their creatures all and some
Do serve to them, and with importune might
Warre against us the vassals of their will.
Who then can save what they dispose to spill?

Not thou, O Clarion, though fairest thou
Of all thy kinde, unhappie happie Flie,
Whose cruell fate is woven even now
Of Ioves owne hand, to worke thy miserie!
Ne may thee help the manie hartie vow,

Which thy old sire with sacred pietie
Hath powred forth for thee, and th' altars sprent:
Nought may thee save from heavens avengëment!

It fortuned (as heavens had behight)
That in this Gardin, where yong Clarion
Was wont to solace him, a wicked wight,
The foe of faire things, th' author of confusion,
The shame of Nature, the bondslave of spight,
Had lately built his hatefull mansion;
And, lurking closely, in awaite now lay,
How he might any in his trap betray.

But when he spide the ioyous Butterflie
In this faire plot dispacing to and fro,
Fearles of foes and hidden ieopardie,
Lord! how he gan for to bestirre him tho,
And to his wicked worke each part applie!
His heart did earne against his hated foe,
And bowels so with rankling poyson swelde,
That scarce the skin the strong contagion helde.

The cause, why he this Flie so maliced,
Was (as in stories it is written found)
For that his mother, which him bore and bred,
The most fine-fingred workwoman on ground,
Arachne, by his meanes was vanquished
Of Pallas, and in her owne skill confound,
When she with her for excellence contended,
That wrought her shame, and sorrow never ended.

For the Tritonian goddesse having hard
Her blazed fame, which all the world had fild,
Came downe to prove the truth, and due reward
For her praise-worthie workmanship to yield:
But the presumptuous Damzell rashly dar'd
The goddesse selfe to chalenge to the field,
And to compare with her in curious skill
Of workes with loome, with needle, and with quill.

Minerva did the chalenge not refuse,

But deign'd with her the paragon to make:
So to their worke they sit, and each doth chuse
What storie she will for her tapet take.
Arachne figur'd how Iove did abuse
Europa like a Bull, and on his backe
Her through the Sea did beare; so lively seene,
That it true Sea, and true Bull, ye would weene.

Shee seem'd still backe unto the land to looke,
And her play-fellowes ayde to call, and feare
The dashing of the waves, that up she tooke
Her daintie feet, and garments gathered neare:
But (Lord!) how she in everie member shooke,
When as the land she saw no more appeare,
But a wilde wildernes of waters deepe:
Then gan she greatly to lament and weepe.

Before the Bull she pictur'd winged Love,
With his yong brother Sport, light fluttering
Upon the waves, as each had been a Dove;
The one his bowe and shafts, the other Spring
A burning teade about his head did move,
As in their syres new love both triumphing:
And manie Nymphes about them flocking round,
And many Tritons which their hornes did sound.

And, round about, her worke she did empale
With a faire border wrought of sundrie flowres,
Enwoven with an yvie-winding trayle:
A goodly worke, full fit for kingly bowres;
Such as dame Pallas, such as Envie pale,
That all good things with venemous tooth devowres,
Could not accuse. Then gan the goddesse bright
Her selfe likewise unto her work to dight.

She made the storie of the olde debate,
Which she with Neptune did for Athens trie:
Twelve gods doo sit around in royall state,
And Iove in midst with awfull maiestie,
To iudge the strife betweene them stirred late:
Each of the gods, by his like visnomie

Eathe to be knowne; but Iove above them all,
By his greate lookes and power imperiall.

Before them stands the god of Seas in place,
Clayming that sea-coast Citie as his right,
And strikes the rockes with his three-forked mace;
Whenceforth issues a warlike steed in sight,
The signe by which he chalengeth the place;
That all the gods, which saw his wondrous might
Did surely deeme the victorie his due:
But seldome seene, foreiudgement proveth true.

Then to herselfe she gives her Aegide shield,
And steel-hed speare, and morion on her hedd,
Such as she oft is seene in warlike field:
Then sets she forth, how with her weapon dredd
She smote the ground, the which streight foorth did yield
A fruitfull Olyve tree, with berries spredd,
That all the Gods admir'd; then all the storie
She compast with a wreathe of Olyves hoarie.

Emongst these leaves she made a Butterflie,
With excellent device and wondrous slight,
Fluttring among the Olives wantonly,
That seem'd to live, so like it was in sight:
The velvet nap which on his wings doth lie,
The silken downe with which his backe is dight,
His broad outstretched hornes, his hayrie thies,
His glorious colours, and his glistering eies.

Which when Arachne saw, as overlaid,
And mastered with workmanship so rare,
She stood astonied long, ne ought gainesaid;
And with fast fixed eyes on her did stare,
And by her silence, signe of one dismaid,
The victorie did yeeld her as her share;
Yet did she inly fret and felly burne,
And all her blood to poysonous rancor turne:

That shortly from the shape of womanhed,

Such as she was when Pallas she attempted,
She grew to hideous shape of dryrihed,
Pined with griefe of folly late repented:
Eftsoones her white streight legs were altered
To crooked crawling shankes, of marrowe empted;
And her faire face to foule and loathsome hewe,
And her fine corpes to a bag of venim grewe.

This cursed creature, mindfull of that olde
Enfested grudge, the which his mother felt,
So soon as Clarion he did beholde,
His heart with vengefull malice inly swelt;
And weaving straight a net with manie a fold
About the cave, in which he lurking dwelt,
With fine small cords about it stretched wide,
So finely sponne, that scarce they could be spide.

Not anie damzell, which her vaunteth most
In skilfull knitting of soft silken twyne:
Nor anie weaver, which his worke doth boast
In diaper, in damaske, or in lyne;
Nor anie skil'd in workmanship embost;
Nor anie skil'd in loupes of fingring fine;
Might in their divers cunning ever dare
With this so curious networke to compare.

* * * * *

This same he did applie
For to entrap the careles Clarion,
That rang'd eachwhere without suspition.

Suspition of friend, nor feare of foe,
That hazarded his health, had he at all,
But walkt at will, and wandred to and fro,
In the pride of his freedome principall:
Little wist he his fatall future woe,
But was secure; the liker he to fall.
He likest is to fall into mischaunce,
That is regardles of his governaunce.

Yet still Aragnoll (so his foe was hight)
Lay lurking covertly him to surprise;
And all his gins, that him entangle might,
Drest in good order as he could devise.
At length, the foolish Flie without foresight,
As he that did all daunger quite despise,
Toward those parts came flying carelesselie,
Where hidden was his hatefull enemie.

Who, seeing him, with secret ioy therefore
Did tickle inwardly in everie vaine;
And his false hart, fraught with all treasons store,
Was fill'd with hope his purpose to obtaine:
Himselfe he close upgathered more and more
Into his den, that his deceitfull traine
By his there being might not be bewraid,
Ne anie noyse, ne anie motion made.

Like as a wily foxe, that, having spide
Where on a sunnie banke the lambes doo play,
Full closely creeping by the hinder side,
Lyes in ambúshment of his hoped pray,
Ne stirreth limbe; till, seeing readie tide,
He rusheth forth, and snatcheth quite away
One of the litle yonglings unawares:
So to his worke Aragnoll him prepares.

Who now shall give unto my heavie eyes
A well of teares, that all may overflow?
Or where shall I find lamentable cryes,
And mournfull tunes, enough my griefe to show?
Helpe, O thou Tragick Muse, me to devise
Notes sad enough, t' expresse this bitter throw:
For loe, the drerie stownd is now arrived,
That of all happines hath us deprived.

The luckles Clarion, whether cruell Fate
Or wicked Fortune faultles him misled,
Or some ungracious blast out of the gate
Of Aeoles raine perforce him drove on hed,
Was (O sad hap and howre unfortunate!)

With violent swift flight forth caried
Into the cursed cobweb, which his foe
Had framed for his finall overthroe.

There the fond Flie, entangled, strugled long,
Himselfe to free thereout; but all in vaine.
For, striving more, the more in laces strong
Himselfe he tide, and wrapt his wingës twaine
In lymie snares the subtill loupes among;
That in the ende he breathlesse did remaine,
And, all his yongthly forces idly spent,
Him to the mercie of th' avenger lent.

Which when the greisly tyrant did espie,
Like a grimme lyon rushing with fierce might
Out of his den, he seized greedelie
On the resistles pray; and, with fell spight,
Under the left wing strooke his weapon slie
Into his heart, that his deepe groning spright
In bloodie streams forth fled into the aire,
His bodie left the spectacle of care.

GLOSSARY.—*Tyne*, affliction; *yongth*, youth; *stie*, mount; *stownd*, blow; *burganet*, helmet; *wroken*, avenged; *doft*, taken off; *hight*, called; *mickle*, much; *eftsoones*, immediately; *embay*, bathe; *suffisaunce*, excess; *sprent*, sprinkled; *earne*, yearn; *spring*, springal, youth; *teade*, torch; *eathe*, ease; *dryrihed*, drearyhead; *lyne*, linen; *drerie stownd*, dismal hour.

EDMUND SPENSER, 1553–1598.

ON A LOCUST.

FROM THE GREEK OF MNASALCUS.

Oh, never more, sweet locust,
  Shalt thou with shrilly wing,
Along the fertile furrows sit

And thy gladsome carols sing;
Oh, never more thy nimble wings
Shall cheer this heart of mine,
With sweetest melody, while I
Beneath the trees recline.

Translation of
W.
HAY.

TO THE CICADA.

FROM THE GREEK OF MELEAGER, 100 B. C.

Oh, shrill-voiced insect, that, with dew-drops sweet
Inebriate, dost in desert woodlands sing;
Perch'd on the spray-top with indented feet,
Thy dusky body's echoings, harp-like ring.

Come, dear Cicada! chirp to all the grove,
The nymphs, and Pan, a new responsive strain;
That I, in noonday sleep, may steal from love,
Reclined beneath this dark o'erspreading plane.

Translation of SIR C. A.
ELTON.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

FROM THE GREEK OF ANACREON, 600 B. C.

Happy insect, what can be
In happiness compared to thee?
Fed with nourishment divine,
The dewy morning's gentle wine!
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup does fill;
'Tis fill'd wherever thou dost tread,
Nature self's thy Ganymede.

Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing,
Happier than the happiest king!
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants belong to thee;
All that summer hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does sow and plow;
Farmer he, and landlord thou!
Thou dost innocently enjoy;
Nor does thy luxury destroy.
The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious than he.
Thee country hinds with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripen'd year!
Thee Phœbus loves, and does inspire;
Phœbus is himself thy sire.
To thee, of all things upon earth,
Life is no longer than thy mirth.
Happy insect! happy thou,
Dost neither age nor winter know.
But when thou'st drunk, and danc'd, and sung
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,
(Voluptuous and wise withal,
Epicurean animal!)
Satiated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

Translation of ABRAHAM COWLEY,
1618–1657.

INSECTS.

These tiny loiterers on the barley's beard,
And happy units of a numerous herd
Of playfellows, the laughing summer brings;
Mocking the sunshine on their glittering wings;
How merrily they creep, and run, and fly!
No kin they bear to labor's drudgery,
Smoothing the velvet of the pale hedge-rose,

And where they fly for dinner no one knows;
The dew-drop feeds them not; they love the shine
Of noon, whose suns may bring them golden wine.
All day they're playing in their Sunday dress—
When night reposes they can do no less;
Then to the heath-bell's purple hood they fly,
And like to princes in their slumbers, lie
Secure from rain, and dropping dews, and all
On silken beds in roomy, painted hall.
So merrily they spend their summer day,
Or in the corn-fields, or in new-mown hay.
One almost fancies that such happy things,
With colored hoods and richly burnished wings,
Are fairy folk, in splendid masquerade
Disguised, as if of mortal folk afraid;
Keeping their joyous pranks a mystery still,
Lest glaring day should do their secrets ill.

FLOWERS AND INSECTS.

Flowers seem, as it were, to impart a portion of their own characteristics to all things that frequent them. This is peculiarly exemplified in the butterfly, which must be regarded, *par excellence*, as the insect of flowers, and a flower-like insect, gay and innocent, made after a floral pattern, and colored after floral hues. But even with families which are usually dark and repulsive—that, for instance, of cockroaches, which are for the most part black or brown—the few species which resort to flowers are gayly colored. What a contrast, also, between the dark, loathsome, in-door spiders and their prettily painted green and red, and white and yellow brethren of the fields and gardens, which seek their prey among the flowers; while more striking still is

the difference between the wingless, disgusting plague of cities and the elegantly-formed, brightly-colored winged bugs, which are common frequenters of the parterre. Whether this be imputed to the effect of light, or the breathing influence of a flowery atmosphere, and the tendency of all things to produce their similitudes, there lies beneath the natural fact a moral analogy applicable to ourselves.

From "ACHETA DOMESTICA."

THE DRAGON-FLY.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Flutter, flutter gently by,
Little motley dragon-fly,
  On thy four transparent wings!
Hover, hover o'er the rill,
And when weary, sit thee still,
  Where the water-lily springs.

More than half thy little life,
Free from passion, free from strife,
  Underneath the wave was sweet;
Cool and calm, content to dwell,
Shrouded by thy pliant shell
  In a dark and dim retreat.

Now the nymph, transformed, may roam,
A sylph in her aerial home,
  Where'er the zephyrs shall invite;
Love is now thy envious care—
Love that dwells in sunny air—
  But thy very love is flight.

Heedless of thy coming doom,
O'er thy birthplace and thy tomb
  Flutter, little mortal, still!

Though beside thy gladdest hour,
Fate's destroying mandates lower—
  Length of life but lengthens ill.

Confine thy offspring to the stream,
That when new summer suns shall gleam,
  They, too, may quit their watery cell;
Then die! I see each weary limb
Declines to fly, declines to swim:
  Thou lovely, short-lived sylph, farewell!

Translation of W. TAYLOR. JOHANN GOTTFRIED V. HERDER, 1744–1803.

TO AN INSECT.

I love to hear thine earnest voice,
  Wherever thou art hid,
Thou testy, little dogmatist,
  Thou pretty Katydid!
Thou mindest me of gentlefolks—
  Old gentlefolks are they;
Thou say'st an undisputed thing
  In such a solemn way.

Thou art a female, Katydid!
  I know it by the trill
That quivers through thy piercing notes,
  So petulant and shrill.
I think there is a knot of you
  Beneath the hollow tree—
A knot of spinster Katydids—
  Do Katydids drink tea?

O tell me, where did Katy live,
  And what did Katy do?
And was she very fair and young,
  And yet so wicked, too?
Did Katy love a naughty man,

Or kiss more cheeks than one?
I warrant Katy did no more
Than many a Kate has done.

Dear me! I'll tell you all about
My fuss with little Jane,
And Ann, with whom I used to walk
So often down the lane,
And all that tore their locks of black.
Or wet their eyes of blue—
Pray tell me, sweetest Katydid,
What did poor Katy do?

Ah, no! the living oak shall crash,
That stood for ages still;
The rock shall rend its rocky base,
And thunder down the hill,
Before the little Katydid
Shall add one word to tell
The mystic story of the maid
Whose name she knows so well.

Peace to the ever-murmuring race!
And when the latest one
Shall fold in death her feeble wings
Beneath the autumn sun,
Then shall she raise her fainting voice,
And lift her drooping lid;
And then the child of future years
Shall hear what Katy did.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

There is the grasshopper, my summer friend—
The minute sound of many a sunny hour
Passed on a thymy hill, when I could send

My soul in search thereof by bank and bower,
Till lured far from it by a foxglove flower,
Nodding too dangerously above the crag,
Not to excite the passion and the power
To climb the steep, and down the blossom drag;
Then the marsh-crocus joined, and yellow water-flag.

Shrill sings the drowsy wassailer in his dome,
Yon grassy wilderness, where curls the fern,
And creeps the ivy; with the wish to roam,
He spreads his sails, and bright is his sojourn,
'Mid chalices with dews in every urn;
All flying things alike delight have found—
Where'er I gaze, to what new region turn,
Ten thousand insects in the air abound,
Flitting on glancing wings that yield a summer's sound.

JEREMIAH HOLME WIFFIN, 1792–1836.

XV.
The Streams.

A volume of general selections from English rural verse would be incomplete without some passage from Denham's poem of "Cooper's Hill"—a poem so highly lauded by past generations, and which we still read to-day with admiration. Sir John Denham is one of those poets who have met with very opposite treatment from critics of different generations; after receiving the highest commendations from Dryden, from Johnson, from Pope, from Somerville, his bays have been very severely handled in our own time. But allowing him to have been over-praised at one period, shall we for that reason refuse ourselves the pleasure he is assuredly capable of affording us? Is not "Cooper's Hill" a fine old poem of the second class, which the nineteenth century does well to read once in a while? The celebrated lines, quoted a thousand times,

> "Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull,
> Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full,"

were amusingly parodied some fifty years ago by Mr. Soame Jenyns, in his satire upon an unfledged, ignorant memberling of Parliament:

"Without experience, honesty, or sense,
Unknowing in her interests, trade, or laws,
He vainly undertakes his country's cause;
Forth from his lips, prepared at all to rail,
Torrents of nonsense flow like bottled ale;
Though shallow, muddy; brisk, though mighty dull;
Fierce without strength; o'erflowing, though not full."

THE STREAMS.

ARIEL'S SONG.

Come unto these yellow sands,
  And then take hands;
Curt'sied when you have, and kind
  (The wild waves whist),
Foot it featly, here and there;
And, sweet sprites, the burden bear!
    Hark! hark!
    The watch-dogs bark;
    Hark! hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry cock-a-doodle-doo!

THE THAMES.

FROM "COOPER'S HILL."

Thames, the most lov'd of all the Ocean's sons,
By his old sire, to his embraces runs;
Hasty to pay his tribute to the sea,
Like mortal life to meet eternity,
Though with those streams he no resemblance hold,
Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold,
His genuine and less guilty wealth t' explore,
Search not his bottoms, but survey his shore,

O’er which he kindly spreads his spacious wing,
And hatches plenty for the ensuing spring;
Nor then destroys it with too fond a stay,
Like mothers who their infants overlay;
Nor with a sudden and impetuous wave,
Like profuse kings, resumes the wealth he gave.
No unexpected inundations spoil
The mower’s hopes, or mock the plowman’s toil;
But God-like his unwearied bounty flows;
First loves to do, then loves the good he does.
Nor are his blessings to his banks confin’d,
But free and common, as the sea or wind;
When he to boast or to disperse his stores,
Full of the tributes of his grateful shores,
Visits the world, and in his flying tow’rs
Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours;
Finds wealth where ’tis, bestows it where it wants—
Cities in deserts, woods in cities plants.
So that to us no thing, no place is strange,
While his fair bosom is the world’s exchange.
O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage; without o’erflowing, full.
Heaven her Eridanus no more shall boast,
Whose fame in thine, like lesser current, lost;
Thy nobler streams shall visit Jove’s abodes,
To shine among the stars and bathe the gods.
Here nature, whether more intent to please
Us or herself, with strange varieties,
(For things of wonder give no less delight
To the wise Maker’s than beholders’ sight;
Though these delights from sev’ral causes move,
For so our children, thus our friends we love),
Wisely she knew the harmony of things,
As well as that of sounds, from discord springs.
Such was the discord which did first disperse
Form, order, beauty, through the universe;
While dryness moisture, coldness heat resists,
All that we have, and that we are, subsists;

While the steep, horrid roughness of the wood
Strives with the gentle calmness of the flood,
Such huge extremes, when Nature doth unite,
Wonder from thence results, from thence delight.
The stream is so transparent, pure, and clear,
That had the self-enamor'd youth gaz'd here,
So fatally deceiv'd he had not been,
While he the bottom, not his face, had seen.
But his proud head the airy mountain hides
Among the clouds; his shoulders and his side
A shady mantle clothes; his curled brows
Frown on the gentle stream, which calmly flows;
While winds and storms his lofty forehead beat,
The common fate of all that's high or great.
Low at his foot a spacious plain is plac'd,
Between the mountain and the stream embrac'd;
Which shade and shelter from the hill derives,
While the kind river wealth and beauty gives;
And in the mixture of all these appears
Variety, which all the rest endears.

SIR JOHN DENHAM, 1618–1668.

RIVER AND SONG.

It is no little recommendation of the rivers we met with here, that almost every one of them is the subject of some pleasing Scotch ditty, which the scene brings to the memory of those who are versed in the lyrics of the country. The elegant simplicity of the verse, and the soothing melody of the music, in almost all the Scotch songs, is universally acknowledged: "*Tweed-side*, and *Ettrick's Banks*," are not among the least pleasing.

GILPIN'S "*Highlands of Scotland*," 1789.

ODE TO LEVEN-WATER.

On Leven's banks, while free to rove,
And tune the rural pipe to love,
I envied not the happiest swain
That ever trod the Arcadian plain.
Pure stream! in whose transparent wave
My youthful limbs I wont to lave;
No torrents stain thy limpid source;
No rocks impede thy dimpling course,
That sweetly warbles o'er its bed,
With white, round, polish'd pebbles spread;
While, lightly pois'd, the scaly brood,
In myriads cleave thy crystal flood;
The springing trout in speckled pride;
The salmon, monarch of the tide;
The ruthless pike, intent on war;
The silver eel, and mottled par,
Devolving from thy parent lake,
A charming maze thy waters make,
By bowers of birds, and groves of pine,
And hedges flower'd with eglantine.
Still on thy banks so gayly green,
May num'rous herds and flocks be seen,
And lasses chanting o'er the pail,
And shepherds piping in the dale,
And ancient Faith, that knows no guile,
And Industry embrown'd with toil,
And hearts resolved, and hands prepar'd,
The blessings they enjoy to guard.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT
1720–1771.

SONG.

FROM THE GERMAN.

See the rocky spring,
Clear as joy,
Like a sweet star gleaming!
O’er the clouds, he
In his youth was cradled
By good spirits,
'Neath the bushes in the cliffs.

Fresh with youth
From the cloud he dances
Down upon the rocky pavement;
Thence, exulting,
Leaps to heaven.

For a while he dallies
Round the summit,
Through its little channels chasing
Motley pebbles round and round;
Quick, then, like determined leader,
Hurries all his brother streamlets
Off with him.

There, all round him in the vale,
Flowers spring up beneath his footstep,
And the meadow
Wakes to feel his breath.
But him holds no shady vale—
No cool blossoms,
Which around his knees are clinging,
And with loving eyes entreating
Passing notice; on he speeds,
Winding snake-like.

Social brooklets
Add their waters. Now he rolls
O’er the plain in silvery splendor,
And the plain his splendor borrows;

And the rivulets from the plain,
And the brooklets from the hill-sides,
All are shouting to him, “Brother,
Brother, take thy brothers too—
Take us to thy ancient Father,
To the everlasting Ocean,
Who, e’en now, with outstretched arms,
Waits for us—
Arms outstretched, alas! in vain,
To embrace his longing ones;
For the greedy sand devours us;
Or the burning sun above us
Sucks our life-blood; or some hillock
Hems us into ponds. Ah! brother,
Take thy brothers from the plain—
Take thy brothers from the hill-sides
With thee, to our Sire with thee!”
“Come ye all, then!”
Now, more proudly,
On he swells; a countless race, they
Bear their glorious prince aloft!
On he rolls triumphantly
Giving names to countries; cities
Spring to being 'neath his feet.

Onward with incessant roaring,
See! he passes proudly by
Flaming turrets, marble mansions—
Creatures of his fullness, all!

Cedar houses bears this Atlas
On his giant shoulders; rustling,
Flapping in the playful breezes,
Thousand flags about his head are
Telling of his majesty.

And so bears he all his brothers,
And his treasures, and his children,
To their Sire, all joyous roaring—
Pressing to his mighty heart.

Translation of J. S. DWIGHT. JOHANN WOLFGANG V.

GOETHE, 1749–1832.

THE RIVULET.

FROM THE SPANISH.

Stay, rivulet, nor haste to leave
  The lovely vale that lies around thee!
Why wouldst thou be a sea at eve,
  When but a fount the morning found thee?

Born when the skies began to glow,
  Humblest of all the rock's cold daughters,
No blossom bowed its stalk to show
  Where stole thy still and scanty waters.

Now on thy stream the moonbeams look,
  Usurping, as thou downward driftest,
Its crystal from the clearest brook,
  Its rushing current from the swiftest.

Ah! what wild haste—and all to be
  A river, and expire in ocean!
Each fountain's tribute hurries thee
  To that vast grave with quicker motion.

Far better 'twere to linger still
  In this green vale these flowers to cherish,
And die in peace, an aged rill,
  Than thus, a youthful Danube, perish.

Translation of W. C. BRYANT. PEDRO DE CASTRO, *17th Century*.

THE STREAM OF THE ROCK.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Unperishing youth!

Thou leapest from forth
The cleft of the rock;
No mortal eye saw
The mighty one's cradle;
No ear ever heard
The lofty one's lisp in the murmuring spring
How beautiful art thou,
In silvery locks!
How terrible art thou,
When the cliffs are resounding in thunder around!
Thee feareth the fir-tree;
Thou crushest the fir-tree
From its root to its crown.
The cliffs flee before thee;
The cliffs thou engraspest,
And hurlest them, scornful, like pebbles adown.

The sun weaves around thee
The beams of its splendor;
It painteth with hues of the heavenly iris,
The uprolling clouds of the silvery spray.

Why speedest thou downward,
Toward the green sea?
Is it not well by the nearer heaven?
Not well by the sounding cliff?
Not well by the o'erhanging forest of oaks?
O hasten not so
Toward the green sea!
Youth! O now thou art strong, like a god!
Free like a god!
Beneath thee is smiling the peacefullest stillness,
The tremulous swell of the slumberous sea;
Now silvered o'er by the swimming moonshine;
Now golden and red in the light of the west.

Youth, O what is this silken quiet;
What is the smile of the friendly moonlight—
The purple and gold of the evening sun,
To him whom the feeling of bondage oppresses?
Now streamest thou wild

As thy heart may prompt!
But below oft ruleth the fickle tempest,
Oft the stillness of death, in the subject sea!

O hasten not so
Toward the green sea!
Youth, O now thou art strong, like a god,
Free, like a god!

Translation of W. W. STORY. FR. LEOP. STOLBERG, 1750–1819.

A RIVER.

FROM "SALMONIA."

Hal. I think I can promise you green meadows, shady trees, the song of the nightingale, and a full,

clear river.

Poiet. This last is, in my opinion, the most poetical object in nature. I will not fail to obey your summons. Pliny has, as well as I recollect, compared a river to human life. I have never read the passage in his works but I have been a hundred times struck with the analogy, particularly amid mountain scenery. The river, small and clear at its origin, gushes forth from rocks, falls into deep glens, and wantons and meanders through a wild and picturesque country, nourishing only the uncultivated tree or flower by its dew or spray. In this, its state of infancy and youth, it may be compared to the human mind, in which fancy and strength of imagination are predominant—it is more beautiful than useful. When the different rills or torrents join, and descend into the plain, it becomes slow and stately in its motions; it is applied to move machinery, to irrigate meadows, and to bear upon its bosom the stately barge; in this mature state it is deep, strong, useful. As it flows on toward the sea, it loses its force and its motion, and at last, as it were, becomes lost, and mingled with the mighty abyss of waters.

Hal. One might pursue the metaphor still further, and say that in its origin—its thundering and foam, when it carries down clay from the bank, and becomes impure—it resembles the youthful mind affected by dangerous passions. And the influence of a lake, in calming and clearing the turbid water, may be compared to the effect of reason in more mature life, when the tranquil, deep, cool, and unimpassioned mind is freed from its fever, its troubles, bubbles, noise, and foam. And, above all, the sources of a river—which may be considered as belonging to the atmosphere—and its termination in

the ocean, may be regarded as imaging the divine origin of the human mind, and its being ultimately returned to, and lost in, the Infinite and Eternal Intelligence from which it originally sprung.

SIR HUMPHREY DAVY.

LIFE COMPARED TO A STREAM.

Life glides away, Lorenzo, like a brook;
Forever changing, unperceiv'd the change.
In the same brook none ever bathed him twice:
To the same life none ever twice awoke.
We call the brook the same; the same we think
Our life, though still more rapid in its flow;
Nor mark the much irrevocably laps'd,
And mingled with the sea; or shall we say
(Retaining still the brook to bear us on)
That life is like a vessel on the stream?
In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide
Of time descend, but not on time intent;
Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave;
Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;
We start, awake, look out; our bark is burst!

EDWARD
YOUN
1681
1755

ON THE BRONZE IMAGE OF A FROG.

FROM THE GREEK OF PLATO.

A traveler, when nearly exhausted by thirst, being guided by the croaking of a frog to a spring of water, afterward vowed to the Nymphs a bronze image of the little creature.

The servant of the Nymphs, the singer dank,
Pleased with clear fountains—the shower-loving frog,
Imaged in brass—hath a wayfaring man
Placed here, a votive gift—because it served
To quench the fever of the traveler's thirst.
For the amphibious creature's well-timed song,
Croaked from its dewy grot, the wandering steps
Of him who searched for water hither drew;
Not heedless of the guiding voice, he found
The longed-for draught from the sweet cooling spring.

Translation of
W.
HAY.

LITTLE STREAMS.

Little streams are light and shadow,
Flowing through the pasture meadow—
Flowing by the green way-side,
Through the forest dim and wild,
Through the hamlet still and small,
By the cottage, by the hall,
By the ruin'd abbey still,
Turning here and there a mill,
Bearing tribute to the river—
Little streams, I love you ever.

Summer music is there flowing—
Flowering plants in them are growing;
Happy life is in them all,
Creatures innocent and small;
Little birds come down to drink,
Fearless of their leafy brink;
Noble trees beside them grow,
Glooming them with branches low;
And between the sunshine glancing
In their little waves is dancing.

Little streams have flowers a many,

Beautiful and fair as any;
Typha strong, and green bur-reed,
Willow-herb, with cotton-seed;
Arrow-head, with eye of jet,
And the water-violet.
There the flowering rush you meet,
And the plumy meadow sweet;
And in places deep and stilly,
Marble-like, the water-lily.

Little streams, their voices cheery,
Sound forth welcomes to the weary;
Flowing on from day to day,
Without stint and without stay;
Here, upon their flowery bank,
In the old time pilgrims drank;
Here have seen, as now, pass by,
King-fisher, and dragon-fly;
Those bright things that have their dwelling,
Where the little streams are welling.

Down in valleys green and lowly,
Murmuring not and gliding slowly,
Up in mountain-hollows wild,
Fretting like a peevish child;
Through the hamlet, where all day
In their waves the children play;
Running west, or running east,
Doing good to man and beast—
Always giving, weary never,
Little streams, I love you ever.

FROGS.

FROM THE GREEK OF ARISTOPHANES.

Bacchus. * * * * * *
Hold your tongues, you tuneful creatures

Frogs. Cease with your profane entreaties,
All in vain forever stirring;
Silence is against our natures.
With the vernal heat reviving,
Our aquatic crew repair
From their periodic sleep,
In the dark and chilly deep,
To the cheerful upper air;
Then we frolic here and there,
All amid the meadows fair;
Shady plants of asphodel,
Are the lodges where we dwell,
Chanting in the leafy bowers,
All the livelong summer hours,
Till the sudden, gusty showers
Send us headlong, helter-skelter,
To the pool to seek for shelter;
Meager, eager, leaping, lunging,
From the sedgy wharfage plunging
To the tranquil depth below,
Then we muster all a-row,
Where, secure from toil and trouble,
With a tuneful bubble-bubble,
Our symphonious accents flow.
Brikake-kesh, koàsh, koàsh.

* * * * *

Translation of J. H.
FRERE.

THE RIVULETS.

Go up and mark the new-born rill,
Just trickling from its mossy bed;
Streaking the heath-clad hill

With a bright emerald thread.

Canst thou her bold career foretell,
What rocks she shall o'erleap or rend,
How far in ocean's swell,
Her freshening billows send?

Perchance that little brook shall flow
The bulwark of some mighty realm,
Bear navies to and fro,
With monarchs at their helm.

Or canst thou guess how far away
Some sister nymph, beside her urn,
Reclining night and day,
'Mid reeds and mountain fern,

Nurses her store, with thine to blend,
When many a moor and glen are past;
Then in the wide sea end
Their spotless lives at last?

Even so the course of prayer who knows?
It springs in silence when it will—
Springs out of sight, and flows
At first a lonely rill.

But streams shall meet it by-and-by,
From thousand sympathetic hearts—
Together swelling high,
Their chant of many parts.

* * * * *

LINES.

I wander'd in the woodland;

My heart beat cold and slow,
And not a tear of sorrow,
To ease its weight, would flow.

But soft a brook sang by me,
"Ah! give thy grief to me,
And I will bear it lightly,
Far, far away from thee!"

So sweet that lulling murmur,
Its music thrill'd my heart,
And, o'er the glad wave weeping,
I felt my grief depart.

FRANCES
SARG
OSGC

THE WAY-SIDE SPRING.

Fair dweller by the dusty way,
Bright saint within a mossy shrine,
The tribute of a heart to-day,
Weary and worn, is thine.

The earliest blossoms of the year,
The sweet-brier and the violet,
The pious hand of spring has here
Upon thy altar set.

And not alone to thee is given
The homage of the pilgrim's knee;
But oft the sweetest birds of heaven
Glide down and sing to thee.

Here daily from his beechen cell,
The hermit squirrel steals to drink,
And flocks which cluster to their bell,
Recline along thy brink.

And here the wagoner blocks his wheels,
   To quaff the cool and generous boon;
Here from the sultry harvest fields
   The reapers rest at noon.

And oft the beggar masked with tan,
   In rusty garments gray with dust,
Here sits and dips his little can,
   And breaks his scanty crust.

And lulled beside thy whispering stream,
   Oft drops to slumber unawares,
And sees the angel of his dream
   Upon celestial stairs.

Dear dweller by the dusty way,
   Thou saint within a mossy shrine.
The tribute of a heart to day,
   Weary and worn, is thine!

THOMAS
BU
RE.

GULLS.

Pleasant it was to view the sea-gulls strive
Against the storm, or in the ocean dive,
With eager scream, or when they dropping gave
Their closing wings to sail upon the wave;
Then as the winds and waters raged around,
And breaking billows mix'd their deafening sound,
They on the rolling deep securely hung,
And calmly rode the restless waves among.
Nor pleas'd it less around me to behold,
Far up the beach the yesty sea-foam roll'd;
Or from the shore upborne, to see on high
Its frothy flakes in wild confusion fly;
While the salt spray, that clashing billows form,

Gave to the taste a feeling of the storm.

GEORGE CRABBE
1754–1832.

THE FOUNTAIN.

Into the sunshine,
  Full of light,
Leaping and flashing,
  From morn till night.

Into the moonlight,
  Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower-like,
  When the winds blow!

Into the starlight,
  Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight—
  Happy by day!

Ever in motion,
  Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
  Never aweary;

Glad of all weathers,
  Still seeming best,
Upward or downward,
  Motion thy rest;

Full of a nature
  Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment—
  Ever the same;

Ceaseless aspiring,
  Ceaseless content,

Darkness or sunshine,
  Thy element;

Glorious fountain!
  Let my heart be
Fresh, changeful, constant
  Upward, like thee!

XVI.
Fairies.

“They inhabit the interior of green hills, chiefly those of a conical form, on which they lead their dances by moonlight, impressing upon the surface the marks of circles, which sometimes appear yellow and blasted, sometimes of a deep-green hue, and within which it is dangerous to sleep or to be found after sunset.

“They are heard sedulously hammering in linns, precipices, and rocky or cavernous situations, where, like the dwarfs of the mines, mentioned by Georg. Agricola, they busy themselves in imitating the actions and the various employments of men. The brook of Beaumont, for example, which passes in its course by numerous linns and caverns, is notorious for being haunted by the Fairies; and the perforated and rounded stones, which are formed by trituration in its channel, are termed, by the vulgar, fairy-cups and dishes. A beautiful reason is assigned by Fletcher for the fays frequenting streams and fountains. He tells us of

> 'A virtuous well, about whose flowery banks
> The nimble-footed Fairies dance their rounds
> By the pale moonshine, dipping oftentimes
> Their stolen children, so to make them free

From dying flesh and dull mortality.'

Faithful Shepher

There is upon the top of Minchmuir, a mountain in Peebleshire, a spring called the Cheese Well, because, anciently, those who passed that way were wont to throw into it a piece of cheese as an offering to the Fairies, to whom it was consecrated.

"The usual dress of the Fairies is green, though, on the moors, they have been sometimes observed in heath brown, or in weeds dyed with the stoneran, or lichen. They often ride in invisible procession, when their presence is discovered by the shrill ringing of their bridles."—*Minstrelsy of Scottish Border.*

The seed of the fern, from its singular manner of growth, was supposed to be under the especial protection of the Queen of the Fairies. It was believed to have the quality of rendering whoever carried it about him invisible, and to be also of great use in charms and incantations. But the difficulties of gathering this mysterious seed were very great indeed; it was supposed to be only visible on St. John's Eve, and at the very moment when the Baptist was born. How the rustic population accounted for the fact that it might, in reality, be found on the fronds both before and after that day, one can not say; but they probably held this to be a delusion of the Fairies. It is certain, at least, that they supposed the important magic seed itself only to be attainable on that one evening in the year. But even at the right hour to collect this seed was no easy task, the Fairies resorting to all kinds of devices to prevent human hands from gathering it. A certain individual who flattered himself that he had succeeded in his errand, and supposed that "he had gotten a quantity of it,

and secured it in papers, and in a box besides, when he came home, found all empty." This fancy connected with the fern appears to have been very general. Shakspeare alludes to it:

"We have the receipt of fern-seed; we walk invisible."

Henry IV., Act 1, Sc. 3.

ELVES.

Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves;
And ye that on the sand, with printless feet,
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
When he comes back; you demi-puppets that
By moonshine do the green, sour ringlets make,
Whereof the ewe bites not; and you whose pastime
Is to make midnight-mushrooms; that rejoice
To hear the solemn curfew, * * *

SHAKSPEARE'S *Tempest.*

HYNDE ETIN.

BALLAD OF THE WOODS.

May Margaret stood in her bouir door
  Kaming her yellow hair;
She heard a note in Elmond wood,
  And she wished that she was there.

Sae she has kiltit her petticoats,
  A little abune her knee;
And she's awa to Elmond's wood

As fast as she can gae.

She hadna poued a nut, a nut,
Nor broke a branch but ane
When by and came a young hind chiel,
Says, “Lady! let alane.

“O why pou ye the nut, the nut,
Or why break ye the tree?
I’m forester ower a’ this wood,
Ye sould speir leave at me.”

But aye she poued the other berry,
Nae thinking o’ the skaith;
And says, “To wrong ye, Hynde Etin,
I wad be unco laith.”

But he has taen her by the yellow locks,
And tied her till a tree,
And said, “For slichting my commands,
An ill death ye sall die!”

He pou’d a tree out o’ the wood,
The biggest that was there;
And he howkit a cave many fathoms deep,
And put May Margaret there.

“Now rest ye there, ye saucy May,
My woods are free for thee;
And gif I take ye to my cell,
The better ye’ll like me.”

Nae rest, nae rest May Margaret took;
Sleep she gat never nane;
Her back lay on the cauld, cauld floor,
Her head upon the stane.

“O tak me out,” May Margaret cried,
“O tak me hame to thee;
And I sall be your bounden page,
Until the day I dee.”

He took her out the dungeon deep,
  And awa wi' him she's gane;
But sad was the day when a king's daughter
  Gaed hame wi' Hynde Etin.

O they hae lived in Elmond wood
  For six lang years and one;
Till six pretty sons to him she bore,
  And the seventh she's brought home.

These seven bairns, sae fair and fine,
  That she to him did bring;
They never were in good church door,
  Nor ever gat good kirking.

And aye at nicht, wi' harp in hand,
  As they lay still asleep,
She sat hersell by their bedside,
  And bitterly did weep.

Singing, "Ten lang years now have I lived
  Within this cave of stane,
And never was at good kirk-door,
  Nor heard the kirk-bell ring."

But it fell once upon a day,
  Hynde Etin went from home;
And for to carry his game to him,
  Has taen his oldest son.

And as they through the good greenwood,
  Wi' slowsome pace did gae,
The bonnie boy's heart grew grit and sair,
  And thus he goud to say:

"A question I would ask, father,
  An ye wadna angry be;"
"Say on, say on, my bonnie boy;
  Ask onything at me."

"My mither's cheeks are often wet;
  I seldom see them dry;

And I wonder aye what aileth my mither
  To mourn continually?”

“Nae wonder that your mither’s cheeks
  Ye seldom see them dry;
Nae wonder, nae wonder, my bonnie boy,
  Though she suld brast and die!

“For she was born a king’s daughter,
  Of noble birth and fame,
And now she is Hynde Etin’s wife,
  Wha ne’er got Christendome.

“But we’ll shoot the laverock in the lift,
  The buntlin on the tree;
And ye’ll take theme hame to your mither,
  An’ see if blythe she’ll be.”

It fell upon another day,
  Hynde Etin he thocht lang;
And he is to the gude greenwood,
  As fast as he can gang.

Wi’ bow and arrow by his side,
  He’s off, single, alane,
And left his seven bairns to stay
  Wi’ their mither at home.

“I’ll tell you, mither,” quoth the auldest son,
  “An’ ye wadna angry be;”
“Speak on, speak on, my bonnie boy,
  Ye’se nay be quarrelled by me.”

“As we came from the hynd-hunting,
  We heard fine music ring!”
“My blessings on ye, my bonnie boy!
  I wish I’d been there, my lane!”

He’s ta’en his mither by the hand—
  His six brothers also;
And they are on through Elmond wood
  As fast as they could go.

They wistna weel where they were gaun,
  Wi' the stratlings o' their feet;
They wistna weel where they were gaun,
  Till at her father's yett.

"I hae nae money in my pocket,
  But royal rings hae three;
I'll gie them you, my auldest son,
  And ye'll walk there for me:

"Ye'll gie the first to the proud porter,
  And he will let you in;
Ye'll gie the next the butler boy,
  And he will show you ben:

"Ye'll gie the next to the ministrell
  That plays before the king;
He'll play success to the bonnie boy,
  Cam through the wood his lane."

He gae the first the proud porter,
  And he opened and let him in.
He gae the next to the butler-boy,
  And he has shown him ben.

He gae the third to the ministrell
  That play'd before the king;
And he play'd success to the bonnie boy
  Cam through the wood his lane.

Now when he came before the king,
  He fell low on his knee;
The king he turn'd him round about,
  And the saut tear blint his e'e.

"Win up, win up, my bonnie boy!
  Gang frae my companie!
Ye look sae like my dear dauchter,
  My heart will burst in three."

"If I look like your dear dauchter,
  A wonder it is none:

If I look like your dear dauchter,
  I am her eldest son.”

“Will ye tell me, my little wee boy,
  Where may my Margaret be?”
“She’s gist now standing at your yetts,
  And my six brothers her wi’.”

“O where are a’ my porter boys,
  That I pay meat and fee,
To open my yetts, baith wide and braid—
  Let her come in to me!”

When she came in before the king,
  She fell low on her knee;
“Win up, win up, my dauchter dear,
  This day ye’ll dine wi’ me.”

“Ae bit I canna eat, father,
  Nor ae drap can I drink,
Till I see my mither and sister dear,
  For lang o’ them I think.”

When she came in before the queen,
  She fell low on her knee:
“Win up, win up, my dauchter dear,
  This day ye’se dine wi’ me.”

“Ae bit I canna eat, mither,
  Nor ae drop can I drink,
Until I see my dear sister—
  For lang o’ her I think.”

And when her sister dear cam in,
  She hailed her courteouslie:
“Come ben, come ben, my sister dear,
  This day ye’se dine wi’ me.”

“Ae bit I canna eat, sister,
  Nor ae drop can I drink,
Until I see my dear husband,
  For lang o’ him I think.”

"O where are all my rangers bold,
  That I pay meat and fee,
To search the forest far and wide,
  And bring Etin to me?"

But out then spak the little wee boy,
  "Na, na, this maunna be;
Without ye grant a free pardon,
  I hope ye'll nae him see."

"O here I grant a free pardon,
  Weel sealed by my own hand,
And see make search for Hynde Etin,
  As sure as e'er ye can."

They searched the country wide and braid—
  The forests far and near,
Till they found him into Elmond wood,
  Tearing his yellow hair.

"Win up, win up, now, Hynde Etin—
  Win up and boune wi' me;
We're messengers sent frae the court—
  The king wants ye to see."

"O let him tak frae me the head,
  Or hang me on a tree;
For sin I'se lost my dear Margaret,
  Life's nae pleasure to me."

"Your head will nae be touched, Etin,
  Nor hanged upon a tree;
Your leddy's in her father's court,
  And all she wants is thee."

When in he came before the king,
  He fell low on his knee;
"Win up, win up, now, Hynde Etin,
  This day ye'se dine wi' me."

But as they were at dinner set,
  The boy asked a boon:

"I wis we were in the good kirk,
For to get Christendoun.

"We hae liv'd in gude greenwood
This seven years and ane;
But a' this time, sin e'er I mind,
Were ne'er a church within."

"Your asking's nae sae great, my boy,
But granted it sall be;
This day to gude church ye sall gang,
And your mither sall gang ye wi'."

When unto the gude church she cam,
She at the door did stan';
She was sae sair sunk down wi' shame,
She waldna come far'r ben,

Then out it speaks the parish priest—
A good auld man was he:
"Come ben, come ben, my lily flouir,
Present your babes to me."

But they staid lang in royal court,
Wi' mirth and high renown;
And when her father was deceased,
She was heir o' his crown.

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

Come follow me, follow me,
You fairy elves that be—
Which circle on the greene,
Come follow Mab your Queene.
Hand in hand let's dance around,
For this place is fairy ground.

When mortals are at rest,
And snoring in their nest,

Unheard and unespy'd
Through key-holes we do glide;
Over tables, stools, and shelves,
We trip it with our fairy elves.

And if the house be foul,
With platter, dish, or bowl,
Up stairs we nimbly creep,
And find the sluts asleep:
There we pinch their armes and thighes;
None escapes, nor none espies

But if the house be swept,
And from uncleanness kept,
We praise the household maid,
And duly she is paid;
For we use before we goe,
To drop a tester in her shoe.

Upon a mushroom's head
Our table-cloth we spread;
A grain of rye or wheat
Is manchet which we eat;
Pearly drops of dew we drink
In acorn cups fill'd to the brink.

The brains of nightingales,
With unctuous fat of snails,
Between two cockles stew'd,
Is meat that's easily chew'd;
Tailes of wormes, and marrow of mice,
Do make a dish that's wonderous nice.

The grasshopper, gnat, and fly
Serve for our minstrelsie;
Grace said, we dance awhile,
And so the time beguile:
And if the moone doth hide her head,
The gloe-worm lights us home to bed.

On tops of dewie grasse

So nimbly we do passe,
The young and tender stalk
Ne'er bends when we do walk;
Yet in the morning may be seene
Where we the night before have beene.

Anonymous, about the year 1600.

THE MERRY PRANKS OF ROBIN GOOD-FELLOW.

From Oberon, in fairy land,
The king of ghosts and shadowes there,
Mad Robin, I, at his command,
Am sent to viewe the night-sports here.
What revell rout
Is kept about
In every corner where I go,
I will o'ersee
And merrie be,
And make good sport with ho, ho, ho!

More swift than lightning can I flye
About the aery welkin soone,
And in a minute's space descrye
Each thing that's done belowe the moone.
There's not a hag
Or ghost shall wag,
Or cry 'ware goblins! where I go,
But Robin, I,
Their feates will spy,
And send them home with ho, ho, ho!

Whene'er such wanderers I meete,
As from their night-sports they trudge home,

With counterfeiting voice I greete,
And call them on with me to roame.
Thro' woods, thro' lakes,
Thro' bogs, thro' brakes;
Or else, unseene, with them I go,
All in the nicke,
To play some tricke,
And frolick it with ho, ho, ho!

Sometimes I meete them like a man;
Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound,
And to a horse I turn me can,
To trip and trot about them round,
But, if to ride,
My backe they stride,
More swift than wind away I goe,
O'er hedge and lands,
Thro' pools and ponds,
I whirry, laughing ho, ho, ho!

When lads and lasses merry be,
With possets, and with junkets fine;
Unseene of all the company,
I eat their cakes and sip their wine;
And to make sport
I fume and snort,
And out the candles I do blow:
The maids I kiss,
They shrieke, Who's this?
I answer nought but ho, ho, ho!

Yet now and then, the maids to please,
At midnight I card up their wooll;
And while they sleepe and take their ease,
With wheel, to threads their flax I pull.
I grind at mill,
Their malt up still;
I dress their hemp, I spin their tow.
If any wake,
And would me take,
I wend me laughing ho, ho, ho!

When house or hearth doth sluttish lye,
I pinch the maidens black and blue,
The bedd-clothes from the bedd pull I,
And in their ear I bawl too-whoo!
'Twixt sleepe and wake
I do them take,
And on the clay-cold floor them throw,
If out they cry,
Then forth I fly,
And loudly laugh out ho, ho, ho!

When any need to borrow ought,
We lend them what they do require,
And for the use demand we nought,
Our owne is all we do desire.
If to repay,
They do delay,
Abroad amongst them then I go,
And night by night,
I them affright,
With pinchings, dreams, and ho, ho, ho!

When lazie queans have nought to do,
But study how to cog and lye,
To make debate and mischief too,
'Twixt one another secretly
I marke their gloze,
And it disclose,
To them whom they have wronged so.
When I have done,
I get me gone
And leave them scolding, ho, ho, ho!

When men do traps and engines set
In loope holes, where the vermine creepe,
Who from their foldes and houses get
Their duckes and geese, and lambes and sheepe;
I spy the gin,
And enter in,
And seeme a vermin taken so;
But when they there

Approach me neare,
I leap out laughing ho, ho, ho!

By wells and rills, in meadowes green,
We nightly dance our hey-day guise;
And to our fairye kinge and queene
We chaunt our moon-lighte minstrelsies.
When larkes gin singe,
Away we flinge;
And babes new-born steale as we go,
And shoes in bed
We leave instead,
And wend us laughing ho, ho, ho!

From hag-bred Merlin's time have I
Thus nightly revell'd to and fro:
And for my prankes, men call me by
The name of Robin Good-Fellow.
Friends, ghosts, and sprites
Who haunt the nightes,
The hags and goblins do me know,
And beldames old
My feates have told,
So *vale*, *vale*, ho, ho, ho!

Anonymous—attributed to BEN JONSON, *about 1600*.

SLAVIC.

AN OLD BALLAD.

The maiden went for water
To the well o'er the meadow away;
She there could draw no water,
So thick the frost it lay.

The mother she grew angry,
She had it long to bemoan;
"O daughter mine, O daughter mine,
I would thou wert a stone!"

The maiden's water-pitcher
  Grew marble instantly,
And she herself, the maiden,
  Became a maple tree.

There came one day two lads,
  Two minstrels young they were;
"We've traveled far, my brother,
  Such a maple we saw nowhere.

"Come let us cut a fiddle,
  One fiddle for me and you,
And from the same fine maple,
  For each one, fiddlesticks two."

They cut into the maple—
  Then splashed the blood so red;
The lads fell to the ground,
  So sore were they afraid.

Then spake from within the maiden:
  "Wherefore afraid are you?
Cut out of me one fiddle,
  And for each one fiddlesticks two.

"Then go and play right sadly,
  To my mother's door begone,
And sing: Here is thy daughter
  Whom thou didst curse to stone."

The lads they went, and sadly
  Their song to play began;
The mother when she heard
  Right to the window ran.

"O lads, dear lads, be silent,
  Do not my pain increase,
For since I've lost my daughter,
  My pain doth never cease!"

Translated by MRS. ROBINSON.

COTTAGE FAIRY.

“Sisters! I have seen this night
A hundred cottage fires burn bright,
And a thousand happy faces shining
In the burning blaze, and the gleam declining.
I care, not I, for the stars above,
The lights on earth are the lights I love;
Let Venus blur the evening air,
Uprise at morn Prince Lucifer;
But those little tiny stars be mine
That through the softened copse-wood shine.
With beauty crown the pastoral hill,
And glimmer o’er the sylvan rill,
Where stands the peasant’s ivied nest,
And the huge mill-wheel is at rest.
From out the honeysuckle’s bloom
I peep’d into that laughing room,
Then, like a hail-drop on the pane,
Pattering, I still’d the din again,
While every startled eye looked up,
And, half-raised to her lips the cup,
The rosy maiden’s look met mine!
But I vail’d mine eyes with the silken twine
Of the small wild roses, clustering thickly;
Then to her seat returning quickly,
She 'gan to talk with bashful glee
Of fairies 'neath the greenwood tree
Dancing by moonlight, and she blest
Gently our silent land of rest.
The infants playing on the floor,
At these wild words their sports gave o’er,
And ask’d where liv’d the Cottage Fairy;
The maid replied, 'She loves to tarry
Ofttimes beside our very hearth,
And joins in little children’s mirth,
When they are gladly innocent;
And sometimes beneath the leafy tent,
That murmurs round our cottage door,
Our overshadowing sycamore,

We see her dancing in a ring,
And hear the blessed creature sing—
A creature full of gentleness,
Rejoicing in our happiness.'
Then pluck'd I a wreath with many a gem
Burning—a flowery diadem—
And through the wicket, with a glide
I slipped, and sat me down beside
The youngest of those infants fair,
And wreath'd the blossoms in her hair.
'Who placed these flowers on William's head?'
The little wondering sister said,
'A wreath not half so bright and gay,
Crown'd me, upon the morn of May,
Queen of that sunny holiday.'
The tiny monarch laughed aloud
With pride among the loving crowd,
And, with my shrillest voice, I lent
A chorus to their merriment;
Then with such murmur as a bee
Makes, from a flower-cup suddenly
Borne off into the silent sky,
I skimmed away, and with delight
Sailed down the calm stream of the night,
Till gently as a flake of snow,
Once more I dropp'd on earth below—

* * * * *

FAIRIES IN THE HIGHLANDS.

FROM THE "CULPRIT FAY."

The moon looks down on old Cro'nest,
She mellows the shades on his shaggy breast,
And seems his huge gray form to throw

In a silver cone on the wave below;
His sides are broken by spots of shade,
By the walnut bough and the cedar made,
And through their clustering branches dark,
Glimmers and dies the firefly's spark—
Like starry twinkles that momently break
Through the rifts of the gathering tempest's rack.

The stars are on the moving stream,
  And fling, as its ripples gently flow,
A burnish'd length of wavy beam,
  In an eel-like, spiral line below;
The winds are whist, and the owl is still,
  The bat in the shelvy rock is hid,
And naught is heard on the lonely hill
But the cricket's chirp, and the answer shrill
  Of the gauze-winged katydid;
And the plaint of the wailing whippowil,
  Who moans unseen and ceaseless sings,
Ever a note of wail and woe,
  Till morning spreads her rosy wings,
And earth and sky in her glances glow.

'Tis the hour of fairy ban and spell:
The wood-tick has kept the minutes well,
She has counted them all with click and stroke,
Deep in the heart of the mountain-oak,
And he has awaken'd the sentry elve,
Who sleeps with him in the haunted tree,
To bid him ring the hour of twelve,
And call the fays to their revelry.
Twelve small strokes on his tinkling bell
  ('Twas made of the white snail's pearly shell)—
  "Midnight comes, and all is well!
Hither, hither, wing your way!
  'Tis the dawn of the fairy day."

They come from beds of lichen green,
They creep from the mullein's velvet screen;
  Some on the backs of beetles fly,
From the silver tops of moon-touched trees,

Where they swung in their cobweb-hammocks high,
And rock'd about in the evening breeze;
Some from the hum-bird's downy nest—
They had driven him out by elfin power,
And, pillow'd on plumes of his rainbow breast,
Had slumber'd there till the charmed hour;
Some had lain in the scoop of the rock,
With glittering ising-stars inlaid;
And some had open'd the four-o'clock,
And stole within its purple shade,
And now they throng the moonlight glade.
Above—below—on every side,
Their little minim forms array'd
In the tricksy pomp of fairy pride!

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE, 1795–1820.

XVII.
Medley.

OF BEAUTY.

* * * * *

There is beauty in the rolling clouds, and placid shingle beach,
In feathery snows and whistling winds, and dim electric skies;
There is beauty in the rounded woods dank with heavy foliage,
In laughing fields and dented hills, the valley and its lake;
There is beauty in the gullies, beauty on the cliffs, beauty in sun and shade,
In rocks and rivers, seas and plains—the earth is drowned in beauty!

Beauty coileth with the water-snake, and is cradled in the shrew-mouse's nest;
She flitteth out with evening bats, and the soft mole hid her in his tunnel;
The limpet is encamped upon the shore, and beauty not a stranger to his tent;
The silvery dace and golden carp thread the rushes with her.
She saileth into clouds with an eagle, she fluttereth into

tulips with a humming-bird;
The pasturing kine are of her company, and she prowleth with the leopard in his jungle.

MAR

FRAGMENT.

Thy walks are ever pleasant; every scene
Is rich in beauty, lively, or serene—
Rich is that varied view with woods around,
Seen from the seat, within the shrubb'ry bound;
Where shines the distant lake, and where appear,
From ruins bolting, unmolested deer;
Lively—the village-green, the inn, the place,
Where the good widow schools her infant race.
Shops, whence are heard the hammer and the saw,
And village-pleasures unreproved by law.
Then how serene, when in your favorite room,
Gales from your jasmines soothe the evening gloom;
And when from upland paddock you look down.
And just perceive the smoke which hides the town;
When weary peasants at the close of day
Walk to their cots, and part upon the way;
When cattle slowly cross the shallow brook,
And shepherds pen their folds, and rest upon their crook.

GEO.

CRAB
1754
1832

THE MEMORY OF A WALK.

I have taken, since you went away, many of the

walks which we have taken together; and none of them, I believe, without thoughts of you. I have, though not a good memory in general, yet a good local memory, and can recollect, by the help of a tree or a stile, what you said on that particular spot. For this reason I purpose, when the summer is come, to walk with a book in my pocket; what I read at my fireside I forget, but what I read under a hedge or at the side of a pond, that pond and that hedge will always bring to remembrance; and this is a sort of *memoria technica* which I would recommend to you, if I did not know that you have no occasion for it.

W. COWPER.—*Letter to S. Rose, Esq., Jan. 19, 1789.*

A BOWER.

In the pleasant orchard closes,
"God bless all our gains," say we;
But, "May God bless all our losses,"
Better suits with our degree.
Listen, gentle—ay, and simple!—Listen, children, on the kine!

Green the land is where my daily
Steps in jocund childhood played—
Dimpled close with hill and valley,
Dappled very close with shade;
Summer-snow of apple-blossoms, running up from glade to glade.

There is one hill I see nearer
In my vision of the rest;
And a little wood seems clearer,
As it climbeth from the west,
Sideway from the tree-locked valley to the airy upland crest.

Small the wood is, green with hazels,
And, completing the ascent,
Where the wind blows and sun dazzles,
Thrills, in leafy tremblement,
Like a heart that after climbing beateth quickly through content.

Not a step the wood advances
O'er the open hill-top's bound;
There in green arrest the branches
See their image on the ground:
You may walk beneath them smiling, glad with sight and glad with sound.

For you hearken on your right hand
How the birds do leap and call
In the greenwood, out of sight and
Out of reach and fear of all,
And the squirrels crack the filberts, through their cheerful madrigal.

On your left the sheep are cropping
The slant grass and daisies pale;
And fine apple-trees stand dropping
Separate shadows toward the vale,
Over which, in choral silence, the hills look you their "All hail!"

Far out, kindled by each other,
Shining hills on hills arise;
Close as brother leans to brother,
When they press beneath the eyes
Of some father praying blessings from the gifts of paradise.

While beyond, above them mounted,
And above their woods also,
Malvern hills, for mountains

counted
Not unduly, loom a row—
Keepers of Piers Plowman's visions, through the sunshine and the snow.

Yet in childhood little prized I
That fair walk and far survey;
'Twas a straight walk, unadvised by
The least mischief worth a nay—
Up and down—as dull as grammar on an eve of holiday!

But the wood, all close and clenching,
Bough in bough, and root in root—
No more sky, for over-branching,
At your head than at your foot—
Oh! the wood drew me within it, by a glamour past dispute.

Few and broken paths showed through it
Where the sheep had tried to run—
Forced with snowy wool to strew it
Round the thickets, when anon
They with silly thorn-pricked noses bleated back unto the sun.

But my childish heart beat stronger
Than those thickets dared to grow:
I could pierce them! I could longer
Travel on, methought, than so!
Sheep for sheep-paths! braver children climb and creep where they would go.

And the poets wander, said I,
Over places all as rude!
Bold Rinaldo's lovely lady
Sat to meet him in a wood—
Rosalinda, like a fountain, laughed out pure with solitude.

And if Chaucer had not traveled
Through a forest by a well,
He had never dream'd nor marveled
At those ladies fair and fell
Who lived smiling, without loving, in their island citadel.

Thus I thought of the old singers,
And took courage from their song,
Till my little struggling fingers
Tore asunder gyve and thong
Of the lichens which entrapped me, and the barrier branches strong.

On a day, such pastime keeping,
With a fawn's heart debonnaire,
Under-crawling, over-leaping
Thorns that prick and boughs that bear,
I stood suddenly astonished—I was gladdened unaware!

From the place I stood in floated
Back the covert dim and close,
And the open ground was coated
Carpet-smooth with grass and moss,
And the blue-bell's purple presence signed it worthily across.

Here a linden-tree stood brightening
All adown its silver rind;
For as some trees draw the lightning,
So this tree, unto my mind,
Drew to earth the blessed sunshine, from the sky where it was shrined.

Tall the linden-tree, and near it
An old hawthorn also grew;

And wood-ivy, like a spirit,
Hovered dimly round the two,
Shaping thence that bower of beauty, which I sing of thus to you.

'Twas a bower for garden fitter
Than for any woodland wide!
Though a fresh and dewy glitter
Struck it through, from side to side,
Shaped and shaven was the freshness, as by garden-cunning plied.

Oh, a lady might have come there,
Hooded fairly, like her hawk,
With a book or lute in summer,
And a hope of sweeter talk—
Listening less to her own music, than for footsteps on the walk.

ELIZABETH
BARRETT
BROWNIN

MIST OF THE MOUNTAIN-TOP.

Like mist on a mountain-top broken and gray,
The dream of my early day fleeted away;
Now the evening of life with its shadows steal on,
And memory reposes on years that are gone!

Wild youth with strange fruitage of errors and tears—
A midday of bliss and a midnight of fears—
Though checker'd and sad, and mistaken you've been,
Still love I to muse on the hours we have seen!

With those long-vanished hours fair visions are flown,
And the soul of the minstrel sinks pensive and lone;
In vain would I ask of the future to bring
The verdure that gladden'd my life in its spring!

I think of the glen where the hazel-nut grew—
The pine-crowned hill where the heather-bells blew—
The trout-burn which soothed with its murmuring sweet,
The wild flowers that gleamed on the red-deer's retreat!

I look for the mates full of ardor and truth,
Whose joys, like my own, were the sunbeams of youth—
They passed ere the morning of hope knew its close—
They left me to sleep where our fathers repose!

Where is now the wide hearth with the big fagot's blaze,
Where circled the legend and song of old days?
The legend's forgotten, the hearth is grown cold,
The home of my childhood to strangers is sold!

Like a pilgrim who speeds on a perilous way,
I pause, ere I part, oft again to survey
Those scenes ever dear to the friends I deplore,
Whose feast of young smiles I may never share more!

WILLIAM MOTHERWEL

1798–
1835.

EMBLEM.

A FLOWER GARDEN WITH SUNSHINE AND RAIN.

When all the year our fields are fresh and green,
And while sweet flowers and sunshine every day,
As oft as need requireth, come between
The heav'ns and earth, they heedless pass away.
The fullness and continuance of a blessing
Do make us to be senseless of the good;
And if it sometime fly not our possessing,
The sweetness of it is not understood.
Had we no winter, summer would be thought
Not half so pleasing; and if tempests were not,
Such comforts could not by a calm be brought;
For things, save by their opposites, appear not.
Both health and wealth are tasteless unto some;
And so is ease, and every other pleasure,
Till poor, or rich, or grieved they become;
And then they relish these in ampler measure.
God, therefore, full as kind as he is wise,
So tempereth all the favors he will do us,
That we his bounties may the better prize,
And make his chastisements less bitter to us.
One while a scorching indignation burns
The flowers and blossoms of our hopes away,
Which into scarcity our plenty turns,
And changeth unmown grass to parched hay;
Anon his fruitful showers and pleasing dews,
Commixt with cheerful rays, he sendeth down;
And then the barren earth her crop renews,
Which with rich harvests hills and valleys crown:
For, as to relish joys he sorrow sends,
So comfort on temptation still attends.

GEORGE

WITHER
1588–
1667.

SONG.

Composed by Robert Duke of Normandy, when a prisoner in Cardiff Castle, and addressed to an old oak, growing in an ancient camp within view from the tower in which he was confined. Imitated by Bishop Heber.

Oak, that stately and alone
On the war-worn mound hast grown,
The blood of man thy sapling fed,
And dyed thy tender root in red;
Woe to the feast where foes combine,
Woe to the strife of words and wine!

Oak, thou hast sprung for many a year,
'Mid whisp'ring rye-grass tall and sere,
The coarse rank herb, which seems to show
That bones unbless'd are laid below;
Woe to the sword that hates its sheath,
Woe to th' unholy trade of death!

Oak, from the mountain's airy brow,
Thou view'st the subject woods below,
And merchants hail the well-known tree,
Returning o'er the Severn sea.
Woe, woe to him whose birth is high,
For peril waits on royalty!

Now storms have bent thee to the ground,
And envious ivy clips thee round;
And shepherd hinds in wanton play
Have stripped thy needful bark away;
Woe to the man whose foes are strong,

Thrice woe to him who lives too long!
REGINALD HEBER. ROBERT OF NORMANDY, *about 1107*.

TO A MOUNTAIN-DAISY,

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOW, APRIL, 1786.

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met met me in an evil hour,
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie gem!

Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewie weet,
Wi' speckled breast,
When upward springing, blythe to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth,
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm—
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield,
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head

In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless breast;
Till she, like thee, all soil'd is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd,
Unskillful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er.

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
By human pride or cunning driv'n,
To mis'ry's brink;
Till wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
He ruin'd sink.

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern ruin's plowshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till, crush'd beneath the furious weight,
Shall be thy doom!

ROBERT BURNS 1750–1796.

MOSSGIEL.

"There," said a stripling, pointing with much pride
  Toward a low roof, with green trees half conceal'd,
  "Is Mossgiel farm; and that's the very field
Where Burns plow'd up the daisy!" Far and wide
A plain below stretch'd seaward; while, descried,
  Above sea-clouds, the peaks of Arran rose;
  And, by that simple notice, the repose
Of earth, sky, sea, and air was vivified.
  Beneath the random field of clod or stone,
Myriads of daisies here shone forth in flower,
Near the lark's nest, and in their natural hour
  Have pass'd away; less happy than the one
That by the unwilling plowshare died to prove
The tender charm of poetry and love.

WILLIAM WORDSWORT
1770–1850.

THE FOREST-LEAVES IN AUTUMN.

FROM "THE CHRISTIAN YEAR."

Red o'er the forest peers the setting sun;
  The line of yellow light dies fast away
That crown'd the eastern copse; and chill and dun
  Falls on the moor the brief November day.

Now the tir'd hunter winds a parting note,
  And Echo bids good-night from every glade;
Yet wait awhile, and on the calm leaves float
  Each to his rest beneath the parent shade.

How like decaying life they seem to glide!
  And yet no second spring have they in store;
But where they fall forgotten, to abide
  Is all their portion, and they ask no more.

Soon o'er their heads blithe April airs shall sing;

A thousand wild-flowers round them shall unfold;
The green buds glisten in the dews of spring,
And all be vernal rapture as of old.

Unconscious they in waste oblivion lie,
In all the world of busy life around
No thought of them; in all the bounteous sky,
No drop, for them, of kindly influence found.

Man's portion is to die and rise again—
Yet he complains; while these unmurmuring part
With their sweet lives, as pure from sin and stain
As his when Eden held his virgin heart.

* * * * *

BOHEMIAN

ANCIENT SONG.

O ye forests, dark-green forests,
Miletinish forests!
Why in summer, and in winter,
Are ye green and blooming?
O! I would not weep and cry,
Nor torment my heart.
But now tell me, good folk, tell me,
How should not I cry?
Ah! where is my dear father?
Woe! he lies deep buried.
Where my mother? O good mother!
O'er her grows the grass!
Brothers have I not, nor sisters,
And my lad is gone!

Translated by TALVI.

LANDSCAPE AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

I wake, I rise; from end to end,
  Of all the landscape underneath,
  I find no place that doth not breathe
Some gracious memory of my friend;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
  Or low morass and whispering reed,
  Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheep-walk up the windy wold;

Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw,
  That hears the latest linnet trill,
  Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,
And haunted by the wrangling daw;

Nor rivulet trickling from the rock,
  Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves
  From left to right through meadowy curves,
That feed the mothers of the flock;

But each has pleased a kindred eye,
  And each reflects a kindlier day;
  And leaving these, to pass away
I think once more he seems to die.

ALF

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
  The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine is, too, the last green field
  That Lucy's eyes surveyed!

W.

WORDS
1770–
1850.

XVIII.
THE CALENDAR.

THE OPENING YEAR.

JANUARY.

Orphan hours, the year is dead,
  Come and sigh, come and weep!
Merry hours smile instead,
  For the year is but asleep.
See! it smiles as it is sleeping,
Mocking your untimely weeping.

As an earthquake rocks a corse
  In its coffin in the clay,
So white winter, that rough nurse,
  Rocks the dead-cold year to-day;
Solemn hours! wail aloud
For your mother in her shroud.

As the wild air stirs and sways
  The tree-swung cradle of a child,
So the breath of these rude days
  Rocks the year: be calm and mild,
Trembling hours; she will arise
With new love within her eyes.

January gray is here,

Like a sexton by her grave;
February bears the bier—
March, with grief, doth howl and rave;
And April weeps—but, O ye hours!
Follow with May's fairest flowers.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, 1792–1822.

ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM

ON THE FIRST OF FEBRUARY.

Sweet flower! that peeping from thy russet stem,
Unfoldest timidly (for in strange sort
This dark, frieze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chattering month
Hath borrowed Zephyr's voice, and gazed on thee
With blue, voluptuous eye); alas, poor flower!
These are but flatteries of the faithless year,
Perchance escaped its unknown polar cave.
E'en now the keen north-east is on its way,
Flower thou must perish! Shall I liken thee
To some sweet girl of too, too rapid growth?

SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE, 1770–1849.

FEBRUARY.

Dip down upon the northern shore,
O sweet new year, delaying long,
Thou dost expectant nature wrong,
Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,
  Thy sweetness from its proper place?
  Can trouble live with April days,
Or sadness in the summer noons?

Bring orchis—bring the fox-glove spire,
  The little speedwell's darling blue,
  Deep tulips dashed with fiery dew,
Laburnums dropping wells of fire.

O thou new year, delaying long,
  Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
  That longs to burst a frozen bud,
And flood a fresher throat of song.

ALF

MARCH.

The stormy March is come at last,
  With wind, and cloud, and changing skies;
I hear the rushing of the blast,
  That through the valley flies.

Ah, passing few are they who speak,
  Wild, stormy month, in praise of thee!
Yet, though thy winds are loud and bleak,
  Thou art a welcome month to me.

For thou to northern lands again
  The glad and glorious sun dost bring,
And thou hast joined the gentler train,
  And wear'st the gentle name of Spring.

And in thy reign of blast and storm
  Smiles many a long, bright, sunny day,
When the changed winds are soft and warm,
  And heaven puts on the blue of May.

Then sing aloud the gushing rills,
  And the full springs, from frost set free,
That, brightly leaping down the hills,
  Are just set out to meet the sea.

The year's departing beauty hides
  Of wintry storms the sullen threat;
But in thy sternest form abides
  A look of kindly promise yet.

Thou bring'st the hope of those calm skies,
  And that soft time of sunny showers,
When the wide bloom, on earth that lies,
  Seems of a brighter world than ours.

APRIL.

All day the low hung clouds have dropped
  Their garnered fullness down;
All day that soft gray mist hath wrapped
  Hill, valley, grove, and town.

There has not been a sound to-day
  To break the calm of nature;
Nor motion, I might almost say,
  Of life or living creature;

Of waving bough, or warbling bird,
  Or cattle faintly lowing—
I could have half believed I heard
  The leaves and blossoms growing.

For leafy thickness is not yet
  Earth's naked breast to screen,
Though every dripping branch is set
  With shoots of tender green.

Sure, since I looked at early morn,
  These honeysuckle buds
Have swelled to double growth; that thorn
  Hath put forth larger studs;

That lilac's cleaving cones have burst,
  The milk-white flowers revealing;
Even now upon my senses first,
  Methinks their sweets are stealing

The very earth, the steaming air,
  Is all with fragrance rife;
And grace and beauty everywhere
  Are flushing into life.

Down, down they come—those fruitful stores!
  Those earth-rejoicing drops!
A momentary deluge pours,
  Then thins, decreases, stops.

And ere the dimples on the stream,
  Have circled out of sight,
Lo! from the west a parting gleam
  Breaks forth of amber light.

But yet, behold! abrupt and loud,
  Comes down the glittering rain;
The farewell of a passing cloud,
  The fringes of her train.

H.

APRIL.

FROM THE FRENCH.

April, season blest and dear,
Hope of the reviving year;
Promise of bright fruits that lie
In their downy canopy,
Till the nipping winds are past,
And their vails aside are cast!
April, who delight'st to spread
O'er the emerald-laughing mead
Flowers of fresh and brilliant dyes,
Rich in wild embroideries!
April, who each zephyr's sigh
Dost with perfumed breath supply,
When they through the forest rove,
Spreading wily nets of love,
That, for lovely Flora made,
May detain her in the shade!
April, by thy hand caressed,
Nature, from her genial breast,
Loves her richest gifts to shower,
And awakes her magic power,
Till all earth and air are rife
With delight, and hope, and life!

April, nymph forever fair,
On my mistress' sunny hair,
Scattering wreaths of odors sweet,
For her snowy bosom meet!
April, full of smiles and grace,
Drawn from Venus' dwelling-place;
Thou, from earth's enamel'd plain,
Yield'st the gods their breath again.
'Tis thy courteous hand doth bring
Back the messenger of spring;
And his tedious exile o'er,
Hail'st the swallow's wing once more.
The eglantine, the hawthorn bright,
The thyme and pink, and jasmine white,
Don their purest robes to be
Guests, fair April, worthy thee.

The nightingale—sweet hidden sound!
'Midst the clustering boughs around,
Charms to silence notes that wake
Soft discourse from bush and brake,
And bids every listening thing
Pause awhile to hear her sing.

'Tis to thy return we owe
Love's fond sighs, that learn to glow
After winter's chilling reign
Long has bound them in her chain.
'Tis thy smile to being warms
All the busy, shining swarms,
Which, on perfumed pillage bent,
Fly from flower to flower intent,
Till they load their golden thighs
With the treasure each supplies.

May may boast her ripened hues,
Richer fruits, and flowers, and dews,
And those glowing charms that well
All the happy world can tell;
But, sweet April, thou shalt be
Still a chosen month for me.

* * * * *

Translation of MISS COSTELLO. REMI BELLEAU, 1528–1577.

ODE TO FIRST OF APRIL.

* * * * *

Mindful of disaster past,
And shrinking at the northern blast,
The sleety storm returning still,
The morning hoar, and evening chill,
Reluctant comes the timid spring.
Scarce a bee, with airy ring,
Murmurs the blossom'd boughs around,
That clothe the garden's southern bound;
Scarce a sickly, straggling flower
Decks the rough castle's rifted tower;
Scarce the hardy primrose peeps
From the dark dell's entangled steeps;
O'er the fields of waving broom
Slowly shoots the golden bloom;
And, but by fits, the furze-clad dale
Tinctures the transitory gale;
While from the shrubbery's naked maze,
Where the vegetable blaze
Of Flora's brightest 'broidery shone,
Every checker'd charm is flown;
Save that the lilac hangs to view
Its bursting gems in clusters blue.
Scant along the ridgy land
The beans their new-born ranks expand;
The fresh-turn'd soil, with tender blades,
Thinly the sprouting barley shades:
Fringing the forest's devious edge,
Half-rob'd appears the hawthorn hedge;
Or to the distant eye displays,
Weakly green its budding sprays.
The swallow, for a moment seen,

Skims in haste the village green;
From the gray moor, on feeble wing,
The screaming plovers idly spring;
The butterfly, gay-painted, soon
Explores awhile the tepid noon,
And fondly trusts its tender dyes
To fickle suns and flattering skies.
  Fraught with a transient, frozen shower,
If a cloud should haply lower,
Sailing o’er the landscape dark,
Mute on a sudden is the lark;
But when gleams the sun again
O’er the pearl-besprinkled plain,
And from behind his watery vail,
Looks through the thin descending hail;
She mounts, and, lessening to the sight,
Salutes the blithe return of light;
And high her tuneful track pursues,
'Mid the dim rainbow’s scattered hues.
  Where, in venerable rows,
Widely-waving oaks disclose
The moat of yonder antique hall,
Swarm the rooks with clamorous call;
And to the toils of nature true,
Wreath their capacious nests anew.
  Musing through the lawny park,
The lonely poet loves to mark
How various greens in faint degrees
Tinge the tall groups of various trees;
While, careless of the changing year,
The pine cerulean, never sere,
Towers distinguish’d from the rest,
And proudly vaunts her winter vest.
  Within some whispering osier isle,
Where Glynn’s low banks neglected smile,
And each trim meadow still retains
The wintry torrent’s oozy stains,
Beneath a willow, long forsook,
The fisher seeks his 'custom’d nook;
And bursting through the crackling sedge,

That crowns the current's cavern'd edge,
He startles from the bordering wood
The bashful wild-duck's early brood.
  O'er the broad downs, a novel race,
Frisk the lambs with faltering pace,
And with eager bleatings fill
The foss that skirts the beacon'd hill.
  His free-born vigor, yet unbroke,
To lordly man's usurping yoke,
The bounding colt forgets to play,
Basking beneath the noontide ray,
And stretch'd among the daisies pied,
Of a green dingle's sloping side;
While far beneath, where Nature spreads
Her boundless length of level meads,
In loose luxuriance taught to stray,
A thousand tumbling rills inlay
With silver veins the vale, or pass
Redundant through the sparkling grass.

* * * * *

THOMAS WARTO
1728–
1790.

APRIL.

Lessons sweet of spring returning,
  Welcome to the thoughtful heart!
May I call ye sense or learning,
  Instinct pure, or heav'n-taught heart?
Be your title what it may,
Sweet and lengthening April day,
While with you the soul is free,
Ranging wild o'er hill and lea;

Soft as Memnon's harp at morning,

To the inward ear devout,
Touch'd by light with heavenly warning,
Your transporting chords ring out.
Every leaf in every nook,
Every wave in every brook,
Chanting with a solemn voice,
Minds us of our better choice.

Needs no show of mountain hoary,
Winding shore or deepening glen,
Where the landscape in its glory,
Teaches truth to wandering men.
Give true hearts but earth and sky,
And some flowers to bloom and die;
Homely scenes and simple views,
Lowly thoughts may best infuse.

See the soft green willow springing
Where the waters gently pass,
Every way her free arms flinging
O'er the moss and reedy grass.
Long ere winter blasts are fled,
See her tipp'd with vernal red,
And her kindly flower display'd
Ere her leaf can cast a shade.

Though the rudest hand assail her,
Patiently she droops awhile,
But when showers and breezes hail her,
Wears again her willing smile.
Thus I learn Contentment's power
From the slighted willow bower,
Ready to give thanks and live,
On the least that Heaven may give.

If, the quiet brooklet leaving,
Up the stormy vale I wind,
Haply half in fancy grieving
For the shades I leave behind,
By the dusty wayside dear,
Nightingales with joyous cheer

Sing, my sadness to reprove,
Gladlier than in cultur'd grove.

Where the thickest boughs are twining
  Of the greenest, darkest tree,
There they plunge, the light declining—
  All may hear, but none may see.
Fearless of the passing hoof,
Hardly will they fleet aloof;
So they live in modest ways,
Trust entire, and ceaseless praise.

MAY.

Oh, the merry May has pleasant hours,
  And dreamingly they glide,
As if they floated like the leaves
  Upon a silver tide.
The trees are full of crimson buds,
  And the woods are full of birds,
And the waters flow to music,
  Like a tune with pleasant words.

The verdure of the meadow-land
  Is creeping to the hills;
The sweet, blue-bosom'd violets
  Are blowing by the rills;
The lilac has a load of balm
  For every wind that stirs,
And the larch stands green and beautiful,
  Amid the somber firs.

There's perfume upon every wind—
  Music in every tree—
Dews for the moisture-loving flowers—
  Sweets for the sucking bee;
The sick come forth for the healing South;

The young are gathering flowers;
And life is a tale of poetry,
That is told by golden hours.

If ’tis not a true philosophy,
That the spirit, when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and in the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of spring.

N

JUNE.

SUMMER.

The summer-time has come again,
With all its light and mirth,
And June leads on the laughing hours
To bless the weary earth.

The sunshine lies along the street,
So dim and cold before,
And in the open window creeps,
And slumbers on the floor.

The country was so fresh and fine,
And beautiful in May,
It must be more than beautiful—
A Paradise to-day!

If I were only there again,
I’d seek the lanes apart,
And shout aloud in mighty words,
To ease my happy heart.

R.

JULY.

Loud is the summer's busy song,
The smallest breeze can find a tongue,
While insects of each tiny size
Grow teasing with their melodies,
Till noon burns with its blistering breath
Around, and day dies still as death.
The busy noise of man and brute
Is on a sudden lost and mute;
Even the brook that leaps along,
Seems weary of its bubbling song,
And so soft its waters creep,
Tired silence sinks in sounder sleep;
The cricket on its bank is dumb,
The very flies forget to hum;
And, save the wagon rocking round,
The landscape sleeps without a sound.
The breeze is stopp'd, the lazy bough
Hath not a leaf that danceth now;
The taller grass upon the hill,
And spider's threads are standing still;
The feathers dropp'd from moorhen's wing,
Which to the water's surface cling,
Are steadfast, and as heavy seem,
As stones beneath them in the stream;
Hawkweed and groundsel's fanny downs
Unruffled keep their seedy crowns;
And in the oven-heated air
Not one light thing is floating there,
Save that to the earnest eye
The restless heat seems twittering by.
Noon swoons beneath the heat it made,
And flowers e'en within the shade,
Until the sun slopes in the west
Like weary traveler, glad to rest

On pillow'd clouds of many hues;
Then Nature's voice its joy renews,
And checkered field and grassy plain,
Hum with their summer songs again,
A requiem to the day's decline,
Whose setting sunbeams coolly shine,
As welcome to day's feeble powers,
As falling dews to thirsty flowers.

AUGUST.

SONNET.

A power is on the earth and in the air,
From which the vital spirit shrinks afraid,
And shelters him in nooks of deepest shade,
From the hot steam, and from the fiery glare.
Look forth upon the earth—her thousand plants
Are smitten; even the dark sun-loving maize
Faints in the field beneath the torrid blaze
The herd beside the shaded fountain pants;
For life is driven from all the landscape brown;
The bird has sought his tree, the snake his den,
The trout floats dead in the hot stream, and men
Drop by the sun-stroke in the populous town,
As if the Day of Fire had dawned and sent
Its deadly breath into the firmament.

AUGUST.

An August day! a dreamy haze
Films air, and mingles with the skies,

Sweetly the rich, dark sunshine plays,
  Bronzing each object where it lies.
Outlines are melted in the gauze
  That Nature vails; the fitful breeze
From the thick pine low murmuring draws,
  Then dies in flutterings midst the trees.
The bee is slumbering in the thistle,
And, now and then, a broken whistle,
A tread—a hum—a tap—is heard
  Through the dry leaves, in grass and bush,
As insect, animal, and bird
  Rouse brief from their lethargic hush.
Then e'en these pleasant sounds would cease,
  And a dread stillness all things lock:
  The aspen seem like sculptured rock,
  And not a tassel thread be shaken,
  The monarch pine's deep trance to waken,
And Nature settle prone in drowsy peace.
The misty blue—the distant masses,
  The air in woven purple glimmering
The shiver transiently that passes
Over the leaves, as though each tree
  Gave one brief sigh—the slumberous shimmering
  Of the red light—invested seem
    With some sweet charm, that soft, serene,
    Mellows the gold—the blue—the green
Into mild temper'd harmony,
    And melts the sounds that intervene,
As scarce to break the quiet, till we deem
Nature herself transform'd to Fancy's dream.

A

SEPTEMBER.

The meridian sun,
Most sweetly smiling with attemper'd beams,
Sheds gently down a mild and grateful warmth;

Beneath its yellow luster groves and woods,
Checker'd by one night's frost with various hues,
While yet no wind has swept a leaf away,
Shine doubly rich. It were a sad delight
Down the smooth stream to glide, and see it tinged
Upon each brink with all the gorgeous hues,
The yellow, red, or purple of the trees
That, singly, or in tufts, or forests thick,
Adorn the shores; to see, perhaps, the side
Of some high mount reflected far below,
With its bright colors, intermixed with spots
Of darker green. Yes, it were sweetly sad
To wander in the open fields, and hear,
E'en at this hour, the noonday hardly past,
The lulling insects of the summer's night;
To hear, where lately buzzing swarms were heard,
A lonely bee, long roving here and there
To find a single flower, but all in vain;
Then rising quick, and with a louder hum,
In widening circles round and round his head,
Straight by the listener flying clear away,
As if to bid the fields a last adieu;
To hear, within the woodland's sunny side,
Late full of music, nothing, save perhaps
The sound of nutshells, by the squirrel dropp'd
From some tall beech, fast falling through the leaves.

CARLOS WILCOX
1794–1827.

OCTOBER.

A SONNET.

Ay, thou art welcome, Heaven's delicious breath,
When woods begin to wear the crimson leaf,
And suns grow meek, and the meek suns grow brief,
And the year smiles as it draws near its death.

Wind of the sunny south! oh still delay
In the gay woods and in the golden air,
Like to a good old age released from care,
Journeying, in long serenity, away.
In such a bright, late quiet, would that I
Might wear out life like thee, 'mid bowers and brooks,
And, dearer yet, the sunshine of kind looks,
And music of kind voices ever nigh;
And when my last sand twinkled in the glass
Pass silently from men, as thou dost pass.

WILLI

NOVEMBER.

A SONNET.

Yet one smile more, departing, distant sun!
One mellow smile through the soft vapory air,
Ere, o'er the frozen earth, the loud winds run,
Or snows are sifted o'er the meadows bare.
One smile on the brown hills and naked trees,
And the dark rocks whose summer wreaths are cast,
And the blue gentian flower, that, in the breeze
Nods lonely, of the beauteous race the last.
Yet a few sunny days, in which the bee
Shall murmur by the hedge that skirts the way,
The cricket chirp upon the russet lea,
And men delight to linger in thy ray.
Yet one rich smile, and we will try to bear
The piercing winter frost, and winds, and darkened air.

WILLI

NOVEMBER.

November's sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sree;
Late, gazing down the steepy linn,
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
So feeble trill'd the streamlet through;
Now murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with double speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our forest hills is shed;
No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam;
Away hath pass'd the heather-bells,
That bloom'd so rich on Needpath-fell,
Sallow his brow, and russet bare,
Are now the sister heights of Yair.
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
To shelter'd dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines;
In meek despondency they eye
The withered sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill,
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill:
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
And wraps him closer from the cold;
His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But, shivering, follow at his heel;
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

NOVEMBER IN ENGLAND.

No sun—no moon!
No morn—no noon—
No dawn—no dusk—no proper time of day—
No sky—no earthly view—
No distance, looking blue—
No road—no street—no t'other side the way—
No end to any "row"—
No indications where the "crescents"
No top to any steeple—
No recognitions of familiar people—
No courtesies for showing 'em—
No knowing 'em!—
No traveling at all—no locomotion—
No inkling of the way—no notion—
"No go," by land or ocean—
No mail—no post—
No news from any foreign coast—
No park, no ring—no afternoon gentility—
No company, or nobility—
No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
No comfortable feel in any member—
No shade—no shine—no butterflies, no bees,
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds.
November!

SONNET.

NOVEMBER, 1792.

There is strange music in the stirring wind

When lowers the autumnal eve, and all alone
To the dark wood's cold covert thou art gone,
Whose ancient trees on the rough slope-reclined
Rock, and at times scatter their tresses sear.
If in such shades, beneath their murmuring,
Thou late hast pass'd the happier hours of spring,
With sadness thou wilt mark the fading year;
Chiefly if one, with whom such sweets at morn
Or eve thou'st shared, to distant scenes shall stray.
O spring, return! return, auspicious May!
But sad will be thy coming, and forlorn,
If she return not with thy cheering ray,
Who from these shades is gone, gone far away!

REV.
WILL
L.
BOW

SONG.

DECEMBER.

I.

A spirit haunts the year's last hours,
Dwelling amidst these yellowing bowers:
To himself he talks;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh,
In the walks;
Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks of the moldering flowers;
Heavily hangs the broad sun-flower
O'er its grave, the earth so chilly;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

II.

The air is damp, and hushed, and close,
As a rich man's room, where he taketh repose
An hour before death;
My very heart faints, and my whole soul grieves
At the moist, rich smell of the rotting leaves,
And the breath
Of the fading edges of box beneath, and the year's last rose.
Heavily hangs the broad sun-flower
Over its grave, the earth so chilly;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

ALF

XIX.
The Schoolmistress.

One does not often meet with Shenstone's "Schoolmistress" now-a-days, and as every year makes her more of a rarity, we have given her a place in our rustic group. There appears to be no doubt that Shenstone, who learned to read from the old dame who taught the village school at Hales-Owen, his native hamlet, sketched from life, when he drew the old "Schoolmistress," her blue apron, her single hen, and the noisy little troop about her. To us, however, in these very different days, the simple rustic sketch assumes something of the dignity of an historical picture.

The little thatched cottage of the dame is still to be seen near Hales-Owen, as well as the gabled roof of the Leasowes, under which the poet was born. The old homes of England, whether cot or castle, are seldom leveled by the hand of man, and they long remain as links between successive generations.

A few of the stanzas have been omitted, in order to bring the poem within the limits of this volume.

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS.

* * * * *

In every village mark'd with little spire,
  Embower'd in trees, and hardly known to Fame,
There dwells, in lowly shed and mean attire,
  A matron old, whom we Schoolmistress name,
Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame;
  They grieven sore, in piteous durance pent,
Aw'd by the power of this relentless dame,
  And ofttimes, on vagaries idly bent,
For unkempt hair, or task unconn'd, are sorely shent.

And all in sight doth rise a birchen tree,
  Which Learning near her little dome did stowe,
Whilom a twig of small regard to see,
  Though now so wide its waving branches flow,
And work the simple vassals mickle woe;
  For not a wind might curl the leaves that blew,
But their limbs shudder'd, and their pulse beat low;
  And as they look'd, they found their horror grew,
And shap'd it into rods, and tingled at the view.

So have I seen (who has not, may conceive)
  A lifeless phantom near a garden plac'd;
So doth it wanton birds of peace bereave,
  Of sport, of song, of pleasure, of repast;
They start, they stare, they wheel, they look aghast;
  Sad servitude! such comfortless annoy
May no bold Briton's riper age e'er taste!
  Ne superstition clog his dance of joy,
Ne vision empty, vain, his native bliss destroy.

Near to this dome is found a patch so green,
  On which the tribe their gambols do display;
And at the door imprisoning-board is seen,
  Lest weakly wights of smaller size should stray,
Eager, perdie, to bask in sunny day!
  The noises intermix'd, which thence resound,
Do Learning's little tenement betray;
  Where sits the dame, disguis'd in look profound,

And eyes her fairy throng, and turns her wheel around.

Her cap, far whiter than the driven snow,
Emblem right meet, of decency does yield;
Her apron dy'd in grain, is blue, I trowe,
As is the hare-bell that adorns the field;
And in her hand for sceptre, she does wield
Tway birchen sprays, with anxious fears entwin'd,
With dark distrust, and sad repentance fill'd,
And stedfast hate, and sharp affliction join'd,
And fury uncontroul'd and chastisement unkind.

Few but have ken'd, in semblance meet portray'd,
The childish faces of old Eol's train;
Libs, Notus, Auster; these in frowns array'd,
How then would fare on earth, or sky, or main,
Were the stern god to give his slaves the rein?
And were not she rebellious breasts to quell,
And were not she her statutes to maintain,
The cot no more, I ween, were deem'd the cell,
Where comely peace of mind and decent order dwell.

A russet stole was o'er her shoulders thrown;
A russet kirtle fenc'd the nipping air;
'Twas simple russet, but it was her own;
'Twas her own country bred the flock so fair;
'Twas her own labour did the fleece prepare;
And, sooth to say, her pupils, rang'd around,
Through pious awe did term it passing rare;
For they in gaping wonderment abound,
And think, no doubt, she been the greatest wight on ground!

Albeit ne flattery did corrupt the truth,
Ne pompous title did debauch her ear;
Goody, good-woman, n'aunt, forsooth,
Or dame, the sole additions she did hear;
Yet these she challeng'd, these she held right dear;
Ne would esteem him act as mought behove,
Who should not honour'd eld with these revere;

For never title yet so mean could prove,
But there was eke a mind that did that title love.

One ancient hen she took delight to feed,
The plodding pattern of the busy dame;
Which, ever and anon, impelled by need,
Into her school, begirt with chickens, came!
Such favor did her past deportment claim;
And if Neglect had lavish'd on the ground
Fragment of bread, she would collect the same,
For well she knew, and quaintly could expound,
What sin it were to waste the smallest crumb she found.

Herbs, too, she knew, and well of each could speak,
That in her garden sipp'd the silvery dew;
Where no vain flower disclos'd a gaudy streak;
But herbs for use and physic not a few,
Of grey renown, within those borders grew;
The tufted basil, pun-provoking thyme,
Fresh baum, and marygold of cheerful hue;
The lowly gill, that never dares to climb;
And more I fain would sing, disdaining here to rhyme.

Yet euphrasy may not be left unsung,
That gives dim eyes to wander leagues around;
And pungent radish, biting infant's tongue;
And plantain ribb'd, that heals the reaper's wound;
And marjoram sweet, in shepherd's posie found;
And lavender, whose spikes of azure bloom
Shall be erewhile in arid bundles bound,
To lurk amid the labours of her loom,
And crown her kerchiefs clean with mickle rare perfume.

And here trim rosemarine, that whilom crown'd
The daintiest garden of the proudest peer,
Ere, driven from its envied site, it found,
A sacred shelter for its branches here;
Where edged with gold its glittering skirts appear.

Oh wassel days! O customs meet and well!
Ere this was banish'd from its lofty sphere;
Simplicity then sought this humble cell,
Nor ever would she more with thane and lordling dwell.

Here oft the dame, on Sabbath's decent eve,
Hymnèd such psalms as Sternhold forth did mete
If winter 'twere, she to her hearth did cleave,
But in her garden found a summer-seat;
Sweet melody! to hear her then repeat
How Israel's sons, beneath a foreign king,
While taunting foemen did a song entreat,
All for the nonce, untuning every string,
Uphung their useless lyres—small heart had they to sing.

For she was just, and friend to virtuous lore,
And pass'd much time in truly virtuous deed;
And in those elfin ears would oft deplore
The times when Truth by Popish rage did bleed,
And tortuous Death was true Devotion's meed;
And simple Faith in iron chains did mourn,
That nould on wooden image place her creed;
And lawny saints in smouldering flames did burn;
Ah, dearest Lord, forefend thilk days should e'er return!

In elbow-chair, like that of Scottish stem
By the sharp tooth of cankering eld defac'd,
In which, when he receives his diadem,
Our sovereign prince and liefest liege is plac'd,
The matron sate, and some with rank she grac'd,
(The source of children's and of courtiers' pride!)
Redress'd affronts, for vile affronts there pass'd;
And warn'd them not the fretful to deride,
But love each other dear, whatever them betide.

Right well she knew each temper to descry;
To thwart the proud, and the submiss to raise;
Some with vile copper-prize exalt on high,

And some entice with pittance small of praise;
And other some with baleful sprig she frays;
E'en absent, she the reins of power doth hold,
While with quaint arts the giddy crowd she sways;
Forewarn'd if little bird their pranks behold,
'Twill whisper in her ear, and all the scene unfold.

Lo! now with state she utters the command;
Eftsoons the urchins to their tasks repair;
Their books of stature small they take in hand,
Which with pellucid horn securèd are,
To save from fingers wet the letters fair;
The work so gay, that on their back is seen,
St. George's high achievements doth declare;
On which thilk wight that has y-gazing been,
Kens the forthcoming rod—unpleasing sight, I ween!

Ah luckless he, and born beneath the beam
Of evil star! it irks me while I write;
As erst the bard by Mulla's silver stream,
Oft as he told of deadly, dolorous plight,
Sigh'd as he sung, and did in tears indite.
For, brandishing the rod, she doth begin
To loose the brogues, the stripling's late delight!
And down they drop; appears his dainty skin,
Fair as the furry coat of whitest ermilin.

O ruthful scene! when from a nook obscure,
His little sister doth his peril see;
All playful as she sate, she grows demure;
She finds full soon her wonted spirits flee;
She meditates a prayer to set him free;
Nor gentle pardon could this dame deny,
(If gentle pardon could with dames agree)
To her sad grief, which swells in either eye,
And wrings her so that all for pity she could die.

No longer can she now her shrieks command,
And hardly she forbears, through awful fear,
To rushen forth, and with presumptuous hand,
To stay harsh justice in his mid-career.

On thee she calls, on thee, her parent dear!
(Ah! too remote to ward the shameful blow!)
She sees no kind domestic visage near,
And soon a flood of tears begins to flow,
And gives a loose at last to unavailing woe.

But ah! what pen his piteous plight may trace?
Or what device his loud laments explain?
The form uncouth of his disguised face?
The pallid hue that dyes his looks amain?
The plenteous shower that does his cheek distain?
When he in abject wise implores the dame,
Ne hopeth aught of sweet reprieve to gain;
Or when from high she levels well her aim,
And through the thatch his cries each falling stroke proclaim.

The other tribe, aghast, with sore dismay,
Attend, and con their tasks with mickle care;
By turns, astonied, every twig survey,
And from their fellow's hateful wounds beware,
Knowing, I wis, how each the same may share,
Till fear has taught them a performance meet,
And to the well-known chest the dame repair,
Whence oft with sugar'd cates she doth them greet,
And ginger-bread y-rare; now, certes, doubly sweet.

See to their seats they hie with merry glee,
And in beseemly order sitten there;
All but the wight of flesh y-gallèd; he
Abhorreth bench, and stool, and fourm, and chair;
(This hand in mouth y-fix'd, that rends his hair;)
And eke with snubs profound, and heaving breast,
Convulsions intermitting, doth declare
His grievous wrong, his dame's unjust behest;
And scorns her offer'd love, and shuns to be caress'd.

His face besprent with liquid crystal shines,

His blooming face that seems a purple flower,
Which low to earth its drooping head declines,
All smear'd and sullied by a vernal shower.
O the hard bosoms of despotic Power!
All, all but she, the author of his shame,
All, all but she, regret this mournful hour;
Yet hence the youth, and hence the flower, shall claim,
If so I deem aright, transcending worth and fame.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE
1714–1763.

THE HAMLET.

AN ODE.

The hinds how blest, who ne'er beguiled
To quit their hamlet's hawthorn wild,
Nor haunt the crowd, nor tempt the main,
For splendid care and guilty gain!

When morning's twilight-tinctured beam
Strikes their low thatch with slanting gleam,
They rove abroad in ether blue,
To dip the scythe in fragrant dew;
The sheaf to bind, the beech to fell,
That nodding shades a craggy dell.

Midst gloomy glades, in warbles clear,
Wild nature's sweetest notes they hear:
On green untrodden banks they view
The hyacinth's neglected hue;
In their lone haunts, and woodland rounds,
They spy the squirrel's airy bounds;
And startle from her ashen spray,
Across the glen, the screaming jay:
Each native charm their steps explore
Of Solitude's sequester'd store.

For them the moon with cloudless ray
Mounts, to illume their homeward way:
Their weary spirits to relieve,
The meadows incense breathe at eve.
No riot mars the simple fare,
That o'er a glimmering hearth they share:
But when the curfew's measured roar
Duly, the darkening valleys o'er,
Has echoed from the distant town,
They wish no beds of cygnet-down,
No trophied canopies, to close
Their drooping eyes in quick repose.

Their little sons, who spread the bloom
Of health around the clay-built room,
Or through the primrosed coppice stray,

Or gambol in the new-mown hay;
Or quaintly braid the cowslip-twine,
Or drive afield the tardy kine;
Or hasten from the sultry hill,
To loiter at the shady rill;
Or climb the tall pine's gloomy crest,
To rob the raven's ancient nest.

Their humble porch with honey'd flowers
The curling woodbine's shade embowers;
From the small garden's thymy mound
Their bees in busy swarms resound:
Nor fell Disease, before his time,
Hastes to consume life's golden prime.
But when their temples long have wore
The silver crown of tresses hoar,
As studious still calm peace to keep,
Beneath a flowery turf they sleep.

T.

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THE NOSEGAY.

FROM "JOURNAL OF A NATURALIST."

With us the nosegay yet retains its station as a decoration to our Sunday beaux; but at our spring clubs and associations it becomes an essential, indispensable appointment, a little of the spirit of rivalry seeming to animate our youths in the choice and magnitude of this adornment. The superb spike of a Brompton, or ten-weeks'-stock long cherished in some sheltered corner for the occasion, surrounded by all the gayety the garden can afford, till it presents a very bush of flowers, forms the appendage of their bosoms, and, with the gay knots in their

hats, their best garments, and the sprightly hilarity of their looks, constitutes a pleasing village scene, and gives an hour of unencumbered felicity to common man and rural life, not yet disturbed by refinement and taste.

J. L. Knapp.

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE.

A well there is in the west country,
  And a clearer one never was seen;
There's not a wife in the west country
  But has heard of the well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm-tree stand beside,
  And behind doth an ash-tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
  Droops to the water below.

A traveler came to the well of St. Keyne—
  Joyfully he drew nigh;
For from cock-crow he had been traveling,
  And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
  For thirsty and hot was he;
And he sat down upon the bank,
  Under the willow-tree.

There came a man from the house hard by,
  At the well to fill his pail;
On the well-side he rested it,
  And he bade the stranger hail.

"Now art thou a bachelor, stranger?" quoth he!
  "For an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drank this day
  That ever thou didst in thy life.

"Or has thy good woman, if one thou hast,
Ever here in Cornwall been?
For an if she have, I'll venture my life,
She has drank of the well of St. Keyne."

"I have left a good woman who never was here,"
The stranger he made reply;
"But that my draught should be the better for that,
I pray you answer me why."

"St. Keyne," quoth the Cornishman, "many a time
Drank of this crystal well;
And before the angel summoned her,
She laid on the water a spell.

"If the husband, of this gifted well,
Shall drink before his wife,
A happy man henceforth is he,
For he shall be master for life.

"But if the wife should drink of it first—
God help the husband then!"
The stranger stoop'd to the well of St. Keyne,
And drank of the water again.

"You drank of the well, I warrant, betimes?"
He to the Cornishman said;
But the Cornishman smiled as the stranger spake,
And sheepishly shook his head:

"I hasten'd as soon as the wedding was done,
And left my wife in the porch;
But i' faith she had been wiser than me,
For she took a bottle to church!"

Westbury, 1798. ROBERT SOUTHEY

LOSEL'S FARM.

FROM "THE SAD SHEPHERD."

An hundred udders for the pail I have
That give me milk and curds that make me cheese
To cloy the markets! Twenty swarm of bees,
Which all the summer hum about the hive
And bring me wax and honey in bilive.
An aged oak, the king of all the field,
With a broad beech, there grows before my door,
That mickle mast unto the farm doth yield.
A chestnut which hath larded mony a swine,
Whose skins I wear to fend me from the cold;
A poplar grey, and with a kerved seat,
Under whose shade I solace in the heat;
And thence can see gang out and in my neat.
Twa trilland brooks, each from his spring doth meet,
And make a river to refresh my feet;
In which each morning, ere the sun doth rise,
I look myself, and clear my pleasant eyes,
Before I pipe; for therein have I skill
'Bove other swineherds. Bid me, and I will
Straight play to you, and make you melody.

BEN

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GIPSIES.

We have few gipsies in our neighborhood. In spite of our tempting green lanes, our woody dells, and heathy commons, the rogues don't take to us. I am afraid we are too civilized—too cautious; our sheepfolds are too closely watched; our barn-yards are too well guarded; our geese and ducks too fastly penned; our chickens too securely locked up; our little pigs too safe in their sty; our game too scarce; our laundresses too careful. In short, we are too little primitive; we have a snug brood of vagabonds and poachers of our own, to say nothing of their regular followers, constables and justices of the peace. We have stocks in the village, and a tread-mill in the next town, and therefore we go gipsy-less—a misfortune of which every landscape painter and every lover of that living landscape, the country, can appreciate the extent. There is nothing under the sun that harmonizes so well with nature, especially in her woodland recesses, as that picturesque people, who are, so to say, the wild genus—the pheasants and roebucks of the human race.

Sometimes, indeed, we used to see a gipsy procession passing along the common, like an Eastern caravan, men, women, children, donkeys, and dogs; and sometimes a patch of bare earth,

strewed with ashes and surrounded by scathed turf, on the broad green margin of some cross-road, would give token of a gipsy hall; but a regular gipsy encampment has always been so rare an event, that I was equally surprised and delighted to meet with one in the course of my walks last autumn. * * * They had pitched their little tent under one of the oak trees, perhaps from a certain dim sense of natural beauty, which those who live with nature in the fields are seldom totally without; perhaps because the neighborhood of the coppices and of the deserted hall was favorable to the acquisition of game, and of the little fuel which their hardy habits required. The party consisted only of four—an old crone in a tattered red cloak and black bonnet, who was stooping over a kettle, of which the contents were probably as savory as that of Meg Merrilies', renowned in story; a pretty black-eyed girl at work under the trees; a sun-burned urchin of eight or nine, collecting sticks and dead leaves to feed their out-of-door fire; and a slender lad, two or three years older, who lay basking in the sun, with a couple of shabby dogs of the sort called mongrel, in all the joy of idleness, while a grave, patient donkey stood grazing hard by. It was a pretty picture, with its soft autumnal sky, its rich woodiness, its verdure, the light smoke curling from the fire, and the group disposed around it so harmless, poor outcasts! and so happy—a beautiful picture! The old gipsy was a celebrated fortune-teller, and the post having been so long vacant, she could not have brought her talents to a better market. The whole village rang with the predictions of this modern Cassandra—unlike her Trojan predecessor, inasmuch as her prophecies were never of ill. I myself could not help admiring the real cleverness and genuine gipsy tact with which she

adapted her foretellings to the age, the habits, and the known desires and circumstances of her clients.

To our little pet Lizzy, for instance, a damsel of seven, she predicted a fairing; to Ben Kirby, a youth of thirteen, head batter of the boys, a new cricket-ball; to his sister Lucy, a girl some three years his senior, and just promoted to that ensign of womanhood—a cap—she promised a pink top-knot; while for Miss Sophia Matthews, our old-maidish schoolmistress, who would be heartily glad to be a girl again, she foresaw one handsome husband, and for the smart widow Simmons, two. These were the least of her triumphs. George Davis, the dashing young farmer of the Hill-house, a gay sportsman, who scoffed at fortune-tellers and matrimony, consulted her as to whose grayhound would win the courser's cup at the beacon meeting, to which she replied that she did not know to whom the dog would belong, but that the winner of the cup would be a white grayhound, with one blue ear and a spot on its side, being an exact description of Mr. George Davis' favorite Helen, who followed her master's step like his shadow, and was standing behind him at this very instant. This prediction gained our gipsy half-a-crown; and Master Welles, the thriving, thrifty yeoman of the lea, she managed to win sixpence from his hard, honest, frugal hand, by a prophecy that his old blood mare, called Blackfoot, should bring forth twins. And Ned, the blacksmith, who was known to court the tall nurse-maid at the mill—she got a shilling from Ned, simply by assuring him that his wife should have the longest coffin that ever was made at our wheelwright's shop: a most tempting prediction! ingeniously combining the prospect of winning and of surviving the lady of his heart—a promise equally adapted to the hot and cold fits of

that ague called love—lightening the fetters of wedlock—uniting in a breath the bridegroom and the widower. Ned was the best pleased of all her customers, and enforced his suit with such vigor, that he and the fair giantess were asked in church the next Sunday, and married at the fortnight's end.

MARY R. MITFORD.

A STERILE FIELD.

Lo! where the heath, with withering brake grown o'er,
Sends the light turf that warms the neighboring poor;
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves its wither'd ears;
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye;
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies nodding, mock the hope of toil;
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
Hardy and high, above her slender sheaf,
The shiny mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade;
With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,
And a sad splendor vainly shines around.
So looks the nymph whom wretched arts adorn,
Betray'd by man, then left for man to scorn;
Whose cheek in vain assumes the mimic rose,
While her sad eyes the troubled breast disclose;
Whose outward splendor is but folly's dress,
Exposing most when most it gilds distress.

GEORGE CRABBE
1754–1832.

THE ENGLISH COMMON.

Turning again up the hill, we find ourselves on that peculiar charm of English scenery, a green common, divided by the road; the right side fringed by hedge-rows and trees, with cottages and farm-houses irregularly placed, and terminated by a double avenue of noble oaks: the left, prettier still, dappled by bright pools of water, and islands of cottages and cottage-gardens, and sinking gradually down to corn-fields and meadows, and an old farm-house with pointed roofs and clustered chimneys looking out from its blooming orchard, and backed by woody hills. The common itself is the prettiest part of the prospect, half covered with low furze, whose golden blossoms reflect so intensely the last beams of the setting sun, and alive with cows and sheep, and two sets of cricketers: one of young men, surrounded with spectators—some standing, some stretched on the grass, all taking a delightful interest in the game: the other a group of little boys at an humble distance, for whom even cricket is scarcely lively enough, shouting, leaping, and enjoying themselves to their hearts' content.

MARY R. MITFORD.

LINES

TO A BEAUTIFUL SPRING IN A VILLAGE.

Once more, sweet stream! with slow foot wandering near,
I bless thy milky waters cold and clear.
Escaped the flashing of the noontide hours,
With one fresh garland of Pierian flowers
(Ere from thy zephyr-haunted brink I turn),

My languid head shall wreathe thy mossy urn.
For not through pathless grove, with murmur rude,
Thou soothest the sad wood-nymph Solitude;
Nor thine unseen in cavern depths to well,
The hermit-fountain of some dripping cell!
Pride of the vale! thy useful streams supply
The scattered cots and peaceful hamlet nigh;
The elfin tribe around thy friendly banks,
With infant uproar and soul-soothing pranks,
Released from school, their little hearts at rest,
Launch paper navies on thy waveless breast.
The rustic here at eve, with pensive look,
Whistling lorn ditties, leans upon his crook;
Or starting, passes with hope-mingled dread
To list the much-lov'd maid's accustom'd tread;
She, vainly mindful of her dame's command,
Loiters, the long-fill'd pitcher in her hand.
Unboasted stream! thy fount with pebbled falls
The faded form of past delight recalls,
What time the morning sun of Hope arose,
And all was joy; save when another's woes
A transient gloom upon my soul imprest,
Like passing cloud impictur'd on thy breast.
Life's current then ran sparkling to the noon,
Or silv'ry stole beneath the pensive moon.
Ah! now it works rude brakes and thorns among,
Or o'er the rough rock bursts and foams along!

SAMUEL
TAYLC
COLER

LINES

FROM "INDEPENDENCE."

Nature I'll court in her sequestered haunts,
  By mountain, meadow, streamlet, grove, or cell,
Where the pois'd lark his evening ditty chants,
  And Health, and Peace, and Contemplation dwell.

Where Study shall with Solitude recline;
  And Friendship pledge me with his fellow-swains;
And Toil and Temperance sedately twine
  The slender cord that fluttering life sustains,
And fearless Poverty shall guard the door;
  And Taste unspoil'd the frugal table spread,
And Industry supply the humble store;
And Sleep unbrib'd his dews refreshing shed;
White-mantled Innocence, ethereal sprite,
Shall chase far off the goblins of the night;
And Independence o'er the day preside,
Propitious power! my patron and my pride!

TOBIAS SMOLLETT
1721–1771.

XX.
Autumn.

Autumn is a favorite season with American poets; they have taken great delight in singing the high-toned magnificence of the season, as well as that delicacy and sweetness of aspect which so often adds an exquisite charm to the brilliancy of autumnal beauty under our native skies. The poets of Europe have scarcely sung the delights of Spring with more eloquent fervor. We can not wonder that such should be the case; from the first tinge of peculiar coloring to the last smile of the Indian Summer, the season is full of interest and beauty, of ever-varying aspects. It has been with real reluctance that we have been compelled to turn aside from many beautiful passages of American verse which we had originally hoped to have inserted in this division of the volume; but fortunately they lie already within every reader's reach, in other forms.

TO AUTUMN NEAR HER DEPARTURE.

Thou maid of gentle light! thy straw-wove vest,
And russet cincture; thy loose pale-tinged hair;
Thy melancholy voice and languid air,

As if shut up within that pensive breast,
Some ne'er-to-be-divulged grief was prest;
  Thy looks resign'd, that smiles of patience wear,
  While Winter's blasts thy scattered tresses tear;
Thee, Autumn, with divinest charms have blest
Let blooming Spring with gaudy hopes delight,
  That dazzling Summer shall of her be born;
Let Summer blaze, and Winter's stormy train
Breathe awful music in the ear of night;
  Thee will I court, sweet dying maid forlorn,
And from thy glance will catch th' inspired strain.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, 1762–1837.

AUTUMN.

ODE.

I.

I saw old Autumn in the misty morn
Stand shadowless like Silence, listening
To Silence, for no lonely bird would sing
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn;
Shaking his languid locks, all dewy bright,
With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
  Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

II.

Where are the songs of Summer? With the sun,
Oping the dusky eyelids of the South,

'Till shade and silence waken up as one,
And Morning sings with a warm, odorous mouth.
Where are the merry birds?—away, away,
On panting wings, through the inclement skies,
Lest owls should prey,
Undazzled at noon-day,
And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

III.

Where are the blooms of Summer? In the West,
Blushing their last to the last sunny hours,
When the mild Eve by sudden Night is prest,
Like tearful Proserpine, snatch'd from her flow'rs,
To a most gloomy breast.
Where is the pride of Summer—the green prime—
The merry, merry leaves all twinkling?—there
On the moss'd elm; there on the naked lime
Trembling—and one upon the old oak-tree!
Where is the Dryad's immortality?
Gone into mournful cypress and dark yew,
Or wearing the long, gloomy Winter through
In the smooth holly's green eternity.

IV.

The squirrel gloats on his accomplish'd hoard;
The ants have cramm'd their garners with ripe grain,
And honey-bees have stored
The sweets of Summer in their luscious cells;
The swallows all have winged across the main;
But here the Autumn melancholy dwells,
And sighs her tearful spells
Among the sunless shadows of the plain:
Alone, alone,
Upon a mossy stone,
She sits and reckons up the dead and gone

With the last leaves for a lone-rosary,
While all the wither'd world looks drearily,
Like a dim picture of the drowned past
In the hush'd mind's mysterious far away,
Doubtful what ghostly thing will steal the last
Into the distance, gray upon the gray.

V.

O go and sit with her, and be o'ershaded
Under the languid downfall of her hair;
She wears a coronal of flowers faded
Upon her forehead, and a face of care;
There is enough of withered everywhere
To make her bower, and enough of gloom,
There is enough of sadness to invite,
If only for the rose that died, whose doom
Is Beauty's—she that with the living bloom
Of conscious cheeks most beautifies the light.
There is enough of sorrowing, and quite
Enough of bitter fruits the earth doth bear—
Enough of chilly droppings from her brow—
Enough of fear and shadowy despair
To frame her cloudy prison for the soul!

ODE

TO WILLIAM LYTTLETON, ESQ.,

TOWARD THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1748.

How blithely passed the summer's day!
  How bright was every flower!
While friends arrived in circles gay
  To visit Damon's bower!

But now with silent step I range
  Along some lonely shore;
And Damon's bower (alas the change!)
  Is gay with friends no more.

Away to crowds and cities borne,
  In quest of joy they steer;
While I, alas, am left forlorn
  To weep the parting year!

O pensive Autumn, how I grieve
  Thy sorrowing face to see!
When languid suns are taking leave

Of every drooping tree.

Ah! let me not with heavy eye
This dying scene survey!
Haste, Winter, haste; usurp the sky;
Complete my bower's decay!

Ill can I bear the motley cast
Yon sickening leaves retain,
That speak at once of pleasure past,
And bode approaching pain.

Ah, home unblessed! I gaze around,
My distant scenes require,
Where, all in murky vapors drown'd,
Are hamlet, hill, and spire.

Though Thomson, sweet, descriptive bard!
Inspiring Autumn sung;
Yet how should he the months regard,
That stopp'd his flowing tongue?

Ah, luckless months, of all the rest,
To whose hard share it fell!
For sure his was the gentlest breast
That ever sung so well.

And see, the swallows now disown
The roofs they loved before;
Each, like his tuneful genius, flown
To glad some happier shore.

The wood-nymph eyes with pale affright
The sportsman's frantic deed,
While hounds, and horns, and yells unite
To drown the Muse's reed.

Ye fields! with blighted herbage brown;
Ye skies! no longer blue;
Too much we feel from Fortune's frown,
To bear these frowns from you.

Where is the mead's unsullied green?
  The zephyr's balmy gale?
And where sweet Friendship's cordial mien
  That brighten'd every vale?

What though the vine disclose her dyes,
  And boast her purple store,
Not all the vineyard's rich supplies
  Can soothe our sorrows more.

He! he is gone, whose moral strain
  Could wit and mirth refine;
He! he is gone, whose social vein
  Surpass'd the power of wine.

Fast by the streams he deign'd to praise,
  In yon sequester'd grove,
To him a votive urn I raise,
  To him and friendly love.

Yes, there, my friend! forlorn and sad,
  I 'grave your Thomson's name;
And there his lyre, which Fate forbad
  To sound your growing fame.

There shall my plaintive song recount
  Dark themes of hopeless woe;
And faster than the drooping fount,
  I'll teach mine eyes to flow.

There leaves, in spite of Autumn, green
  Shall shade the hallow'd ground;
And Spring will there again be seen,
  To call forth flowers around.

But no kind suns will bid me share
  Once more his social hour;
Ah, Spring! thou never can'st repair
  His loss to Damon's bower.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE

1714–
1763.

SONG.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Tell me where's the violet fled,
  Late so gayly blowing;
Springing 'neath fair Flora's tread,
  Choicest sweets bestowing?
Swain, the vernal scene is o'er
And the violet blooms no more!

Say, where hides the blushing rose,
  Pride of fragrant morning;
Garland meet for beauty's brow,
  Hill and dale adorning?
Gentle maid, the summer's fled,
And the hapless rose is dead!

Bear me then to yonder rill,
  Late so freely flowing,
Watering many a daffodil
  On its margin glowing;
Sun and wind exhaust its store;
Yonder rivulet glides no more!

Lead me to the bowery shade,
  Late with roses flaunting;
Loved resort of youth and maid,
  Amorous ditties chaunting;
Hail and storm with fury shower.
Leafless mourns the rifled bower!

Say, where bides the village maid,
  Late yon cot adorning?
Oft I've met her in the glade,
  Fair and fresh as morning.
Swain, how short is beauty's bloom!

Seek her in the grassy tomb!

Whither roves the tuneful swain,
  Who of rural pleasures,
Rose and violet, rill and plain,
  Sung in dulcet measures?
Maiden, swift life's vision flies,
Death has closed the poet's eyes!

Translation of BERESFORD. JOHAN GEORG. JACOBI, 1740–1814.

AUTUMN SCENE IN ENGLAND.

But see the fading, many-color'd woods,
Shade deepening over shade the country round
Imbrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk and dun,
Of every hue, from wan declining green
To sooty dark—these now the lonesome Muse,
Low whispering, lead into their leaf-strewn walks,
And give the season in its latest view.

Meantime, light-shadowing all, a sober calm
Fleeces unbounded ether, whose least wave
Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
The gentle current; while illumin'd wide,
The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
And through their lucid vail his softened force
Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time
For those whom wisdom and whom Nature charm,
To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
And soar above this little scene of things;
To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet;
To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
And woo lone Quiet in her silent walks.

* * * * *

The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf

Incessant rustles from the mournful grove;
Oft startling such as studious walk below,
And slowly circles through the waving air.
But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams;
Till choked and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest-walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bleak.
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields,
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign. Even what remained
Of stronger fruits, falls from the naked tree,
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

JAMES THOMS
1700–1748.

INDIAN SUMMER.

It is the season when the light of dreams
  Around the year in golden glory lies—
  The heavens are full of floating mysteries,
And in the lake the vailed splendor gleams!
  Like hidden poets lie the hazy streams,
Mantled with mysteries of their own romance,
While scarce a breath disturbs their drowsy trance.
  The yellow leaf which down the soft air gleams,
Glides, wavers, falls, and skims the unruffled lake.
  There the frail maples, and the faithful firs
By twisted vines are wed. The russet brake
  Skirts the low pool, and starred with open burrs
  The chestnut stands; but when the north-wind stirs,
How like an armed host the summoned scene shall wake!

AN AUTUMN LANDSCAPE.

Far and wide
Nature is smiling in her loveliness.
Masses of wood, green strips of fields, ravines
Shown by their outlines drawn against the hills,
Chimneys and roofs, trees, single and in groups,
Bright curves of brooks, and vanishing mountain-top
Expand upon my sight, October's brush
The scene has color'd; not with those broad hues
Mix'd in his later pallet by the frost,
And dash'd upon the picture till the eye
Aches with varied splendor, but in tints
Left by light, scatter'd touches. Overhead
There is a blending of cloud, haze, and sky,
A silvery sheet with spaces of soft blue;
A trembling vail of gauze is stretch'd athwart
The shadowy hill-sides and dark forest-flanks;
A soothing quiet broods upon the air,
And the faint sunshine winks with drowsiness.
Far sounds melt mellow on the ear: the bark—
The bleat—the tinkle—whistle—blast of horn—
The rattle of the wagon-wheel—the low—
The fowler's shot—the twitter of the bird,
And e'en the hum of converse from the road.
The grass, with its low insect-tones, appears
As murmuring in its sleep. This butterfly
Seems as if loth to stir, so lazily
It flutters by. In fitful starts, and stops,
The locust sings. The grasshopper breaks out
In brief, harsh strains, amid its pausing chirps.
The beetle, glistening in its sable mail,
Slow climbs the clover-tops, and e'en the ant
Darts round less eagerly.

* * * * *

A

AUTUMN WOODS.

Ere, in the northern gale,
The summer tresses of the trees are gone,
The woods of Autumn all around our vale,
Have put their glory on.

The mountains that enfold
In their wide sweep the colored landscape round,
Seem groups of giant kings, in purple and gold,
That guard the enchanted ground.

I roam the woods that crown
The upland, where the mingled splendors glow—
Where the gay company of trees look down
On the green fields below.

My steps are not alone
In these bright walks; the sweet southwest, at play,
Flies, rustling, where the painted leaves are strewn
Along the winding way.

And far in heaven, the while,
The sun that sends that gale to wander here,
Pours out on the fair earth his quiet smile,
The sweetest of the year.

Where now the solemn shade,
Verdure and gloom, where many branches meet;
So grateful when the noon of summer made
The valleys rich with heat?

Let in through all the trees
Come the strange rays; the forest depths are bright!
Their sunny-colored foliage in the breeze
Twinkles, like beams of light.

The rivulet, late unseen,
Where, bickering through the shrubs, its waters run,
Shines with the image of its golden screen,
And glimmerings of the sun.

Beneath yon crimson tree,
Lover to listening maid might breathe his flame,
Nor mark within its roseate canopy
Her blush of maiden shame.

Oh, Autumn, why so soon
Depart the hues that make thy forests glad,
Thy gentle wind, and thy fair sunny noon,
And leave thee wild and sad!

Ah! twere a lot too bless'd
Forever in thy colored shades to stray;
Amid the tresses of the soft southwest,
To rove and dream for aye;

And leave the vain, low strife
That makes men mad—the tug for wealth and power,
The passions and the cares that wither life,
And waste its little hour.

WILLI

XXI.
Medley.

A WISH.

Mine be a cot beside the hill,
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear,
A willowy brook that turns a mill,
With many a fall shall linger near.

The swallow oft, beneath my thatch,
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy at her wheel shall sing,
In russet gown and apron blue.

The village-church among the trees,
Where first our marriage vows were giv'n,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze,
And point with taper spire to heav'n.

A COUNTRY LIFE.

FROM THE LATIN OF AVIENUS, A.D. 380.

Safe-roof'd my cottage; swelling rich with wine
Hangs from the twisted elm my cluster'd vine.
Boughs glow with cherries, apples bend my wood;
And the crush'd olive foams with juicy flood.
Where my light beds the scattering rivulet drink,
My simple pot-herbs flourish on the brink;
And poppies smiling wave the rosy head,
That yield no opiate to a restless bed.
If for the birds I weave the limed snare,
Or for the startlish deer the net prepare,
Or with a slender thread the fish delude,
No other wiles disturb these woodlands rude.
Go now, and barter life's calm stealing days
For pompous suppers, that with luxury blaze!
Pray Heaven! for me the lot may thus be cast,
And future time glide peaceful as the past.

Translation of SIR C. A. ELTON.

OF BUILDING.

COUNTRY HOUSES.

He that alters an old house is tied as a translator to the original, and is confined to the fancy of the first builder. Such a man were unwise to pluck down good old buildings, to erect, perchance, worse new. But those that raze a new house from the ground are blameworthy if they make it not handsome, seeing, to them, method and confusion are both at a rate. In building, we must respect situation, contrivance, receipt, strength, and beauty. Of situation:

Chiefly choose a wholesome air. For air is a dish

one feeds on every minute, and therefore it need be good. Wherefore great men (who may build where they please, as poor men where they can), if herein they prefer their profit above their health, I refer them to their physicians to make them pay for it accordingly.

Wood and water are two staple commodities, where they may be had. The former, I confess, hath made so much iron, that it must now be bought with the more silver, and grows daily dearer. But it is as well pleasant as profitable to see a house cased with trees, like that of Anchises, in Troy,

> "——quanquam secreta parentis
> Anchisæ domus arboribusque obtecta recessit."

The worst is, where a place is bald of wood, no art can make it a periwig. As for water, begin with Pindar's beginning, "ἄρισον μεὺ hύὁωρ." The fort of Gogmagog Hill, nigh Cambridge, is counted impregnable, but for water; the mischief of many houses, where the servants must bring the water on their shoulders.

Next, a pleasant prospect is to be respected. A medley view (such as of water and land at Greenwich) best entertains the eye, refreshing the wearied beholder with exchange of objects. Yet I know a more profitable prospect, where the owner can only see his own land round about.

A fair entrance, with an easy ascent, gives a great grace to a building, where the hall is a preferment out of the court, the parlor out of the hall; not (as in some old buildings) where the doors are so low, pigmies must stoop, and the rooms so high that giants may stand upright. But now we are come to the contrivance:

Let not thy common rooms be several, nor thy several rooms be common. The hall (which is a pandocheum) ought to lie open, and so ought passages and stairs (provided that the whole house be not spent in paths); chambers and closets are to be private and retired.

Light (God's eldest daughter) is a principal beauty in a building; yet it shines not alike from all parts of heaven. An east window welcomes the infant beams of the sun before they are of strength to do any harm, and is offensive to none but a sluggard. A south window in summer is a chimney with a fire in it, and needs the screen of a curtain. In a west window in summer time, toward night, the sun grows low and over-familiar, with more light than delight. A north window is best for butteries and cellars, where the beer will be sour for the sun's smiling on it. Thorough-lights are best for rooms of entertainment, and windows on one side for dormitories. As for receipt:

A house had better be too little for a day than too great for a year. And it is easier borrowing of thy neighbor a brace of chambers for a night, than a bag of money for a twelvemonth. It is vain, therefore, to proportion the receipt to an extraordinary occasion, as those who, by over-building their houses have dilapidated their lands, and their estates have been pressed to death under the weight of their house. As for strength:

Country houses must be substantives, able to stand of themselves; not like city buildings, supported by their neighbors on either side. By strength we mean such as may resist weather and time, not invasion—castles being out of date in this peaceable age. As for the making of moats round about, it is questionable whether the fogs be not more unhealthful than the

fish bring profit, or the water defense. Beauty remains behind, as the last to be regarded, because houses are made to be lived in, not looked on.

Let not the front look asquint on a stranger, but accost him right at his entrance. Uniformity, also, much pleaseth the eye; and it is observed that freestone, like a fair complexion, soonest waxeth old, while brick keeps her beauty longest.

Let the office-houses observe the due distance from the mansion-house. Those are too familiar which presume to be of the same pile with it. The same may be said of stables and barns; without which a house is like a city without outworks, it can never hold out long.

Gardens, also, are to attend in their place. When God (Genesis ii. 9) planted a garden eastward, He made to grow out of the ground every tree pleasant to the sight, and good for food. Sure He knew better what was proper to a garden than those, who, now-a-days, therein only feed the eyes, and starve both taste and smell.

To conclude. In building, rather believe any man than an artificer in his own art for matter of charges; not that they can not, but will not, be faithful. Should they tell thee all the cost at the first, it would blast a young builder in the budding, and therefore they sooth thee up till it hath cost thee something to confute them. The spirit of building first possessed people after the flood, which then caused the confusion of languages, and since, the estate of many a man.

THOMAS FULLER, "*Holy and Profane States*," 1608–1661.

OF BUILDING.

Houses are built to live in, and not to look on; therefore let use be preferred before uniformity, except where both may be had. Leave the goodly fabrics of houses, for beauty only, to the enchanted palaces of the poets, who build them with small cost. He that buildeth a fair house upon an ill seat, committeth himself to prison; neither do I reckon it an ill seat only where the air is unwholesome, but likewise where the air is unequal; as you shall see many fine seats set upon a knap of ground, environed with higher hills round about it, whereby the heat of the sun is pent in, and the wind gathereth as in troughs; so as you shall have, and that suddenly, as great diversity of heat and cold as if you dwelt in several places. Neither is it ill air only that maketh an ill seat, but ill ways, ill markets; and if you will consult with Momus, ill neighbors. I speak not of many more; want of water, want of wood, shade, and shelter, want of fruitfulness, and mixture of grounds of several natures; want of prospect, want of level grounds, want of places at some near distance for sports of hunting, hawking, and races; too near the sea, or too remote; having the commodity of navigable rivers, or the discommodity of their overflowing; too far from great cities, which may hinder business; or too near them, which lurcheth all provisions, and maketh every thing dear; where a man hath a great living laid together and where he is scanted; all which, as it is impossible perhaps to find together, so it is good to know them, and think of them, that a man may like as many as he can; and, if he have several dwellings, that he sod them so, that what he wanteth in one he may find in another. Lucullus answered Pompey well, who, when

he saw his stately galleries, and rooms so large and lightsome, in one of his houses, said, “Surely an excellent place for summer, but how do you in winter?” Lucullus answered, “Why do you not think me as wise as some fowls, that ever change their abode toward the winter?”

LORD BACON, 1561–1627.

THE WISH.

Well, then, I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne’er agree—
The very honey of all earthly joy
Does of all meats the soonest cloy;
And they, methinks, deserve my pity,
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd, the buzz, and murmurings,
Of this great hive, the city.

Ah, yet, ere I descend to th’ grave,
May I a small house and large garden have!
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!
And, since love ne’er will from me flee,
A mistress moderately fair,
And good as guardian angels are,
Only beloved, and loving me!

Oh fountains! when in you shall I
Myself, eased of unpeaceful thoughts, espy?
Oh fields! oh woods! when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shades?
Here’s the spring-head of Pleasure’s flood;
Where all the riches lie, that she
Has coin’d and stamp’d for good.

Pride and ambition here
Only in far-fetch’d metaphors appear;

Here naught but winds can hurtful murmurs scatter,
And naught but Echo flatter.
The gods, when they descended, hither
From heaven did always choose their way,
And therefore we may boldly say,
That 'tis the way, too, thither.

How happy here should I
And one dear she, live, and embracing die!
She who is all the world, and can exclude
In deserts solitude.
I should have then this only fear—
Lest men, when they my pleasures see,
Should hither throng to live like me
And so make a city here.

ABRAHAM COWLEY
1618–1657.

A THANKSGIVING FOR HIS HOUSE.

Lord, thou hast given me a cell
Wherein to dwell;
A little house, whose humble roof
Is weather-proof;
Under the spars of which I lie
Both soft and dry.
Where Thou, my chamber for to ward,
Hast set a guard,
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep
Me while I sleep.
Low is my porch, as is my fate,
Both void of state;
And yet the threshold of my door
Is worn by the poor,
Who hither come, and freely get
Good words or meat.
Like as my parlor, so my hall,

And kitchen small;
A little buttery, and therein
A little bin,
Which keeps my little loaf of bread,
Unchipt, unflead.
Some brittle sticks of thorn or brier
Make me a fire,
Close by whose living coal I sit,
And glow like it.
Lord, I confess, too, when I dine,
The pulse is Thine,
And all those other bits that be
There placed by Thee;
The worts, the purslane, and the mess
Of water-cress,
Which of Thy kindness Thou has sent;
And my content
Makes these and my beloved beet
To be more sweet.
'Tis Thou that crown'st my glittering hearth
With guiltless mirth,
And giv'st me wassail bowls to drink,
Spiced to the brink.
Lord, 'tis thy plenty-dropping hand
That sows my land.
All this, and better dost Thou send
Me for this end—
That I should render for my part
A thankful heart,
Which, fir'd with incense, I resign
As wholly Thine;
But the acceptance, that must be,
O Lord, of Thee!

RO

THE STRANGER ON THE SILL.

Between broad fields of wheat and corn

Is the lowly home where I was born;
The peach-tree leans against the wall,
And the woodbine wanders over all;
There is the shaded doorway still—
But a stranger's foot has crossed the sill.

There is the barn—and, as of yore,
I can smell the hay from the open door,
And see the busy swallows throng,
And hear the peewee's mournful song;
But the stranger comes—oh! painful proof—
His sheaves are piled to the heated roof.

There is the orchard—the very trees
Where my childhood knew long hours of ease,
And watched the shadowy moments run,
Till my life imbibed more shade than sun;
The swing from the bough still sweeps the air—
But the stranger's children are swinging there.

He bubbles, the shady spring below,
With its bulrush brook where the hazels grow;
'Twas there I found the calamus root,
And watched the minnows poise and shoot,
And heard the robin lave his wing—
But the stranger's bucket is at the spring.

Oh ye who daily cross the sill,
Step lightly, for I love it still;
And when you crowd the old barn eaves,
Then think what countless harvest sheaves
Have passed within that scented door,
To gladden eyes that are no more.

Deal kindly with these orchard trees,
And when your children crowd your knees,
Their sweetest fruit they shall impart,
As if old memories stirred their heart;
To youthful sport still leave the swing,
And in sweet reverence hold the spring.

THE INVITATION.

FROM THE GERMAN.

I have a cottage by the hill,
  It stands upon a meadow green,
Behind it flows a murmuring rill,
  Cool-rooted moss and flowers between.

Beside the cottage stands a tree,
  That flings its shadow o'er the eaves;
And scarce the sunshine visits me,
  Save when a light wind rifts the leaves.

A nightingale sings on a spray,
  Through the sweet summer time night-long,
And evening travelers, on their way,
  Linger to hear her plaintive song.

Thou maiden with the yellow hair,
  The winds of life are sharpened chill,
Will thou not seek a shelter there,
  In yon lone cottage by the hill?

Translation of S. H. WHITMAN. JOHANN W. L. GLEIM, 1719–1803.

ICELANDIC LINES.

FROM THE DISCOURSE OF ODIN.

On guests who come with frozen knees
Bestow the genial warmth of fire;
Who has walked far and waded streams
Needs cheering food and drier clothes.

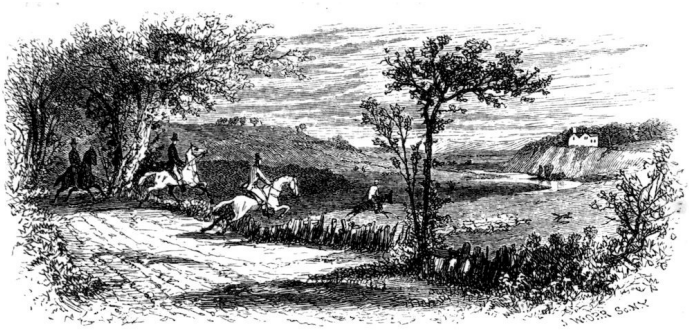
To him about to join your board,
Clear water bring to cleanse his hands,
And treat him freely, would you win
The kindly word, the thankful heart.

Translation of W.
TAYLOR.

DOMESTIC PEACE.

Tell me on what holy ground
May Domestic Peace be found—
Halcyon daughter of the skies!
Far, on fearful wings she flies,
From the pomp of scepter'd state,
From the rebel's noisy hate.
In a cottaged vale she dwells,
Listening to the Sabbath bells!
Still around her steps are seen
Spotless Honor's meeker mien,
Love, the sire of pleasing fears,
Sorrow smiling through her tears,
And, conscious of the past employ,
Memory, bosom-spring of joy.

SAMUEL
TAYLC
COLER



XXII.
THE HUNT.

ANCIENT HUNTING SONG.

The hunt is up, the hunt is up!
Sing merrily we, the hunt is up
The birds they sing,
The deer they fling,
Hey, nonny, nony, no;
The hounds they cry,
The hunters fly,
Hey, trolilo, trololilo.
The hunt is up, the hunt is up!
Sing merrily we, the hunt is up!

The wood resounds
To hear the sounds,
Hey, nonny, nony, no;
The rocks report
This merry sport,
Hey, trolilo, trololilo,
The hunt is up, the hunt is up!
Sing merrily we, the hunt is up!

Then hie apace
Unto the chase,
Hey, nonny, nony, no!
While every thing

Doth sweetly sing
Hey, trolilo, trololilo,
The hunt is up, the hunt is up!
Sing merrily we, the hunt is up!

HOUNDS.

My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind;
So flew'd, so sanded, and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-knee'd and dew-lapp'd, like Thessalian bulls;
Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells,
Each under each: a cry more tunable
Was never halloo'd to, nor cheered with horn.

W

DEER LEAP.

In our way to Hound's-Down we rode past a celebrated spot, called the Deer Leap. Here a stag was once shot, which, in the agony of death, collecting his force, gave a bound which astonished those who saw it. It was immediately commemorated by two posts, which were fixed at the two extremities of the leap, where they still remain. The space between them is somewhat more than eighteen yards.

GILPIN'S "*New Forest.*"

THE HARE.

FROM "THE CHASE."

Delightful scene!
Where all around is gay, men, horses, dogs,
And in each smiling countenance appears
Fresh blooming health and universal joy.
Huntsman! lead on—behind, the clustering pack
Submiss attend, hear with respect thy whip
Loud clanging, and thy harsher voice obey.

* * * * *

Here on this verdant spot, where Nature kind
With double blessings crowns the farmer's hopes;
Where flowers autumnal spring, and the rank mead
Affords the wandering hares a rich repast,
Throw off thy ready pack. See where they spread,
And range around, and dash the glittering dew!
If some staunch hound, with his authentic voice,
Avow the recent trail, the jostling tribe
Attend his call, then with one mutual cry
The welcome news confirm, and echoing hills
Repeat the pleasing tale. See how they thread
The brakes, and up yon furrow drive along!
But quick they back recoil, and wisely check
Their eager haste; then o'er the fallow'd ground
How leisurely they work, and many a pause
Th' harmonious concert breaks; till more assur'd,
With joy redoubled, the low valleys ring.
What artful labyrinths perplex their way!
Ah! there she lies; how close! she pants, she doubts
If now she lives; she trembles as she sits,
With horror seiz'd! The withered grass that clings
Around her head, of the same russet hue,
Almost deceiv'd my sight, had not her eyes,
With life full beaming, her vain wiles betray'd.
At distance draw thy pack; let all be hush'd—
No clamor loud, no frantic joy be heard,
Lest the wild hound run gadding o'er the plain
Untractable, nor hear thy chiding voice.
Now gently put her off; see how direct
To her known mew she flies! Here, huntsman, bring
(But without hurry) all thy jolly hounds,

And calmly lay them in. How low they stoop,
And seem to plow the ground! then all at once,
With greedy nostrils, snuff the fuming steam
That glads their fluttering hearts. As winds let loose
From the dark caverns of the blustering god,
They burst away and sweep the dewy lawn.
Hope gives them wings, while she's spurred on by fear.
The welkin rings—men, dogs, hills, rocks, and woods
In the full concert join. Now, my brave youths,
Stripp'd for the chase, give all your souls to joy!
See how their coursers, than the mountain roe
More fleet, the verdant carpet skim; thick clouds
Snorting they breathe; their shining hoofs scarce print
The grass embruis'd; with emulation fir'd,
They strain to lead the field, top the barr'd gate,
O'er the deep ditch exulting bound, and brush
The thorny-twining hedge: the riders bend
O'er their arch'd necks; with steady hands, by turns,
Indulge their speed, or moderate their rage.
Where are their sorrows, disappointments, wrongs,
Vexations, sickness, cares? All, all are gone,
And with the panting winds lag far behind.
  Huntsman! her gait observe; if in wide rings
She wheel her mazy way, in the same round
Persisting still, she'll foil the beaten track;
But if she fly, and with the favoring wind
Urge her bold course, less intricate thy task:
Push on thy pack. Like some poor exil'd wretch,
The frighted Chase leaves her late dear abodes;
O'er plains remote she stretches far away,
Ah! never to return! For greedy Death
Hovering exults, secure to seize his prey.
  Hark! from yon covert, where those towering oaks
Above the humble copse aspiring rise,
What glorious triumphs burst in every gale
Upon our ravish'd ears! The hunter's shout,
The changing horns, swell their sweet-winding notes;
The pack wide opening load the trembling air
With various melody; from tree to tree
The propagated cry redoubling bounds,

And winged zephyrs waft the floating joy
Through all the regions near: afflictive birch
No more the school-boy dreads; his prison broke,
Scampering he flies, nor heeds his master's call;
The weary traveler forgets his road,
And climbs th' adjacent hill; the plowman leaves
Th' unfinish'd furrow; nor his bleating flocks are now
The shepherd's joy! Men, boys, and girls
Desert th' unpeopled village, and wild crowds
Spread o'er the plain, by the sweet frenzy seiz'd.
Look, how she pants! and o'er yon opening glade
Slips glancing by! while, at the farther end,
The puzzled pack unravel wile by wile,
Maze within maze. The covert's utmost bound
Slily she skirts; behind them cautious creeps;
And in that very track, so lately stain'd
By all the steaming crowd, seems to pursue
The foe she flies. Let cavilers deny
That brutes have reason; sure 'tis something more,
'Tis Heaven directs, and stratagems inspires
Beyond the short extent of human thought.
But hold! I see her from her covert break;
Sad on yon little eminence she sits;
Intent she listens, with one ear erect,
Pondering, and doubtful what new course to take,
And how t' escape the fierce, blood-thirsty crew
That still urge on, and still in valleys loud
Insult her woes, and mock her sore distress.
As now in louder peals the loaded winds
Bring on the gathering storm, her fears prevail,
And o'er the plain, and o'er the mountain's ridge
Away she flies; nor ships with wind and tide,
And all their canvas wings, scud half so fast.
Once more, ye jovial train, your courage try,
And each clean courser's speed. We scour along
In pleasing hurry and confusion lost;
Oblivion to be wish'd. The patient pack
Hang on the scent unwearied; up they climb,
And ardent we pursue; our laboring steeds
We press, we gore; till once the summit gain'd,

Painfully panting, there we breathe awhile;
Then, like a foaming torrent, pouring down
Precipitant, we smoke along the vale.
Happy the man who with unrival'd speed
Can pass his fellows, and with pleasure view
The struggling pack; how in the rapid course
Alternate they preside, and jostling push
To guide the dubious scent; how giddy youth
Oft babbling errs, by wiser age reprov'd;
How niggard of his strength, the wise old hound
Hangs in the rear, till some important point
Rouse all his diligence, or till the Chase
Sinking he finds: then to the head he springs,
With thirst of glory fir'd, and wins the prize.
Huntsman, take heed; they stop in full career!
Yon crowding flocks, that at a distance gaze,
Have haply foil'd the turf. See! that old hound,
How busily he works, but dares not trust
His doubtful sense; draw yet a wider ring.
Hark! now again the chorus fills. As bells
Stilled awhile, at once their peal renew,
And high in air the tuneful thunder rolls.
See how they toss, with animated rage
Recovering all they lost! That eager haste
Some doubling wile foreshows. Ah! yet once more
They're checked—hold back with speed—on either hand
They flourish round—ev'n yet persist. 'Tis right;
Away they spring; the rustling stubbles bend
Beneath the driving storm. How the poor Chase
Begins to flag, to her last shifts reduc'd!
From brake to brake she flies, and visits all
Her well-known haunts, where once she rang'd secure,
With love and plenty blest. See! there she goes,
She reels along, and by her gait betrays
Her inward weakness. See how black she looks!
The sweat that clogs th' obstructed pores scarce leaves
A languid scent. And now in open view,
See, see, she flies! each eager hound exerts
His utmost speed, and stretches every nerve.

How quick she turns! their gaping jaws eludes,
And yet a moment lives; till, round inclos'd
By all the greedy pack, with infant screams
She yields her breath, and there reluctant dies!

WILLIAM SOMERVILLE, 1692–1742.

A HUNTER'S MATIN.

Up, comrades, up! the morn's awake
Upon the mountain side,
The curlew's wing hath swept the lake,
And the deer has left the tangled brake,
To drink from the limpid tide.

Up, comrades, up! the mead-lark's note
And the plover's cry o'er the prairie float;
The squirrel he springs from his covert now,
To prank it away on the chestnut bough,
Where the oriole's pendent nest, high up,
Is rock'd on the swaying trees,
While the hum-bird sips from the harebell's cup,
As it bends to the morning breeze.

Up, comrades, up! our shallops grate
Upon the pebbly strand,
And our stalwart hounds impatient wait
To spring from the huntsman's hand!

CHARLES FEN HOf

A SPORTSMAN OF OLDEN TIME.

I shall conclude this account of the officers of the forest with the singular character of one of them who lived in the times of James I. and Charles I. * * *

The name of this memorable sportsman—for in that character alone was he conspicuous—was Henry Hastings. He was second son to the Earl of Huntingdon, and inherited a good estate in Dorsetshire from his mother. He was one of the keepers of New Forest, and resided in his lodge there during a part of every hunting-season. But his principal residence was at Woodlands, in Dorsetshire, where he had a capital mansion. One of his nearest neighbors was Anthony Cooper, afterward Earl of Shaftesbury. Two men could not be more opposite in their dispositions and pursuits. They seldom saw each other, and their occasional meetings were still more disagreeable to both, from their opposite sentiments in politics. Lord Shaftesbury, who was the younger man, was the survivor; and the following account of Mr. Hastings, which I have somewhat abridged, is said to have been the production of his pen. If Mr. Hastings had been the survivor, and had lived to have seen Lord Shaftesbury one of the infamous ministers of Charles II., he might, with interest, have returned the compliment.

Mr. Hastings was low of stature, but strong and active; of a ruddy complexion, with flaxen hair. His clothes were always of green cloth. His house was of the old fashion, in the midst of a large park, well stocked with deer, rabbits, and fish-ponds. He had a long, narrow bowling-green in it, and used to play with round sand-bowls. Here, too, he had a banqueting-room built, like a stand, in a large tree. He kept all sorts of hounds that ran buck, fox, hare, otter, and badger; and had hawks of all kinds, both long and short winged. His great hall was commonly

strewed with marrow-bones, and full of hawk-perches, hounds, spaniels, and terriers; the upper end of it was hung with fox-skins of this and the last year's killing. Here and there a polecat was intermixed, and hunters' poles in great abundance. The parlor was a large room, completely furnished in the same style. On a broad hearth, paved with brick, lay some of the choicest terriers, hounds, and spaniels. One or two of the great chairs had litters of cats in them, which were not to be disturbed. Of these, three or four always attended him at dinner, and a little white wand lay by his trencher to defend it if they were too troublesome. In the windows—which were very large—lay his arrows, cross-bows, and other accoutrements. The corners of the room were filled with his best hunting and hawking poles. His oyster-table stood at the lower end of the room, which was in constant use twice a day, all the year round, for he never failed to eat oysters, both at dinner and supper, with which the neighboring town of Pool supplied him. At the upper end of the room stood a small table with a double desk, one side of which held a church Bible, the other the Book of Martyrs. On different tables in the room lay hawk's-hoods; bells; old hats, with their crowns thrust in, full of pheasant eggs; tables; dice; cards; and a store of tobacco-pipes. At one end of this room was a door which opened into a closet, where stood bottles of strong beer and wine, which never came out but in single glasses, which was the rule of the house; for he never exceeded himself, nor permitted others to exceed. Answering to this closet was a door into an old chapel—which had been long disused—for devotion: but in the pulpit, at the safest place, was always to be found a cold shin of beef, a venison pasty, a gammon of bacon, or a great apple-pie, with

thick crust, well baked. His table cost him not much, though it was good to eat at. His sports supplied all but beef and mutton, except on Fridays, when he had the best of fish. He never wanted a London pudding; and he always sang it in with "My part lies therein—a—." He drank a glass or two of wine at meals, put syrup of gilliflowers into his sack, and had always a tun-glass of small beer standing by him, which he often stirred about with rosemary. He lived to be an hundred, and never lost his eyesight, nor used spectacles. He got on horseback without help, and rode to the death of the stag till past fourscore.

WILLIAM GILPIN, 1724–1807.

SONNET.

Old Harry Hastings! of thy forest life
How whimsical, how picturesque the charms!
Yet it was sensual! With thy hounds and horn,
How cheerily didst thou salute the morn!
With airy steed didst thou pursue the strife,
Sounding through all the woodland-glades alarms.
Sunk not a dell, and not a thicket grew,
But thy skill'd eye and long experience knew.
The herds were thy acquaintance; antler'd deer
Knew where to trust thy voice, and where to fear;
And through the shadowy oaks of giant size,
Thy bugle could the distant sylvans hear,
And wood-nymphs from their bowery bed would rise,
And echoes dancing round repeat their ecstasies.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, 1762–1837.

SONNET.

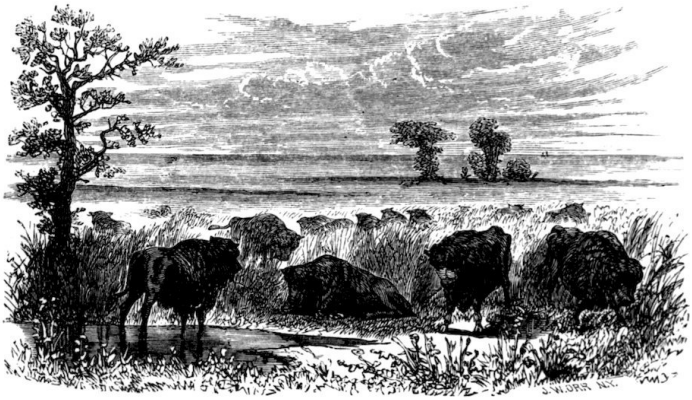
There is exhilaration in the chase—
Not bodily only! Bursting from the woods,
Or having climb'd some misty mountain's height,
When on our eyes a glorious prospect opes,
With rapture we the golden view embrace:
Then worshiping the sun on silver floods,
And blazing towers, and spires, and cities bright
With his reflected beams; and down the slopes
The tumbling torrents; from the forest-mass
Of darkness issuing, we with double force
Along the gayly-checker'd landscape pass,
And, bounding with delight, pursue our course.
It is a mingled rapture, and we find
The bodily spirit mounting to the mind.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, 1762–1837.

LINES.

This world a hunting is
The prey, poor man; the Nimrod fierce is Death;
His speedy grayhounds are
Lust, sickness, envy, care,
Strife that ne'er falls amiss,
With all those ills that harm'd us while we breathe.
Now if by chance we fly,
Of these the eager chase,
Old age, with stealing pace,
Casts on us his nets, and then we panting die.

WILLIAM DRUMMON 1585–1649.



XXIII.
Medley.

ODE.

FROM THE LATIN OF HORACE.

How happy in his low degree,
How rich in humble poverty is he,
Who leads a quiet country life;
Discharg'd of business, void of strife,
And from the griping scrivener free!
Thus, ere the seeds of vice were sown
Liv'd men in better ages born,
Who plow'd with oxen of their own
Their small paternal field of corn.
Nor trumpets summon him to war,
Nor drums disturb his morning sleep,
Nor knows he merchants' painful care,
Nor fears the dangers of the deep.
The clamors of contentious law,
And court and state, he wisely shuns;
Nor brib'd with hopes, nor dar'd with awe,
To servile salutations runs;
But either to the clasping vine
Does the supporting poplar wed,
Or with his pruning-hook disjoin
Unbearing branches from their head,
And grafts more happy in their stead;

Or climbing to a hilly steep,
He views his buds in vales afar,
Or shears his overburden'd sheep,
Or mead for cooling drink prepares
Of virgin honey in the jars;
Or, in the now declining year,
When beauteous Autumn rears his head,
He joys to pull the ripen'd pear
And clust'ring grapes, with purple spread.
Sometimes beneath an ancient oak,
Or on the matted grass, he lies;
No god of Sleep he need invoke;
The stream that o'er the pebble flies,
With gentle slumber crowns his eyes,
The wind that whistles through the sprays
Maintains the concert of the song;
And hidden birds, with native lays,
The golden sleep prolong.
But when the blast of winter blows,
And hoary frost invests the year,
Into the naked woods he goes,
And seeks the tusky boar to near,
With well-mouthed hounds and pointed spear!
Or spreads his subtile nets from sight,
With twinkling glasses to betray
The larks that in the meshes light;
Or makes the fearful bear his prey.
Amidst his harmless, easy joys,
No anxious care invades his health,
Nor love his peace of mind destroys,
Nor wicked avarice of wealth.
But if a chaste and pleasing wife,
To business of his life,
Divides with him his household care,
Such as the Sabine matrons were,
Such as the swift Apulian's bride,
Sunburnt and swarthy though she be,
Will fire for winter nights provide,
And—without noise—will oversee
His children and his family;

And order all things till he come,
Sweaty and over-labored, home;
If she in pens his flock will fold,
And then produce her dairy store,
With wine to drive away the cold,
And unbought dainties for the poor;
Not oysters of the Lucrine lake
My sober appetite would wish,
Nor turbot, or the foreign fish
That rolling tempests overtake,
And hither waft the costly dish.
Not heathpoult, or the rarer bird,
Which Phasis or Ionia yields,
More pleasing morsels would afford
Than the fat olives of my fields;
Than shards or mallows for the pot,
That keep the loosened body sound;
Or than the lamb, that falls by lot
To the just guardian of my ground.
Amidst these feasts of happy swains,
The jolly shepherd smiles to see
His flock returning from the plains;
The farmer is as pleased as he,
To view his oxen sweating smoke,
Bear on their necks the loosen'd yoke;
To look upon his menial crew,
That sit around his cheerful hearth,
And bodies spent in toil renew
With wholesome food and country mirth.

This Alphius said within himself,
Resolv'd to leave the wicked town,
And live retir'd upon his own,
He call'd his money in;
But the prevailing love of pelf,
Soon split him on the former shelf—
He put it out again.

Translation of
DRYDEN.

LETTER OF SIR THOMAS MORE TO HIS WIFE.

Mistress Alice, in my most heartywise I recommend me to you. And whereas I am informed by my son Heron of the loss of our barns and our neighbours' also, with all the corn that was therein; albeit (saving God's pleasure) it is great pity of so much good corn lost; yet since it has liked him to send us such a chance, we must and are bounden, not only to be content, but also to be glad of his visitation. He sent us all that we have lost; and since he hath by such a chance taken it away again, his pleasure be fulfilled! Let us never grudge thereat, but take it in good worth, and heartily thank him, as well for adversity as for prosperity. And peradventure we have more cause to thank him for our loss than for our winning, for his wisdom better seeth what is good for us than we do ourselves. Therefore, I pray you be of good cheer, and take all the household with you to church, and there thank God, both for that he has given us, and for that he has taken from us, and for that he hath left us; which, if it please him, he can increase when he will, and if it please him to leave us yet less, at his pleasure be it!

I pray you to make some good onsearch what my poor neighbours have lost, and bid them make no thought therefor; for, if I should not leave myself a spoon, there shall no poor neighbour of mine bear no loss by my chance, happened in my house. I pray you be, with my children and your household, merry in God; and devise somewhat with your friends what way were best to take, for provision to be made for corn for our household, and for seed this year coming, if we think it good that we keep the ground

still in our hands. And whether we think it good that we so shall do or not, yet I think it were not best suddenly thus to leave it all up, and to put away our folk from our farm, till we have somewhat advised us thereon. Howbeit, if we have more now than ye shall need, and which can get them other masters, ye may then discharge us of them. But I would not that any man were suddenly sent away, he wot not whither.

At my coming hither, I perceived none other but that I should tarry still with the king's grace. But now I shall, I think, because of this chance, get leave this next week to come home and see you, and then shall we farther devise together upon all things, what order shall be best to take.

And thus as heartily fare you well, with all our children, as ye can wish. At Woodstock, the third day of September, by the hand of

THOMAS MORE, 1480–1535.

PEASANT PAVO.

SWEDISH.

Mid the high bleak moors of Saarijärvis,
On a sterile farm, lived peasant Pavo,
And its poor soil tilled with care untiring,
Trusting to the Lord to send the increase.
Here he lived with wife and little children,
With them of sweat-earned bread partaking.
Dikes he dug, and plowed his land and sowed it.
Spring-time came, and now the melting snow-drifts
Drenched the fields, and half the young crop perished;
Summer came, and the descending hail-storms
Dashed the early ears down, half destroying;
Autumn came, and frosts the remnant blasted.
  Pavo's wife she tore her hair, and spake thus:

“Pavo, Pavo! man the most unhappy,
Take thy staff; by God we are forsaken;
Hard it is to beg, to starve is harder!”
Pavo took her hand, and thus he answered:
“God doth try his servant, not forsake him;
Bread made half of bark must now suffice us!
I will dig the dikes of two-fold deepness;
But from God will I await the increase!”
She made bread of corn and bark together;
He dug lower dikes with double labor,
Sold his sheep, and purchased rye and sowed it.
Spring-time came, again the melting snow-drifts
Drenched the fields, and half the young crop perished;
Summer came, and the descending hail-storms
Dashed the early ears down, half destroying;
Autumn came, and frosts the remnant blasted.
Pavo’s wife she smote her breast, exclaiming:
“Pavo, Pavo! man the most unhappy,
Let us die, for God hath us forsaken:
Hard it is to die, to live is harder!”
Pavo took her hand, and thus he answered:
“God doth try his servant, not forsake him;
Bread made half of bark must still suffice us!
I will dig the dikes of double deepness;
But from Heaven I will expect the increase!”
She made bread of corn and bark together;
He dug lower dikes with double labor,
Sold his cattle, purchased rye and sowed it.
Spring-time came, but now the melting snow-drifts
Left the young crops in the fields uninjured;
Summer came, but the descending hail-storms
Dashed not down the rich ears, naught destroying;
Autumn came, and saw, by frosts unblighted,
Wave the golden harvest for the reaper.
Then fell Pavo on his knees, thus speaking:
“God hath only tried us, not forsaken!”
On her knees his wife fell, and thus said she:
“God hath only tried us, not forsaken!”
And then gladly spake she to her husband:
“Pavo, Pavo! take with joy the sickle,

We may now make glad our hearts with plenty,
Now may throw away the bark unsavory,
And bake rich, sweet bread of rye-meal only!"
Pavo took her hand in his, and answered:
"Woman, woman! 'tis but sent to try us,
If we will have pity on the sufferer.
Mix thou bark with corn even as aforetime,
Frosts have killed the harvest of our neighbor."

Translation of MRS. HOWITT. JOHANN LUDWIG RUNEBERG.

COUNTRY LIFE.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Happy the man who has the town escaped!
To him the whistling trees, the murmuring brooks,
The shining pebbles preach
Virtue's and wisdom's lore.

The whispering grove a holy temple is
To him, where God draws nigher to his soul;
Each verdant sod a shrine
Whereby he kneels to Heaven.

The nightingale on him sings slumber down—
The nightingale rewakes him, fluting sweet,
When shines the lovely red
Of morning through the trees.

Then he admires thee in the plain, O God!
In the ascending pomp of dawning day—
Thee in the glorious sun—
The worm—the budding branch.

Where coolness gushes in the waving grass,
Or o'er the flowers, streams, and fountains rests;
Inhales the breath of prime,
The gentle airs of eve.

His straw-decked thatch, where doves bask in the sun,
And play and hop, incites to sweeter rest
Than golden halls of state
Or beds of down afford.

To him the plumy-people sporting chirp,
Chatter, and whistle, on his basket perch,
And from his quiet hand
Pick crumbs, or peas, or grains.

Oft wanders he alone, and thinks on death;
And in the village church-yard by the graves
Sits, and beholds the cross—
Death's waving garland there.

The stone beneath the elders, where a text
Of Scripture teaches joyfully to die—
And with his scythe stands Death—
An angel, too, with palms.

Happy the man who thus hath 'scaped the town!
Him did an angel bless when he was born—
The cradle of the boy
With flowers celestial strewed.

Translation of C. T. BROOKS. LUDWIG HOLTY.

SCENE IN AN AMERICAN FOREST.

FROM A LETTER OF LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD TO THE DUCHESS OF LEINSTER.

ST. JOHN'S, NEW BRUNSWICK, *July 8, 1788*.

MY DEAREST MOTHER—Here I am, after a very long and fatiguing journey. I had no idea of what it was; it was more like a campaign than anything else, except in one material point, that of having no danger. I should have enjoyed it most completely but for the musquitoes, but they took off a great deal of my pleasure; the millions of them are dreadful; if it

had not been for this inconvenience, my journey would have been delightful. The country is almost all in a state of nature, as well as its inhabitants. There are four sorts of these—the Indians, the French, the old English settlers, and now the refugees from other parts of America; the last seem the most civilized. The old settlers are almost as wild as Indians, but lead a very comfortable life; they are all farmers, and live entirely within themselves. * * * I came by a settlement along one of the rivers, which was all the work of one pair; the old man was seventy-two, the old lady seventy; they had been there thirty years; they came there with one cow, three children, and one servant; there was not a being within sixty miles of them. The first year they lived mostly on milk and marsh leaves; the second year they contrived to purchase a bull by the produce of their moose skins and fish; from this time they got on very well; and there are now five sons and a daughter, all settled in different farms along the river for the space of twenty miles, and all living comfortably and at ease. The old pair live alone in the little old cabin they first settled in, two miles from any of their children; their little spot of ground is cultivated by these children, and they are supplied with so much butter, grain, meal, etc., from each child, according to the share he got of the land, so that the old folks have nothing to do but to mind their house, which is a kind of inn they keep, more for the sake of the company of the few travelers there are than for gain. I was obliged to stay a day with the old people, on account of the tides, which did not answer for going up the river till next morning. It was, I think, as odd and pleasant a day, in its way, as ever I passed. I wish I could describe it to you, but I can not; you must only help it out with your own imagination.

Conceive, dearest mother, arriving about twelve o'clock in a hot day, at a little cabin upon the side of a rapid river, the banks all covered with wood, not a house in sight, and there finding a little, clean, tidy woman spinning, with an old man, of the same appearance, weeding salad. We had come for ten miles up the river without seeing any thing but woods. The old pair, on our arrival, got as active as if only five-and-twenty, the gentleman getting wood and water, the lady frying eggs and bacon, both talking a great deal, telling their story, as I mentioned before, how they had been there thirty years, and how their children were settled, and, when either's back was turned, remarking how old the other had grown; at the same time all kindness, all cheerfulness, and love to each other. The contrast of all this, which had passed during the day, with the quietness of the evening, when the spirits of the old people had a little subsided and began to wear off with the day, and with the fatigue of their little work, sitting quietly at their door, on the same spot they had lived in thirty years together; the contented thoughtfulness of their countenances, which was increased by their age and the solitary life they had led; the wild quietness of the place—not a living creature or habitation to be seen—and me, Tony, and our guide, sitting with them, all on one log; the difference of the scene I had left—the immense way I had to get from this corner of the world to any thing I loved—the difference of the life I should lead from that of this old pair, perhaps at their age discontented, disappointed, and miserable, wishing for power—my dearest mother, if it was not for you, I believe I never should go home, at least I thought so at that moment. However, here I am with my regiment, up at six in the morning doing all sorts of

right things, and liking it very much, determined to go home next spring, and live with you a great deal. Employment keeps up my spirits, and I shall have more every day. I own I often think how happy I should be with G——, in some of the spots I see; and envied every young farmer I met whom I saw sitting down with a young wife whom he was going to work to maintain. I believe these thoughts made my journey pleasanter than it otherwise would have been; but I don't give way to them here. Dearest mother, I sometimes hope it will all end well; but shall not think any more of it till I hear from England. * * * * * * *

EDWARD FITZGERALD, 1763–1798.

SONG.

See, O see!
How every tree,
Every bower,
Every flower,
A new life gives to others' joys,
While that I
Grief-stricken lie,
Nor can meet
With any sweet
But what faster mine destroys.
What are all the senses' pleasures,
When the mind has lost all measures?

Hear, O hear!
How sweet and clear
The nightingale
And water's fall
In concert join for others' ear,
While to me,
For harmony,
Every air
Echoes despair,
And every drop provokes a tear.
What are all the senses' pleasures,
When the soul has lost all measures?

GEORGE DIGBY, *Earl of Bristol*, 1612–1676.

SONG.

Sweet are the thoughts that savor of content;
The quiet mind is richer than a crown;
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent;
The poor estate scorns Fortune's angry frowns;
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.

The homely house that harbors quiet rest,
The cottage that affords no pride or care,

The mean that 'grees with country music best,
  The sweet consort of mirth and music's fare,
Obscured life sets down a type of bliss;
A mind content both crown and kingdom is.

ROBERT GREEN
1550–1592.

BLESSINGS OF A COUNTRY LIFE.

1725.

Far from our debtors; no Dublin letters;
Not seen by our betters.

PLAGUES OF A COUNTRY LIFE.

A companion with news; a great want of shoes;
Eat lean meat or choose; a church without pews;
Our horses away; no straw, oats, or hay;
December in May; our boys run away; all servants at play!

JONATHAN SWIFT,
1667–1728.

XXIV.
Wind and Cloud

A STORM IN AUTUMN.

FROM THE LATIN OF VIRGIL.

Why should I mark each storm and starry sign,
When milder suns in autumn swift decline?
Or what new cares await the vernal hour,
When spring descends in many a driving shower,
While bristle into ear the bearded plains,
And the green stalk distends its milky grains?
  E'en in mid autumn, while the jocund hind
Bade the gay field the gather'd harvest bind,
Oft have I seen the war of winds contend,
And prone on earth th' infuriate storm descend—
Waste, far and wide, and by the roots uptorn,
The heavy harvest sweep through ether borne!
While in dark eddies, as the whirlwind past,
The straw and stubble flew before the blast.
Column on column prest in close array,
Dark tempests thicken o'er the watery way.
Heaven poured in torrents, rushes on the plain,
And with wide deluge sweeps the floating grain;
The dikes o'erflow, the flooded channels roar,
Vexed ocean's foaming billows rock the shore:
The Thunderer, thron'd in clouds, with darkness crown'd,

Bares his red arm, and flashes lightnings round.
The beasts are fled; earth rocks from pole to pole—
Fear walks the world, and bows th' astonished soul;
Jove rides with fiery bolt Ceraunia's brow,
Or Athos blazing 'mid eternal snow.
The tempest darkens, blasts redoubled rave,
Smite the hoarse wood, and lash the howling wave.

Translation of W.
SOTHEBY.

TO THE RAINBOW.

Loveliest of the meteor train,
Girdle of the summer rain—
Finger of the dews of air,
Glowing vision, fleet as fair;
While the evening shower retires,
Kindle thy unhurting fires,
And among the meadows near,
Thy refulgent pillar rear;
Or amid the dark-blue cloud,
High thine orbed glories shroud;
Or the moisten'd hills between,
Bent in mighty arch be seen;
Through whose sparkling portals wide,
Fiends of storm and darkness ride.

Like Cheerfulness, thou art wont to gaze
Always on the brightest blaze;
Canst from setting suns deduce
Varied gleams and sprightly hues;
And on low'ring gloom imprint
Smiling streaks of gayest tint.

R.
SOU
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THE WINDY NIGHT.

Alow and aloof,
Over the roof,
How the midnight tempests howl!
With a dreary voice, like the dismal tune
Of wolves that bay at the desert moon;
Or whistle and shriek
Through limbs that creek,
"Tu-who! Tu-whit!"
They cry and flit,
"Tu-whit! Tu-who!" like the solemn owl!

Alow and aloof,
Over the roof,
Sweep the moaning winds amain,
And wildly dash
The elm and ash,
Clattering on the window sash,
With a clatter and patter,
Like hail and rain,
That well might shatter
The dusky pane!

Alow and aloof,
Over the roof,
How the tempests swell and roar!
Though no foot is astir,
Though the cat and the cur
Lie dozing along the kitchen floor;
There are feet of air
On every stair!
Through every hall—
Through each gusty door,
There's a jostle and bustle,
With a silken rustle,
Like the meeting of guests at a festival!

Alow and aloof,
Over the roof,

How the stormy tempests swell!
And make the vane
On the spire complain—
They heave at the steeple with might and main,
And burst and sweep
Into the belfry, on the bell!
They smite it so hard, and they smite it so well,
That the sexton tosses his arms in sleep,
And dreams he is ringing a funeral knell!

A SHOWER.

FROM COWPER'S LETTERS.

It has pleased God to give us rain, without which this part of our country, at least, must soon have become a desert. The meadows have been parched to a January brown, and we have foddered our cattle for some time, as in winter. The goodness and power of God are never, I believe, so universally acknowledged as at the end of a long drought. Man is naturally a self-sufficient animal, and in all concerns that seem to lie within the sphere of his own ability thinks little or not at all of the need he always has of protection and furtherance from above. But he is sensible that the clouds will not assemble at his bidding; and that, though the clouds assemble, they will not fall in showers because he commands them. When, therefore, at last the blessing descends, you shall hear even in the streets the most irreligious and thoughtless with one voice exclaim, "Thank God!" confessing themselves indebted to his favor, and willing, at least so far as words go, to give Him the glory. I can hardly doubt, therefore, that the

earth is sometimes parched, and the crops endangered, in order that the multitude may not want a memento to whom they owe them, nor absolutely forget the power on which all depend for all things.

Letter to S. ROSE, ESQ., *June 23, 1788*. W. COWPER, 1731–1800.

TO THE RAINBOW.

* * * * *

When o'er the green undeluged Earth,
  Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the World's gray fathers forth
  To watch thy sacred sign!

And when its yellow luster smiled
  O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child,
  To bless the bow of God.

Methinks, thy jubilee to keep,
  The first-made anthem rang,
On earth deliver'd from the deep,
  And the first poet sang.

Nor ever shall the Muse's eye
  Unraptur'd greet thy beam;
Theme of primeval prophecy,
  Be still the poet's theme!

The earth to thee her incense yields,
  The lark thy welcome sings,
When glittering in the freshen'd fields,
  The snowy mushroom springs.

How glorious is thy girdle cast

O'er mountain, tower, and town,
Or mirror'd in the Ocean vast,
A thousand fathoms down!

As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young thy beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in thy beam.

For faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still rebuilds thy span,
Nor lets the type grow pale with age,
That first spoke peace to man.

TH.

CAMPI
1777–
1844.

THE HURRICANE.

I had left the village of Shawaney, situated on the banks of the Ohio, on my return to Henderson, which is also situated on the banks of the same beautiful stream. The weather was pleasant, and I thought not warmer than usual at that season. My horse was jogging quietly along, and my thoughts were for once, at least, in the course of my life, entirely engaged in commercial speculations. I had forded Highland Creek, and was on the eve of entering a tract of bottom-land, or valley that lay between it and Canoe Creek, when on a sudden I remarked a great difference in the aspect of the heavens. A hazy thickness had overspread the country, and I for some time expected an earthquake, but my horse exhibited no propensity to stop and prepare for such an occurrence. I had nearly arrived at the verge of the valley, when I thought fit to stop near a brook, and

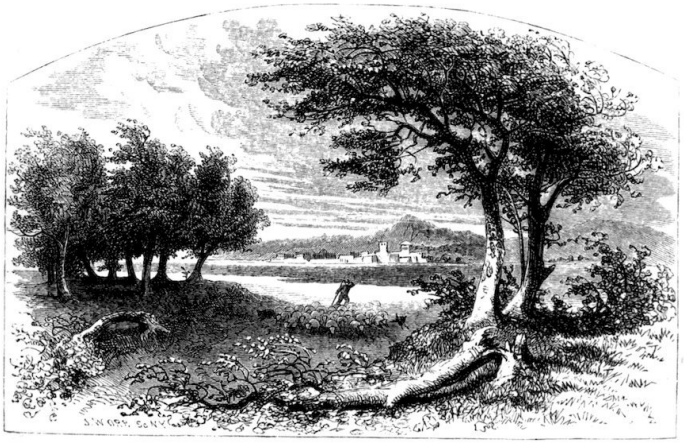
dismounted to quench the thirst which had come upon me.

I was leaning on my knees, with my lips about to touch the water, when, from my proximity to the earth, I heard a distant murmuring sound of an extraordinary nature; I drank, however, and as I rose on my feet, looked toward the southwest, where I observed a yellowish, oval spot, the appearance of which was quite new to me. Little time was left me for consideration, as the next moment a smart breeze began to agitate the taller trees. It increased to an unexpected height, and already the smaller branches and twigs were seen falling in a slanting direction toward the ground. Two minutes had scarcely elapsed, when the whole forest before me was in fearful motion. Here and there, where one tree pressed against another, a creaking noise was produced, similar to that occasioned by the violent gusts which sometimes sweep over the country. Turning instinctively toward the direction from which the wind blew, I saw, to my great astonishment, that the noblest trees of the forest bent their lofty heads for a while, and, unable to stand against the blast, were falling into pieces. First, the branches were broken off with a crackling noise; then went the upper part of the massy trunks, and in many places whole trees of gigantic size were falling entire to the ground. So rapid was the progress of the storm, that before I could think of taking measures to insure my safety, the hurricane was passing opposite to the place where I stood. Never can I forget the scene which at that moment presented itself. The tops of the trees were seen moving in the strangest manner, in the central current of the tempest, which carried along with it a mingled mass of twigs and foliage, that completely obscured the view. Some of

the largest trees were seen bending and writhing under the gale; others suddenly snapped across, and many, after a momentary resistance, fell uprooted to the earth. The mass of branches, twigs, foliage, and dust that moved through the air, was whirled onward like a cloud of feathers, and, on passing, disclosed a wide space filled with fallen trees, naked stumps, and heaps of shapeless ruins, which marked the path of the tempest. This space was about a fourth of a mile in breadth, and to my imagination resembled the dried-up bed of the Mississippi, with its thousands of *planters* and *sawyers* strewed in the sand, and inclined in various degrees. The horrible noise resembled that of the great cataracts of Niagara; and as it howled along in the track of the desolating tempest, produced a feeling in my mind which it is impossible to describe.

The principal force of the hurricane was now over, although millions of twigs and small branches, that had been brought from a great distance, were seen following the blast, as if drawn onward by some mysterious power. They even floated in the air for some hours after, as if supported by the thick mass of dust that rose high above the ground. The sky had now a greenish, lurid hue, and an extremely disagreeable sulphureous odor was diffused in the atmosphere. I waited in amazement, having sustained no material injury, until nature at length resumed her wonted aspect. For some moments I felt undetermined whether I should return to Morgantown, or attempt to force my way through the wrecks of the tempest. My business, however, being of an urgent nature, I ventured into the path of the storm, and after encountering innumerable difficulties, succeeded in crossing it. I was obliged to lead my horse by the bridle to enable him to leap

over the fallen trees, while I scrambled over or under them in the best way I could—at times so hemmed in by the broken tops and tangled branches, as almost to become desperate. On arriving at my house, I gave an account of what I had seen, when, to my surprise, I was told there had been very little wind in the neighborhood, although in the streets and gardens many branches and twigs had fallen in a manner which excited great surprise.



* * * The valley is yet a desolate place, overgrown with briers and bushes, thickly entangled amid the tops and trunks of the fallen trees, and is the resort of ravenous animals, to which they betake themselves, when pursued by man, or after they have committed their depredations on the farms of the surrounding district. I have crossed the path of the storm at a distance of a hundred miles from the spot where I witnessed its fury, and again four hundred miles farther off, in the State of Ohio. Lastly, I observed traces of its ravages on the summits of the

mountains connected with the Great Pine Forest of Pennsylvania, three hundred miles beyond the place last mentioned. In all these different parts it appeared to me not to have exceeded a quarter of a mile in breadth.

J. J. AUDUBON.

THE RAINBOW.

A rainbow and the sun breaking through cloud.
Discourage not yourselves, although you see
The weather black, and storms prolonged be.
What though it fiercely rains and thunders loud,
Behold there is a rainbow in the cloud,
Wherein a trustful promise may be found,
That quite your little worlds shall not be drown'd.
The sunshine through the foggy mists appear,
The low'ring sky begins again to clear;
And though the tempest yet your eyes affright,
Fair weather may befall you long ere night.
Such comfort speaks our Emblem unto those
Whom stormy persecution doth inclose;
And comforts him, that for the present sad,
With hopes that better seasons may be had.
There is not trouble, sorrow, nor distress,
But mitigation hath, or some release.
Long use or time the storm away will turn,
Else patience makes it better to be borne.
Yea; sorrow's low'ring days will come and go,
As well as prosp'rous hours of sunshine do;
And when 'tis past, the pain that went before
Will make the following pleasure seem the more.
For He hath promis'd, whom we may believe,
His blessing unto those that mourn and grieve;
And that though sorrow much dejects their head,
In ev'ry need we shall be comforted.
This promise I believe; in ev'ry grief
Perform it, Lord, and help my unbelief.

So others viewing how thou cheerest me,
Shall in all sorrows put their trust in thee.

GEORGE WITHER
1588–1667.

XXV.
Medley.

THE STORY OF AARON THE BEGGAR.

FROM THE SWEDISH.

Kangas lieth in Sioni; ’tis a homestead that scarce has an equal;
Plenteous in wood and in corn-fields, with rich grassy meadows and moorland.
This won my father, in wedding the farmer’s fair daughter;
And here he grew old, like a summer’s eve calmly declining.
From him came the farm unto me; and here, like my father,
I spent the best years of my life, and dwelt like a king amid plenty.
Servants I had; men servants to plow with my oxen;
And maids in the house, too; and children, the joy of their mother
And the hope of my eye, who grew up like olive-plants round us.
Thus sowing and reaping in comfort, from season to season abode I,
Envied by many, but having the good-will of all men.
At length came misfortune, and so put an end to my gladness.

The frost of one night destroyed all my yet unreaped harvest,
Wolves killed my cattle; and thus passed a winter of sorrow.
Again I sowed rye-crops, looking for profit in autumn;
And again the rye failed, for again was the early ear frosted.
I had men and maid servants no longer. I could not pay land-dues.
Bread we had none; bark dried in the oven sustained us.
So passed the time; and as long as the milch-kine were spared us,
And we had their milk, the bark-bread for us was sufficient.
Thus came and went Christmas; and still we lived on, although famished.
At length, when returning one morning with bark on my shoulder,
I was met on the threshold by strangers—and thus one accosts me:
“Friend, either pay that thou owest, or all that thou hast will be seized on.”
Amazed, I made answer: “Good sir, yet awhile have thou patience,
And I will pay all, Heaven helping! We now are sustained
Alone on bark bread!”
Again they turned into the house, no answer vouchsafing,
Then hastily stripped from the walls our poor store of household utensils,
Seized all that remained of our clothing, and carried them off to their sledge.
Weeping, my wife lay, my excellent wife, on her straw bed,
Watching in silence the men, and all the while soothing the baby,
Which lay on her bosom new-born, and kept up a wailing of sorrow.

I followed them out as they bore thence the last of our chattels,
As stern in my mood as the pine when his axe at its roots lays the woodman.
They cast up the worth of their plunder, and said that it reached not
The half of the sum that they needed. Again spake the bailiff:
“Friend,” said he, “this doth not suffice, but thou hast much kine in the cow-shed.”
Thus saying, with no more ado, they went on to the straw-yard,
Where stood the kine under their shelter lowing for fodder.
They loosened and drove them all forth, one after another;
Still forcing them on by compulsion, unwilling to leave their old homestead.
In this way six cows were secured; the seventh, a starveling,
Dead rather than living, they left me. Thus all that I had was distrained on.
I spake not; in dreary despondence re-crossing my threshold,
And thus from the bed of her sorrow a low voice of misery accosts me;
“Look around if thou canst not find aught for my hunger’s appeasing;
How sweet were a draught of new milk, for I thirst, and the babe findeth nothing!”
Thus spake she; a darkness came over my eyesight, and sorrowing
I went to the cow-shed, where stood the lean, famishing creature,
And chewed a poor mouthful of rye-straw. I pressed the dry udder,
For milk trying vainly, for not a drop answered the pressure.
Despairing, yet dreading a failure, yet harder assayed I,
And blood flowed, a crimson stream, staining the pail

of the milker.
As fierce as the mother-bear, struck by the spear of the hunter,
Rushed I indoors, and took up a loaf, which I sundered
By the stroke of the axe, and black flew the bark-fragments round me.
One morsel I gave to my wife, saying: “Take it; ’tis all that is left us;
Eat, and give suck to the infant.” She took the dry morsel;
She turned it about in her hand, looked at it, then pressing
The babe to her bosom, she swooning, fell back on her pillow.
I buckled the skates on my feet, and sped in all haste to the neighbor
Who dwelt nearest to me, and prayed for some help in my sorrow
He willingly gave it, dividing his all as a brother.
Again I sped back with a pailful of milk on my shoulder;
But on reaching my threshold a cry of sad sorrow assailed me;
And entering, I saw by the bedside my two eldest children,
Frantic with terror, and trying to waken their mother;
But silent and motionless lay she, a ghastly death pallor
Spread over her face, and the blackness of night her eyes vailing.
This was the crown of our sorrow—bereaved was the beautiful Kangas.
And ere long, as if Heaven-abandoned, I left it forever,
And, taking my staff in my hand went forth, drawing my children
On a light sledge behind me, and wandered gray-headed a beggar.
From parish to parish we wandered, and God and good Christians sustained us.
But Time doth lighten most sorrows; and now amid strangers

My children are blooming afresh; for myself it contents me
If only my bread I can win, and playing my jew's-harp
Can sit 'neath the trees in the sunshine, and sing like a cricket.

* * * * *

Translation of M. HOWITT. JOHANN LUDWIG RUNEBERG, *a Finlander*.

ELEGY.

RUSSIAN.

O thou field! thou clean and level field!
O thou plain! so far and wide around!
Level field, dressed up with every thing,
Every thing; with sky-blue flowerets small,
Fresh green grass, and bushes thick with leaves;
But defaced by one thing, but by one!

For in thy very middle stands a broom,
On the broom a young gray eagle sits,
And he butchers wild a raven black,
Sucks the raven's heart-blood, glowing hot,
Drenches with it too the moistened earth.
Ah, black raven, youth so good and brave,
Thy destroyer is the eagle gray!

Not a swallow 'tis, that hovering clings,
Hovering clings to her warm little nest;
To the murdered son the mother clings,
And her tears fall like the rushing stream,
And his sister's like the flowing rill;
Like the dew the tears fall of his love—
When the sun shines it dries up the dew!

Translated by
TALVI.

TAKE THY OLD CLOAKE ABOUT THEE.[14]

This winter weather—itt waxeth cold,
And frost doth freese on every hill,
And Boreas blows his blastes so cold
That all our cattell are like to spill;
Bell, my wife, who loves no strife,
Shee sayd unto me quietlye,
Rise up, and save cowe Crumbocke's life—
Man, put thy old cloake about thee.

He. O Bell, why dost thou flyte and scorne?
Thou kenst my cloake is very thin,
Itt is soe bare and overworne
A cricke he thereon can not renn;
Then Ile no longer borrowe nor lend,
For once Ile new apparelled bee;
To-morrow Ile to towne, and spend,
For Ile have a new cloake about mee.

She. Cow Crumbocke is a very good cowe,
She ha beene alwayes true to the payle,
Shee has helpt us to butter and cheese, I trow,
And other things she will not fayle,
I wold be loth to see her pine,
Good husbande, council take of mee,
It is not for us to goe so fine—
Man, take thy old cloake about thee.

He. My cloake, it was a very good cloake,
Itt hath been alwayes true to the weare,
But now it is not worth a groate;
I have had itt four-and-forty yeare.
Sometime it was of cloth in graine,
'Tis now but a sigh clout as you may see
It will neither hold nor winde nor raine—
And Ile have a new cloake about mee.

She. It is four-and-forty yeeres agoe
Since the one of us the other did ken,
And we have had betwixt us towe
Of children either nine or ten;
We have brought them up to women and men,
In the fere of God I trowe they bee,
And why wilt thou thyself misken—
Man, take thy old cloake about thee.

He. O Bell, my wiffe, why dost thou floute,
Now is now, and then was then;
Seeke now all the world throughout,
Thou kenst not clownes from gentlemen,
They are cladd in blacke, greene, yellowe, or gray,
Soe far above their owne degree—
Once in my life Ile do as they,
For Ile have a new cloake about mee.

She. King Stephen was a worthy peere,
His breeches cost him but a crowne,
He held them sixpence all too deere,
Therefore he call'd the tailor loon.

He was a wight of high renowne,
  And thouse but of a low degree—
Its pride that putts this countrye downe—
  Man, take thy old cloake about thee.

He. Bell, my wife, she loves not strife,
  Yet she will lead me if she can;
And oft to live a quiet life
  I'm forced to yield though I bee good-man.
Itt's not for a man with a woman to threepe,
  Unless he first give o'er the plea;
As we began sae will wee leave—
  And Ile take my old cloake about mee.

Anonymous
—
16th
centu

THE COUNTRY LASSE.

OLD SONG.

Although I am a country lass,
  A lofty mind I bear-a,
I think myself as good as those
  That gay apparel wear-a.
My coat is made of homely gray,
  Yet is my skin as soft-a
As those that with the chiefest wines
  Do bathe their bodies oft-a.
Down, down, derry, derry down;
  Heigh, downa, downa, downa;
A derry, derry, derry, derry down,
  Heigh down a derry!

What though I keep my father's sheep—
  A thing that must be done-a,
A garland of the fairest flowers

Shall shroud me from the sun-a;
And when I see them feeding be,
Where grass and flowers spring-a,
Close by a crystal fountain side
I sit me down and sing-a.

Dame Nature crowns us with delight,
Surpassing court or city;
We pleasures take from morn to night,
In sports and pastimes pretty.
Your city dames in coaches ride
Abroad for recreation;
We country lasses hate their pride,
And keep the country fashion.

Your city wives lead wanton lives,
And if they come i' the country,
They are so proud, that each one strives
For to out-brave our gentry.
We country lasses lowly be,
For seat nor wall we strive not;
We are content with our degree—
Our debtors we despise not.

I care not for the fan or mask,
When Titan's heat reflecteth;
A homely hat is all I ask,
Which well my face protecteth;
Yet I am in my country guise
Esteemed lasse as pretty
As those that every day devise
New shapes in court or city.

In every season of the year
I undergo my labor;
No shower nor wind at all I fear,
My limbs I do not favor.
If summer's heat my beauty stain,
It makes me ne'er the sicker,
Sith I can wash it off again
With a cup of Christmas liquor.

From a black-letter copy in the Assigns of Symcocke.

HARVEST SONG.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Sickles sound;
On the ground
Fast the ripe ears fall;
Every maiden's bonnet
Has blue blossoms on it—
Joy is over all.

Sickles ring,
Maidens sing
To the sickle's sound;
Till the moon is beaming,
And the stubble gleaming,
Harvest songs go round.

All are springing,
All are singing
Every lisping thing;
Man and master meat
From one dish they eat;
Each is now a king.

Hans and Michael
Whet the sickle,
Piping merrily.
Now they mow; each maiden,
Soon with sheaves is laden,
Busy as a bee!

Now the blisses,
Now the kisses—
Now the wit doth flow
Till the beer is out;
Then with song and shout,

Hence they go, yo ho!

Translation of C. T. BROOKS. LUDWIG HOLTY, 1748–1776.

SONG.

FROM THE SPANISH.

I ne'er on the border
Saw girl fair as Rosa,
The charming milk-maiden
Of sweet Finojosa.

Once making a journey
To Santa Maria
Of Calataveño,
From weary desire
Of sleep, down a valley
I strayed, where young Rosa
I saw, the milk-maiden
Of lone Finojosa.

In a pleasant green meadow,
'Midst roses and grasses,
Her herd she was tending,
With other fair lasses;
So lovely her aspect,
I could not suppose her
A simple milk-maiden
Of rude Finojosa.

I think not primroses
Have half her smile's sweetness,
Or mild, modest beauty;
I speak with discreetness.
O had I beforehand
But known of this Rosa,
The lovely milk-maiden
Of fair Finojosa:

Her very great beauty
  Had not so subdued,
Because it had left me,
  To do as I would!
I have said more, O fair one,
  By learning 'twas Rosa,
The charming milk-maiden
  Of sweet Finojosa.

Translation of T. ROSCOE. LOPE DE MENDOZA, 1398–1458.

SERVIAN.

SONG OF THE PEASANT'S WIFE.

Come, companion, let us hurry,
That we may be early home;
For my mother-in-law is cross!
Only yestreen she accused me—
Said that I had beat my husband,
When, poor soul, I had not touched him;
Only bid him wash the dishes,
And he would not wash the dishes;
Threw, then, at his head the pitcher;
Knocked a hole in head and pitcher;
For the head I do not care much;
But I care much for the pitcher,
As I paid for it right dearly—
Paid for it with one wild apple—
Yes, and half a one besides.

Translated by TALVI.

LINES.

She dwelt among the untrodden ways,

Beside the springs of Dove;
A maid whom there were none to praise.
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown—and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh!
The difference to me!

WILLIAM WORDSWORT
1770–
1850.

THE BALADE OF THE SHEPHARDE.

FROM THE "KALENDAR OF SHEPHARDES."

I know that God hath formed me,
And made me to his own likenesse:
I know that he hath given to me truly
Soul and body—wit and knowledge givis.
I know that by right wise true balance,
After my deeds judged shall I be.
I know much, but I wot not the variance,
To understand whereof cometh my folly.
I know full well that I shall die,
And yet my life amend not I.

I know in what poverty,
Born a child this earth above.
I know that God hath lent to me
Abundance of goods to my behoof.
I know that riches can me not save,
And with me I shall bear none away.

I know the more good I have,
The loather I shall be to die.
I know all this faithfully,
And yet my life amend not I.

I know that I have passed
Great part of my days with joy and pleasaunce.
I know that I have gathered
Sins, and also do little penance.
I know that by ignorance,
To excuse me there is no art.
I know that once shall be
When my soul shall depart—
That I shall wish that I had mended me.
I know there is no remedy,
And therefore my life amend I will!

RICHARD PYNSON,
16th century.

XXVI.
Medley.

Several translations from pleasing verses of Charles, Duke of Orleans, have been inserted in this volume; and as the American reader is seldom very familiar with French poets, we shall venture to give a little sketch of their author. Charles d'Orleans was born in 1391, and his life was highly colored by the vicissitudes of that stormy period. He was a nephew of the unhappy Charles VI., and was still a mere lad when, in 1406, his father Louis, Duke of Orleans, and regent of the kingdom, was assassinated in the streets of Paris, an event which placed the youth at once in nominal possession of his father's duchy. The crime was laid at the door of John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy; and the widowed princess, Valentine Visconti, urged doubtless by the nobles of her political party, sought every possible means of bringing the offender to punishment; a criminal suit, extraordinary in its details, stands recorded in the French annals in connection with this circumstance. In order to excite the public sympathies to the utmost, the widowed duchess, with her children, appeared repeatedly in the streets, and courts of justice, in gloomy mourning procession. On all these occasions the young duke held a prominent position

at the side of his Italian mother. His father's murderer and kinsman, however, was too powerful for legal punishment; a few years later he fell under the dagger of the assassin on the bridge of Montereau, and in the presence of the dauphin. The consequences of these crimes were ruinous to France; the powerful house of Burgundy, after the murder of Duke John, rose in open rebellion, and Henry V. of England, through their means, obtained what without them he would scarcely have dared seriously to aim at—possession of the throne of St. Louis. On the famous field of Agincourt, Charles d'Orleans, sharing the fate of so many others, was made prisoner. He was immediately sent to England, where his captivity and exile were prolonged through a period of nearly five and twenty years, and varied only by removals from one stronghold to another. During part of that time he was confined in Pontrefact Castle, where his cousin, Queen Katherine, the wife of Henry V., paid him a visit in one of her progresses. Captivity, as in the case of several other royal and princely exiles, led him to seek consolation and amusement from poetical composition. His verses are very pleasing indeed, full of the simplicity of natural feeling, with much ease and grace of expression. Absence does not appear to have diminished his love of country; he cherished a longing desire to return to France, and envied, as he tells us, even the birds which were flying toward his native shores. At length, after a captivity extending over half a lifetime, he was liberated, and returned to France. Having some claims upon the Duchy of Milan, through his mother, a Visconti, he raised troops, not long after his return to Paris, and led an expedition into Italy, but failed to conquer the ducal crown. He was more successful as a poet than as a

soldier; but he left, however, a reputation superior to either of these distinctions, that of a good and honest man. His death took place in the year 1461.

The Duke of Orleans, who figures in Shakspeare's drama of Henry V. at the battle of Agincourt, was this same poet-prince. His character is not unworthily sketched in the play, where he appears loyal and brave, superior to the other French princes figuring in the same scenes. When the French are already in full flight, he exclaims:

> "We are enough yet living in the field
> To smother up the English in our throngs,
> If any order might be thought upon."

To which the Duke of Bourbon is made to reply, very expressively:

> "The devil take order now! I'll to the throng;
> Let life be short, else shame will be too long."

Shakspeare was probably not aware that the duke was a poet, else he would doubtless have made an allusion to the fact in Act iii., Scene vii., where some pleasantry occurs between the dauphin and his companions regarding a sonnet he had himself written to his horse.

SONG.

FROM THE FRENCH.

I stood upon the wild sea-shore,
  And marked the wide expanse;
My straining eyes were turned once more
  To long-loved distant France:
I saw the sea-bird hurry by

Along the waters blue;
I saw her wheel amid the sky,
And mock my tearful, eager eye,
That would her flight pursue.

Onward she darts, secure and free,
And wings her rapid course to thee!
O that her wing were mine to soar,
And reach thy lovely land once more!

O Heaven! It were enough to die
In my own, my native home—
One hour of blessed liberty
Were worth whole years to come!

Translation of MISS COSTELLO. CHARLES, DUKE OF ORLEANS, 1391–1467.

SONG OF COLMA

OSSIAN.

It is night, I am alone; forlorn on the hill of storms. The wind is heard on the mountain. The torrent pours down the rock. No hut receives me from the rain; forlorn on the hill of winds!

Rise, moon! from behind thy clouds. Stars of the night, arise! Lead me, some light, to the place where my love rests from the chase alone! his bow near him unstrung; his dogs panting 'round him. But here I must sit alone by the rock of the mossy stream. The stream and the wind roar aloud. I hear not the voice of my love! Why delays my Salgar—why the chief of the hill his promise? Here is the rock, and there the tree! Here is the roaring stream! Thou didst promise with night to be here. Ah! whither is Salgar gone? With thee I would fly from my father; with thee from my brother of pride. Our race have long been foes;

we are not foes, O Salgar!

Cease a little while, O wind! Stream, be thou silent awhile! Let my voice be heard around. Let my wanderer hear me! Salgar, it is Colma who calls. Here is the tree and the rock. Salgar, my love! I am here. Why delayest thou thy coming? Lo, the calm moon comes forth. The flood is bright in the vale. The rocks are gray on the steep; I see him not on the brow. His dogs come not before him with tidings of his near approach. Here I must sit alone!

Who lie on the heath beside me? Are they my love, and my brother? Speak to me, O my friends! To Colma they give no reply. Speak to me; I am alone! My soul is tormented with fears! Ah! they are dead! Their swords are red from the fight. O my brother! my brother! why hast thou slain my Salgar? Why, O Salgar, hast thou slain my brother? Dear were ye both to me! What shall I say in your praise? Thou wert fair on the hill among thousands! He was terrible in the fight! Speak to me; hear my voice; hear me, sons of my love! They are silent; silent forever! Cold, cold are their breasts of clay! Oh! from the rock on the hill—from the top of the windy steep, speak, ye ghosts of the dead! speak, I will not be afraid! Whither are ye gone to rest? In what cave of the hill shall I find the departed? No feeble voice is on the gale; no answer half-drowned in the storm!

I sit in my grief; I wait for morning in my tears! Rear the tomb, ye friends of the dead. Close it not till Colma come. My life flies away like a dream; why should I stay behind? Here shall I rest with my friends, by the stream of the sounding rock. When night comes on the hill; when the loud winds arise, my ghost shall stand in the blast, and mourn the death of my friends. The hunter shall hear from his booth. He shall fear but love my voice! For sweet

shall my voice be for my friends: pleasant were her friends to Colma!

JAMES MACPHERSON, 1738–1796.

SONG.

FROM "CYNTHIA'S REVELS."

Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears;
Yet slower, yet, O faintly, gentle springs!
List to the heavy part the music bears;
Woe weeps out her division when she sings.
Droop herbs and flowers,
Fall grief in showers—
Our beauties are not ours.
O I could still,
Like melting snow upon some craggy hill,
Drop, drop, drop, drop,
Since summer's pride is now a withered daffodil.

BEN
JON
157
163

LINES.

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands o' Dee;"
The western wind was wild and dark wi' foam,
And all alone went she.

The creeping tide came up along the sand,
And o'er, and o'er the sand,
And 'round, and 'round the sand,
As far as eye could see;

The blinding mist came down and hid the land,
And never home came she.

"O is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress o' golden hair—
O' drowned maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair,
Among the stakes on Dee!"

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel, crawling foam,
The cruel, hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea.
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home,
Across the sands o' Dee.

LETTER OF ST. BASIL, DESCRIBING HIS HERMITAGE.

TO ST. GREGORY NAZIANZEN.

I believe I may at last flatter myself with having found the end of my wanderings. The hopes of being united with thee—or, I should rather say, my dreams, for hopes have been justly termed the waking dreams of men—have remained unfulfilled. God has suffered me to find a place, such as has often flitted before our imaginations; for that which fancy has shown us from afar is now made manifest to me. A high mountain, clothed with thick woods, is watered to the north by fresh and everflowing streams. At its foot lies an extended plain, rendered fruitful by the vapors with which it is moistened. The surrounding forest crowded with trees of different kinds, incloses one as in a strong fortress. This

wilderness is bounded by two deep ravines; on the one side the river, rushing in foam down the mountain, forms an almost impassable barrier, while on the other all access is impeded by a broad mountain-ridge. My hut is so situated on the summit of the mountain, that I can overlook the whole plain, and follow throughout its course the Iris, which is more beautiful, and has a more abundant body of water than the Strymon, near Amphipolis. The river of my wilderness, which is more impetuous than any other that I know of, breaks against the jutting rock, and throws itself foaming into the abyss below—an object of admiration to the mountain wanderer, and a source of profit to the natives from the numerous fishes that are found in its waters. Shall I describe to thee the fructifying vapors that rise from the moist earth, or the cool breezes wafted over the rippled face of the waters? Shall I speak of the sweet song of the birds, or of the rich luxuriance of the flowering plants? What charms me beyond all else is the calm repose of the spot. It is only visited occasionally by huntsmen; for my wilderness nourishes herds of deer and wild goats, but not bears and wolves. What other spot could I exchange for this? Alcmæon, when he had found the Echinades, would not wander farther.

Letters of ST. BASIL, 329–379.

When I see every ledge of rock, every valley and plain, covered with new-born verdure, the varied beauty of the trees, and the lilies at my feet decked by Nature with the double charms of perfume and of color, when in the distance I see the ocean, toward which the clouds are borne onward, my spirit is overpowered by a sadness not wholly devoid of enjoyment. When in autumn the fruits have passed away, the leaves have fallen, and the branches of the trees, dried and shriveled, are robbed of their leafy

adornments, we are instinctively led, amid the everlasting and regular change in Nature, to feel the harmony of the wondrous powers pervading all things. He who contemplates them with the eye of the soul, feels the littleness of man amid the greatness of the universe.

ST. GREGORY *of Nyssa*, 396.

A VISION.

FROM ITALIAN OF PETRARCH.

I.

Being one day at my window all alone,
So many strange things happened me to see,
As much it grieveth me to think thereon.
At my right hand a hynde appeared to mee,
So faire as mote the greatest god delite;
Two eager dogs did her pursue in chase,
Of which the one was blacke, the other white;
With deadly force, so in their cruell race
They pincht the haunches of that gentle beast,
That at the last, and in short time I spide,
Under a rocke, where she, alas, opprest,
Fell to the ground, and there untimely dide.
Cruell death vanquishing so noble beautie
Oft makes me wrile so harde a destanie.

II.

After, at sea, a tall ship did appeare,
Made all of heben and white yvorie;
The sailes of golde, of silk the tackle were;
Milde was the winde, calme seemed the sea to bee,

The skie eachwhere did show full bright and faire.
  With rich treasures this gay ship fraighted was;
But sudden storme did so turmoyle the aire,
  And tumbled up the sea, that she (alas!)
Strake on a rock that under water lay,
  And perished past all recoverie.
O! how great ruth and sorrowful assay
  Doth vex my spirite with perplexitie,
Thus in a moment to see lost and drown'd
So great riches, as like cannot be found.

III.

The heavenly branches did I see arise
  Out of the fresh and lustie lawrell tree,
Amidst the yong greene wood of Paradise;
  Some noble plant I thought my selfe to see,
Such store of birds therein yshrowded were,
  Chaunting in shade their sundrie melodie,
That with their sweetness I was ravisht nere.
  While on this lawrell fixed was mine eie,
The skie gan everie where to overcast,
  And darkened was the welkin all about,
When sudden flash of heaven's fire out brast,
  And rent this royall tree quite by the roote;
Which makes me much, and ever, to complaine,
For no such shadowe shal be had againe.

IV.

Within this woode, out of a rocke, did rise
  A spring of water, mildly rumbling downe,
Wherto approched not in anie wise
  The homely shepherd nor the ruder clowne,
But manie muses, and the nymphes withall,
  That sweetly in accord did tune their voyce
To the soft sounding of the water's fall,
  That my glad heart thereat did much reioyce.

But, while herein I tooke my chiefe delight,
  I saw (alas!) the gaping earth devoure
The spring, the place, and all cleane out of sight;
  Which yet aggrieves my hart even to this houre,
And wounds my soul with ruefull memorie,
To see such pleasures gon so suddenly.

V.

I saw a phœnix in the wood alone,
  With purple wings and crest of golden hewe;
Strange bird he was, whereby I thought anone,
  That of some heavenly wight I had the viewe;
Untill he came unto the broken tree,
  And to the spring, that late devoured was.
What say I more? Each thing at last we see
  Doth passe away; the phœnix there, alas!
Spying the tree destroid, the water dride,
  Himself smote with his beake, as in disdaine,
And so forthwithe in greate despight he dide;
  That yet my heart burns in exceeding paine,
For ruth and pitie of so haples plight;
O! let mine eyes no more see such a sight.

VI.

At last so faire a ladie did I spie,
  That thinking yet on her I burn and quake;
On hearts and flowres she walked pensively
  Milde, but yet love she proudly did forsake;
White seem'd her robes, yet woven so they were
  As snow and golde together had beene wrought;
Above the waste a darke cloude shrouded her,
  A stinging serpent by the heele her caught;
Wherewith she languish'd as the gathered flowre;
  And, well assured, she mounted up to ioy.
Alas, on earth no nothing doth endure
  But bitter griefe and sorrowful annoy;

Which make this life wretched and miserable,
Tossed with stormes of fortune variable.

VII.

When I beheld this tickle trustles state
  Of vaine worlde's glorie, flitting to and fro,
And mortall men tossed by troublous fate
  In restless seas of wretchednesse and woe,
I wish I might this wearie life foregoe,
  And shortly turn into my happie rest,
Where my free spirit might not anie moe
  Be vext with sights that doo her peace molest.
And ye, faire ladie, in whose bounteous brest
  All heavenly grace and vertue shrined is,
When ye these rymes doe read, and vow the rest,
  Loath this base world, and thinke of heaven's bliss;
And though ye be the fairest of God's creatures,
Yet thinke that Death shall spoyle your goodly features.

Translation of EDMUND SPENSER. FRANCESCO PETRARCA, 1304–1374.

THE CAMPAGNA OF ROME.

Perhaps there is no more impressive scene on earth than the solitary extent of the Campagna of Rome under evening light. Let the reader imagine himself for a moment withdrawn from the sounds and motion of the living world, and sent forth alone into this wild and wasted plain. The earth yields and crumbles beneath his foot, tread he never so lightly, for its substance is white, hollow, and carious, like the dusty wreck of the bones of men. The long, knotted grass waves and tosses feebly in the evening wind, and the shadows of its motion shake feverishly

along the banks of rivers that lift themselves to the sunlight. Hillocks of moldering earth heave around him, as if the dead beneath were struggling in their sleep; scattered blocks of black stone, four square, remnants of mighty edifices, not one left upon another, lie upon them to keep them down. A dull purple, poisonous haze stretches level along the desert, vailing its spectral wrecks of massy ruins, on whose rents the red light rests like dying fire on defiled altars. The blue ridge of the Alban mount lifts itself against a solemn space of green, clear, quiet sky. Watch-towers of dark clouds stand steadfastly along the promontories of the Apennines. From the plain to the mountains, the shattered aqueducts, pier beyond pier, melt into the darkness, like shadowy and countless troops of funeral mourners passing from a nation's grave.

JOHN RUSKIN.

THE WAVE OF LIFE.

FROM THE GERMAN.

"Whither, thou turbid wave?
Whither, with so much haste,
As if a thief wert thou?"

"I am the Wave of Life
Stained with my margin's dust;
From the struggle and the strife
Of the narrow stream I fly
To the sea's immensity,
To wash me from the slime
Of the muddy banks of Time."

Translation of H. W. LONGFELLOW. CHRISTOPH TIEDGE, 1752–1840.

MUTABILITY.

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
And sinks from high to low, along a scale
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not; but her outward forms that bear
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and plain
And is no more; drop like the tower sublime
Of yesterday, that royally did wear
Its crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

WILLIA
W

XXVII.
Winter.

An interesting passage from Hesiod is given below. The extract is taken from the “Works and Days,” a poem giving instructions regarding agriculture, trade, and labor, blended with precepts of a moral character; and, in addition to the extremely remote date of its origin, the passage is also remarkable as one of the few instances in which a poet of the old heathen world has entered into detail of description on natural subjects. Its authenticity is, I believe, admitted. “The picturesque description given by Hesiod of Winter bears all the evidences of great antiquity,” says a learned German critic.

WINTER.

FROM HESIOD.

Beware the January month, beware
Those hurtful days, that keenly piercing air,
Which flays the herds; when icicles are cast
O’er frozen earth, and sheathe the nipping blast.
From courser-breeding Thrace comes rushing forth
O’er the broad sea the whirlwind of the North,
And moves it with his breath; the ocean floods

Heave, and earth bellows through her wild of woods.
Full many an oak of lofty leaf he fells
And strews with thick-branched pines the mountain dells
He stoops to earth; the crash is heard around;
The depth of forests rolls the roar of sound.
The beasts their cowering tails with trembling fold,
And shrink and shudder at the gusty cold;
Thick is the hairy coat, the shaggy skin,
But that all-chilling breath shall pierce within.
Not his rough hide can then the ox avail;
The long-haired goat, defenseless, feels the gale;
Yet vain the northwind's rushing strength to wound
The flock with sheltering fleeces fenced around.

Translation of SIR C. A. ELTON.

A WINTER SCENE.

FROM "THE SEASONS."

The keener tempests rise; and fuming dun,
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend; in whose capacious womb
A vapory deluge lies, to snow congeal'd.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along;
And the sky saddens with the gathered storm.
Through the hush'd air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin wavering; till at last the flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the sky,
With a continual flow. The cherish'd fields
Put on their winter robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all; save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low, the woods
Bow their hoar head; and, ere the languid sun,
Faint from the west, emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep hid and still,
Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of man. Drooping, the laborer-ox

Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tam'd by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of th' embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is:
Till, more familiar grown, the table crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks,
Urg'd on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the bleak heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair; then, sad dispers'd,
Dig for the withered herb through heaps of snow.

JAMES THOMS
1700–1748.

WINTER SONG.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Summer joys are o'er;
Flow'rets bloom no more
Wintry winds are sweeping,
Through the snow-drifts peeping,
Cheerful evergreen
Rarely now is seen.

Now no plumed throng
Charms the wood with song;
Ice-bound trees are glittering;
Merry snow-birds, twittering,
Fondly strive to cheer
Scenes so cold and drear.

Winter, still I see
Many charms in thee;
Love thy chilly greeting,
Snow-storms fiercely beating,
And the dear delights
Of the long, long nights.

Translation of T. BROOKS. LUDWIG HOLTY, 1748–1776.

HOLLY SONG.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly;
Then, heigh ho! the holly;
This life is most jolly!

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly;
Then, heigh ho! the holly!

This life is most jolly!

AN OLD-FASHIONED HOLLY HEDGE.

Is there under heaven a more glorious and refreshing object of the kind than an impassable hedge of about four hundred feet in length, nine feet high, and five feet in diameter, which I can show in my gardens at Say's Court, at any time of the year, glittering with its armed and varnished leaves, the taller standards at orderly distances blushing with their natural coral—shorn and fashioned into columns and pilasters, architecturally shaped, at due distance?

EVELYN'S "*Silva.*"

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

HOLLY AND IVY.

I.

Holly and Ivy made a great party,
Who should have the mastery
In lands where they go.
Then spake Holly, "I am fierce and jolly,
I will have the mastery
In lands where we go!"
Then spake Ivy, "I am loud and proud,
And I will have the mastery
In lands where we go!"
Then spake Holly, and bent down on his knee,
"I pray thee, gentle Ivy, essay me no villainy,

In lands where we go!”

II.

Nay, Ivy, nay, it shall not be, I wis,
Let Holly have the mastery, as the manner is.
Holly standeth in the hall fair to behold;
Ivy stands without the door, she is full sore a cold.
Nay, Ivy, nay, etc., etc.
Holly and his merry men, they dance now and they sing;
Ivy and her maidens they weep and their hands wring.
Nay, Ivy, nay, etc., etc.
Ivy hath a lyke,[15] she caught it with the cold,
So may they all have that do with Ivy hold.
Nay, Ivy, nay, etc., etc.
Holly he hath berries as red as any rose,
The foresters, the hunters, keep them for the does.
Nay, Ivy, nay, etc., etc.
Ivy she hath berries as black as any sloe,
There come the owls and eat them as they goe.
Nay, Ivy, nay, etc., etc.
Holly he hath birds, a full, fair flock,
The nightingale, the popinjay, the gentle laverock.
Nay, Ivy, nay, etc., etc.
Good Ivy say to us what bird hath thou;
None but the owlet that cries How! How!

Dating in the 14th century.

THE SEASONS.

A blue-eyed child that sits amid the noon,
O’erhung with a laburnum’s drooping sprays,
Singing her little songs, while softly, 'round

Along the grass the checkered sunshine plays.

All beauty that is throned in womanhood,
Pacing a summer-garden's fountain-walks,
That stoops to smooth a glossy spaniel down,
To hide her flushing cheek from one who talks.

A happy mother with her fair-faced girls,
In whose sweet Spring again her youth she sees,
With shout and dance, and laugh and bound and song,
Stripping an Autumn orchard's laden trees.

An aged woman in a wintry room—
Frost on the pane, without the whirling snow—
Reading old letters of her far-off youth,
Of sorrows past and joys of long ago.

A WINTER SONG.

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail;
When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-whoo;
Tu-whit, to-whoo, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw;
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-whoo;

Tu-whit, to-whoo, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

THE THRUSH.

Sing on, sweet thrush, upon the leafless bough;
Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain;
See aged Winter, 'mid his surly reign,
At thy blithe carol cheers his furrowed brow.

So in lone Poverty's dominion drear
Sits meek Content with light, unanxious heart,
Welcomes the rapid movements, bids them part,
Nor asks if they bring aught to hope or fear.

I thank thee, Author of this opening day!
Thou whose bright sun now gilds the Orient skies!
Riches denied, thy boon was purer joys,
What wealth could never give nor take away!

Yet come, thou child of poverty and care;
The mite high Heaven bestow'd, that mite with thee I'll share.

ROBERT BURNS
1750–1796.

SONNET.

Sheath'd is the river as it glideth by,
Frost-pearl'd are all the boughs in forests old,
The sheep are huddling close upon the wold,
And over them the stars tremble on high.
Pure joys, these winter nights, around me lie;
'Tis fine to loiter through the lighted streets

At Christmas time, and guess from brow and pace
The doom and history of each one we meet;
What kind of heart beats in each dusky case;
Whiles startled by the beauty of a face
In a shop-light a moment; or, instead,
To dream of silent fields, where calm and deep
The sunshine lieth like a golden sleep—
Recalling sweetest looks of summers dead.

ALE

SPRING AND WINTER.

FROM THE FRENCH.

Gentle Spring, in sunshine clad,
  Well dost thou thy power display!
For Winter maketh the light heart sad,
  And thou—thou makest the sad heart gay.
He sees thee, and calls to his gloomy train,
The sleet, and the snow, and the wind, and the rain;
And they shrink away, and they flee in fear,
When thy merry step draws near!

Winter giveth the fields and the trees so old
  Their beards of icicles and snow;
And the rain it raineth so fast and cold,
  We must cover over the embers low;
And, snugly housed from the wind and weather,
Mope like birds that are changing feather.
But the storm retires, and the sky grows clear,
When thy merry step draws near!

Winter maketh the sun in the gloomy sky
  Wrap him 'round with a mantle of cloud;
But, Heaven be praised! thy step is nigh;
  Thou tearest away the mournful shroud,
And the Earth looks bright, and Winter surly,
Who has toiled for naught, both late and early,

Is banished afar by the new-born year,
When thy merry step draws near!
Translation by H. W. LONGFELLOW. CHARLES, DUKE OF ORLEANS, 1391–1467.

WOODS IN WINTER.

When winter winds are piercing chill,
And through the hawthorn blows the gale,
With solemn feet I tread the hill
That overbrows the lonely vale.

O'er the bare upland, and away
Through the long reach of desert woods,
The embracing sunbeams chastely play,
And gladden those deep solitudes

Where, twisted round the barren oak,
The summer vine in beauty clung,
And summer winds the silence broke,
The crystal icicle is hung.

Where from their frozen urns, mute springs
Pour out the river's gradual tide,
Shrilly the skater's iron rings,
And voices fill the woodland side.

Alas! how changed from the fair scene,
When birds sang out their mellow lay,
And winds were soft, and woods were green,
And the song ceased not with the day.

But still wild music is abroad,
Pale, desert woods! within your crowd;
And gathering winds in hoarse accord
Amid the vocal reeds pipe loud.

Chill airs, and wintry winds! my ear
Has grown familiar with your song;
I hear it in the opening year—

I listen, and it cheers me long.

H.

WINTER.

Sad soul—dear heart, O why repine?
The melancholy tale is plain;
The leaves of spring, the summer flowers
Have bloomed and died again.

The sweet and silver-sandaled Dew,
Which, like a maiden, fed the flowers,
Hath waned into the beldame Frost,
And walked amid our bowers.

Some buds there were—sad hearts, be still!
Which looked awhile unto the sky,
Then breathed but once or lived, to tell
How sweetest things may die!

And some must blight where many bloom;
But, blight or bloom, the fruit must fall!
Why sigh for spring or summer flowers,
Since winter gathers all?

He gathers all—but chide him not;
He wraps them in his mantle cold,
And folds them close, as best he can,
For he is blind and old.

Sad soul—dear heart, no more repine—
The tale is beautiful and plain:
Surely as winter taketh all,
The spring shall bring again.

XXVIII.
Medley.

FRAGMENT FROM THE GREEK OF ARISTOTLE.

If there were beings who lived in the depths of the earth, in dwellings adorned with statues and paintings, and every thing which is possessed in rich abundance by those whom we esteem fortunate; and if these beings could receive tidings of the power and might of the gods, and could then emerge from their hidden dwellings through the open fissures of the earth, to the places which we inhabit; if they could suddenly behold the earth, and the sea, and the vault of heaven; could recognize the expanse of the cloudy firmament, and the might of the winds of heaven, and admire the sun in its majesty, beauty, and radiant effulgence; and, lastly, when night vailed the earth in darkness, they could behold the starry heavens, the changing moon, and the stars rising and setting in the unvarying course ordained from eternity, they would surely exclaim, "There are gods, and such great things must be the work of their hands."

Translation from HUMBOLDT'S "*Cosmos*."

THE CREATION OF THE EARTH.

God said,
Be gather'd now, ye waters under heav'n,
Into one place, and let dry land appear.
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad backs upheave
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky.
So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters: thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command imprest
On the swift floods; as armies at the call
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard, so the wat'ry throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found;
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill,
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore,
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land Earth, and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters he call'd Seas;
And saw that it was good, and said, Let th' earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind;
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flower'd,
Op'ning their various colors, and made gay
Her bosom smelling sweet; and these scarce blown,

Forth flourish'd thick the clust'ring vine, forth crept
The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Embattl'd in her field; and th' humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd
Their blossoms: with high wood the hills were crown'd;
With tufts the valleys and each fountain side,
With borders 'long the rivers: that earth now
Seem'd like to heav'n, a seat where Gods might dwell
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades. * * * *

JOHN
MILT
1608
1674

EARTH.

Harp! lift thy voice on high,
And run in rapid numbers o'er the face
Of Nature's scenery; and there were day
And night, and rising suns, and setting suns;
And clouds that seemed like chariots of saints,
By fiery coursers drawn—as brightly head
As if the glorious, lusty, golden locks
Of thousand cherubims had been shorn off,
And on the temples hung of morn and even;
And there were moons, and stars, and darkness streaked
With light; and voice of tempest heard secure.
And there were seasons coming evermore,
And going still—all fair and always new,
With bloom, and fruit, and fields of hoary grain.
And there were hills of flocks, and groves of song;
And flowery streams, and garden walks embowered,
Where side by side the rose and lily bloomed.
And sacred founts, wild hills, and moonlight glens;
And forests vast, fair lawns, and lovely oaks,

And little willows sipping at the brook;
Old wizard haunts, and dancing seats of mirth;
Gay, festive bowers, and palaces in dust;
Dark owlet nooks, and caves, and belted rocks;
And winding valleys, roofed with pendent shade;
And tall and perilous cliffs, that overlooked
The breath of Ocean, sleeping on his waves.
Sounds, sights, smells, tastes; the heaven and earth, profuse
In endless sweets, above all praise of song:
For not to use alone did Providence
Abound, but large example gave to man
Of grace, and ornament, and splendor rich;
Suited abundantly to every taste
In bird, beast, fish, winged and creeping thing;
In herb and flower; and in the restless change
Which on the many-colored seasons made
The annual circuit of the fruitful earth.

ROBERT POLLOCK
1799–1827.

THE SHIELD OF ACHILLES.

FROM THE "ILIAD."

* * * * *

He also graved on it a fallow field,
Rich, spacious, and well tilled. Plowers not few,
There driving to and fro their sturdy teams,
Labor'd the land; and oft as in their course
They came to the field's bourn, so oft a man
Met them, who in their hands a goblet placed,
Charged with delicious wine. They, turning, wrought
Each his own furrow, and impatient seem'd
To reach the border of the tilth, which black
Appear'd behind them as a glebe new-turn'd,

Though golden, sight to be admired by all!
  There, too, he form'd the likeness of a field,
Crowded with corn, in which the reapers toil'd
Each with a sharp-tooth'd sickle in his hand.
Along the furrow here the harvest fell
In frequent handfuls, there they bound the sheaves.
Three binders of the sheaves their sultry task
All plied industrious, and behind them boys
Attended, filling with the corn their arms,
And offering still their bundles to be bound.
Amid them, staff in hand, the master stood
Silent exulting, while beneath an oak
Apart, his heralds busily prepared
The banquet, dressing a well-thriven ox,
New slain, and the attendant maidens mix'd
Large supper for the hinds of whitest flour.
  There, also, laden with its fruit, he form'd
A vineyard all of gold; purple he made
The clusters, and the vines supported, stood
By poles of silver set in even rows.
The trench he color'd sable, and around
Fenced it with tin. One only path it show'd
By which the gatherers, when they stripp'd the vines,
Pass'd and repass'd. There, youths and maidens blithe,
In pails of wicker bore the luscious fruit,
While in the midst a boy, on his shrill harp,
Harmonious play'd; still as he struck the chord,
Carolling to it with a slender voice,
They smote the ground together, and with song
And sprightly reed came dancing on behind.
  There, too, a herd he fashion'd of tall beeves,
Part gold, part tin; they, lowing, from the stalls
Rush'd forth to pasture by a river-side,
Rapid, sonorous, fringed with whispering reeds.
Four golden herdsmen drove the kine a-field,
By nine swift dogs attended. Dreadful sprang
Two lions forth, and of the foremost herd,
Seized fast a bull. Him, bellowing, they dragg'd,
While dogs and peasants all flew to his aid.
The lions tore the hide of the huge prey,

And lapp'd his entrails and his blood. Meantime
The herdsmen, troubling them in vain, their hounds
Encouraged; but no tooth for lion's flesh
Found they, and therefore stood aside and bark'd.
  There, also, the illustrious smith divine
Amidst a pleasant grove a pasture found
Spacious, and sprinkled o'er with silver sheep
Numerous, and stalls, and huts, and shepherds' tents.

Translation of WILLIAM COWPER. HOMER.

LINES.

FROM "CHILDE HAROLD."

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
  With the wild world I dwell in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
  Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
His quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
  To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn Ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
  Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
  Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
  Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and, drawing near,
  There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
  Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more:

He is an evening reveler, who makes
  His life an infancy, and sings his fill;

At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill;
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instill,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven,
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:
All heaven and earth are still: from the high host
Of stars, and to the lull'd lake and mountain coast,
All is concenter'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator, and defense.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are least alone:
A truth which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self; it is a tone
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty; 'twould disarm

The specter Death, had he substantial power to harm.

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak,
Unrear'd of human hands. Come and compare
Columns, and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer.

The sky is changed! and such a change! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night: most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight—
A portion of the tempest, and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black—and now the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,

Love was the very root of the fond rage,
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed;
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters—war within themselves to rage.

Now, where the quick Rhone thus has cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand,
For here not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunderbolts from hand to hand,
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
His lightnings—as if he did understand
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt, and feeling, well may be,
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless—if I rest.
But where, of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

LORD BYR
178
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AN ITALIAN NOON.

LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS, OCTOBER, 1818.

* * * * *

Noon descends around me now;

’Tis the noon of autumn’s glow,
When a soft and purple mist,
Lake a vaporous amethyst,
Or an air-dissolved star,
Mingling light and fragrance, far
From the curved horizon’s bound,
To the point of heaven’s profound,
Fills the overflowing sky,
And the plains that silent lie
Underneath, the leaves unsodden
Where the infant frost has trodden
With his morning-winged feet,
Whose bright print is gleaming yet;
And the red and golden vines,
Piercing with their trellis’d lines
The rough, dark-skirted wilderness;
The dim and bladed grass no less
Pointing from this hoary tower
In the windless air; the flower
Glimmering at my feet; the line
Of the olive-sandaled Apennine,
In the south dimly islanded;
And the Alps, whose snows are spread
High between the clouds and sun;
And of living things each one;
And my spirit, which so long
Darken’d this swift stream of song,
Interpenetrated lie
By the glory of the sky;
Be it love, light, harmony,
Odor, or the soul of all
Which from Heaven like dew doth fall,
Or the mind which feeds this verse,
Peopling the lone universe.

P.

ITALIAN SONG.

Dear is my little native vale;
The ring-dove builds and warbles there;
Close by my cot she tells her tale
To every passing villager.
The squirrel leaps from tree to tree,
And shells his nuts at liberty.

In orange grove and myrtle bowers,
That breathe a gale of fragrance round,
I charm the fairy-footed hours
With my lov'd lute's romantic sound;
Or crowns of living laurel weave
For those that win the race at eve.

The shepherd's horn, at break of day,
The ballet danc'd in twilight glade,
The canzonet and roundelay,
Sung in the silent greenwood shade;
These simple joys, that never fail,
Shall bind me to my native vale.

S

A FARM SCENE IN PORTUGAL.

FROM A LETTER OF W. BECKFORD, ESQ.

October 19, 1797.

The valley of Collares affords me a source of perpetual amusement. I have discovered a variety of paths which lead through chestnut copses and orchards to irregular green spots, where self-sown bays and citronbushes hang wild over the rocky margin of a little river, and drop their fruit and blossoms into the stream. You may ride for miles along the banks of this delightful water, catching endless perspectives of flowery thickets, between the

stems of poplar and walnut. The scenery is truly Elysian, and exactly such as poets assign for the resort of happy spirits. The mossy fragments of rocks, grotesque pollards, and rustic bridges you meet with at every step, recall Savoy and Switzerland to the imagination; but the exotic cast of the vegetation, the vivid green of the citron, the golden fruitage of the orange, the blossoming myrtle, and the rich fragrance of a turf embroidered with the brightest-colored and most aromatic flowers, allow me, without a stretch of fancy, to believe myself in the garden of the Hesperides, and to expect the dragon under every tree. I by no means like the thought of abandoning these smiling regions, and have been twenty times on the point, this very day, of revoking the orders I have given for my journey. Whatever objections I may have had to Portugal seem to vanish since I have determined to leave it; for such is the perversity of human nature, that objects appear the most estimable precisely at the moment when we are going to leave them.

There was this morning a mild radiance in the sunbeams, and a balsamic serenity in the air, which infused that voluptuous listlessness—that desire of remaining imparadised in one delightful spot, which, in classical fictions, was supposed to render those who had tasted of the lotus, forgetful of friends and of every tie. My feelings were not dissimilar; I loathed the idea of moving away.

Though I had entered these beautiful orchards soon after sunrise, the clocks of some distant conventual churches had chimed hour after hour, before I could prevail upon myself to quit the spreading odoriferous baytrees under which I had been lying. If shades so cool and fragrant invited to repose, I must observe, that never were paths better

calculated to tempt the laziest of beings to a walk, than those that opened on all sides, and are formed of a smooth, dry sand, bound firmly together, composing a surface as hard as gravel. These level paths wind about among a labyrinth of light, elegant fruit-trees: almond, plum, and cherry, something like the groves of Tongo-Taboo, as represented in Cook's voyages; and to increase the resemblance, neat, clean fences and low, open sheds, thatched with reeds, appear at intervals, breaking the horizontal line of the perspective. I had now lingered and loitered away pretty nearly the whole morning, and though, as far as scenery could authorize and climate inspire, I might fancy myself an inhabitant of Polynesia, I could not pretend to be sufficiently ethereal to exist without nourishment. In plain English, I was extremely hungry. The pears, quinces, and oranges, which dangled above my head, although fair to the eye, were neither so juicy nor so gratifying to the palate, as might have been expected from their promising appearance.

Being considerably

> "More than a mile within the wood,"

and not recollecting by which clue of a path I could get out of it, I remained at least half an hour deliberating which way to turn myself. The sheds and inclosures I have mentioned were put together with care, and even nicety, it is true, but seemed to have no other inhabitants than flocks of bantams, strutting about and destroying the eggs and hopes of many an insect family. These glistening fowls, like their brethren described in Anson's voyages, as ruminating the profound solitudes of the island of Tinian, appeared to have no master. At length, just as I was beginning to wish myself very heartily in a

less romantic region, I heard the loud, though not unmusical tones of a powerful female voice, echoing through the arched green avenues; presently a stout, ruddy young peasant, very picturesquely attired in brown and scarlet, came hoydening along, driving a mule before her laden with two enormous panniers of grapes. To ask for a share of this luxurious load, and to compliment the fair driver, was instantaneous on my part—but to no purpose. I was answered by a sly wink: "We all belong to Senhor José Dias, whose coreal (farm-yard) is half a league distant. There, Senhor, if you follow that road and don't puzzle yourself by a straying to the right or left, you will soon reach it, and the bailiff, I dare say, will be proud to give you as many grapes as you please. Good-morning; happy days to you! I must mind my business."

Seating herself between the tantalizing panniers, she was gone in an instant, and I had the good luck to arrive at the wicket of a rude, dry well, winding up several bushy slopes in a wild, irregular manner. If the outside of this inclosure was rough and unpromising, the interior presented a most cheerful scene of rural opulence: droves of cows and goats milking; ovens, out of which huge savory cakes of bread had just been taken; ranges of bee-hives and long pillared sheds, entirely tapestried with purple and yellow muscadine grapes half candied, which were hung up to dry. A very good-natured, classical-looking *magister pecorum*, followed by two well-disciplined, though savage-eyed dogs, whom the least glance of their master prevented from barking, gave me a hearty welcome, and with genuine hospitality not only allowed me the free range of his domain, but set whatever it produced in the greatest perfection before me. A contest took place between

two or three curly-haired, chubby-faced children, who should be first to bring me walnuts fresh from the shell, bowls of milk, and cream cheeses, made after the best of fashions, that of the province of Alemtejo.

WILLIAM BECKFORD.

FROM "THE LUSIAD."

With graceful pride three hills of softest green
Rear their fair bosoms o'er the sylvan scene;
Their sides embroider'd boast the rich array
Of flowery shrubs in all the pride of May;
The purple lotus and the snowy thorn,
And yellow pod-flowers every slope adorn.
From the green summits of the leafy hills

Descend with murmuring lapse three limpid rills;
Beneath the rose-trees loitering slow they glide,
Now tumbles o'er some rock their crystal pride;
Sonorous now they roll adown the glade,
Now plaintive tinkle in the secret shade;
Now from the darkling grove, beneath the beam
Of ruddy morn, like melted silver stream,
Edging the painted margins of the bowers,
And breathing liquid freshness on the flowers.
Here bright reflected in the pool below
The vermil apples tremble on the bough;
Where o'er the yellow sands the waters sleep,
The primrosed banks inverted, dew-drops weep;
Where murmuring o'er the pebbles purls the stream,
The silver trouts in playful curvings gleam.
Long thus and various every riv'let strays,
Till closing now their long meand'ring maze,
Where in a sinking vale the mountains end,
Form'd in a crystal lake the waters blend;
Fring'd was the border with a woodland shade,
In every leaf of various green array'd,
Each yellow-ting'd, each mingling tint between
The dark ash verdure and the silvery green.
The trees now bending forward, slowly shake
Their lofty honors o'er the crystal lake;
Now from the flood the graceful boughs retire,
With coy reserve, and now again admire
Their various liveries by the summer dress'd,
Smooth-gloss'd and soften'd in the mirror's breast.
So by her glass the wishful virgin strays,
And oft retiring steals the lingering gaze.

* * * * *

Wild forest-trees the mountain sides array'd:
With curling foliage and romantic shade;
Here spreads the poplar, to Alcides dear;
And dear to Phœbus, ever verdant here,
The laurel joins the bowers for ever green,
The myrtle bowers belov'd of beauty's queen.
To Jove the oak his wide-spread branches rears;

And high to heaven the fragrant cedar bears;
Where through the glades appear the cavern'd rocks,
The lofty pine-tree waves her sable locks;
Sacred to Cybele, the whispering pine
Loves the wild grottoes where the white cliffs shine;
Here towers the cypress, preacher to the wise,
Less'ning, from earth, her spiral honors rise,
Till, as a spear-point rear'd, the topmost spray
Points to the Eden of eternal day.

Translation of W. J. MICKLE. LUIS DE CAMOENS, 1517–1579.

PARADISE.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE.

Longing already to search in and round
The heavenly forest, dense and living-green,
Which to the eyes tempered the new-born day,
Withouten more delay I left the bank,
Crossing the level country slowly, slowly,
Over the soil, that everywhere breathed fragrance.
A gently breathing air, that no mutation
Had in itself, smote me upon the forehead—
No heavier blow than of a pleasant breeze;
Whereat the tremulous branches readily
Did all of them bow downward toward that side
Where its first shadow casts the Holy Mountain;
Yet not from their upright direction bent,
So that the little birds upon their tops
Should cease the practice of their tuneful art;
But, with full-throated joy, the hours of prime
Singing received they in the midst of foliage,
That made monotonous burden to their rhymes;
Even as from branch to branch it gathering swells
Through the pine forests on the shore of Chiassi
When Æolus unlooses the sirocco.
Already my slow steps had led me on
Into the ancient wood so far, that I

Could see no more the place where I had entered;
  And, lo! my farther course cut off a river,
Which, toward the left hand, with its little waves,
Bent down the grass that on its margin sprang.
  All waters that on earth most limpid are,
Would seem to have within themselves some mixture,
Compared with that, which nothing doth conceal,
  Although it moves with a brown, brown current,
Under the shade perpetual, that never
Ray of sun let in, nor of the moon.

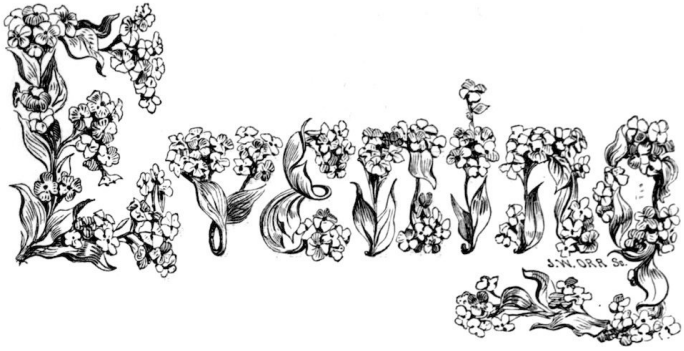
Translation of H. W. LONGFELLOW. DANTE ALIGHIERI, 1265–1321.

NATURE TEACHING IMMORTALITY.

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth
Of thee, the great Immutable, to man
Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;
And he who most consults her is most wise.
Look nature through, ’tis revolution all.
All change, no death. Day follows night, and night
The dying day; stars rise, and set, and rise;
Earth takes th’ example. See the summer gay,
With her green chaplet, and ambrosial flow’rs,
Droops into pallid autumn; winter gray,
Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
Blows autumn and his golden fruits away,
Then melts into the spring; soft spring, with breath
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,
Recalls the first. All to re-flourish fades,
As in a wheel all sinks to reascend;
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.
  With this minute distinction, emblems just,
Nature revolves, but man advances; both
Eternal, that a circle, this a line;
That gravitates, this soars. Th’ aspiring soul,
Ardent and tremulous, like flame ascends,
Zeal and humility her wings, to heaven.
The world of matter, with its various forms,

All dies into new life. Life, born from death,
Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.
No single atom, once in being lost,
With change of counsel charges the Most High.
Matter immortal, and shall spirit die?
Above the nobler shall less noble rise?
Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,
Now resurrection know! shall man alone,
Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,
Less privileg'd than grain on which he feeds?
Is man, in whom alone is power to prize
The bliss of being, or with previous pain
Deplore its period, by the spleen of fate,
Severely doom'd, death's single unredeem'd?

EDWARD
YOUN
1681–
1765.



XXIX.
Evening and Night.

THE MOON.

FROM THE GREEK OF SAPPHO.

The stars that 'round the beauteous moon
  Attendant wait, cast into shade
Their ineffectual luster soon
  As she in full-orb'd majesty array'd
    Her silver radiance showers
    Upon this world of ours.

Translation of J. H. MERIVALE.

LINES

FROM THE "MEMORABLE MASK."

Silvan. Tell me, gentle Hour of Night,
  Wherein dost thou most delight?

Hour. Not in sleep!

Silvan. Wherein, then?

Hour. In the frolic view of men.

Silvan. Lov'st thou music?

Hour. Oh, 'tis sweet!

Silvan. What's dancing.

Hour. E'en the mirth of feet.

Silvan. Joy you in fairies, or in elves.

Hour. We are of that sort ourselves.
But, Silvan, say, why do you love
Only to frequent the grove?

Silvan. Life is fullest of content
When delight is innocent.

Hour. Pleasure must vary, not be long;
Come, then, let's close, and end the song.

DR.
THOM
CAMPI
1607.

TO CYNTHIA.

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep;
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep:
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright!

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close;
Bless us, then with wished sight,
Goddess excellently bright!

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
  And thy crystal-shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
  Space to breathe, how short soever;
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright!

BEN
JO
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TO NIGHT.

Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
  Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
  Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath the curtain of translucent dew,
  Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
  Hesperus with the host of Heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.
  Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
  While fly, and leaf, and insect lay revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
  Why do we, then, shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

I

NIGHT.

When I survey the bright
  Celestial sphere,
So rich with jewels hung, that night
  Doth like an Ethiop bride appear;

My soul her wings doth spread,
  And heavenward flies
The Almighty's mysteries to read
  In the large volume of the skies.

For the bright firmament
  Shoots forth no flame
So silent, but is eloquent
  In speaking the Creator's name.

No unregarded star
  Contracts its light
Into so small character,
  Remov'd far from our human sight:

But if we steadfast look,
  We shall discern
In it, as in some holy book,
  How man may heavenly knowledge learn.

It tells the conqueror
  That far-stretch'd power,
Which his proud dangers traffic for,
  Is but the triumph of an hour.

That from the farthest north
  Some nation may
Yet undiscovered issue forth,
  And o'er his new-got conquest sway.

Some nation yet shut in
  With hills of ice,
May be let out to scourge his sin,
  Till they shall equal him in vice.

And they likewise shall
  Their ruin have;
For as yourselves, your empires fall,
  And every kingdom hath a grave.

There those celestial fires,
  Though seeming mute,

The fallacy of our desires,
  And all the pride of life confute.

For they have watch'd since first
  The world had birth,
And found sin in itself accurst,
  And nothing permanent on earth.

WILLIAM HABINGTON
1560–1647.

TO THE MOON.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Fillest hill and vale again,
  Still with softening light!
Loosest from the world's cold chain
  All my soul to-night!

Spreadest round me, far and nigh,
  Soothingly thy smile;
From thee, as from friendship's eye,
  Sorrow shrinks the while.

Every echo thrills my heart—
  Glad and gloomy mood;
Joy and sorrow both have part
  In my solitude.

River, river, glide along!
  I am sad, alas!
Fleeting things are love and song—
  Even so they pass!

I have had, and I have lost
  What I long for yet;
Ah! why will we, to our cost,
  Simple joys forget?

River, river, glide along,
  Without stop or stay;
Murmur, whisper to my song,
  In melodious play:

Whether on a winter's night
  Rise thy swollen floods,
Or in spring thou hast delight,
  Watering the young buds.

Happy he, who, hating none,
  Leaves the world's dull noise,
And with trusty friends alone
  Quietly enjoys

What, forever unexpressed,
  Hid from common sight,
Through the mazes of the breast
  Softly steals the night!

Translation of J. S. DWIGHT. JOHANN WOLFGANG V. GOETHE, 1749–1832.

MOONLIGHT.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Darker than the day,
Clearer than the night,
Shines the mellow moonlight,

From the rocky heights,
Shapes in shimmer clad,
Mistily are mounting.

Pearls of silver dew,
Soft distilling, drop
On the silent meadows.

Night of sweetest song,
With the gloomy woods,

Philomela mingleth.

Far in ether wide
Yawns the dread abyss
Of deep worlds uncounted.

Neither eye nor ear,
Seeking, findeth here
The end of mazy thinking.

Evermore the wheel
Of unmeasured Time
Turns round all existence;

And it bears away
Swift, how swift! the prey
Of fleet-flitting mortals.

Where soft breezes blow,
Where thou see'st the row
Of smooth-shining beeches;

Driven from the flood
Of the thronging Time,
Lina's hut receives me.

Brighter than aloft,
In night's shimmering star,
Peace with her is shining.

And the vale so sweet,
And the sweet moonlight,
Where she dwells, is sweeter.

Anonymous Translation. CARL V. KNEBEL, 1744–1834.

ELEGY.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF PETRARCH.

In the still evening, when with rapid flight,
Low in the western sky the sun descends
To give expectant nations life and light,
The aged pilgrim, in some clime unknown,
Slow journeying, right onward fearful bends
With weary haste, a stranger and alone;
    Yet, when his labor ends,
    He solitary sleeps.
    And in short slumber steeps
Each sense of sorrow hanging on the day,
And all the toil of the long past way:
But O each pang, that wakes with morn's first ray,
    More piercing wounds my breast,
When heaven's eternal light sinks crimson in the west!

His burning wheels when downward Phœbus bends,
And leaves the world to night, its lengthened shade
Each towering mountain o'er the vale extends;
The thrifty peasant shoulders light his spade,
With sylvan carol gay and uncouth note,
Bidding his cares upon the wild winds float—
    Content in peace to share
    His poor and humble fare,
    As in that golden age
We honor still, yet leave its simple ways;
Whoe'er so list, let joy his hours engage:
No gladness e'er has cheer'd my gloomy days,
    Nor moment of repose,
However rolled the spheres, whatever planet rose.

When as the shepherd marks the sloping ray
Of the great orb that sinks in ocean's bed,
While on the east soft steals the evening gray,
He rises, and resumes the accustom'd crook,
Quitting the beechen grove, the field, the brook,
And gently homeward drives the flock he fed;
    Then far from human tread,
    In lonely hut or cave,
    O'er which the green boughs wave,
In sleep without a thought he lays his head:
Ah! cruel Love! at this dark, silent hour,

Thou wak'st to trace, and with redoubled power,
The voice, the step, the air
Of her who scorns my chain, and flies thy fatal snare.

And in some sheltered bay, at evening's close,
The mariners their rude coats 'round them fold,
Stretched on the rugged plank in deep repose:
But I, though Phœbus sink into the main,
And leave Granada wrapt in night with Spain,
Morocco, and the Pillars fam'd of old—
Though all of human kind,
And every creature blest,
All hush their ills to rest,
No end to my unceasing sorrows find:
And still the sad account swells day by day;
For, since these thoughts on my lorn spirit prey,
I see the tenth year roll;
Nor hope of freedom springs in my desponding soul.

Thus, as I vent my bursting bosom's pain!
Lo! from their yoke I see the oxen freed—
Slow moving homeward o'er the furrowed plain:
Why to my sorrow is no pause decreed?
Why from my yoke no respite must I know?
Why gush these tears, and never cease to flow?
Ah, me! what sought my eyes,
When, fixed in fond surprise,
On her angelic face
I gazed, and on my heart each charm impress'd?
From whence nor force nor art the sacred trace
Shall e'er remove, till I the victim rest
Of Death, whose mortal blow
Shall my pure spirit free, and this worn frame lay low.

Translation of LADY DACRE. FRANCESCO PETRARCA, 1304–1374.

NIGHT SONG.

FROM THE GERMAN.

The moon is up in splendor,
And golden stars attend her;
  The heavens are calm and bright;
Trees cast a deepening shadow,
And slowly off the meadow
  A mist is rising silver-white.

Night's curtains now are closing
'Round half a world reposing
  In calm and holy trust:
All seems one vast, still chamber,
Where weary hearts remember
  No more the sorrows of the dust.

Translation of C. T. BROOKS. MATTHIAS CLAUDIUS, 1740–1818.

PROGRESS OF EVENING.

From yonder wood mark blue-eyed Eve proceed:
First through the deep, and warm, and secret glens,
Through the pale-glimmering, privet-scented lane,
And through those alders by the river-side:
Now the soft dust impedes her, which the sheep
Have hollow'd out beneath their hawthorn shade.
But ah! look yonder! see a misty tide
Rise up the hill, lay low the frowning grove,
Enwrap the gay, white mansion, sap its sides,
Until they sink and melt away like chalk.
Now it comes down against our village tower,
Covers its base, floats o'er its arches, tears
The clinging ivy from the battlements—
Mingles in broad embrace the obdurate stone
All one vast ocean! and goes swelling on
Slow and silent, dim and deepening waves.

WALTER
SA
LA

NIGHT.

FROM THE ITALIAN.

Night dew-lipped comes, and every gleaming star
  Its silent place assigns in yonder sky;
The moon walks forth, and fields and groves afar,
  Touched by her light, in silver beauty lie
In solemn peace, that no sound comes to mar;
  Hamlets and peopled cities slumber nigh;
While on this rock, in meditation's mien,
  Lord of the unconscious world, I sit unseen.

How deep the quiet of this pensive hour!
  Nature bids labor cease—and all obey.
How sweet this stillness, in its magic power
  O'er hearts that know her voice and own her sway!
Stillness unbroken, save when from the flower
  The whirring locust takes his upward way;
And murmuring o'er the verdant turf is heard
The passing brook—or leaf by breezes stirred.

Borne on the pinions of night's freshening air,
  Unfettered thoughts with calm reflection come;
And fancy's train, that shuns the daylight glare,
  To wake when midnight shrouds the heavens in gloom;
Now tranquil joys, and hopes untouched by care,
  Within my bosom throng to seek a home;
While far around the brooding darkness spreads,
And o'er the soul its pleasing sadness sheds.

Anonymous Translation. IPPOLITO PINDEMONTE, 1753–1828.

EVENING.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE OF CAMOENS.

Silent and cool, now freshening breezes blow

Where groves of chestnut crown yon shadowy steep,
And all around the tears of evening weep
For closing day, whose vast orb, westering slow,
Flings o'er the embattled clouds a mellower glow;
While pens of folded herds, and murmuring deep,
And falling rills, such gentle cadence keep,
As e'en might soothe the weary heart of woe.
Yet what to me is eve, what evening airs,
Or falling rills, or ocean's murmuring sound,
While sad and comfortless I seek in vain
Her who in absence turns my joy to cares,
And, as I cast my listless glances round,
Makes varied scenery but varied pain?

Translation of VISCOUNT STRANGFORD. LUIS DE CAMOENS, 1524–1579.

SPRING EVENING.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Bright with the golden shine of heaven, plays
On tender blades the dew;
And the spring-landscape's trembling likeness sways
Clear in the streamlet's blue.

Fair is the rocky fount, the blossomed hedge,
Groves stained with golden light;
Fair is the star of eve, that on the edge
Of purple clouds shines bright.

Fair is the meadow's green—the valley's copse—
The hillock's dress of flowers—
The alder-brook—the reed-encircled pond,
O'er-snowed with blossom-showers.

This manifold world of Love is held in one
By Love's eternal band;
The glow-worm and the fire-sea of the sun
Sprang from one Father's hand!

Thou beckonest, Almighty! from the tree
The blossom's leaf doth fall;
Thou beckonest, and in immensity
Is quenched a solar ball!

Anonymous Translation. FRIEDRICH VON MATTHISSON, 1761–1831.

SONG.

The splendor falls on castle walls,
And snowy summits old in story
The long light shakes across the lakes
And the wild cataract leaps in glory:
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle, answer echoes, dying, dying, dying.

Oh hark! oh hear! now thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
Oh! sweet and far, from cliff and scar,
The horns of Elf-land faintly blowing.
Blow; let us hear the purple glens replying,
Blow, bugle, answer echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O Love, they die on yon rich sky,
They faint on hill, on field, on river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow; set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer dying, dying, dying.

ALF

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell
By slow Meander's margent green,

And in the violet embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flow'ry cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heaven's harmonies.

JOHN
MILT
1608
1674

LIFE.

Like to the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are,
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew,
Or like a wind that chafes the flood,
Or bubbles which on water stood—
Even such is man, whose borrow'd light
Is straight call'd in, and paid to-night,
The wind blows out; the bubble dies;
The spring entomb'd in autumn lies;
The dew dries up; the star is shot;
The flight is past—and man forgot.

HENRY KING, *Bishop of Chichester*, 1591–1669.

ON HOPE.

Reflected on the lake, I love
To see the stars of evening glow,

So tranquil in the heaven above,
   So restless in the wave below.

Thus heavenly Hope is all serene;
   But earthly Hope, how bright soe'er,
Still flutters o'er this changing scene,
   As false and fleeting as 'tis fair.

I

SONNET.

Beauty still walketh on the earth and air,
Our present sunsets are as rich in gold
As ere Iliad's music was outrolled;
The roses of the spring are ever fair,
'Mong branches green still ring-doves coo and pair,
And the deep sea still foams its music old.
So, if we are at all divinely souled,
This beauty will unloose our bonds of care.
'Tis pleasant, when blue skies are o'er us bending,
Within old starry-gated Poesy,
To meet a soul set to no worldly tune,
Like thine, sweet friend! oh, dearer this to me
Than are the dewy trees, the sun, the moon,
Or noble music with a golden ending.

ALE

TWILIGHT.

There is an evening twilight of the heart
   When its wild passion-waves are lull'd to rest,
And the eye sees life's fairy scenes depart,
   As fades the day-dream in the rosy west.
'Tis with a nameless feeling of regret
   We gaze upon them as they melt away,

And fondly would we bid them linger yet.
But Hope is 'round us with her angel lay,
Hailing afar some happier moonlight hour;
Dear are her whispers still, though lost their early power.

In youth the cheek was crimson'd with her glow
Her smile was loveliest then; her matin song
Had heaven's own music, and the note of woe
Was all unheard her sunny bowers among.
Life's little world of bliss was newly born;
We knew not, cared not, it was born to die,
Flush'd with the cool breeze and the dews of morn,
With dancing heart we gazed on the pure sky,
And mock'd the passing clouds that dimm'd its blue,
Like our own sorrows then, as fleeting and as few.

And manhood felt her sway too—on the eye,
Half realized her early dreams burst bright,
Her promised bower of happiness seem'd nigh,
Its days of joy, its vigils of delight.
And though at times might lower the thunder-storm,
And the red lightnings threaten, still the air
Was balmy with her breath, and her loved form,
The rainbow of the heart, was hovering there.
'Tis in life's noontide she is nearest seen,
Her wreath the summer flower, her robe of summer green.

But though less dazzling in her twilight dress,
There's more of heaven's pure beam about her now;
That angel-smile of tranquil loveliness,
Which the heart worships, glowing on her brow;
That smile shall brighten the dim evening-star
That points our destined tomb, nor e'er depart
Till the faint light of life is fled afar,
And hush'd the last deep beating of the heart;
The meteor bearer of our parting breath,
A moonbeam in the midnight cloud of death.

FITZ-
G

H

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1. See Part XXIX. of the following selections.

2. Unwilling, for a moment, to be supposed entitled to credit to which she can lay no just claim, the writer of these remarks hastens to avow that whatever opinions she may have formed on subjects connected with ancient literature, have been entirely drawn from translations. Although it is impossible to enjoy the full perfection of a great poem in any other than the original language, yet we are enabled, by means of the best versions, to form general views regarding a work, and to appreciate, at least, the spirit with which it is imbued.

3. Part X.

4. Goethe.

5. Part XXVII. These translations have all been transcribed from M. de Humboldt's pages.

6. Camöens.

7. See Parts XXIX. and XXX.

8. Copses.

9. "The Honorable Entertainement given to the Queenes Majestie (Queen Elizabeth) in Progresse at Elvetham, in Hampshire, by the R. H. the Earle of Hertford, 1501:

"The thirde daies Entertainement.

"On Wednesday morning, about 9 o'clock, as her Majestie opened a casement of her gallerie window, ther were three excellent musitians, who, being disguised in auncient country attire, did greete her with a pleasant song of Corydon and Phillida, made in three parts, of purpose. The song, as well for the worth of the dittie, as the aptnesse of the note thereto applied, it pleased her Highnesse after it had been once sung, to command it againe, and highly to grace it with her cheerefull acceptaunce and commendation."

10. It is scarcely necessary to observe that *weed*, in old English, signified garment *bouir*, meant chamber, or apartment; *kute*, ankle; *braune*, calf.

11. *See* note on previous page.

12. Frederick Prince of Wales, father of George III.—Ed.

13. Neustadt.

14. See *Othello*, Act ii., Scene 3.

15. Unexplained in any glossary.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

Page	Changed from	Changed to
167	mild-maid's wish upon her, "That she may die in the spring, and	milk-maid's wish upon her, "That she may die in the spring, and
202	from it, being often called *Neustadt ander grossen Linden*, or Niestad	from it, being often called *Neustadt an der grossen Linden*, or Niestad
324	[Heading missing]	III.

374	Where grass and flowers spring	Where grass and flowers spring-a
428	A moombeam in the midnight cloud of death.	A moonbeam in the midnight cloud of death.

- Typos fixed; non-standard spelling and dialect retained.
- Used numbers for footnotes, placing them all at the end of the last chapter.

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