

ISA CRAIG KNOX.

ISA CRAIG was born at Edinburgh, October 17, 1831. She is the only child of parents that belonged to a middle-class family in Aberdeenshire. When only a few months old her mother died; her father afterwards removed to Aberdeen, leaving his daughter to the care of her grandmother, who brought up her young charge in a very simple and secluded manner. Isa's school education did not extend beyond three years, and was concluded in her tenth year. After assisting in the various household duties she diligently devoted every spare hour to books, and these not of the newest or lightest kind—Gibbon, Addison and his contemporaries, Shakspeare, Milton, Cowper, and Burns being her teachers.

When about sixteen Miss Craig ventured to write a short poem now and then, and was amply rewarded by seeing her nameless effusions in print. In 1851 she began to contribute to the *Scotsman* newspaper under the signature "Isa." Her verses attracted considerable attention, and in 1853 the proprietor of the paper called on his unknown contributor and proposed that she should undertake regular literary work for its columns. In the summer of 1857 she visited a lady friend in London, by whom she was introduced to Mr. G. W. Hastings, who was then engaged in organizing the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, and was greatly in need of an efficient assistant. Miss Craig at his request undertook the task of assisting him for the three months preceding the first meeting of the Association, which was held at Birmingham. After the meeting she was appointed by the council his assistant in the secretarial work of the society—a position which she held for nearly

nine years, and only relinquished in May, 1866, when she was married to her cousin Mr. John Knox. In 1853 she sent in a competitive poem "On the Centenary of Burns," which gained the prize of £50 over six hundred and twenty competitors. It was written at a single sitting, and was read at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, to a vast audience collected to celebrate the centenary of the Scottish poet's birth. The poem was dictated more by love for the poet than eagerness for the prize, for on the day of the award Miss Craig was absent, and being busily occupied had forgotten it altogether.

Going on steadily with her work in the Association, editing under Mr. Hastings its weighty volumes, and conducting its extensive correspondence, Miss Craig took no advantage of the popularity which the prize obtained for her. She had published a volume of poems in 1856, and in 1864 she brought out another volume entitled *Duchess Agnes, &c.*, the fruits of her scanty leisure. It is written in the dramatic form, and contains numerous fine passages. Her latest volume, entitled *Songs of Consolation*, and dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Frederick Denison Maurice, is of a purely religious character. Mrs. Knox has contributed prose and verse to *Fraser's Magazine*, to *Good Words*, and various other periodicals, and has recently written an excellent *Little Folks' History of England*. Her poetry, particularly in her shorter pieces, is characterized by much pathos and deep religious sentiment. A distinguished critic says her poems "are far above the average, and possess such kindly qualities as will carry them home to many who do not live by the sensational alone, but appreciate true feeling, however shy—beauty, however subdued."

ODE ON THE CENTENARY OF BURNS.

We hail, this morn,
A century's noblest birth;
A poet peasant born,
Who more of Fame's immortal dower
Unto his country brings
Than all her kings!

As lamps high set
Upon some earthly eminence—
And to the gazer brighter thence
Than the sphere-lights they flout—
Dwindle in distance and die out,
While no star waneth yet;

So through the past far-reaching night,
Only the star-souls keep their light.

A gentle boy—
With moods of sadness and of mirth,
Quick tears and sudden joy—
Grew up beside the peasant's hearth.
His father's toil he shares;
But half his mother's cares
From his dark-searching eyes,
Too swift to sympathize,
Hid in her heart she bears.

At early morn,
His father calls him to the field;
Through the stiff soil that clogs his feet,
Chill rain, and harvest heat,
He plods all day; returns at eve outworn,
To the rude fare a peasant's lot doth yield;
To what else was he born?

The God-made king
Of every living thing
(For his great heart in love could hold them all);
The dumb eyes meeting his by hearth and stall—
Gifted to understand!—
Knew it and sought his hand;
And the most timorous creature had not fled,
Could she his heart have read,
Which fain all feeble things had blessed and shel-
tered.

To Nature's feast—
Who knew her noblest guest
And entertained him best—
Kingly he came. Her chambers of the East
She draped with crimson and with gold,
And poured her pure-joy wines
For him the poet-souled,
For him her anthem rolled,
From the storm-wind among the winter pines,
Down to the slenderest note
Of a love warble, from the linnet's throat.

But when begins
The array for battle, and the trumpet blows,
A king must leave the feast, and lead the fight;
And with its mortal foe—
Grim gathering hosts of sorrows and of sins—
Each human soul must close.
And Fame her trumpet blew
Before him; wrapped him in her purple state,
And made him mark for all the shafts of Fate,
That henceforth round him flew.

Though he may yield
Hard pressed, and wounded fall
Forsaken on the field;
His regal vestments soiled;
His crown of half its jewels spoiled;
He is a king for all.

Had he but stood aloof!
Had he arrayed himself in armour proof
Against temptation's darts!
So yearn the good; so those the world calls wise,
With vain presumptuous hearts,
Triumphant moralize.

Of martyr-woe
A sacred shadow on his memory rests;
Tears have not ceased to flow;
Indignant grief yet stirs impetuous breasts,
To think—above that noble soul brought low,
That wise and soaring spirit fooled, enslaved—
Thus, thus he had been saved!

It might not be!
That heart of harmony
Had been too rudely rent;
Its silver cords, which any hand could wound,
By no hand could be tuned,
Save by the Maker of the instrument,
Its every string who knew,
And from profaning touch His heavenly gift
withdraw.

Regretful love
His country fain would prove,
By grateful honours lavished on his grave;
Would fain redeem her blame
That he so little at her hands can claim,
Who unrewarded gave
To her his life-bought gift of song and fame.

The land he trod
Hath now become a place of pilgrimage;
Where dearer are the daisies of the sod
That could his song engage.
The hoary hawthorn, wreathed
Above the bank on which his limbs he flung
While some sweet plaint he breathed;
The streams he wandered near;
The maidens whom he loved; the songs he
sung,—
All, all are dear!

The arch blue eyes—
Arch but for love's disguise—
Of Scotland's daughters soften at his strain;
Her hardy sons, sent forth across the main
To drive the ploughshare through earth's virgin
soils,
Lighten with it their toils;
And sister lands have learned to love the tongue
In which such songs are sung.

For doth not song
To the whole world belong!
Is it not given wherever tears can fall,
Wherever hearts can melt, or blushes glow,
Or mirth and sadness mingle as they flow,
A heritage to all?

THE WAY IN THE WOOD.

A wood lies on the shore,
 Fill'd with murmurs, as each tree
 Learn'd the music of the sea,
 Which it heareth all the day,
 Ever growing more and more,
 Or fading far away.

And standing on that shore,
 The past comes back to me,
 In that music of the sea,
 And that murmur of the wood,
 Ever fading far away,
 Yet evermore renewed.

In the weird and ancient wood,
 There are fairy lights that fall,
 Never by the sunshine made;
 And a flicker and a shade,
 Where no substance is at all;
 There are thrilling touches laid
 By no hand on head and shoulder;
 Things that peep from leaf and blade
 And blossom, when there's no beholder;
 And we walk as in a story
 Through the gloom and through the glory
 Of the weird and ancient wood.

Through the gloom and through the glory
 Of the ancient wood beheld,
 Comes in glimpses, like her story,
 A maiden of the times of Eld;
 Like a young fawn, unafraid,
 Straying through its own green glade.
 Now a little rill she crosses,
 Stealing through the velvet mosses,
 From the hollow, where the trees
 Stand in groups of twos and threes,
 Wide-armed, bountiful, and spread
 As for blessing overhead;
 While the thick grass underfoot
 Shelters violets round each root,
 And on tender lap receives
 Soft the fall of dying leaves.

All along the maiden's way,
 Glades are opening, glad and green,
 Ever tempting her to stray
 From the bare brown path between.
 Some one surely called her name!
 Was it but the wood-dove cooing?
 And that beck'ning, wasn't the same
 As the plummy ferns are doing?
 In each foxglove bell the bee
 Swings himself right merrily,
 Every bell by turns he tries,

He is buried head and thighs!
 Now on that side, now on this,
 Does a bird his song repeat,
 Quivering at its close with bliss
 Far too full and far too sweet
 For the little throat to utter;
 Here a whirr, and there a flutter,
 Here a coo, and there a call,
 Here a dart, and there a spring,
 Token'd happy creatures all.
 Now and then awhile she stood,
 Wishful that they might come near her,
 Wistful half that they should fear her,
 Silence in her attitude.

Now the sunny noon is high,
 And upon a bank she sits,
 Shade on shade around her flits—
 On the bank's embroidery—
 Star and heart of leaf inwrought,
 Mazy as a poet's thought—
 One doth rest beside the maid
 In the mystic light and shade.
 Into silence sweet subdued,
 In the dim heart of the wood
 Many paths together meet,
 And companionship is sweet.

Sounds as of a river flowing
 Through the forest depths are going,
 And the distant murmurs seem
 Like a river in a dream,
 For the path is carried far
 Over precipice and sear,
 And beneath it runs the river,
 Flowing onward, flowing ever,
 Drawing down the little rills
 From the rocks and from the hills,
 To the bosom of the sea.
 Here the daisies disappear,
 Shadows on the pathway brown
 Falling ever thicklier down,
 Something like a thrill of fear
 Touches trembling lip and limb,
 And the violets in her eyes,
 Blue beneath the open skies,
 Seem to grow more large and dim.
 Round and round, for rood on rood,
 Trees are growing, trees are throwing
 Shades of ill and shades of good,
 Arms of shelter fondly flinging,
 Arms of murder fiercely clinging,
 Stiffing in their close embraces,
 Throes of terror and affright,
 While some meckly in their places
 Die of pining for the light.

Closely heart to heart will beat,
 Closely lip with lip will meet,

Where the branch and bow embraces,
 And the light and shade enlaces;
 Hands of trust in his she places,
 And her heaven is in his eyes,
 Link'd together as they rise
 To go forward, but he chooses
 Smoother than he would, refuses
 Peril for her sake;—thus may
 He be guarded still in guarding,
 And be guided still in guiding,
 Ill from the beloved warding,
 Blessing to himself betiding.

In mid-forest oaks and beeches,
 Thick and tow'ring, hold the ground;
 By the river's winding reaches
 Trees of every leaf are found;
 Here the ash with arms all knotted,
 Into anguish'd writhings grew;
 Here the sickly alder rotted;
 On a mound an ancient yew;
 And the willows in the water
 Trail'd their tresses silver gray;
 Aspen, when the low wind caught her,
 Sigh'd through every trembling spray;
 Lady birch so light and gay,
 Something sad that wind had taught her,
 For each slender limb would quiver:
 While upon the moaning river,
 Flags of drownèd lilies lay.

In the forest depths unknown,
 Once more is the maid alone;
 And she hears the moaning river,
 Hears the ivy near her shiver,
 Hears the rain upon the leaves,
 Beating with a sound that grieves;
 On the path her feet are slipping,
 'Tween the river and the rock,
 All the adder's-tongues are dripping,
 Wet is every ruddy lock
 Of her hair, and when she lays
 Her small lily hand, and stays
 Trembling steps, the worm is crawling,
 Toads beneath her feet are sprawling,
 And her very soul is faint
 With the dank air's deathly taint.

She hath reach'd a tree whose head
 Still is green, whose heart is dead;
 Her wet robe about her clings,
 And she sinks upon the ground,
 Heedless of the loathly things,
 Where her slain knight she hath found,
 Lying white among the green
 Of the ferns that strive to screen,
 From the staring of the light,
 Those dead eyes, a ghastly sight.

By the river sat the maiden,
 With the burden of her pain:
 Downward flow'd the river laden
 With the burden of the rain:
 In that dark and swollen flood,
 Who had known the little rill
 At the entrance of the wood?
 Who had known that maiden still?
 When the dismal pall of night
 Came and wrapt her grief from sight;
 And there rose upon the blast,
 In the dark hours wailing past,
 Mingled groan and shriek and sigh—
 More than mortal agony.

Ere long in that solitude
 Rose the forest sanctuary,
 Where the holy dead they bury,
 'Tween the murmur of the river,
 And the murmur of the wood,
 Fill'd with pleading sound for ever;
 And a slain knight's mouldering bones
 Rest beneath its chancel stones.

Yellow, yellow leaves
 All grown pale with sighing!—
 For the sweet days dead,
 For the sad days dying,
 Yellow, yellow leaves,
 How the parting grieves!

Yellow, yellow leaves,
 Falling, falling, falling!
 Death is best, when hope
 There is no recalling;
 Yet O, yellow leaves,
 How the parting grieves!

A SONG OF SUMMER.

I will sing a song of summer,
 Of bright summer as it dwells,
 Amid leaves, and flowers, and sunshine,
 In lone haunts and grassy dells.
 Lo! the hill-encircled valley
 Is like an emerald cup,
 To its inmost depths all glowing,
 With sunlight brimming up.
 Here I'd dream away the day-time,
 And let happy thoughts have birth,
 And forget there's aught but glory,
 Aught but beauty on the earth.

Not a speck of cloud is floating
 In the deep blue overhead,

'Neath the trees the daisied verdure
 Like a broidered couch is spread.
 The rustling leaves are dancing
 With the light wind's music stirr'd,
 And in gushes through the stillness
 Comes the song of woodland bird.
 Here I'd dream away the day-time,
 And let gentlest thoughts have birth,
 And forget there's aught but gladness,
 Aught but peace upon the earth.

GOING OUT AND COMING IN.

In that home was joy and sorrow
 Where an infant first drew birth,
 While an aged sire was drawing
 Near unto the gate of death.
 His feeble pulse was failing,
 And his eye was growing dim;
 He was standing on the threshold
 When they brought the babe to him.

While to murmur forth a blessing
 On the little one he tried,
 In his trembling arms he raised it,
 Press'd it to his lips and died.
 An awful darkness resteth
 On the path they both begin,
 Who thus meet upon the threshold,
 Going out and coming in.

Going out unto the triumph,
 Coming in unto the fight—
 Coming in unto the darkness,
 Going out into the light;
 Although the shadow deepen'd
 In the moment of eclipse,
 When he pass'd through the dread portal
 With the blessing on his lips.

And to him who bravely conquers,
 As he conquer'd in the strife,
 Life is but a way of dying—
 Death is but the gate of life:
 Yet awful darkness resteth
 On the path we all begin,
 Where we meet upon the threshold,
 Going out and coming in.

MY MARY AN' ME.

We were baith neebor bairns, thegither we play'd,
 We loved our first love, an' our hearts never
 stray'd;

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When I got my young lassie her first vow to gie,
 We promised to wait for each ither a wee.

My nither was widow'd when we should hae wed,
 An' the night when we stood roun' my faither's
 death-bed,
 He echarged me a husband and father to be,
 While my young orphan sisters clung weeping to
 me.

I kent nae, my Mary, what high heart was thine,
 Nor how brightly thy love in a dark hour wad
 shine,
 Till in doubt and in sorrow, ye whisper'd to me,
 "Win the blessing o' Heaven for thy Mary and
 thee."

An' years hae flown by deeply laden wi' care,
 But Mary has help'd me their burden to bear,
 She gave me my shield in misfortune and wrong,
 'Twas she that aye bade me be steadfast and
 strong.

Her meek an' quiet spirit is aye smooth as now,
 Her saft shinin' hair meekly shades her white
 brow,
 A few silver threads 'mang its dark faulds I see,
 They tell me how lang she has waited on me.

Her cheek has grown paler, for she too maun toil,
 Her sma' hands are thinner, less mirthfu' her
 smile;
 She aft speaks o' heaven, and if she should dee,
 She tells me that there she'll be waitin' on me.

"OUR FATHER."¹

Among the little ones,
 "Our Father," let me say,
 I learn the holy childhood thus,
 And am a child as they.

Among the servants, Lord,
 I breathe the prayer divine,
 A servant among servants, so
 A servant—theirs and thine.

"Our Father," among men—
 The evil and the good—
 Daily for all on thee I call,
 And own their brotherhood.

Child, servant, brother, thus
 Alone can I be one
 With Him by whom in perfectness
 The Father's will was done.

¹ This beautiful lyric is the first of a series on the
 Lord's Prayer, from the author's volume *Songs of Conso-
 lation*, 1874.—E.D.

JAMES MACFARLAN.

BORN 1832—DIED 1862.

JAMES MACFARLAN—a gifted but almost forgotten Scottish poet, who died at the early age of thirty—was born in Glasgow, April 9, 1832. To his mother he was indebted for his first lessons, and was far advanced in reading when sent to school in his eighth year. His schoolmaster describes him “as one of those boys a teacher takes a pride in—always obedient, assiduous, and attentive; causing him little trouble, and realizing to him what the poet is pleased to describe as ‘The Delightful Task!’” In this school he remained for about two years, and made good progress in his education, giving evidence even thus early of the poetic power he displayed in after life. On leaving school James began to accompany his father in excursions which he at that time took among the towns and villages in the west of Scotland for the sale of his goods; and thus, travelling up and down the country, was the boy-poet for years made familiar with the magnificent scenery of nature, and fitted to produce that rich legacy of song which he has bequeathed to us.

In August, 1855, Macfarlan married Agnes Miller, whom he had known from earliest life. She was the poet's first love, and proved a suitable partner for him; but the youthful pair had to contend with the trials of straitened circumstances, for the largest wage the husband ever received was fifteen shillings a week, and that only for a very brief period. Yet, in spite of this adverse fortune, we find him in 1854 issuing a volume entitled “Poems: Pictures of the Past,” &c., published in London by Robert Hardwicke; and in rapid succession followed in book form “City Songs,” “Lyrics of Life,” “Wanderer of the West,” “The Attic Study, or Brief Notes on Nature, Men, and Books;” while in the course of his brief career he was engaged from day to day contributing to the periodical press the following among other writings:—“Tales and Sketches,” “One of a Million,” “Wayside Thoughts,” and composing poems for *All the Year Round*. His last production

in verse, written a few months before his death, was the thrilling lines entitled “The Drunkard's Doom.”

This literary work extended over a period of about eight years, but before its close a pulmonary disease had attacked the poet, and his recovery became doubtful. For the last two years of his life he was the daily companion and guest of Mr. H. Buchanan MacPhail, who took him on an excursion to Ireland and to various places on the Scottish coast. But all efforts for his recovery proved in vain, and he expired in Glasgow, Nov. 6, 1862. By his own desire his remains were interred in Mr. MacPhail's burying-ground, Cheapside Street, Anderston. Four children were the issue of the poet's marriage, one of whom, his second-born and favourite child Ann, alone survived him for some two years. A complete edition of his poems, with a memoir of the poet, is now (July, 1876) in preparation by Mr. MacPhail.

Of Macfarlan's poetic talent Dr. Rogers eloquently says:—“His muse taught philosophy, and dealt with the spiritual properties of things. Like the ancient enraptured prophet, his lofty conceptions impart breadth and compass to his imagery. Unlike the bards of the spasmodic school, he keeps a rein upon his fancy; his flights are never beyond the comprehension or the patience of his reader. His language is chaste, ornate, and exact; he concentrates rather than expands his sentiments; in the graceful flow of numbers, he never betrays a point of weakness. He has celebrated the nobler affections and instincts of the human heart—and painted with master hand the scenes of civic activity and rustic gladness. He writes hopefully of human progress, deprecates the revival of ancient feuds, and rejoices in a high-souled patriotism. He is the poet of that species of chivalry which cannot stoop to dishonour, and rejoices to upraise and support the weak. He has written not a single line which in the heart of another will awaken unpleasing emotions.”

THE LORDS OF LABOUR.

They come, they come, in a glorious march,
 You can hear their steam-steeds neigh,
 As they dash through Skill's triumphal arch,
 Or plunge 'mid the dancing spray.
 Their bale-fires blaze in the mighty forge,
 Their life-pulse throbs in the mill,
 Their lightnings shiver the gaping gorge,
 And their thunders shake the hill.
 Ho! these are the Titans of toil and trade,
 The heroes who wield no sabre;
 But mightier conquests reapeth the blade
 That is borne by the lords of labour.

Brave hearts like jewels light the sod,
 Through the mists of commerce shine,
 And souls flash out, like stars of God,
 From the midnight of the mine.
 No palace is theirs, no castle great,
 No princely pillar'd hall,
 But they well may laugh at the roofs of state,
 'Neath the heaven which is over all.
 Ho! these are the Titans of toil and trade,
 The heroes who wield no sabre;
 But mightier conquests reapeth the blade
 Which is borne by the lords of labour.

Each bares his arm for the ringing strife
 That marshals the sons of the soil,
 And the sweat-drops shed in their battle of life
 Are gems in the crown of Toil.
 And better their well-won wreaths, I trow,
 Than laurels with life-blood wet;
 And nobler the arch of a bare bold brow,
 Than the clasp of a coronet.
 Then hurrah for each hero, although his
 deed
 Be unblown by the trump or tabor,
 For holier, happier far is the meed
 That crowneth the lords of labour.

BOOKWORLD.

When the dim presence of the awful night
 Claps in its jewell'd arms the slumbering earth,
 Alone I sit beside the lowly light,
 That like a dream-fire flickers on my hearth,
 With some joy-teeming volume in my hand—
 A peopled planet, opulent and grand.

It may be Shakspeare, with his endless train
 Of sceptred thoughts, a glorious progeny
 Borne on the whirlwind of his mighty strain,
 Through vision-lands, for ever far and free,

His great mind beaming thro' those phantom
 crowds,
 Like evening sun from out a wealth of clouds.

It may be Milton, on his seraph wing,
 Soaring to heights of grandeur yet untrod;
 Now deep where horrid shapes of darkness cling,
 Now lost in splendour at the feet of God;
 Girt with the terror of avenging skies,
 Or wrapt in dreams of infant paradise.

It may be Spenser, with his misty shades
 Where forms of beauty wondrous tales rehearse,
 With breezy vistas, and with cool arcades
 Opening for ever in his antique verse.
 It may be Chaucer, with his drink divine,
 His Tabard old, and pilgrims twenty-nine.

Perchance I linger with the mighty three
 Of glorious Greece, that morning land of song,
 Who bared the fearful front of tragedy,
 And soared to fame on pinions broad and strong;
 Or watch beneath the Trojan ramparts proud
 The dim hosts gathering like a thunder-cloud.

No rust of time can sully Quixote's mail,
 In wonted rest his lance securely lies;
 Still is the faithful Sancho stout and hale,
 For ever wide his wonder-stricken eyes;
 And Rosinante, bare and spectral steed,
 Still throws gaunt shadows o'er their every deed.

Still can I robe me in the old delights
 Of caliph splendid, and of genii grim,
 The star-wealth of Arabia's Thousand Nights,
 Shining till every other light grows dim;
 Wander away in broad voluptuous lands,
 By streams of silver, and through golden sands;

Still hear the storms of Camoens burst and swell,
 His seas of vengeance raging wild and wide;
 Or wander by the glimmering fires of hell,
 With dreaming Dante and his spirit-guide;
 Loiter in Petrarch's green melodious grove,
 Or hang with Tasso o'er his hopeless love.

What then to me is all your sparkling dance,
 Wine-purpled banquet, or vain fashion's blaze,
 Thus roaming through the realms of rich romance,
 Old Bookworld, and its wealth of royal days,
 For ever with those brave and brilliant ones
 That fill time's channel like a stream of suns!

THE MIDNIGHT TRAIN.

Across the dull and brooding night
 A giant flies with demon light,
 And breath of wreathing smoke;
 Around him whirls the reeling plain,

And with a dash of grim disdain
He cleaves the Sundered rock.

In lonely swamps the low wind stirs
The belt of black funereal firs,
That murmur to the sky,
Till, startled by his mad career,
They seem to keep a hush of fear,
As if a god swept by!

Through many a dark wild heart of heath,
O'er booming bridges, where beneath
A midnight river brawls;
By ruins, remnants of the past,
Their ivies trembling in the blast;
By singing waterfalls!

The slumb'rer on his silent bed
Turns to the light his lonely head,
Divested of its dream.
Long leagues of gloom are hurried o'er,
Through tunnel-sheaths, with iron roar,
And shrill night-rending scream.

Past huddling huts, past flying farms,
High furnace flames, whose crimson arms
Are grappling with the night,
He tears along receding lands,
To where the kingly city stands,
Wrapt in a robe of light.

Here, round each wide and gushing gate,
A crowd of eager faces wait,
And every smile is known.
We thank thee, O thou Titan train,
That in the city once again
We clasp our loved, our own!

THE WIDOW'S WAKE.

Deep in the midnight lane,
Where glimmering tapers feebly pierce the
gloom,
Through many a winking pane,
All tearful in the rain,
The widow lies within her naked room.

Coldly the widow lies,
Though woe and want can touch her never more;
And in her beamless eyes
Grief's well, that rarely dries,
Never again shall hoard its oozy store.

Coldly the widow lies,
God's mighty midnight creepeth overhead
King's couch and pauper's bed,
All human tears, all cares, all agonies,
Beneath His gaze are spread.

And these poor boards of thin and dismal deal,
That hold her mortal relics, in His eyes
Are sacred as the gilded obsequies,
When purchased mourners kneel
Mid all the painful pomp in which some great
man lies.

None may this vigil keep:
Retired in life, the widow died alone,
And in this silent sleep
None wait by her; none weep
To find that she is gone.

Only the winds that steal
Coldly across the damp and broken wall,
On that pale visage fall,
As though they paused, her icy brow to feel,
Or death's blank gaze a moment to reveal,
Uplift the scanty pall.

And this is she who struggled long and sore,
In the black night-time of a dire distress—
Most patient wretchedness,
Bearing a bitter cross to death's dark door,
Receiving there—if humankind may guess—
A crown of glory for the thorns she wore.

THE RUINED CITY.

The shadows of a thousand Springs,
Unnumbered sunsets, sternly sleep
Above the dust of perished things
That form this city's blasted heap.
Dull watch the crumbling columns keep
Against the fierce relentless sky,
Hours, that no dial noteth, creep
Like unremembered phantoms by;
And still this city of the dead
Gives echo to no human tread.

A curse is writ on every stone.
The temple's latest pillar lies
Like some white mammoth's bleaching bone
Its altars know no deities.
Fine columns of a palace rise,
And when the sun is red and low,
And glaring in the molten skies,
A shadow huge these columns throw,
That like some dark colossal hand
In silence creeps across the sand.

The senate slumbers, wondrons hive
Of counsels sage, of subtle schemes;
But does no lingering tone survive
To prove their presence more than dreams?
No light of revelation beams
Around that voiceless forum now,

Time bears upon his restless streams
 No reflex of the haughty brow
 That oft has frowned a nation's fate
 Here—where dark reptiles congregate.

Where, where is now the regal rag
 That clothed the monarch of you tower,
 On which the rank weed flaps its flag
 Across the dusk this sombre hour?
 Alas! for pomp, alas! for power,
 When time unveils their nakedness.
 And valour's strength and beauty's flower
 Find nought to echo their distress;
 And flattery—fine delusive breath—
 Melts in the iron grasp of death.

Day rises with an angry glance,
 As if to blight the stagnant air,
 And hurls his fierce and fiery lance
 On that doomed city's forehead bare.
 The sunset's wild and wandering hair
 Streams backward like a comet's mane,
 And from the deep and sullen glare
 The shuddering columns crouch in vain,
 And through the wreck of wrathful years
 The grim hyæna stalks and sneers.

SHADOWS ON THE WALL.

Beside the hearth there is an hour of dreaming,
 A calm and pensive solitude of soul,
 When life and death have each another seeming,
 And thoughts are with us owning no control.
 These are the spirits, memory's revealing,
 In deep solemnity they rise and fall,
 Shrouding the living present, and concealing
 The world around us—Shadows on the Wall.

Hopes, like the leaves and blossoms, rudely shaken
 By cruel winds of winter, from the tree
 Of our existence; phantoms that awaken
 Wild passing gleams of joy's young ecstasy;
 And love, once kind and tenderly outpouring
 Her wine into our souls, we may recall,
 And find them dear and ever heavenward soaring,
 Though only now as Shadows on the Wall.

Old clasping hands, old friendships and affections,
 Once bodied forms beside us on the earth,
 Come back to haunt us, ghostly recollections
 With mystic converse by the silent hearth.
 Yet these are kindly spirits, and retiring
 Draw their long shadows slowly from the wall.
 And visit us in peace and gentleness, inspiring
 A hope that brings the sunshine after all.

DAVID GRAY.

BORN 1838—DIED 1861.

DAVID GRAY, the son of a poor weaver, and the eldest of eight children, was born Jan. 29, 1838, at Duntiblae, on the banks of the Luggie, about eight miles from Glasgow. From early childhood the little fellow was noted for his wit and cleverness; and while at the Kirkintilloch parish school his literary bias became strikingly apparent. Zealous at his tasks, bright with precocious intellect, an unconscionable devourer of books, and ambitious of fame, it was early intended that he should devote himself to the ministry. When about fourteen years old he was accordingly sent to Glasgow, where, supporting himself to a considerable extent by laborious tuition, first as a pupil teacher in a public school in Bridgeton, and afterward as Queen's scholar in the Free Church Normal Seminary, he contrived to attend the Humanity, Greek, and other

classes in the university during four successive sessions. Having likewise obtained some employment as a private tutor, he found it necessary to add French to his lingual acquisitions. But whatever progress he made in his more severe studies, it soon became evident that the bent of his mind was poetical, rather than theological. In place of composing sermons he took to writing verses, many of which were published in the *Glasgow Citizen*; and finally abandoning the idea of the pulpit, he decided on the career of a man of letters.

Soon after Gray went to London, living in a garret with his poet friend Robert Buchanan, now on the high road to immortality, and trying unsuccessfully to obtain a publisher for his poems. From Lord Houghton, the biographer of John Keats, he received some literary employment; and when the young poet

was suddenly struck down in the enthusiasm of his struggles and the pride of his hopes with ill-health, that nobleman furnished him with the best medical advice, and, after a brief sojourn in the south of England without benefit, had him carefully sent back to his father's humble home at Merkland. Here he lingered for some months, and at length passed away tranquilly, Dec. 3, 1861, almost his last words being "God has love, and I have faith." The day previous his heart was gladdened by the sight of a specimen page of his "Luggie." After his death the following epitaph, written in his own clear hand, was found among his papers:—

"Below lies one whose name was traced in sand;
He died not knowing what it was to live:
Died while the first sweet consciousness of manhood
And maiden thought electrified his soul;
Faint beatings in the calyx of the rose.
Bewildered reader, pass without a sigh
In a proud sorrow! There is life with God,
In other kingdom of a sweeter air;
In Eden every flower is blown. Amen."

A handsome monument was erected to the young poet's memory by friends from far and near in the "Auld Aisle" burying-ground near Kirkintilloch, and an address delivered by Sheriff Bell on the occasion of its inauguration, July 29, 1865. About the same time there appeared a small volume entitled *Poems by David Gray, with Memoirs*, from the pens of Lord Houghton and James Hedderwick; and Robert Buchanan also published a lengthy obituary notice in the *Cornhill Magazine*. This work was republished in the United States, and met with a large circulation. A new and enlarged edition of Gray's *Poems* was issued in Glasgow in 1874 by James Maclehose, through whose courtesy we are permitted to insert the following selections.

In the memoir of Gray, his generous friend Lord Houghton remarks: "I will not here assume the position of a poetical critic, both because I know such criticism to be dreary and unsatisfactory, and because I am conscious that the personal interest I took in David Gray is likely in some degree to influence my judgment. There is in truth no critic of poetry but the man who enjoys it, and the amount of gratification felt is the only just measure of criticism. I believe, however, that I should have found much pleasure in these poems if I had met with them accidentally, and if I had been unaware of the strange and pathetic incidents of their production. But the public mind will not separate the intrinsic merits of the verses from the story of the writer, any more than the works and fate of Keats or Chatterton. We value all connected with the being of every true poet, because it is the highest form of nature that man is permitted to study and enjoy."

The object of Gray's principal poem, "The Luggie," as has been well said, "may not possess in itself much to attract the painter's eye, but it has sufficed for a poet's love." Of his sonnets entitled "In the Shadows," Sheriff Bell remarks, they "appear to me to possess a solemn beauty not surpassed by many of the finest passages in Tennyson's 'In Memoriam,' totally distinct and unlike the 'In Memoriam,' but as genuine, as sincere, as heart-stirring, and often as poetical. In the poet's own words, they admit you 'to the chancel of a dying poet's mind:' you feel when you are reading these sonnets that they are written in the sure and immediate prospect of death; but they contain thoughts about life, about the past, and about the future, most powerful and most beautiful."

THE YELLOW-HAMMER.

In fairy glen of Woodilee,
One sunny summer morning,
I plucked a little birchen tree,
The spongy moss adorning;
And bearing it delighted home,
I planted it in garden loam,
Where, perfecting all duty,
It flower'd in tasselled beauty.

When delicate April in each dell
Was silently completing
Her ministry in bud and bell,
To grace the summer's meeting;
My birchen tree of glossy rind
Determined not to be behind;
So with a subtle power
The buds began to flower.

And I could watch from out my house
 The twigs with leaflets thicken;
 From glossy rind to twining boughs
 The milky sap 'gan quicken.
 And when the fragrant form was green
 No fairer tree was to be seen,
 All Gartshore woods adorning,
 Where doves are always mourning.

But never dove with liquid wing,
 Or neck of changeful gleaming,
 Came near my garden tree to sing,
 Or croodle out its meaning.
 But this sweet day, an hour ago,
 A yellow-hammer, clear and low,
 In love and tender pity
 Trilled out his dainty ditty.

And I was pleased, as you may think,
 And blessed the little singer:
 "O fly for your mate to Luggie brink,
 Dear little bird! and bring her;
 And build your nest among the boughs,
 A sweet and cosy little house,
 Where ye may well content ye,
 Since true love is so plenty.

"And when she sits upon her nest,
 Here are cool shades to shroud her;"
 At this the singer sang his best,
 O louder yet, and louder;
 Until I shouted in my glee,
 His song had so enchanted me:
 No nightingale could pant on
 In joy so wise and wanton.

But at my careless noise he flew,
 And if he chance to bring her
 A happy bride the summer through
 'Mong birchen boughs to linger,
 I'll sing to you in numbers high
 A summer song that shall not die,
 But keep in memory clearly
 The bird I love so dearly.

THE HAREBELL.

Beneath a hedge of thorn, and near
 Where Bothin steals through light and shadow,
 I saw its bell, so blue and clear—
 That little beauty of the meadow.

It was a modest, tender flower—
 So clearly blue, so sweetly tender;
 No simpler offspring of the shower
 And sunshine may July engender.

The "azure harebell," Shakspeare says—
 And such a half-transparent azure
 Was never seen in country ways
 By poet in creative leisure.

But chiefly the beloved song—
 The patriot ballad, fresh and olden—
 The "Scottish Blue Bells," rose among
 Some other memories, pure and golden.

And chiming o'er one verse of power,
 While in the chalice fondly peering,
 A tear-drop fell upon the flower—
 My blessing earnest and enduring.

The prize was mine!—but no, ah! no—
 To spare it was a poet's duty;
 So in that spot I let it blow,
 And left it in its lonely beauty.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

O love, whose patient pilgrim feet
 Life's longest path have trod;
 Whose ministry hath symbolized sweet
 The dearer love of God;
 The sacred myrtle rears again
 Thine altar as of old;
 And what was green with summer then,
 Is mellowed now to gold.

Not now, as then, the future's face
 Is flushed with fancy's light;
 But memory, with a milder grace,
 Shall rule the feast to-night.
 Blest was the sun of joy that shone,
 Nor less the blinding shower;
 The bud of fifty years agone
 Is love's perfected flower.

O memory, ope thy mystic door;
 O dream of youth, return;
 And let the light that gleamed of yore
 Beside this altar burn.
 The past is plain; 'twas love designed
 E'en sorrow's iron chain;
 And mercy's shining thread has twined
 With the dark warp of pain.

So be it still, O thou who hast
 That younger bridal blest,
 Till the May-morn of love has past
 To evening's golden west;
 Come to this later Cana, Lord,
 And, at thy touch divine,
 The water of that earlier board
 To-night shall turn to wine.

AN OCTOBER MUSING.

Ere the last stack is housed, and woods are bare,
 And the vermilion fruitage of the brier
 Is soaked in mist, or shrivelled up with frost;
 Ere warm spring nests are coldly to be seen
 Tenantless but for rain and the cold snow,
 While yet there is a loveliness abroad—
 The frail and indescribable loveliness
 Of a fair form life with reluctance leaves,
 Being then only powerful,—while the earth
 Wears sackcloth in her great prophetic grief:—

Then the reflective, melancholy soul,
 Aimlessly wandering with slow-falling feet
 The heathery solitude, in hope to assuage
 The cunning humour of his malady,
 Loses his painful bitterness, and feels
 His own specific sorrows one by one
 Taken up in the huge dolor of all things,
 O, the sweet melancholy of the time,
 When gently, ere the heart appeals, the year
 Shines in the fatal beauty of decay;
 When the sun sinks enlarged on Carrouben,
 Nakedly visible, without a cloud,

And faintly from the faint eternal blue
 (That dim sweet harebell colour) comes the star
 Which evening wears, when Luggie flows in mist,
 And in the cottage windows one by one,
 With sudden twinkle, household lamps are lit—
 What noiseless falling of the faded leaf!

SONNET.

If it must be; if it must be, O God!
 That I die young, and make no further moans;
 That, underneath the unrespective sod,
 In unseutehoned privacy, my bones
 Shall crumble soon;—then give me strength to
 bear
 The last convulsive throe of too sweet breath!
 I tremble from the edge of life, to dare
 The dark and fatal leap, having no faith,
 No glorious yearning for the Apocalypse;
 But like a child that in the night-time cries
 For light, I cry; forgetting the eclipse
 Of knowledge and our human destinies,
 O peevish and uncertain soul! obey
 The law of life in patience till the Day.

WILLIAM LEIGHTON.

BORN 1841—DIED 1869.

WILLIAM LEIGHTON, a young poet of great promise, who died at the early age of twenty-eight, was born at Dundee, February 3, 1841. In his seventh year his family removed to Liverpool, where he received his education, and where the remainder of his short life was spent. At the age of thirteen he was placed in a merchant's office, and in course of time he attained the position of confidential clerk to a firm engaged in the Brazil trade. An assiduous attention to business left him but little leisure for the cultivation of his natural taste for literature, but the greater portion of his spare hours was devoted to study and composition. Poetry was his passion, and his favourite authors were Shakspeare, Tennyson, and Longfellow. He began to write verses at an early age, and the majority of his poems were composed before he had completed his twenty-third year. They had appeared in the

columns of various periodicals, and the poet was often urged by his friends to collect and publish them in a volume. He was engaged in preparing this volume for the press when he was attacked by typhoid fever, and after a brief illness died April 22, 1869. The year following his poetical writings, with a brief memoir from the pen of his brother, were published, and a second edition has since appeared. Of the fourscore thoughtful pieces contained in the little volume, all breathing a genuine poetic spirit and a vein of delicate fancy, a new edition is now in preparation, to which will be added other hitherto unpublished poems, essays, and sketches.

The *Westminster Review*, in a notice of his poems, remarks, "The late William Leighton came of a poetical family. We remember being struck some years ago with the remarkable powers of description shown in Mr. Robert

Leighton's poems. The nephew possesses much the same power and facility. A love for nature in her quietest moods and a vein of a delicate fancy distinguish the present poems. What Mr. William or Mr. Robert Leighton might

have accomplished had their lives been spared, it is impossible to say. We can but lament the early deaths of two relatives who were certainly endowed with poetical gifts of no common order."

THE LEAF OF WOODRUFF.

I found a leaf of woodruff in a book,
Gone was its scent, and lost its pristine glory;
Each slender bladelet wore a dingy look,
And all was blanched and hoary.

And yet this withered leaf a spell possessed,
Which worked upon me in mysterious measure,
And sent old memories thronging through my breast
Of mingled pain and pleasure—

Of childhood's days that knew no thought of care;
Of hours that passed on wings of rainbow fleet-
ness;

Of odours floating on the wanton air,
Sad from their very sweetness;

Of woods that wore a garb of summer green;
Of knee-deep ferns, and nooks of shady stillness;
Of streams that glimmered in the full moon's sheen
And mirrored back its fulness;

Of lazy baskings on the lone hill-side
In the fierce glow of July's sultry weather;
Of twilight wanderings where the enamoured tide
Crept up to kiss the heather;

Of voices still beneath the churchyard sod,
Bright eyes that glistened from behind long
lashes;

Warm beauty early given back to God;
Red lips that now are ashes!

And many other memories, gay and grave,
The woodruff brought in life-like guise before
me;

Until I marvelled how a leaf could have
Such magic influence o'er me.

Ah, so it is! all that hath ever been
Experienced by the spirit is immortal;
Each hope and joy and grief is hid within
The memory's sacred portal.

And yet the soft glow of a moonlight hour,
A strain of haunting music sweet and olden,
A dream, a bird, a bee, a leaf, a flower,
A sunset rich and golden,

Can fling that portal open; and beyond
Appears the record of each earlier feeling;—

All hopes, all joys, all fears, all musings fond,
In infinite revealing.

Till all the present passes from the sight—
Its cares and woes that make us weary-hearted,
And leaves us basking in the holy light
Of golden days departed.

SUMMERS LONG AGO.

How sweet to me the memories of happy days
of youth,

When my heart was full of gladness and my
smile was full of truth,

When everything I gazed upon seemed beauti-
ful and fair,

And all the livelong summer day I never knew
a care;

When I could scarcely understand such things
as grief and woe—

Ah! those were happy, happy days, those sum-
mers long ago.

The merry birds sang joyously, the sun shone
brighter then,

The flow'rets grew more fragrantly down in the
grassy glen,

The waters had a brighter flash, and bluer was
the sky,

And greener were the forest trees that waved
their branches high,

And sweeter was the gentle breeze that thrilled
a music low

Throughout my heart, and made me love those
summers long ago.

Then, stretched beneath the forest trees, upon
the ground I lay,

And heard the rustling of the leaves through
the long summer day;

The happy carol of the thrush, the blackbird's
whistle clear,

Like softly whispered melodies fell gently on
my ear,

And like Æolian harpings sweet, the prattling
brooklet's flow,

Gushing and bright came o'er my heart in
summers long ago.

And when the sun with fiery face was sinking
fast to rest,
And evening's dim pale glimmering star was
twinkling in the west,
Oh how I loved to wander then at twilight's
dreamy hour,
To feel the freshness of the breeze, the fragrance
of the flower,
To gaze in transport at the heavens, and wonder
at the glow—
The purple glow of eventide, in summers long
ago.

Ah! those indeed were happy days, my heart
knew nought of guile,
And all God's earth then seemed to me one
universal smile!
And oft amid this stern world's strife my
memory ponders o'er,
And fondly dwells upon those days—those
joyous days of yore;
The silent stars may cease to shine, and all
things fade below,
But I never, never can forget the summers
long ago!

THE CLOUD.

I saw a little lonely clond
Hung on the western verge of heaven;
In twilight's earliest beams it glowed,
And mirrored back the blush of even;
No other cloud was in the sky,
It lay in lonely witchery.

The twilight deepened: one by one
The pale stars trembled through the haze;
The golden light of eve was gone,
And gone the sunset's lingering blaze;
Yet still that little cloulet lay
In mellow beauty, softly gay.

A silence brooded far and nigh,
A stillness burdened all the air,
And the wide welkin stretched on high
In dusky azure everywhere,—
Save that one spot, where, earthward bowed,
Stooped down the solitary clond.

It looked so lovely as it lay
Becalmed upon the waveless blue!

Its border melting, faintly gray,
Into the sky's diviner hue;
And yet, I know not how nor why,
It brought the tear-drop to my eye!

And ever when I think upon
That clond on the horizon's rim,
Brooding in beauty, rich and lone—
My heart is sad, my eyes grow dim!
And I could long to fly away
To where the little cloulet lay!

'Tis ever thus! the spirit pants
For all things peaceful, fair, and sweet;
For joys that leave no aching wants;
For bliss that is not incomplete!
But all these yearnings vague and fond
Must anchor in the great Beyond!

BABY DIED TO-DAY.

Lay the little limbs out straight;
Gently tend the sacred clay;
Sorrow-shaded is our fate—
Baby died to-day!

Fold the hands across the breast,
So, as when he knelt to pray;
Leave him to his dreamless rest—
Baby died to-day!

Voice, whose prattling infant-lore
Was the music of our way,
Now is hushed for evermore—
Baby died to-day!

Sweet blue eyes, whose sunny gleams
Made our waking moments gay,
Now can shine but in our dreams—
Baby died to-day!

Still a smile is on his face,
But it lacks the joyous play
Of the one we used to trace—
Baby died to-day!

Give his lips your latest kiss;
Dry your eyes and come away;
In a happier world than this
Baby lives to-day!



ROBERT BUCHANAN.

ROBERT BUCHANAN, the son of a well-known Socialist missionary, long resident in Glasgow, was born at Caverswall, Staffordshire, Aug. 18, 1841, and was educated at the High-school and University of Glasgow. At an early age he began the career of a man of letters, and in 1860 issued his first volume of poems with the title of *Undertones*. While it occasionally reflected the manner of Browning and Tennyson, the volume clearly showed that it was the offspring of a genuine poet. His second work, *Idyls and Legends of Inverburn*, while inferior to Tennyson's idyls as ornate compositions, are for unstudied pathos and humour greatly superior to the laureate's. In this volume Mr. Buchanan's foot is on his native heath, which he bestrides with as much pride as affection. *London Poems*, his third publication, containing the most representative and original of his creations, was followed by a beautifully illustrated volume entitled *Ballad Stories of the Affections*, translated from the Scandinavian. His other publications are *North Coast and other Poems*, *The Book of Orm*, *The Drama of Kings*, and *The Land of Lorne*. The latter volume contains a very full and sympathetic account of the Burns of the Highlands—Duncan Ban Macintyre, to whose memory a monument was recently erected at Glenorchy. Mr. Buchanan is also the author of "A Madcap Prince," a play produced at the Haymarket Theatre, London, 1874, but written in youth; "Napoleon Fallen," a lyrical drama; and the tragedy of "The Witchfinder," brought out at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, London. He has edited several works, including a memoir of John James Audubon,

the American naturalist, written by his widow; an edition of Henry W. Longfellow's poems; and is a frequent and favourite contributor to many of the leading magazines. Mr. Buchanan also published anonymously two widely-circulated poems, "St. Abe," and "White Rose and Red," both of which he has recently acknowledged, and each of which has gone through many editions. An edition of his acknowledged poetical and prose writings is being published in London in five handsome volumes. In 1870 he received from Mr. Gladstone a pension of £100 per annum, in consideration of his literary merit as a poet.

The American critic Stedman, himself a poet, thus concludes an appreciative notice of Buchanan and his writings: "His merits lie in his originality, earnestness, and admirable understanding of nature, in freedom of style and strength of general effect. His best poetry grows upon the reader. He is still young, scarcely having begun the mature creative period, and if he will study the graces of restraint, and cling to some department of art in which he is easily foremost, he should not fail of a new and still more successful career." A still higher authority, Mr. R. H. Hutton of the *Spectator*, writes, reviewing Mr. Buchanan's collected works:—"To our mind, after long knowledge of his poems, they seem to us nearly perfect of their kind, realistic and idealistic alike in the highest sense. Nor has the voice of dumb wistful yearning in Man towards something higher—of yearning such as the brute creation seemed to show in the Greek period towards the human—found as yet any interpreter equal to Buchanan."

WILLIE BAIRD.

A WINTER IDYL.¹

'Tis two-and-thirty summers since I came
To school the village lads of Inverburn.

My father was a shepherd old and poor,
Who, dwelling 'mong the clouds on norland hills,
His tartan plaidie on, and by his side

His sheep-dog running, reddened with the winds
That whistle southward from the Polar seas:
I follow'd in his footsteps when a boy,

¹ Few poems have more fairly deserved their welcome than "Willie Baird." Buchanan justly may be pro-

And knew by heart the mountains round our
home;
But when I went to Edinglass, to learn
At college there, I look'd about the place,
And heard the murmur of the busy streets
Around me, in a dream;—and only saw
The clouds that snow around the mountain-tops,
The mists that chase the phantom of the moon
In lonely mountain tarns,—and heard the while,
Not footsteps sounding hollow to and fro,
But wild winds, wailing thro' the woods of pine.
Time pass'd; and day by day those sights and
sounds
Grew fainter,—till they troubled me no more.

O Willie, Willie, are you sleeping sound?
And can you feel the stone that I have placed
Yonder above you? Are you dead, my doo?
Or did you see the shining Hand that parts
The clouds above, and becks the bonnie birds,
Until they wing away, and human eyes,
That watch them while they vanish up the blue,
Droop and grow tearful? Ay, I ken, I ken,
I'm talking folly, but I loved the child!
He was the bravest scholar in the school!
He came to teach the very dominie—
J'e, with my lyart locks and sleepy heart!

Oh, well I mind the day his mother brought
Her tiny trembling tot with yellow hair,
Her tiny poor-clad tot six summers old,
And left him seated lonely on a form
Before my desk. He neither wept nor gloom'd;
But waited silently, with shoeless feet
Swinging above the floor; in wonder eyed
The maps upon the walls, the big black-board,
The slates and books and copies, and my own
Gray hose and clumpy boots; last, fixing gaze
Upon a monster spider's web that fill'd
One corner of the whitewash'd ceiling, watch'd
The speckled traitor jump and jink about,
Till he forgot my unfamiliar eyes,
Weary and strange and old. "Come here, my
bairn!"
And timid as a lamb he cecled up,
"What do they call ye?" "Willie," coo'd the
wean,
Up-peeping slyly, scraping with his feet.
I put my hand upon his yellow hair,
And cheer'd him kindly. Then I bade him lift
The small black bell that stands behind the door,
And ring the shouting laddies from their play.
"Run, Willie!" And he ran, and eyed the bell,
Stoop'd o'er it, seem'd afraid that it would bite,
Then grasp'd it firm, and as it jingled gave
A timid cry—next laugh'd to hear the sound—

nounced the most faithful poet of Nature among the
new men. He is her familiar, and in this respect it
would seem as if the mantle of Wordsworth had fallen
to him from some fine sunset or misty height.—*Sted-
man's Victorian Poets*, Boston, 1876.

And ran full merry to the door and rang,
And rang, and rang, while lights of music lit
His pallid cheek, till, shouting, panting hard,
In ran the big rough laddies from their play.

Then, rapping sharply on the desk, I drove
The scholars to their seats, and beckon'd up
The stranger; smiling, bade him seat himself,
And hearken to the rest. Two weary hours,
Buzz-buzz, boom-boon, went on the noise of
school,
While Willie sat and listen'd open-mouth'd;
Till school was over, and the big and small
Flew home in flocks. But Willie stay'd behind.
I beckon'd to the mamock with a smile,
Took him upon my knee, and crack'd and talk'd.

First, he was timid; next, grew bashful; next,
He warm'd, and told me stories of his home,
His father, mother, sisters, brothers, all;
And how, when strong and big, he meant to buy
A gig to drive his father to the kirk;
And how he long'd to be a dominie!
Such simple prattle as I plainly see
Your wisdom smiles at. . . . Weel! the laddie
still

Was seated on my knee, when at the door
We heard a sound of scraping; Willie prick'd
His ears and listen'd, then he clapt his hands—
"Hey! Donald, Donald, Donald!" [See! the
rogue
Looks up and blinks his eyes—he knows his name!]
"Hey, Donald, Donald!" Willie cried. At that
I saw beneath me, at the door, a dog—
The very collie dozing at your feet,
His nose between his paws, his eyes half closed.
At sight of Willie, with a joyful bark
He leapt and gamboll'd, eying me the while
In queer suspicion; and the mamock peep'd
Into my face, while patting Donald's back—
"It's Donald! he has come to take me home!"

An old man's tale, a tale for men gray-hair'd,
Who wear, thro' second childhood, to the grave!
I'll hasten on. Thenceforward Willie came
Daily to school, and daily to the door
Came Donald trotting; and they homeward went
Together—Willie walking slow but sure,
And Donald trotting sagely by his side.
[Ay, Donald, he is dead! be still, old man!]

What link existed, human or divine,
Between the tiny tot six summers old,
And yonder life of mine upon the hills
Among the mists and storms? 'Tis strange, 'tis
strange!

But when I look'd on Willie's face, it seem'd
That I had known it in some beauteous life
That I had left behind me in the North!
This fancy grew and grew, till oft I sat—
The buzzing school around me—and would seem
To be among the mists, the tracks of rain,

Nearing the silence of the sleeping snow.
 Slowly and surely I began to feel
 That I was all alone in all the world,
 And that my mother and my father slept
 Far, far away, in some forgotten kirk—
 Remember'd but in dreams. Alone at nights,
 I read my Bible more and Euclid less.
 For, mind you, like my betters, I had been
 Half scoffer, half believer; on the whole,
 I thought the life beyond a useless dream,
 Best left alone, and shut my eyes to themes
 That puzzled mathematicians. But at last,
 When Willie Baird and I grew friends, and
 thoughts
 Came to me from beyond my father's grave,
 I found 'twas *pleasant* late at e'en to read
 The Scripture—haply, only just to pick
 Some easy chapter for my pet to learn—
 Yet night by night my soul was guided on
 Like a blind man some angel hand conveys.

I cannot frame in speech the thoughts that fill'd
 This gray old brow, the feelings dim and warm
 That soothed the throbbings of this weary heart!
 But when I placed my hand on Willie's head,
 Warm sunshine tingled from the yellow hair
 Thro' trembling fingers to my blood within!
 And when I look'd in Willie's stainless eyes
 I saw the empty ether, floating gray
 O'er shadowy mountains murmuring low with
 winds!
 And often when, in his old-fashion'd way,
 He question'd me, I seem'd to hear a voice
 From far away, that mingled with the cries
 Haunting the regions where the round red sun
 Is all alone with God among the snow!

Who made the stars! and if within his hand
 He caught and held one, would his fingers burn?
 If I, the gray-hair'd dominie, was dug
 From out a cabbage garden such as *he*
 Was found in? if, when bigger, he would wear
 Gray homespun hose and clumsy boots like mine,
 And have a house to dwell in all alone?
 Thus would he question, seated on my knee,
 While Donald [*cheesht, old man!*] stretch'd lyart
 limbs
 Under my chair, contented. Open-mouth'd
 He hearken'd to the tales I loved to tell
 About Sir William Wallace and the Bruce,
 And the sweet lady on the Scottish throne,
 Whose crown was colder than a band of ice,
 Yet seem'd a sunny crown when'er she smiled;
 With many tales of genii, giants, dwarfs,
 And little folk that play at jing-a-ring
 On beds of harebells 'neath the silver moon;
 Stories and rhymes and songs of Wonder-land:
 How Tammas Ercildoune in Elfdand dwelt,
 How Galloway's mermaid comb'd her golden hair,
 How Tammas Thumb stuck in the spider's web,
 And fought and fought, a needle for his sword,

Dyeing his weapon in the crimson blood
 Of the foul traitor with the poison'd fangs!

And when we read the Holy Book, the child
 Would think and think o'er parts he loved the
 best:—
 The draught of fish, the Child that sat so wise
 In the great Temple, Herod's cruel law
 To slay the babes, or—oftenest of all—
 The crucifixion of the Good Kind Man
 Who loved the babes, and was a babe himself.
 He speir'd of death; and were the sleepers *coll*
 Down in the dark wet earth? and was it *God*
 That put the grass and flowers in the kirk-yard?
 What kind of dwelling-place was heaven above?
 And was it full of *flowers*? and were there *schools*
 And *dominies* there? and was it *far away*?
 Then, with a look that made your eyes grow dim,
 Clasp'ing his wee white hands round Donald's
 neck,
 "Do *doggies* gang to heaven?" he would ask;
 "Would Donald gang?" and keek'd in Donald's
 face,
 While Donald blink'd with meditative gaze,
 As if he knew full brawly what we said,
 And ponder'd o'er it, wiser far than we.
 But how I answer'd, how explain'd, these themes,
 I know not. Oft I could not speak at all.
 Yet every question made me think of things
 Forgotten, puzzled so, and when I strove
 To reason puzzled me so much the more,
 That, flinging logic to the winds, I went
 Straight onward to the mark in Willie's way,
 Took most for granted, laid down premises
 Of faith, imagined, gave my wit the reins,
 And often in the night, to my surprise,
 Felt palpably an angel's glowing face
 Glimmering down upon me, while mine eyes
 Dimm'd their old orbs with tears that came unbid
 To bear the glory of the light they saw!

So summer pass'd. You chestnut at the door
 Scatter'd its burnish'd leaves and made a sound
 Of wind among its branches. Every day
 Came Willie, seldom going home again
 Till near the sunset: wet or dry he came:
 Oft in the rainy weather carrying
 A big umbrella, under which he walk'd—
 A little fairy in a parachute,
 Blown hither, thither, at the wind's wild will.
 Pleased was my heart to see his pallid cheeks
 Were gathering rosy-poses, that his eyes
 Were softer and less sad. Then, with a gust,
 Old Winter tumbled shrieking from the hills,
 His white hair blowing in the wind.

The house
 Where Willie's mother lives is scarce a mile
 From yonder hallan, if you take a cut
 Before you reach the village, crossing o'er
 Green meadows till you reach the road again;

But he who thither goes along the road
Loses a reaper's mile. The summer long
Wee Willie came and went across the fields.
He loved the smell of flowers and grass, the sight
Of cows and sheep, the changing stalks of wheat,
And he was weak and small. When winter came,
Still caring not a straw for wind or rain,
Came Willie and the collie; till by night
Down fell the snow, and fell three nights and days,
Then ceased. The ground was white and ankle-
deep;

The window of the school was threaded o'er
With flowers of hueless ice—Frost's unseen hands
Prick'd you from head to foot with tingling heat.
The shouting urchins, yonder on the green,
Play'd snowballs. In the school a cheery fire
Was kindled every day, and every day
When Willie came he had the warmest seat,
And every day old Donald, punctual, came
To join us, after labour, in the lowe.

Three days and nights the snow had mistily
fall'n.

It lay long miles along the country-side,
White, awful, silent. In the keen cold air
There was a hush, a sleepless silentness,
And 'mid it all, npraising eyes, you felt
Frost's breath upon your face. And in your blood,
Though you were cold to touch, was flaming fire,
Such as within the bowels of the earth
Burnt at the bones of ice, and wreath'd them
round
With grass ungrawn.

One day in school I saw,
Through threaded window-panes, soft snowy flakes
Swim with unquiet motion, mistily, slowly,
At intervals; but when the boys were gone,
And in ran Donald with a dripping nose,
The air was clear and gray as glass. An hour
Sat Willie, Donald, and myself around
The murruring fire; and then with tender hand
I wrapt a comforter round Willie's throat,
Button'd his coat around him close and warm,
And off he ran with Donald, happy-eyed
And merry, leaving fairy prints of feet
Behind him on the snow. I watch'd them fade
Round the white road, and, turning with a sigh,
Came in to sort the room and smoke a pipe
Before the fire. Here, dreamingly and alone,
I sat and smoked, and in the fire saw clear
The norland mountains, white and cold with
snow,
That crumbled silently, and moved, and changed,—
When suddenly the air grew sick and dark,
And from the distance came a hollow sound,
A murmur like the moan of far-off seas.

I started to my feet, look'd out, and knew
The winter wind was whistling from the east
To lash the snow-clothed plain, and to myself

I prophesied a storm before the night.
Then with an icy pain, an eldritch gleam,
I thought of Willie; but I cheer'd my heart,
"He's home, and with his mother, long ere this!"
While thus I stood the hollow murmur grew
Deeper, the wold grew darker, and the snow
Rush'd downward, whirling in a shadowy mist.
I walk'd to yonder door and open'd it.
Whirr! the wind swung it from me with a clang,
And in upon me with an iron-like crash
Swoop'd in the drift. With pinch'd sharp face
I gazed

Out on the storm! Dark, dark was all! A mist,
A blinding, whirling mist, of chilly snow,
The falling and the driven; for the wind
Swept round and round in spindrift on the earth,
And birm'd the deathly drift aloft with moans,
Till all was swooning darkness. Far above
A voice was shrieking, like a human cry.

I closed the door, and turn'd me to the fire,
With something on my heart—a load—a sense
Of an impending pain. Down the broad lum
Came melting flakes, that hiss'd upon the coal;
Under my eyelids blew the blinding smoke;
And for a time I sat like one bewitch'd,
Still as a stone. The lonely room grew dark,
The flickering fire threw phantoms of the fog
Along the floor and on the walls around;
The melancholy ticking of the clock
Was like the beating of my heart. But, hush!
Above the moaning of the wind I heard
A sudden scraping at the door . . . my heart
Stood still and listen'd . . . and with that there
rose

An anguish'd howl, shrill as a dying screech,
And scrape-scrape-scrape, the sound beyond the
door!

I could not think—I could not cry nor breathe—
A fierce foreboding gript me like a hand,
As opening the door I gazed straight out,
Saw nothing, till I felt against my knees
Something that moved, and heard a moaning
sound—

Then, panting, moaning, o'er the threshold leapt
Donald, the dog, alone, and white with snow.

Down, Donald! down, old man! Sir, look at
him!

I swear he knows the meaning of my words,
And tho' he cannot speak, his heart is full!
See now! see now! he puts his cold black nose
Into my palm and whines! he knows, he knows!
Would speak, and cannot, but he minds that
night!

The terror of my heart seem'd choking me:
Wildly I stared in wonder at the dog,
Who gazed into my face and whined and moan'd,
Leap'd at the door, then touch'd me with his paws,
And lastly, grip my coat between his teeth,

And pull'd and pull'd—with stifled howls and whines—

Till fairly madden'd, stupified with fear,
I let him drag me through the banging door
Out to the whirling storm. Bareheaded, wild,
The wind and snow-drift beating on my face,
Blowing me hither, thither, with the dog,
I dash'd along the road. . . . What follow'd, seem'd
An eerie, eerie dream!—a world of snow,
A sky of wind, a whirling howling mist
Which swam around with countless flashing eyes;
And Donald dragging, dragging, beaten, bruised,
Leading me on to something that I fear'd—
An awful something, and I knew not what!
On, on, and farther on, and still the snow
Whirling, the tempest moaning! Then I mind
Of stooping, groping in the shadowy light,
And Donald by me, burrowing with his nose
And whining. Next a darkness, blank and deep!
But *then* I mind of tearing through the storm,
Stumbling and tripping, blind and deaf and dumb,
But holding to my heart an icy load
I clutch'd with freezing fingers. Far away—
It seem'd long miles on miles away—I saw
A yellow light—unto that light I tore—
And last, remember opening a door
And falling, dazzled by a blinding gleam
Of human faces and a flaming fire,
And with a crash of voices in my ears
Fading away into a world of snow!

. . . When I awaken'd to myself, I lay
In mine own bed at home. I started up
As from an evil dream, and look'd around,
When to my side came one, a neighbour's wife,
Mother to two young lads I taught in school.
With hollow, hollow voice I question'd her,
And soon knew all: how a long night had pass'd
Since, with a lifeless laddie in my arms,
I stumbled, horror-stricken, swooning, wild,
Into a ploughman's cottage: at my side,
My coat between his teeth, a dog; and how
Senseless and cold I fell. Thence, when the storm
Had pass'd away, they bore me to my home.
I listen'd dumbly, catching at the sense;
But when the woman mention'd Willie's name,
And I was fear'd to phrase the thought that rose,
She *saw* the question in my tearless eyes
And told me—he was dead.

'Twould weary you
To tell the thoughts, the fancies, and the dreams
That weigh'd upon me, ere I rose in bed,
But little harm'd, and sent the wife away,
Rose, slowly drest, took up my staff and went
To Willie's mother's cottage. As I walk'd,
Though all the air was calm and cold and still,
The blowing wind and dazzled snow were yet
Around about. I was bewilderd like!
Ere I had time to think, I found myself
Beside a truckle-bed, and at my side

A weeping woman. And I clench'd my hands,
And look'd on Willie, who had gone to sleep.

In death-gown white lay Willie fast asleep,
His blue eyes closed, his tiny fingers clench'd,
His lips apart a wee as if he breathed,
His yellow hair kaim'd back, and on his face
A smile—yet not a smile—a dim pale light
Such as the snow keeps in its own soft wings.
Ay, he had gone to sleep, and he was sound!
And by the bed lay Donald watching still,
And when I look'd he whined, but did not move.

I turn'd in silence, with my nails stuck deep
In my clench'd palms; but in my heart of hearts
I pray'd to God. In Willie's mother's face
There was a cold and silent bitterness—
I saw it plain, but saw it in a dream,
And cared not. So I went my way, as grim
As one who holds his breath to slay himself.
What follow'd that is vague as was the rest:
A winter day, a landscape hush'd in snow,
A weary wind, a horrid whiteness borne
On a man's shoulder, shapes in black, o'er all
The solemn clanging of an iron bell,
And lastly me and Donald standing both
Beside a tiny mound of fresh-heap'd earth,
And while around the snow began to fall
Mistily, softly, thro' the icy air,
Looking at one another, dumb and old.

And Willie's dead!—that's all I comprehend—
Ay, bonnie Willie Baird has gone before!
I begg'd old Donald hard—they gave him me—
And we have lived together in this house
Long years, with no companions. There's no need
Of speech between us. Here we dumbly bide,
But know each other's sorrow,—and we both
Feel weary. When the nights are long and cold,
And snow is falling as it falleth now,
And wintry winds are moaning, here I dream
Of Willie and the unfamiliar life
I left behind me on those norland hills!
“Do doggies gang to heaven?” Willie ask'd;
And ah! what Solomon of modern days
Can answer *that*? Yet here at nights I sit,
Reading the Book, with Donald at my side;
And stooping, with the Book upon my knee,
I sometimes gaze in Donald's patient eyes—
So sad, so human, though he cannot speak—
And think he knows that Willie is at peace,
Far far away beyond the norland hills,
Beyond the silence of the untrodden snow.

THE DEAD MOTHER.

As I lay asleep, as I lay asleep,
Under the grass as I lay so deep,
As I lay asleep in my white death-serk
Under the shade of Our Lady's Kirk,

I waken'd up in the dead of night,
 I waken'd up in my shroud o' white,
 And I heard a cry from far away,
 And I knew the voice of my daughter May:
 "Mother, mother, come hither to me!
 Mother, mother, come hither and see!
 Mother, mother, mother dear,
 Another mother is sitting here:
 My body is bruised, in pain I cry,
 All night long on the straw I lie,
 I thirst and hunger for drink and meat,
 And mother, mother to sleep were sweet!"
 I heard the cry, though my grave was deep,
 And awoke from sleep, and awoke from sleep.

I awoke from sleep, I awoke from sleep,
 Up I rose from my grave so deep!
 The earth was black, but overhead
 The stars were yellow, the moon was red;
 And I walk'd along all white and thin,
 And lifted the latch and enter'd in.
 I reach'd the chamber as dark as night,
 And though it was dark my face was white:
 "Mother, mother, I look on thee!
 Mother, mother, you frighten me!
 For your cheeks are thin and your hair is gray!"
 But I smiled, and kiss'd her fears away;
 I smooth'd her hair and I sang a song,
 And on my knee I rock'd her long.
 "O mother, mother, sing low to me—
 I am sleepy now, and I cannot see!"
 I kiss'd her, but I could not weep,
 And she went to sleep, she went to sleep.

As we lay asleep, as we lay asleep,
 My May and I, in our grave so deep,
 As we lay asleep in the midnight mirk,
 Under the shade of Our Lady's Kirk,
 I waken'd up in the dead of night,
 Though May my daughter lay warm and white,
 And I heard the cry of a little one,
 And I knew 'twas the voice of Hugh my son:
 "Mother, mother, come hither to me!
 Mother, mother, come hither and see!
 Mother, mother, mother dear,
 Another mother is sitting here.
 My body is bruised and my heart is sad,
 But I speak my mind and call them bad;
 I thirst and hunger night and day,
 And were I strong I would fly away!"
 I heard the cry though my grave was deep,
 And awoke from sleep, and awoke from sleep!

I awoke from sleep, I awoke from sleep,
 Up I rose from my grave so deep,
 The earth was black, but overhead
 The stars were yellow, the moon was red;
 And I walk'd along all white and thin,
 And lifted the latch and enter'd in.

"Mother, mother, and art thou here?
 I know your face, and I feel no fear;
 Raise me, mother, and kiss my cheek.
 For oh, I am weary and sore and weak."
 I smooth'd his hair with a mother's joy,
 And he laugh'd aloud, my own brave boy:
 I raised and held him on my breast,
 Sang him a song, and bade him rest.
 "Mother, mother, sing low to me—
 I am sleepy now, and I cannot see!"
 I kiss'd him, and I could not weep,
 As he went to sleep, as he went to sleep.

As I lay asleep, as I lay asleep,
 With my girl and boy in my grave so deep,
 As I lay asleep, I awoke in fear,
 Awoke, but awoke not my children dear,
 And heard a cry so low and weak
 From a tiny voice that could not speak:
 I heard the cry of a little one,
 My bairn that could neither talk nor run,
 My little, little one, uncaress'd,
 Starving for lack of the milk of the breast;
 And I rose from sleep and enter'd in,
 And found my little one pinch'd and thin,
 And croon'd a song and hush'd its moan,
 And put its lips to my white breast-bone;
 And the red, red moon that lit the place
 Went white to look at the little face,
 And I kiss'd, and kiss'd, and I could not weep,
 As it went to sleep, as it went to sleep.

As it lay asleep, as it lay asleep,
 I set it down in the darkness deep,
 Smooth'd its limbs and laid it out,
 And drew the curtains round about;
 Then into the dark, dark room I hied,
 Where awake lay *he* at the woman's side;
 And though the chamber was black as night,
 He saw my face, for it was so white:
 I gazed in his eyes, and he shriek'd in pain,
 And I knew he would never sleep again,
 And back to my grave went silently,
 And soon my baby was brought to me;
 My son and daughter beside me rest,
 My little baby is on my breast;
 Our bed is warm and our grave is deep,
 But he cannot sleep, he cannot sleep!

THE BALLAD OF JUDAS ISCARIOT.¹

'Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
 Lay in the Field of Blood:

¹Equal in finish to anything written since "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," and approaches that poem in weird impressiveness and power.—*Stedman*.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Beside the body stood.

Black was the earth by night,
And black was the sky;
Black, black were the broken clouds,
Tho' the red moon went by.

'Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
Strangled and dead lay there;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Look'd on it in despair.

The breath of the world came and went
Like a sick man's in rest;
Drop by drop on the world's eyes
The dews fell cool and blest.

Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did make a gentle moan—
"I will bury underneath the ground
My flesh and blood and bone.

"I will bury deep beneath the soil,
Lest mortals look thereon,
And when the wolf and raven come
The body will be gone!

"The stones of the field are sharp as steel,
And hard and cold, God wot;
And I must bear my body hence
Until I find a spot!"

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot,
So grim, and gaunt, and gray,
Raised the body of Judas Iscariot,
And carried it away.

And as he bare it from the field
Its touch was cold as ice,
And the ivory teeth within the jaw
Rattled aloud, like dice.

As the soul of Judas Iscariot
Carried its load with pain,
The Eye of Heaven, like a lanthorn's eye,
Open'd and shut again.

Half he walk'd, and half he seem'd
Lifted on the cold wind;
He did not turn, for chilly hands
Were pushing from behind.

The first place that he came unto
It was the open wold,
And underneath were prickly whins,
And a wind that blew so cold.

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The next place that he came unto
It was a stagnant pool,
And when he threw the body in
It floated light as wool.

He drew the body on his back,
And it was dripping chill,
And the next place he came unto
Was a cross upon a hill.

A cross upon the windy hill,
And a cross on either side,
Three skeletons that swing thereon,
Who had been crucified.

And on the middle cross bar sat
A white dove slumbering;
Dim it sat in the dim light,
With its head beneath its wing.

And underneath the middle cross
A grave yawn'd wide and vast,
But the soul of Judas Iscariot
Shiver'd, and glided past.

The fourth place that he came unto
It was the Brig of Dread,
And the great torrents rushing down
Were deep, and swift, and red.

He dared not fling the body in
For fear of faces dim,
And arms were waved in the wild water
To thrust it back to him.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Turned from the Brig of Dread,
And the dreadful foam of the wild water
Had splashed the body red.

For days and nights he wandered on,
Upon an open plain,
And the days went by like blinding mist,
And the nights like rushing rain.

For days and nights he wandered on,
All thro' the Wood of Woe;
And the nights went by like moaning wind,
And the days like drifting snow.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Came with a weary face—
Alone, alone, and all alone,
Alone in a lonely place!

He wandered east, he wandered west,
And heard no human sound;
For months and years, in grief and tears,
He wandered round and round.

For months and years, in grief and tears,
He walked the silent night;
Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
Perceived a far-off light.

A far-off light across the waste,
As dim as dim might be,
That came and went like the lighthouse gleam
On a black night at sea.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Crawl'd to the distant gleam;
And the rain came down, and the rain was
blown
Against him with a scream.

For days and nights he wandered on,
Push'd on by hands behind;
And the days went by like black, black rain,
And the nights like rushing wind.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot,
Strange, and sad, and tall,
Stood all alone at dead of night
Before a lighted hall.

And the wold was white with snow,
And his footmarks black and damp,
And the ghost of the silvern moon arose,
Holding her yellow lamp.

And the icicles were on the eaves,
And the walls were deep with white,
And the shadows of the guests within
Pass'd on the window light.

The shadows of the wedding guests
Did strangely come and go,
And the body of Judas Iscariot
Lay stretch'd along the snow.

The body of Judas Iscariot
Lay stretched along the snow;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Ran swiftly to and fro.

To and fro, and up and down,
He ran so swiftly there,
As round and round the frozen pole
Glideth the lean white bear.

'Twas the Bridegroom sat at the table-head,
And the lights burnt bright and clear—
"Oh, who is that," the Bridegroom said,
"Whose weary feet I hear!"

'Twas one looked from the lighted hall,
And answered soft and slow,
"It is a wolf runs up and down
With a black track in the snow."

The Bridegroom in his robe of white
Sat at the table-head—
"Oh, who is that who moans without?"
The blessed Bridegroom said.

'Twas one looked from the lighted hall,
And answered fierce and low,
"'Tis the soul of Judas Iscariot
Gliding to and fro."

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did hush itself and stand,
And saw the Bridegroom at the door
With a light in his hand.

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he was clad in white,
And far within the Lord's Supper
Was spread so broad and bright.

The Bridegroom shaded his eyes and look'd,
And his face was bright to see—
"What dost thou here at the Lord's Supper
With thy body's sins?" said he.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stood black, and sad, and bare—
"I have wandered many nights and days;
There is no light elsewhere."

'Twas the wedding guests cried out within,
And their eyes were fierce and bright—
"Scourge the soul of Judas Iscariot
Away into the night!"

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he waved hands still and slow,
And the third time that he waved his hands
The air was thick with snow.

And of every flake of falling snow,
Before it touched the ground,
There came a dove, and a thousand doves
Made sweet sound.

'Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
Floated away full fleet,
And the wings of the doves that bare it off
Were like its winding sheet.

'Twas the Bridegroom stood at the open door,
And beckon'd, smiling sweet;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stole in, and fell at his feet.

"The Holy Supper is spread within,
And the many candles shine,
And I have waited long for thee
Before I poured the wine!"

The supper wine is poured at last,
 The lights burn bright and fair,
 Iscariot washes the Bridegroom's feet,
 And dries them with his hair.

THE BATTLE OF DRUMLIEMOOP.

COVENANT PERIOD.

Bar the door! put out the light, for it gleams
 across the night,
 And guides the bloody motion of their feet;
 Hush the bairn upon thy breast, lest it gude
 them in their quest,
 And with water quench the blazing of the peat.
 Now, wife, sit still and bark!—hold my hand
 amid the dark;
 O Jeanie, we are scattered—e'en as sleet!

It was down on Drumliemoor, where it slopes
 upon the shore,
 And looks upon the breaking of the bay,
 In the kirkyard of the dead, where the heather
 is thrice red
 With the blood of those asleep beneath the clay;
 And the Howiesons were there, and the people
 of Glen Ayr,
 And we gathered in the gloom o' night—to
 pray.

How! Sit at home in fear, when God's voice was
 in mine ear,
 When the priests of Baal were slaughtering his
 sheep?
 Nay! there I took my stand, with my reap-hook
 in my hand,
 For bloody was the sheaf that I might reap;
 And the Lord was in his skies, with a thousand
 dreadful eyes,
 And his breathing made a trouble on the deep.

Each mortal of the band brought his weapon in
 his hand,
 Though the chopper or the spit was all he bare;
 And not a man but knew the work he had to do,
 If the fiend should fall upon us unaware.
 And our looks were ghastly white, but it was not
 with affright,—
 The Lord our God was present to our prayer.

Oh, solemn, sad, and slow, rose the stern voice
 of Monroe,
 And he curst the curse of Babylon the whore;
 We could not see his face, but a gleam was in its
 place,
 Like the phosphor of the foam upon the shore;
 And the eyes of all were dim, as they fixed them-
 selves on him,
 And the sea filled up the pauses with its roar.

But when, with accents calm, Kilmahoe gave out
 the psalm,
 The sweetness of God's voice upon his tongue,
 With one voice we praised the Lord of the fire
 and of the sword,
 And louder than the winter wind it rung:
 And across the stars on high went the smoke of
 tempest by,
 And a vapour roll'd around us as we sung.

'Twas terrible to hear our cry rise deep and clear,
 Though we could not see the criers of the cry,
 But we sang and gript our brands, and touched
 each other's hands,
 While a thin sleet smote our faces from the sky:
 And, sudden, strange, and low, hissed the voice
 of Kilmahoe,
 "Grip your weapons! Wait in silence! They
 are nigh!"

And heark'ning, with clen'd teeth, we could
 hear, across the heath,
 The tramping of the horses as they flew,
 And no man breathed a breath, but all were still
 as death,
 And close together shivering we drew;
 And deeper round us fell all the eyeless gloom of
 hell,
 And the fiend was in among us ere we knew!

Then our battle shriek arose, and the cursing of
 our foes—
 No face of friend or foeman could we mark;
 But I struck and kept my stand (trusting God
 to guide my hand),
 And struck, and struck, and heard the hell-
 hounds bark;
 And I fell beneath a horse, but I reached with
 all my force,
 And ript him with my reap-hook through the
 dark.

As we struggled, knowing not whose hand was
 at our throat,
 Whose blood was spouting warm into our eyes,
 We felt the thick snow-drift swoop upon us from
 the lift,
 And murmur in the pauses of our cries;
 But, lo! before we wist, rose the curtain of the
 mist,
 And the pale moon shed her sorrow from the
 skies.

O God! it was a sight that made the hair turn
 white,
 That wither'd up the heart's blood into woe,
 To see the faces loom in the dimly lighted gloom,
 And the butcher'd lying bloodily below;
 While melting, with no sound, fell so peacefully
 around
 The whiteness and the wonder of the snow!

Ay, and thicker, thicker, poured the pale silence
of the Lord,

From the hollow of his hand we saw it shed,
And it gather'd round us there, till we groan'd
and gasped for air,

And beneath was ankle deep and stained red;
And soon, whatever wight was smitten down in
fight

Was *buried* in the drift ere he was dead.

Then we beheld at length the troopers in their
strength,

For faster, faster, faster up they streamed,
And their pistols flashing bright showed their
faces ashen white,

And their blue steel caught the driving moon,
and gleamed.

But a dying voice cried, "Fly!" and behold, e'en
at the cry,

A panic fell upon us and we screamed!

Oh, shrill and awful rose, 'mid the splashing
blood and blows,

Our scream unto the Lord that let us die;
And the fiend amid us roared his defiance at the
Lord,

And his servants slew the strong man 'mid his
cry;

And the Lord kept still in heaven, and the only
answer given

Was the white snow falling, falling from the sky.

Then we fled! the darkness grew! 'mid the driving
cold we flew,

Each alone, yea, each for those whom he held
dear;

And I heard upon the wind the thud of hoofs
behind,

And the scream of those who perish'd in their
fear,

But I knew by heart each path through the dark-
ness of the strath,

And I hid myself all day,—and I am here.

Ah! gathered in one fold be the holy men and bold,
And beside them the accursed and the proud;

The Howiesons are there, and the Wylies of
Glen Ayr,

Kirkpatrick, and Maedonald, and Maeleod.
And while the widow groans, lo! God's hand

around their bones

His thin ice windeth whitely, as a shroud.

On mountain and in vale our women will look pale,
And palest where the ocean surges boom:

Buried 'neath snow-drift white, with no holy
prayer or rite,

Lie the loved ones they look for in the gloom;
And deeper, deeper still, spreads the snow on
vale and hill,

And deeper and yet deeper is their tomb!

THE STARLING.

The little lame tailor
Sat stitching and snarling—

Who in the world
Was the tailor's darling?

To none of mankind
Was he well inclined,

But he doted on Jack the starling.

For the bird had a tongue,
And of words good store,

And his cage was hung
Just over the door;

And he saw the people,
And heard the roar,—

Folk coming and going
Evermore,—

And he look'd at the tailor—
And swore.

From a country lad

The tailor bought him,—
His training was bad,

For tramps had taught him;
On alehouse benches

His cage had been,
While louts and wenches

Made jests obscene,—
But he learn'd, no doubt,

His oaths from fellows
Who travel about

With kettle and bellows;
And three or four

[The roundest by far
That ever he swore!]

Were taught by a tar.
And the tailor heard—

"We'll be friends!" thought he;
"You're a clever bird,

And our tastes agree.
We both are old

And esteem life base,
The whole world cold,

Things out of place;
And we're lonely too,

And full of care—
So what can we do

But swear?

"The devil take you,
How you mutter!

Yet there's much to make you
Fluster and flutter.

You want the fresh air
And the sunlight, lad,

And your prison there
Feels dreary and sad;

And here I frown
 In a prison as dreary,
 Hating the town,
 And feeling weary:
 We're too confined, Jack,
 And we want to fly,
 And you blame mankind, Jack,
 And so do I!
 And then, again,
 By chance as it were,
 We learn'd from men
 How to grumble and swear;
You let your throat
 By the scamps be guided,
 And swore by rote—
 All just as I did!
 And without beseeching,
 Relief is brought us—
 For we turn the teaching
 On those who taught us!"

A haggard and ruffled
 Old fellow was Jack,
 With a grim face muffled
 In ragged black,
 And his coat was rusty
 And never neat,
 And his wings were dusty
 With grime of the street,
 And he sidelong peer'd,
 With eyes of soot,
 And scowl'd and sneer'd,—
 And was lame of a foot!
 And he long'd to go
 From whence he came;—
 And the tailor, you know,
 Was just the same.

All kinds of weather
 They felt confined,
 And swore together
 At all mankind;
 For their mirth was done,
 And they felt like brothers,
 And the railing of one
 Meant no more than the other's.

'Twas just the way
 They had learn'd, you see,—
 Each wanted to say
 Only *this*—"Woe's me!
 I'm a poor old fellow,
 And I'm prison'd so,
 While the sun shines mellow,
 And the eorn waves yellow,
 And the fresh winds blow,—
 And the folk don't care
 If I live or die,
 But I long for air
 And I wish to fly!"
 Yet unable to utter it,
 And too wild to bear,
 They could only mutter it,
 And swear.

Many a year
 They dwelt in the city,
 In their prisons drear,
 And none felt pity,—
 Nay, few were sparing
 Of censure and coldness,
 To hear them swearing
 With such plain boldness.
 But at last, by the Lord,
 Their noise was stopt,—
 For down on his board
 The tailor dropt,
 And they found him, dead,
 And done with snarling,
 Yet over his head
 Still grumbled the starling.
 But when an old Jew
 Claim'd the goods of the tailor,
 And with eye askew
 Eyed the feathery railer,
 And with a frown
 At the dirt and rust,
 Took the old cage down,
 In a shower of dust,—
 Jack, with heart aching,
 Felt life past bearing,
 And shivering, quaking,
 All hope forsaking,
 Died, swearing.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON, one of our youngest and most promising Scottish poets, was born at Kirkconnel, a small village in Dumfriesshire, April 30, 1845. When a child his parents removed to the village of Crockettford in Gal-
 loway, at the school of which place their son received the rudiments of his education. He was not in any way remarkable for scholarship, but

enjoyed some fame amongst his school-fellows for being a good sketcher and colourist. By and by the youthful artist turned from colours to word-painting, and began to indulge in doggerel rhymes, turning every sentence that he deemed worth recording into verse. In this way he composed a number of satires, epistles, and other poems, which, however, on reaching manhood he committed to the flames.

In 1863 he returned to his native village, and for some years abandoned his poetical pursuits, devoting his leisure time to reading and mental improvement. But the death of an elder brother again opened the poetic spring in his heart; he produced the piece "To One in Eternity," and from this time his career as a poet began. In 1870 his poem on John Keats appeared in the *People's Friend*, and after this he became a regular and highly appreciated contributor to the columns of that journal. In 1873 he was encouraged to publish his *Song of Labour and other Poems*, which met an instant and most generous reception from both the press and the public. Two years later appeared his second volume, *The Two Angels and other Poems*, which contains a number of sweet Scottish songs, some pieces rich in imagination, and a remarkable series of sonnets entitled "In Rome," exhibiting proofs of great genius.

Mr. Anderson is employed in the humble calling of a surfaceman on the Glasgow and South-Western Railway, and still contentedly continues to reside with his parents in his native village—a pure and simple-minded man. To his love of poetry is added a taste for the study of languages, and by his own application he has mastered the difficulties of French, German, and Italian, and can now, he says, "in my own way appreciate in their own tongue the mighty voices of Goethe, Schiller, and Dante." With his favourite books to amuse him in the evenings, and the social intercourse of friends, who drop in now and then to have a quiet chat, he asks, "What more can I wish for? I have the great rush and whirl of the world going past me in trains through the day when at my work, and at night the cool healthy calm of my native village."

The *Athenæum* says of Mr. Anderson's poems, "They show a remarkable power in the author of assimilating what he reads, and of expressing his own thoughts with vigour and poetical taste;" and another critic remarks, "There is a ring of true poetry in the book, and it may be a subject of pride to sixteen thousand platelayers engaged on the railways of the United Kingdom to have such a poet in their ranks."

BLOOD ON THE WHEEL.

"Bless her dear little heart!" said my mate, and he pointed out to me,

Fifty yards to the right, in the darkness, a light burning steady and clear.

"That's her signal in answer to me, when I whistle, to let me see

She is at her place by the window the time I am passing here."

I turn'd to look at the light, and I saw the tear on his cheek—

He was tender of heart, and I knew that his love was lasting and strong—

But he dash'd it off with his hand, and I did not think fit to speak,

But look'd right ahead through the dark, as we clank'd and thunder'd along.

They had been at the school, the two, and had run, like a single life,

Through the mazes of childhood, up to the sweeter and firmer prime,

And often he told me, smiling, he had promised to make her his wife,

In the rambles they had for nuts in the woods in the golden autumn time.

"I must make," he would add, "that promise good in the course of a month or two;

And then when I have her safe and sound in a nook of the busy town,

No use of us whistling then, Joe, lad, as now we incline to do,

For a wave of her hand or an answering light as we thunder up and down."

Well, the marriage was settled at last, and I was to stand by his side,

Take a part in the happy rite, and pull from his hand the glove;

And still as we joked between ourselves, he would say, in his manly pride,
That the very ring of the engine-wheels had something in them of love.

At length we had just one run to make before the bridal took place,
And it happen'd to be in the night, yet merry in heart we went on;
But no long ere he came to the house, he was turning each moment his face
To catch the light by the window, plac'd as a beacon for him alone.

"Now then, Joe," he said, with his hand on my arm, "keep a steady look-out ahead
While I whistle for the last time;" and he whistled sharply and clear;
But no light rose up at the sound; and he look'd with something like dread
On the whitewash'd walls of the eot, through the gloom looking dull, and misty, and drear.

But lo! as he turn'd to whistle again, there rose on the night a scream,
And I rush'd to the side in time to catch the flutter of something white;
Then a hitch through the engine ran like a thrill, and in haste he shut off the steam,
While we stood looking over at each with our hearts beating wild with affright.

The station was half a mile ahead, but an age seem'd to pass away
Ere we came to a stand, and my mate, as a drunken man will reel,
Rush'd on to the front with his lamp, but to bend and come back and say,
In a whisper faint with its terror—"Joe, come and look at this blood on the wheel."

Great heaven! a thought went through my heart like the sudden stab of a knife,
While the same dread thought seem'd to settle on him and palsy his heart and mind,
For he went up the line with the haste of one who is rushing to save a life,
And with the dread shadow of what was to be I follow'd closely behind.

What came next is indistinct, like the mist on the mountain side—
Gleam of lights and awe-struck faces, but one thing can never grow dim:
My mate, kneeling down in his grief like a child by the side of his mangled bride,
Kill'd, with the letter still in her hand she had wished to send to him.

Some little token was in it, perhaps to tell of her love and her truth,

Some little love-errand to do ere the happy bridal drew nigh;
So in haste she had taken the line, but to meet, in the flush of her fair sweet youth,
The terrible death that could only be seen with a horror in heart and eye.

Speak not of human sorrow—it cannot be spoken in words;
Let us veil it as God veil'd His at the sight of His Son on the cross.
For who can reach to the height or the depth of those infinite yearning chords
Whose tones reach the very centre of heaven when swept by the fingers of loss?

She sleeps by the little ivied church in which she had bow'd to pray—
Another grave close by the side of hers, for he died of a broken heart,
Wither'd and shrunk from that awful night like the autumn leaves in decay,
And the two were together that death at first had shaken so roughly apart.

But still, when I drive through the dark, and that night comes back to my mind,
I can hear the shriek take the air, and beneath me fancy I feel
The engine shake and hitch on the rail, while a hollow voice from behind
Cries out, till I leap on the foot-plate, "Joe, come and look at this blood on the wheel!"

AGNES DIED.

(EXTRACT.)

But let me try to paint that one sweet day
We spent within the woods, before her strength
Grew a soft traitor, and confined her steps
To the hush'd precincts of her sacred room.

The sun was bright that day, and all the sky
Glimmer'd like magic with its sunniest light,
As if it knew that I, in later times,
Would look back on that fading light, and sigh,
And sadden at that splendour sunk in death.
We took our way along a path which kept
Our footsteps by a lake, wherein was seen
A little island dripping to the edge
With golden lilies, double in their bloom;
When some, more amorous than the rest, leant
o'er
And nodded to their shadows seen below.
The eot came forth at times to show the speck
Of white upon his wings, then swept away
Behind the twisted roots. The silent heron,
Amid the tiny pillars of the reed,

Kept eager watch, nor stirr'd upon his post,
 But stood a feather'd patience waiting prey;
 While in the woods the birds, as if ashamed
 Of all their silence through the night, made up
 The want by one great gush of varied song,
 Flooding all things, until the very leaves
 Flutter'd to find a voice to vent their joy.
 We heard the piping of the amorous thrush—
 The bird that sings with all his soul in heaven—
 The mellow blackbird, and the pert redbreast,
 Whose song was bolder than his own bright eye;
 While fainter notes of lesser choristers
 Came in like semitones to swell the whole;
 While over all, to crown this one great song,
 The lark—the gray Apollo of his race,
 The feather'd Pan, the spirit clad in song—
 High up, and in the very sight of heaven,
 Pour'd downward with the brightness of the
 smiles

Of angels all his spirit, leaving doubts
 Whether his song belong'd to God or us.
 And there we sat within the woods, and saw
 The lake between the trees, and now and then
 The gentle shadow of a cloud above
 Passing along its bosom, as a thought
 Across the calmness of a poet's brow,
 And all around the lilies grew, and on
 The bank beside us, rearing its sweet head,
 The azure fairy of the woodland grass,
 That has a spot of heaven for its eye,
 The violet nestled, while, close by its side,
 The primrose, yellow star of earth's green sky,
 Peep'd up in bold surprise, and, further on,
 An orchis, like the fiery orb of Mars,
 Rose up with purple mouth agape to catch
 All murmurs and all scents that came its way.

So in this paradise we sat, until
 We broke the silence with soft speech, to fit
 The purer thought which, at the golden touch
 Of the pure things beside us, grew within,
 Blowing to instant blossom. Then our talk
 Took simple bounds, and, with a fond delight,
 We touch'd on all the heart will think, when youth
 Ranges throughout its chambers; like to one
 Who dares the sanctity of some fair room,
 And finds in every corner fresh delight.
 But I was bound by one great spell which she
 Knew nothing of. I could not speak my love,
 Nor could she see it, though in that sweet guise
 In which we hide it only to be seen.

And so the converse sped—now quick at times,
 Now slow, and then an interval in which
 We went through all the paths of spoken thought,
 Making the pleasure double by retouching
 In silence the past interchange of words.
 We felt the welcome of the summer day,
 We heard its music rising everywhere;
 Yet strange that all our thoughts should slip
 away

And strike a chord that beat not unison
 With all this joy; for from our dreams and smiles
 We shrunk, and, with a shadow in our eyes,
 We struck upon the cypress'd edge of death.
 Then solemn grew our converse, and she spoke
 In low sweet whispers, which to me were spells
 Of deeper quiet, as she strove to make
 A land wherein a great world moves like ours
 Distinct and clear to all the grosser eye;
 And simple as herself she painted heaven.
 She knew not, as she spoke, how all my heart
 Follow'd her words, and hung upon their tones
 Helpless, and with no wish to change the task,
 But catch the eloquence of what she spoke,
 For truth lives nowhere but in simple words.

I hear her voice again this very hour
 Clear and distinct, as if the death it wore
 Made it the clearer, even as two friends,
 Apart from each, but with a lake between,
 Will keep up converse, losing not a word,
 Because the faithful waters lie between.

THE LOST EDEN FOUND AGAIN.

The angels look'd up into God's own eyes,
 As he shut the gateways of Paradise;

For they heard coming up from the earth below
 A wail as of mortals in deepest woe;

And bending their far keen vision down,
 Saw two on the earth from whom hope had flown.

Then the foremost one of the angels said,
 Drooping his wings and bowing his head—

“Here, Father, are two in Thy shape and ours
 Who have lost the light of their bridal bowers,

And wander, blind in their tears, and tost
 With the thoughts of their Eden for ever lost.”

Then God said, turning His face on him—
 “Look once again, for thine eyes are dim.”

Then the angel look'd, and, lo! he could see
 A smiling babe on the woman's knee.

While the man bent down, and within his eyes
 Was the light of his former Paradise.

Then the angel whisper'd—“My fears were vain,
 For man has found his lost Eden again.”

A' HIS LANE.

Pit his back against a chair,
 Let us see if he can gang,
 But be ready wi' your han'
 If he sways wi' ocht gacs wrang;

Mammy wadna like to see
 Ony ill come to her wean;
 There noo, leave him to himsel',
 Mammy's bairnie's a' his laue.

What a thrawin' o' his mou',
 What a rowin' o' his een,
 Then a steady look at me,
 An' the space that lies between;
 Noo, ae fittie's oot a bit,
 Look at him, he's throo fain,
 Straicht himsel' up like a man,
 Mammy's bairnie's a' his lane.

There, he's left the chair at last,
 Lauchin' in his merry glee—
 Haudin' oot a wee plump hau',
 As if to say, "Tak' haud o' me."
 Juist anither step, an' then—
 Gudesake, what a thraw he's ta'en!
 There, he's fairly ow'r at last—
 Coupit when he's left his lane.

Did he hurt his curly heid?
 Let his mammy clap the place,
 Pay the stool, an' kiss his croon
 Till the tears are aff his face.
 There noo; lean him to the chair—
 Let us try the bairn again—
 Half-a-dozen fa's are nocht,
 If he learns to gang his lane.

Steady this time wi' his feet—
 Dinna keep his legs sac wide.
 See, I hac my han' to kee
 If he sways to ony side.
 Mercy! what a solemn face
 Lookin' up to meet my ain;
 There, he's in my lap at last;
 Here's a bairn can gang his lane.

Mither life has unco wark,
 Settin' up her weans to gang;

Some pit oot ae fit, then stop,
 Ithers step oot an' fa' wrang;
 Very few can keep their feet
 As they stot o'er elod or stane;
 Angels greet abune to see
 Hoo we fa' when left oor lane.

 KEATS AND DAVID GRAY.

(FROM IN ROME.)

And wilt thou go away from Rome, nor see
 The resting-place of Keats, from whom thy soul
 Took early draughts of worship and control—
 Poet thyself, and from beyond the sea?
 I turn'd, and stood beside his grassy grave,
 Almost within the shadow of the wall
 Honorian; and as kindred spirits call
 Each unto each, my own rose up to crave
 A moment's sweet renewal by the dust
 Of that high interchange in vanish'd time,
 When my young soul was reeling with his
 prime;
 But now my manhood lay across that trust.
 Ah! had I stood here in my early years,
 This simple headstone had been wet with tears.

I go, for wider is the space that lies
 Between the sleeper in this grave and me;
 I look back on my golden youth, but he
 Cannot look backward with less passion'd eyes.
 There is no change in him; the fading glory
 Of mighty Rome's long triumph is around,
 But cannot come anear or pierce the bound
 Of this our laurell'd sleeper, whose pale story
 Takes fresher lustre with the years that fly.
 But Roman dust upon an English heart
 Is naught, yet this is Keats's, and a part
 Of England's spirit. With a weary sigh
 I turned from sacred ground, and all the way
 Two spirits were with me—Keats and David
 Gray.

 MARQUIS OF LORNE.

Another name has been added to the bea-
 roll of royal and noble poets by the publica-
 tion of *Guido and Lita: A Tale of the Riviera*,¹
 written by the Marquis of Lorne. The marquis
 is not the first of his ancient family who has

given evidence of the possession of poetic gifts.
 It will be within the remembrance of many
 of our readers that the first Marquis of Argyll,
 the night previous to his execution, composed
 some singularly tender and touching verses,
 well worthy of preservation, like those of his

¹ Macmillan & Co., London, 1875.

illustrious adversary the Marquis of Montrose, written under similar circumstances.¹

JOHN DOUGLAS SUTHERLAND CAMPBELL, called by courtesy Marquis of Lorne, eldest son of the Duke of Argyll, was born at Stafford House, the London residence of the Duke of Sutherland, August 6, 1845. He received his education at Eton and at the University of St. Andrews, and in 1867 published a volume entitled *A Trip to the Tropics and Home through America*. He was elected M.P. for Argyleshire in the Liberal interest in February, 1868, and in December of the same year he became private secretary to the Duke of Argyll at the India Office. He was re-elected to parliament in 1869, and again in 1874, and the year following was appointed a privy-councillor. He is Lieutenant-colonel of the Argyll and Bute Artillery Administrative Brigade, to which he was appointed in 1867. In 1875 he declined to allow his name to be used as a candidate for the Lord Rector's chair of Aberdeen University. An important event in the career of the marquis was his marriage with the Princess Louise, fourth daughter of Queen Victoria, at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, March 21, 1871. The same year the twenty-fifth anniversary of his birthday was celebrated

with great rejoicing at Inverary Castle, which for eight hundred years has been the residence of the Mac Calan More.

The story of "Guido and Lita" is taken from an incident in one of the Saracen raids on the coast of the Riviera during the tenth century, and is told in some thousand lines of singularly sweet and melodious verse, showing that the marquis possesses not only literary taste but a more than ordinary poetic vein. The love-story concludes with the happy marriage, after many hair-breadth escapes, of Guido and Lita:—

"The time has come that where red battle burned
Fair Peace again with blessings has returned,
And mailed processions, banished from the field,
To white-robed trains the festive town must yield.
See, to the sound of music and of song
A stately pageant slowly moves along.
Before the church's doors the crowds divide;
Hail the sweet pomp that guards the maiden bride!
Hail the young lord, who comes this day to claim
A prize, the guardian of a glorious name!
They kneel before the altar hand in hand,
While thronged around Provence's warriors stand.
Hush, for the sacred rites, the solemn vow,
That crowns with faith young love's impetuous brow.
The prayer is said—then, as the anthem swells,
A peal rings out of happy marriage bells,
Grief pales and dies 'neath love's ascending sun,
For knight and maid have blest their lives in one."

GUIDO AND LITA.

(EXTRACT.²)

Hail, Riviera! hail, the mountain range
That guards from northern winds, and seasons'
change,
You southern spurs, descending fast to be
The sunlit capes along the tideless sea;
Whose waters, azure as the sky above,
Reflect the glories of the scene they love!

Here every slope, and intervening dale,
Yields a sweet fragrance to the passing gale,
From the thick woods, where dark caroubas twine
Their massive verdure with the hardier pine,
And 'mid the rocks, or hid in hollowed cave,
The fern and iris in profusion wave;

From countless terraces, where olives rise,
Unehilled by autumn's blast and wintry skies,
And round the stems, within the dusky shade,
The red anemones their home have made;
From gardens, where its breath for ever blows
Through myrtle thickets, and their wreaths of
rose.

Like the proud lords who oft, with clash of mail,
Would daunt the commerce that the trader's sail
Had sought to bring, enriching and to bless,
The lands they plagued with conflict and distress,
Till none but robber chiefs and galley slaves
Ruled the fair shores or rode the tranquil waves,—

¹ See vol. i. page 85.—ED.

² "Lord Lorne may be congratulated on a metrical romance not unworthy of the country and associations which suggested it" (*Times*). "The story of 'Guido and Lita' stands in need of no distinguished name to recommend it, and it will assuredly be popular among poetical readers" (*Daily News*). *The Pall Mall Gazette*

finds the verse singularly melodious, and says "the most striking thing about the whole composition is the almost perfect melody to which the commonest and most threadbare phrase is attuned." Still, there is "much matter of a far nobler quality," and the conclusion is that, on the whole, "the poem is a creditable one."—ED.

So stand their forts upon the hills; with towers
Still frowning, sullen at the genial showers,
That, brought on white-winged clouds, have come
to dower

The arid soil with recreative power.

No warrior's tread is echoed by their halls,
No warder's challenge on the silence falls.
Around, the thrifty peasants ply their toil
And pluck in orange groves the scented spoil
From trees, that have for purple mountains made
A vestment bright of green, and gold inlaid.
The women, baskets poised above their brows,
In long array beneath the citron boughs
Drive on the loaded mules with sound of bells,
That, in the distance, of their presence tells,
To springs that, hid from the pursuing day,
Love only night; who, loving them, doth stay
In the deep waters, moss and reed o'ergrown,—
Or cold in caverns of the chilly stone,—
Sought of the steep-built towns, whose white walls
gleam

High 'midst the woods, or close by ocean's stream.

Like flowering aloes, the fair belfries soar
O'er houses clustered on the sandy shore;
From ancient battlements the eye surveys
A hundred lofty peaks and curving bays,
From where, at morn and eve, the sun may paint
The cliffs of Corsica with colours faint;
To where the fleets of haughty Genoa plied
The trade that humbled the Venetian's pride,
And the blue wastes, where roamed the men who
came

To leaguer tower and town with sword and flame.
For by that shore, the scene of soft repose
When happy Peace her benison bestows,
Have storms, more dire than nature's, lashed the
coasts,

When met the tides of fierce contending hosts;
From the far days when first Liguria's hordes
Stemmed for a while the rush of Roman swords,
Only to mark how, on their native hill,
Turbia's trophy stamped the tyrant's will;
To those bright hours that saw the Moslem reel
Back from the conflict with the Christian steel.

These last were times when, emulous for creed,
And for his soul to battle and to bleed,
The warrior had no need of pilgrim's vow,
At eastern shrines, to lay the Paynim low;
For through the west, the Saracen had spread
The night that followed where his standards led.

Not with the pomp or art Granada saw
Reign in her lands, beneath the Prophet's law,
Did the rude pirates here assert their sway:—
No gilded talons seized the quivering prey;
Savage the hand, and pitiless the blow,
That wrought the swift and oft-recurring woe.
No boon, no mercy, could the captive ask;
If spared to live, his doom the deadly task

To strain—a slave—each musee at the oar
That brought the rover to the kinsman's door,
Or bore him, safe from the pursuit, away,
The plunder stored, to Algiers' hated bay.

With the dread terror that their raids instilled
Sank every hope, by which the heart is filled,
Among the poor to labour and to hoard;
And e'en the merchant, for his gains adored,
Dared not to venture, or to gather more,
Where danger's form seemed darkening all before.
Only in narrow streets, where guarded wall,
And high-raised watch-tower gave the signal call
When foes were near, to gather in defence,
Did the scared people wake from impotence:—
And yet, neglecting what could give them power.
In jealous feuds they spent the prosperous hour;
While only adding to their grief's great load,
Each baron kept within his strong abode.
Careless of wars that yielded little prize,
They let the havoc spread beneath their eyes;
Content, if driven from their own estate,
The baffled spoiler sought another's gate.
Thus, through disunion, and their selfish greed,
The Moor, unharmed performed his venturesous
deed.

These Alps, the fastnesses of high Savoy,
Became his home; these fertile plains his joy.

E'en now the sounds of his barbaric speech
In many a word, his lingering influence teach;
For men will copy, 'neath a yoke abhorred,
All, save the art to wield the conqueror's sword!

Whence then the strategy, or force, or guile,
That bade foul Fortune turn at length, and smile
Upon a region like a very heaven,
But vexed by man with hatred's cankering leaven?
See, where the mountain stretches forth a limb,
Down to the full sea's palpitating brim,
Dividing by that brawny arm the plain,
Just where a river swiftly seeks the main;
Upon the topmost ridge of its clenched hand
Appears a castle, strongest in the land.
From the hard rock the grisly ramparts rise,
Their front illumined by the morning skies:
And, sweeping from their broadening base away
The line of wall, the burgher's hope and stay,
Eneircles with low towers the stony mass
Where, densely packed, the dwellings heap the
pass;
And girdling still the fast-descending steep,
Crests the last ridge that overhangs the deep.

Beneath the cliff the fishing vessels float
With long-winged sails o'erarching every boat,
But where the river's mouth has made a port,
Guarded to seaward by yon square-built fort,
And near the rocks without the harbour bar,
Rise taller masts, with many a stronger spar.
On the broad decks that bear them may be heard
From time to time the sharp commanding word;

But oftener far the sounds that meet the ear
 Are the rough songs that tell the soldier's cheer,
 The laughter loud and long, the shouted jest,
 The tireless clamour of his time of rest,
 When danger draws not nigh, with finger cold
 Enforcing silence on her followers bold.

Yet these are men who, if there come affront,
 Seem ready now to bear her sternest brunt:
 For some are polishing their arms, that shine
 In fitful flashes o'er the sparkling brine;
 And some have landed, and in order move
 Past the dark belts of yonder ilex grove;
 Or, stationed singly, drill and fence with care,
 And hew with sword and axe the glancing air.

Now, on the road that leads from out the town,
 Appear two knights, who slowly wend them down,
 Till reached the ground, where still the men-at-
 arms
 Repeat their mimicry of war's alarms.
 But when among them wave the chief's gay
 plumes,
 Each, in the ordered line, his place assumes;
 And waits with steady gaze and lowered brand,
 Till every weapon in each rank is scanned.

The elder knight, whose fierce and haughty mien
 In his firm stride, and on his brow was seen,
 Was grizzled, swarthy, and his forehead worn
 By scars of fight and time, not lightly borne;
 For the dimmed eye that gazed, deep sunk,
 beneath,

Showed that the spirit's blade had worn its sheath;
 And that full soon the years must have an end
 In which, on friend or foe, that glance should
 bend.

The younger man, who followed at his side,
 Bore the same impress of a lofty pride.
 But all his bearing lacked the rigid mould
 That in the elder of tough metal told;
 Thus as the sire, with patient care, surveys
 How every movement practised skill displays;
 The son would saunter heedlessly along,
 His lips just murmuring as they shaped a song.
 His large gray eye was restless as the thought
 That fixed no purpose in the mind it sought.
 One jewelled hand was on his dagger laid,
 With pointed beard the other often played,
 Or swept from neck and shoulder curls that, flung
 In studied negligence, upon them hung.
 Yet though he seemed irresolute and weak,
 A flush of pride would rise upon his cheek,
 When his sire chid him, "as a stripling vain,—
 Almost unworthy of this gallant train,"
 And told him, if he cared not for such state,
 To "go, play ball within the castle gate!"
 Then backward falling for a little space,
 A pain was pictured on his handsome face:
 The dark brows met, the shapely lips were pressed,
 The nostril curved, as if for breath distressed.

But, as a glistening wave that quickly flies
 From the cloud-shadow where its brightness dies,
 To travel, laughing, onward as before,
 With not a sign of any change it bore;
 Did the light temper of the comely knight
 Forget in joyousness the father's slight;
 And smiling, answered, "Nay, my lord, you ne'er
 Let me see use, in all this pageant fair;
 For, save upon the field of their parade,
 These gallant soldiers never bare a blade."
 "Enough," the father answered, "that they keep
 Our home from outward harm or treason deep,
 And that you only hear, and have not seen,
 Aught of what they in other days have been,
 Before I made the town and yonder rock
 Proof to the miseries you would lightly mock."

Thus speaking, with a few of their armed band
 The two passed slowly to the yellow sand,
 Listening the while to wants of those who came
 To offer homage, or prefer a claim.
 When free, as onward on their path they went,
 The elder told how all his days were spent
 "Throughout his youth, and e'en to manhood's
 prime,

In broils, the passion of his troubled time;
 How at the last, through many a year of toil,
 Through the dread discord sown upon the soil,
 He reaped the profit of his stubborn will,
 And gathered power; until he won his fill
 Of all for which a man of spirit strives;—
 Riches and strength to save or take men's lives.
 'Twas true, all this might yet be still increased;
 But age had come, and his ambition ceased.
 He would not care himself to waste more blood
 By hunting those who ne'er against him stood.
 They said the Saracen should be destroyed;
 Then let them do it. If they died, he joyed.
 Yet for himself he would not aid, for they
 Had never dared to meet him in affray.
 They knew the length of his good arm too well.
 No, for his part, he felt no shame to tell,
 His work had only been with those who dwell
 Around and near him, thus his son had gained
 Such place and power as none before attained.
 He could not tell him how to use it, when
 New times must change so much both things and
 men.

One maxim only he must bear in mind,
 Aye to the followers of his house be kind,
 For if the tree would stretch its branches round,
 The roots must clasp and win the nearest ground."

The other, as such speech continuous flowed,
 But little interest in his bearing showed.
 His gentle nurture had not made him feel
 Either the fear or love of brandished steel;
 And he but lazily would dream of deeds
 Such as, with other youths, rapt fancy feeds,
 Until the thought to glorious action leads.
 Thus little had he cared for aught beside

The early objects of a boyish pride:
His sports, his horse, his dog; and now full-grown,
Less worthy loves seemed in his nature sown,
And less a man than when he was a boy,
A trivial foppery became his joy:
His velvet stuffs, the fashion of his sleeve,
His hat and plume, were what could please or
grieve.

While thus he listened not, but gazed or sung,
His eye had wandered to where now there hung
Along the far horizon, a low cloud
That mounted steadily on high, while loud
The wind piped, like a rustic at his toil,
Furrowed the sea in ridges like the soil,
And scattered rain-drops, as he strode along;
Then rose the storm, in awful fury strong.
Glams of a wondrous light a moment stood
On pallid sea and on wind-stricken wood,
And dazzling, where they shone the vision's sense,
They fled; and, chased by shadows as intense,
Passed with the swiftness of the blast, and leaped
From gulf to cliff,—then to the crags, that heaped
In grandeur 'gainst the flying skies, appeared
Like to white ashes that the fire has seared.
And then the mists rolled over them, as black
Grew heaven's vault with darkest thunder wrack;
From under which, increasing in fierce sound,
A harsh and hissing noise spread far around,
And a low moaning, like a voice of dread,
Welled, as if coming from the deep sea's bed.
The rain ran down, and, as the lightning flashed,
In bounding torrents o'er the ground was dashed.
From the dry hills the new-born fountains sprung,
The narrow tracks with swelling waters rung,
And, 'mid the turmoil, could be faintly heard
The heavy fall of distant land-slip, stirred
To headlong ravage, burying as it flowed,
Man and his works beneath a hideous load!
Down the broad bed of shingle and of stone
That the shrunk river seemed ashamed to own
When, in the heat of the life-parching day,
A feeble streamlet, scarce it found a way;
Now dashed a brimming tide, whose eddies surged
Till o'er the banks the muddy foam was urged,
And louder still the notes of terror grew,
Ere past the hills the roaring tempest flew,
And on lashed sea, and groaning shore was spent
The rage of nature, and her frown unbent!

Meanwhile the old man would have held his way,
Unhurried, back to where the castle lay,
Now hidden long by headlands of the bay;
But that they told him, "he must seek some rest;
A fisher's hut was near, its shelter best."—
And to the joy of the gay plumaged knight
Who followed, sorrowing at their dragged plight,
They turned aside; and, 'neath the slaekening
rain,

Soon found a cottage in a wooded plain;
And passing through the open door, were met
By the poor owner, who, with garments wet,

Stood dripping like a merman, standing nigh
The pine-wood fire, that sent its flame on high:
While the good wife, her distaff laid aside,
Still fed its glow with many a branch well dried,
Chattering as o'er her task she bent intent,
And from the blaze a storm of sparks was sent,

A bright-hued sash the fisher's jerkin bound,
His seanty locks a crimson bonnet crowned.
He turned upon the guests a face that spoke
A ready welcome, ere he silence broke.
Then, with bared head and smile of joy, he said,
"Ah! knight of Orles, what chance has hither led
Thee and the Signor Guido?—Enter here:
Praise be to God, and to the Virgin dear;
May she from tempests every ill avert,
Send gladness as to me, instead of hurt!—
Pray, glorious sirs, to honour my abode,
And with deep gratitude my heart to load
By wishing well to me and this my roof:
Now of such kindness to give me proof,
I pray you take your seats, and break your fast.
'Tis your first visit here, I fear the last,
For humble folk get not such favours oft."
And here his dame broke in—"Hist, Carlo! soft;
Their presence now gives joy, and they may take
Some fish, and fruit, and wine. Our girl will bake
A little flour upon the embers soon;
Come hither, Lita—Lita. Here's a boon,
A pleasure rare for thee. Thy bread shall be
Refreshment to these lords of high degree.
O, Signors, 'tis indeed a poor repast,
But on its winning has our toil been east.
Come, Lita—wherefore lingers she?" Then came
Into the ruddy light of her hearth's flame,
So that it blazoned her young beauty forth,
And seemed to love with all its charms to play,
The fisher's daughter, pride of eape and bay!

Whose loveliness, not such as in the north
Blushes like sunshine through the morning mist,
Was that of southern eve, quick darkening,
kissed

By crimsoned lightnings of her burning day.
A maid whose arching brow and glancing eyes
Told of a passing, timorous surprise;
Whose tresses half concealed a neck that raised
A head that classic art might well have praised.
Framed with the hair, in glossy masses thrown
From forehead whiter than Carrara's stone,
Her face's lineaments, clear cut and straight,
Might show that sternness lived her nature's mate,
Did not the smile that over them would steal
Another mood, as favourite, reveal;
Else had not dimples on the sunburnt cheek
Helped the eye's merriment so oft to speak.
O'erauteous mouth and rounded chin there
strayed

The sign of power that ardent will betrayed;
But broken by a gentleness of soul
That through her steadfast gaze in softness stole.

Her form was strong and lithe. She came and made
 A slight obeisance, as though half afraid;
 Then stood,—a coarse robe flowing to her feet,
 Each limb round shadowed in the fitful heat.
 And, like the glow that lighted her, there sped
 Through Guido's frame a pulse that quickly fled,
 But left his breathless gaze to feed upon
 The figure that, to him, like angel's shone.
 Till the repast prepared, his father quaffed
 A horn of wine; and turning, as he laughed,
 Said to the wife, "A beauteous maid in truth
 You give to serve us. That young man, forsooth,
 Has, as you see, no eyes for food, because
 They worship elsewhere with a mute applause.
 Nay! is she gone? I spoke with little grace,
 Else had not scared her from her 'customed
 place."

Then said the wife, "Oh, sir, we do not heed
 If her fair looks to admiration lead
 With such great folks as you, who cannot care
 For fisher maidens, with your ladies rare;
 But oftentimes, when neighbours come about,
 They find my welcome marred by anxious doubt."
 And Guido smiled, but could not laugh away
 The spell of silence that upon him lay.

When, turning from old Carlo's poor abode,
 The knights again together homeward strode,
 So strange the feeling that within found birth,
 It seemed to him he scarcely walked the earth.

One thought could only claim his wondering mind,
 Alone once more that humble hearth to find,
 Alone once more that radiant face to scan,
 And prove the charm, as when it first began.

Ah! who can tell, when thus the will is swayed,
 And to emotions dangerous train is laid,
 The torch that love or passion each can fire,
 What hidden issue waits the heart's desire?
 What little grains the balance may control,
 E'en though it shape the fortune of the soul,
 That, by its fervid longings all possessed,
 Yearn for the secrets of another's breast;
 Would live or die, but in the sight of one
 Who to its being seems the central sun,
 Without whose presence every scene is drear—
 The world a desert, haunted but with fear!
 Who from the scroll of fate may knowledge wring
 Of the first birth of life's mysterious spring,
 What is the nature that so soon has grown
 A potent tide, on which our bark is thrown?
 Ah! who can tell if noblest impulse lies
 Within the magic of the meeting eyes,
 Or, if the ruin of a life be where
 The light falls softest on some golden hair?

The knights of Orles regained the lofty keep,
 When, sinking slowly on the purpled deep,
 The sun still lingered on the bannered tower,
 Though evening on the shore now showed her
 power,
 And bathed it deeply in the twilight hour.