

# THE LAND WE LOVE

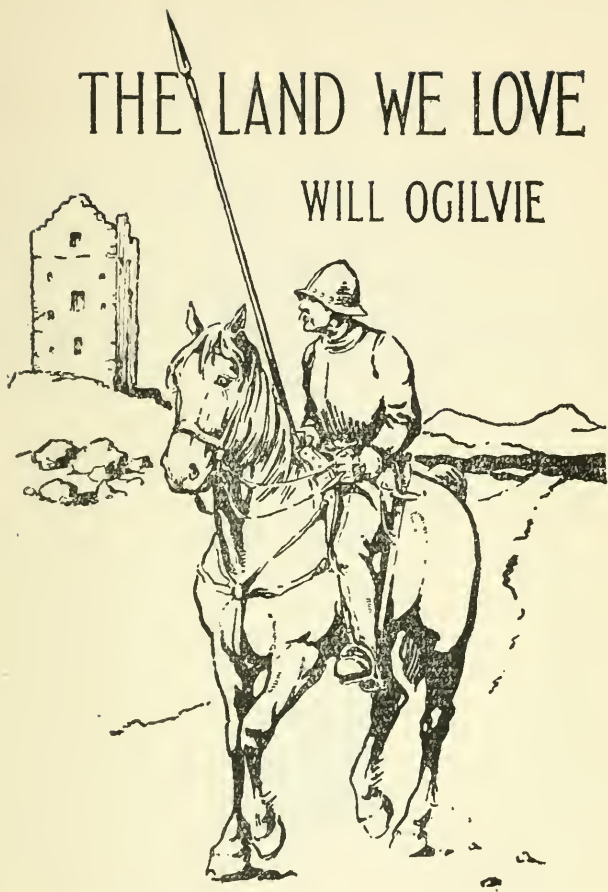
WILL OGILVIE



• Finckelstein

# THE LAND WE LOVE

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BY

WILL OGILVIE

AUTHOR OF

"WHAUP O' THE REDE"

"RAINBOWS AND WITCHES," "FAIR GIRLS AND GREY HORSES"

"MY LIFE IN THE OPEN"

ETC

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SECOND EDITION

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TO  
MY MOTHER

Of the pieces of verse included in this volume thirty-six were first published in **The Scotsman**, nine in **The Glasgow Herald**, and eight in **The Border Magazine**. "March Winds," "A Royal Heart" and "The Brumbies" appeared in **The Spectator**; "The White Pavilions" in **The Academy**; "To Right the Wrong" and "The Wolves" in **Britannia**; "The Cottage" in **Scotia**; "Colledge Water" in **Chambers's Journal**; "The Hoofs of the Horses" in **Baily's Magazine**; and "An Idyl of the Farm" in **The Weekly Scotsman**. The Author acknowledges the courtesy of the Editors of the above newspapers and magazines in permitting reproduction.

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BORDER SONGS

God gave all men all earth to love,  
But since our hearts are small,  
Ordained for each one spot should prove  
Belovèd over all.

Rudyard Kipling.

## THE LAND WE LOVE

---

JUST a line of blue hills to remember:  
Just a valley one fails to forget,  
Whether bound with the gold of September  
Or with jewels of midsummer set!  
Just a fringe of dark woodland and coppice,  
Just a ribbon of river and stream  
For a hem to the cornfields whose poppies  
Burn soft as a rose in a dream!

Just a sweep of marsh-moorland and heather,  
Just a brae where the blackfaces climb,  
Just a loch where the grey gulls forgather  
And the burns out of Cheviot chime!  
Just a glen where the wild-duck and pheasant  
Find a sheltering nook from the blast,  
Just a peel-tower that stoops to the Present  
With the legend and lore of the Past!

## THE LAND WE LOVE

Just an abbey that, ruined and hoary  
And racked with the reign of the years,  
Tells a mystic and marvellous story  
That breaks on the silence like tears!  
Just a fortress, perhaps, or a fastness,  
Just a bridge or a grave or a stone,  
That has saved from Time's infinite vastness  
Some tale half as old as Time's own!

There's a spell in this Land of the Marches,  
In this Border that gave us our birth,  
In this spot where the Heaven's wide arch is  
Spread blue o'er the best of the earth!  
'Tis the shrine where our hearts keep returning  
Wherever our feet may be led;  
All our love on that altar lies burning,  
All our song-wreaths around it are spread!



## A BORDER TOAST

---

**A**RMSTRONGS and Elliots! You know where  
they were bred—

Above the dancing mountain burns, among the  
misty scaurs;

And through their veins, these Border lads, the  
raiding blood runs red

—The blood that's out before the dawn and  
home behind the stars!

Armstrongs and Elliots!!

And touch your glass with mine!

Armstrongs and Elliots! And how should they forget

The pride their fathers gathered round the roving,  
reckless names?

Can't you hear the horses neighing, and the riders  
jesting yet

Above a thousand driven steers and fifty farms in  
flames?

Armstrongs and Elliots!!

Stand up and drink to it!

## A BORDER TOAST

Armstrongs and Elliots! The hills are riding deep,  
The steeds are very weary and the sun is sinking  
low,

But yonder steals our grey hill-fox along the stony  
steep!

Hark for'ard! Now, my Border boys, sit down  
and let them go!

Armstrongs and Elliots!!  
With all the honours! Drink!

## HOME

---

I HEAR the plough's creak, and the trampling Clydes,  
The bicker of the darting gulls above the new-  
turned loam,  
And the March wind from Cheviot roaring as he  
rides  
Down the ribboned leas of Home.

I see the clover and the swung bluebells,  
The curling waves of hawthorn, with their crests  
of blossom-foam,  
The moon upon the meadow and a star above the  
fells,  
And the night-mist wrapping Home.

I see the rivers, low before the rains,  
Laden with the laughter of the moorlands where  
they roam,  
The little Border rivers flashing white like silver  
chains  
Made to bind warm hearts to Home.

## HOME

I hear the wide world calling faint and far  
Down dim forgotten beaches where the fenceless  
oceans comb,  
But a stronger voice is calling where the green fields  
are  
In the quiet valley that is Home.

## THE BROWN BURNS

---

THE brown burns of the Border,  
They hasten down the vale,  
In shallows through the sunlight,  
In spates before the gale.  
Grey dawn and rosy sunset  
Lie mirrored in their breast,  
Who call us forth to labour,  
And lead us home to rest.

They cool our knee-deep cattle,  
They turn our drowsy mills  
They bring to us the music  
Of our blue eternal hills.  
They count our crumbling arches,  
They tell our lichened towers,  
And wake with soft insistence  
Some ancient pride of ours.

## THE BROWN BURNS

Sweet with the scent of heather,  
Clear from the clasp of peat,  
They dance, to please our children,  
Against their rosy feet.  
They guide our youths and maidens  
When love has bid them roam ;  
They lead our tired fathers  
Along the last road home.

For thought of whence they gather,  
For love of where they wend,  
For pride of flowers they cherish  
And fields that they befriend,  
When all sounds else are silent,  
When all songs else depart,  
The brown burns of the Border  
Shall sing within my heart.

## KIRKHOPE TOWER

---

**G**REY to the grey of the hill, fronting the quiet  
places,  
Where under their plaid of the purple the red  
grouse cower,  
Alone with the wind of the wold and the feeding  
blackfaces  
Stands, like a king on the Marches, old Kirkhope  
Tower.

Its stones are riven apart 'neath the weight of the  
weather,  
In its cold and crumbling chimneys the corbies  
nest,  
A heron flaps from the burn, and out of the  
heather  
A blackcock sails as my step breaks in on his  
rest.

Under the walls four-square, weird and lichened  
and hoary,  
I stand at the open port in a dream and gaze  
At the worn old stones that have borne swift feet  
to the foray,  
And light feet down to the burn in forgotten days.



## KIRKHOPE TOWER

I climb by the broken stairway; the great grey wall  
Runs fair and free to the roof, uncrossed of  
beam;

And that that was lady's bower, and this that was  
hall

Where the strong men feasted, are one; and  
again I dream,

And I see the board with its English sirloin laden,  
I hear the spurred heels clink as the benches fill,  
I see the goblet snatched aloft from the hand of a  
maiden,

And I hear the raiders' toast as it rings to the hill.

A fair dame sits at her bower-window and spins,  
Looking forth to the Ettrick, whose blossoms of  
foam

Leap not so light and white down the shadowy  
linns

As the white hand here in the shadow above  
the comb.

High on the rampart crest, where the wind blows  
free

On his sunburnt cheek and his rough hilt-  
hardened hand,

One looks southward and east over tide and tree  
Searching the moor for foes as a sailor searches  
for land.

## KIRKHOPE TOWER

Below me, huddled and dumb, in the darkened  
floor of the keep,

I can hear a reined horse stamp, clicking his snaffle-bar;  
I can hear the sudden rustle of startled sheep  
As a spurred foot treads the silence and hinges jar.

West wind, wailing so sadly over the buttress stone,  
You that have lifted the beard of the watcher on  
the tower,

You that have stirred the arras where the dame sits  
spinning alone,  
Stay, and whisper to me the secrets of board and bower!

You that have stooped and sung to this old grey  
silent warden,

You that have carried the tidings of hoofs on  
the plain,

When home with their plunder came riding the  
vassals of Harden

With mud of the moss of the Carter on rowel and rein!

The west wind rides past me unheeding. The  
shadows that lower

On the hillside have darkened the purple;  
departing, I turn,

For a white hand is waving farewell to me out of  
the tower

And a brown hand is pointing my path as I  
climb by the burn.

## KIRKHOPE TOWER

Grey to the grey of the hill, lichen-covered and  
hoary,

I leave you alone in the silent dusk of the hour;  
What I have guessed I have guessed, but you keep  
your own story

Held safe in your heart and for ever, O Kirkhope  
Tower!

## DECEMBER MISTS

---

THE mists are riding on Ruberslaw,  
Their nets are spread on the Border!  
Winds, have ye never a sword to draw,  
Or a troop to set in order?  
Waken, and rally your spears in line;  
Carve us a space where the sun may shine;  
Fill us a cup of your wild-honey wine  
To drink to their death on the Border!

The mists are trooping on Bowmont Vale  
In dull grey resolute order,  
Trampling the silver of Ettrick and Ale,  
Blinding the beautiful Border!  
Waken, O waken, ye winds of the west;  
Sweep from the Solway at Beauty's behest;  
Fling them, the foemen, from corrie and crest,  
From furrow and fence of the Border!

## TEVIOT

---

**N**OWHERE branch the trees so bonny,  
Nowhere grows the grass so green,  
Rise the banks so rich and sunny,  
Run the roads so white and clean,  
As where, glad with mountain water,  
Truant from her heath-clad hills,  
This the Border's hoyden daughter  
Laughter through the Lowland spills.

Silver shines her sunlit shoulder,  
Silver sounds her cymbal call,  
Here a challenge growing bolder,  
There a love-word low let fall!  
None her wanton mood may master,  
None her wayward feet may stay;  
Call her—she but glides the faster!  
Chide—the less will she obey!

## TEVIOT

Love-lorn swallows stoop above her,  
Kissing, clinging, breast to wave;  
All the wild flowers lean to love her,  
Every bud a bending slave;  
But she stays for flower nor swallow,  
Longing bush nor lonely tree,  
Mocking, "Come, then, come and follow;  
I am his who masters me!"

So, with only laughter laden,  
Never caught, yet often called,  
Teviot speeds, a blue-eyed maiden,  
Chainless, curbless, unenthralled;  
Mad and glad with mountain water,  
Gathered where the pink heath grows  
She, the Border's hoyden daughter,  
Wayward through the Lowland goes.

## ON A ROMAN HELMET

(Found at Newstead)

---

**A** HELMET of the legion, this,  
That long and deep hath lain,  
Come back to taste the living kiss  
Of sun and wind again.  
Ah! touch it with a reverent hand,  
For in its burnished dome  
Lies here within this distant land  
The glory that was Rome!

The tides of sixteen hundred years  
Have flowed, and ebbcd, and flowed,  
And yet—I see the tossing spears  
Come up the Roman Road;  
While, high above the trumpets pealed,  
The eagles lift and fall,  
And, all unseen, the War God's shield  
Floats, guardian, over all!



## ON A ROMAN HELMET

Who marched beneath this gilded helm?  
Who wore this casque a-shine?  
A leader mighty in the realm?  
A soldier of the line?  
The proud patrician takes his rest  
The spearman's bones beside,  
And earth who knows their secret best  
Gives this of all their pride!

With sunlight on this golden crest  
Maybe some Roman guard,  
Set free from duty, wandered west  
Through Memory's gates unbarred;  
Or climbing Eildon cleft in three,  
Grown sick at heart for home,  
Looked eastward to the grey North Sea  
That paved the road to Rome.

Or by the queen of Border streams  
That flowed his camp beneath  
Long dallied with the dearer dreams  
Of love as old as death,  
And doffed this helm to dry lips' need,  
And dipped it in the tide,  
And pledged in brimming wine of Tweed  
Some maid on Tiber-side.

## ON A ROMAN HELMET

Years pass; and Time keeps tally,  
And pride takes earth for tomb,  
And down the Melrose valley  
Corn grows and roses bloom;  
The red suns set, the red suns rise,  
The ploughs lift through the loam,  
And in one earth-worn helmet lies  
The majesty of Rome.

## TWEEDMOUTH BAR

---

O WIDE and winding river,  
You bring, it seems to me,  
The glamour of the Lowlands  
As gift unto the sea:  
The clink of spur and stirrup,  
The gleam of bit and lance,  
The spoil of all the Border  
In riches of Romance!

Beneath your silver burden  
The stars have heard you pass,  
With laughter o'er the pebbles,  
With love-words through the grass;  
Now, welcomed by the sea winds  
And woven with the spray,  
'Neath Berwick's time-worn ramparts  
You mix with Tweedmouth Bay!

## TWEEDMOUTH BAR

While we lie deeply dreaming,  
What wraiths of vessels ride!  
Ghost ships of song and story  
That drop with every tide!  
Their sails are broidered moonlight,  
Each masthead lamp's a star,  
When the white boats of Fancy  
Glide over Tweedmouth Bar!

The sea mists stoop and wrap them,  
And none on earth may know  
Where they shall furl their tops'ls  
And let their anchors go;  
For round the world and round again  
They'll find in fields afar  
No knight to ride like Deloraine,  
Or love like Lochinvar!

## THE HARP OF ETTRICK

---

I N a green kirkyard where the silent hills  
Are a guard to the glamour that Ettrick keeps,  
Rocked by the music of rain-fed rills  
The shepherd friend of the fairies sleeps.  
Nought nameth his grave the rest among,  
Save the simple slab as a headstone set,  
With the deep-cut date when he lived and sung,  
And a carven harp—lest the world forget!  
Round him the sheep and the moorfowl feed,  
Close to his shoulder the heathbells blow,  
And the sun may shine and he does not heed,  
And the flowers may bloom and he does not know.

But at night, when the arras of cloud is torn  
And tossed by the Solway winds aside,  
When the moon comes sailing above Delorne  
And sets in her silver the Ettrick tide,  
When the magic wing of the midnight hour  
Stoops low to the worn old Gamescleuch walls,  
And a lonely owl on the Thirlestane Tower  
With a querulous note to the silence calls,  
Then a murmur wakes in the heath and fern,  
And the fairies gather, unseen of men,  
Riding up from the Rankleburn  
And trooping down from the Tima Glen.

## THE HARP OF ETTRICK

So soft is the fall of their feet in the grass,  
So light is the lift of each gossamer wing,  
You might think it the murmur of breezes that pass  
Leaving whispers of love on the lips of the ling.  
They cross the low Ettrick by light of the moon  
That has robed in her lilies the foam on its wave,  
They climb the dark dyke where the shadows are  
strewn,  
And stand with bowed heads on the marge of his  
grave.  
However so soft be their step, he has heard,  
And he moves to their midst like a king to his  
throne,  
Not a leaf, not a blade in the grasses is stirred  
As he lifts the grey harp from its place on the stone.

The dead strings waken beneath his hand,  
And the echoes ring through the cleuch and ford,  
As he sings of a new Kilmeny's land  
And a new Earl Walter's matchless sword;  
'Tis a song that is never for mortal ear,  
And the grave to the world is unstirred and still,  
And he who might pass by the kirk would hear  
No sound but the wind as it crossed on the hill;  
Yet those golden words to the vale belong,  
And the tale is a tale that the fairies know,  
And the wail of that harp is the deathless song  
That the dreamer hears in the Ettrick's flow.

## ON CHEVIOT'S SHOULDER

---

UP here where the winding sheep-tracks go  
By the knoll and the naked boulder  
The old hill's plaid of the winter snow  
Has slipped from his wind-swept shoulder.

The clouds are scattered; the sun rides through,  
All earth with splendour gilding;  
The loch is lit with a lighter blue  
And a swan in the reeds is building.

A lark is singing in love's old way,  
With his heart and his wings a-quivver;  
He knows the worth of a morn in May,  
And the song to sing to the Giver.

Down in the valley, a silver thread,  
Tweed to the sea runs slowly,  
And round him an old romance is spread  
Like a presence hushed and holy.

And here where the kingdoms march and meet,  
And Cheviot stands as warder,  
Witching and sweet lies under our feet  
All the matchless pride of the Border.



## ON CHEVIOT'S SHOULDER

Not a foot of ground in this grey morass,  
Not a space in yon stretch of heather,  
But has heard the hoofs of the horses pass  
As the reivers rode together.

Not a silent glen in this range's shade  
But has rung to the boast of battle,  
But has heard the sob of a Southron maid  
And the lowing of English cattle.

But peace lies over this still May-morn  
Like the mist on the Bowmont lying,  
And strife has fled, to the silence borne  
Like a gull to the Solway flying.

## DRYBURGH

---

O SILVER waves that go crooning by,  
For whom is the slumber song ye sing!  
And whose is this tomb ye guard, and why;  
O, tall grey towers where the ivies cling?  
Not for a soldier, and not for a king  
That is laid in the lap of his last long sleep,  
O, waves, are the whispering words ye bring!  
O, walls, is the generous watch ye keep!

Here in the stillness sleeps the Bard,  
Where the shadows are flung from the Eildons Three.  
Hush! Step light, lest the peace be marred  
Of the sweet spot's silent witchery!  
With footfall soft as the wind in the tree,  
And light as the dew on the bluebell's breast,  
Come, come to the rail of his tomb and see  
Where the Wizard of Old Romance takes rest!

He hath woven the wonderful threads of Life  
From cradle to bier in a cloth of gold;  
He hath crossed us the spears of Border strife  
And the hands of the Highland loves of old,  
And every word is a jewel to hold  
While a nerve shall thrill or a sword shall thrust,  
Till the last of the fairy tales be told  
And the mouldering Dryburgh stones be dust.

## FROM BEMERSYDE

---

**H**IS favourite view! Southward the Carter Bar  
Beating a purple breast against the blue,  
Northward the braes of Gala stretching far,  
And, all between, the golden fields he knew;  
And this is Bemersyde! And this Scott's view!

Here from the hillside lift your eyes and see  
The cornfields of the Border waving wide,  
Eildon upreared in triple majesty,  
And silver Tweed bound seaward in his pride!  
All, all he loved, looking from Bemersyde!

The blue mists stoop on Melrose; from the moors  
The Gala gathers home her hundred rills;  
Still in the vale the old-time charm endures,  
Still some weird glamour of enchantment fills  
The far grey riot of the Ettrick hills.

This was his favourite scene! With our dull eyes  
We note its lights and shadows, and our pride  
Throbs as we murmur "Here our homeland lies!"  
We see the Border; but Scott's view more wide  
Took in Life's light and shade from Bemersyde!

## THE WITCH OF BOWDEN

---

CORN was blighted, cattle died,  
In the fields of Bowden!  
Red o' hair and evil-eyed  
Laughed a wife of Bowden.  
"Burn the witch!" the people cried;  
"For the sake o' crop and corn,  
For the sake o' hoof and horn,  
Burn the witch o' Bowden!"

Bringing wood from far and near  
Came the folk of Bowden,  
Piled the faggots for a bier  
For the witch of Bowden.  
Down the street with taunt and jeer  
Flew the maids and flocked the men,  
Trooped the children ten by ten  
To burn the witch of Bowden.

## THE WITCH OF BOWDEN

Spinning at her ingleside

Sat the witch of Bowden,

Heard the roar of the rabble ride

Down by the doors of Bowden.

Looking from her casement, cried:—

“A’ the folk’ll no’ be met,

Twa-three turns A’ve time for yet,

A’ve spun sae lang in Bowden!”

Smoke and flame to Eildon sped

On the moor by Bowden!

Her cloak was grey and her shoes were red

When they burned the witch of Bowden!

Still ye may search and see the spot,

Brown on the moor where the grass grows not,

Where they burned the witch of Bowden.

## COLLEDGE WATER

---

**M**Y sire is the stooping Cheviot mist,  
My mother the heath in her purple train,  
And every flower on her gown I've kissed  
Over and over and over again.

The secret ways of the hills are mine;  
I know where the wandering moorfowl nest,  
And up where the wet grey glidders shine  
I know where the roving foxes rest.

I know what the wind is wailing for  
As it searches hollow and hag and peak;  
And, riding restless on Newton Tor,  
I know what the questing shadows seek.

I know the tale that the brown bees tell,  
And they tell it to me with a raider's pride,  
As drunk with the cups of Yeavinger Bell  
They stagger home from the English side.

I know the secrets of haugh and hill,  
But sacred and safe they rest with me  
Till I hide them deep in the heart of Till  
To be taken to Tweed and the open sea.

## TO A BORDER COLLIE IN TOWN

---

**W**HERE are you travelling, head on paw,  
With big brown eyes a-dreaming?  
Leaving your bed in the barley straw  
For the morning hill mists cold and raw  
To gather the sheep on Hounam Law,  
With the grey Kale under you streaming?

Has your heart gone back to your mountain home  
On the wings of a wild wish flying?  
Do you sniff the scent of the peaty loam  
On the open moor where the red grouse roam?  
Is the white drift flung in your face like foam?  
Do the whaups wheel over you, crying?

Why do you whimper and start in your sleep?  
Are you losing the rebel blackfaces?  
Down the braeside do you gallop, and leap  
At the burn in the hollow, and race at the steep  
With a heart that has only a thought for your sheep  
In this wildest of runaway chases?

## TO A BORDER COLLIE IN TOWN

This is no home for a dog of your breed,  
You, a knight of the Hill-Shepherds' Order!  
You that have stood where the ridges recede,  
And looked to the South on the haughs of the Rede,  
And looked to the North on the vale of the Tweed,  
With your paw on the Gates of the Border!

The roar of the traffic goes past you unheard  
In monotonous maddening motion,  
But you have gone back where the heather is stirred  
By the swift little feet of the Cheviot herd—  
Gone back to the realm of the fox and the bird,  
And the wind blowing clean from the ocean!



## THE RAIDERS

---

LAST night a wind from Lammermoor came  
    roaring up the glen  
With the tramp of trooping horses and the laugh  
    of reckless men  
And struck a mailed hand on the gate and cried in  
    rebel glee:  
“Come forth. Come forth, my Borderer, and ride  
    the March with me!”

I said, “Oh! Wind of Lammermoor, the night’s  
    too dark to ride,  
And all the men that fill the glen are ghosts of  
    men that died!  
The floods are down in Bowmont Burn, the moss  
    is fetlock-deep;  
Go back, wild Wind of Lammermoor, to Lauderdale  
    —and sleep!”

Out spoke the Wind of Lammermoor, “We know  
    the road right well,  
The road that runs by Kale and Jed across the  
    Carter Fell.”  
There is no man of all the men in this grey troop  
    of mine  
But blind might ride the Borderside from Teviot-  
    head to Tyne!”

## THE RAIDERS

The horses fretted on their bits and pawed the  
flints to fire,  
The riders swung them to the South full-faced to  
their desire;  
"Come!" said the Wind from Lammermoor, and  
spoke full scornfully,  
"Have ye no pride to mount and ride your fathers'  
road with me?"

A roan horse to the gate they led, foam-flecked  
and travelled far,  
A snorting roan that tossed his head and flashed  
his forehead star;  
There came a sound of clashing steel and hoof-  
tramp up the glen.  
. . . And two by two we cantered through, a  
troop of ghostly men!

. . . . .

I know not if the farms we fired are burned to  
ashes yet!  
I know not if the stirks grew tired before the stars  
were set!  
I only know that late last night when Northern  
winds blew free,  
A troop of men rode up the glen and brought a  
horse for me!

## THE MARCH BURN

---

FOLK will tell you in their order  
Bowmont, Teviot, Tweed—in turn;  
But I know the real Border,  
And I know the true March Burn.

'Tis the playground of the swallow,  
'Tis the heron's banquet-hall,  
Just a gleam the wild ducks follow  
When the evening shadows fall.

Just a strip of sunny water  
That a man may step across,  
Just a little laughing daughter  
Of the mist-cloud and the moss.

Meadow-sweet and hemlock love her,  
And when soft the South wind blows  
There are kisses blown above her  
From the thistle to the rose.

And, though Tweed may claim the honour,  
She who dances through the fern  
With the white lace-foam upon her  
Is the true March Burn.

## A BORDER POET

---

THE green of God's earth  
Is the floor of the fane  
Where he worships the worth  
Of the sun and the rain.

The blue of God's sky  
Is the roof and the dome  
Of the storehouse where lie  
The rich gems of his home.

Each dale as it dips,  
Each stream and its strand,  
Is a song to his lips  
And a harp to his hand.

Each hill, near and far,  
Holds the gleam of the lance  
Of an Armstrong or Kerr  
In the days of Romance.

And the bard of this land  
That was spoil to the strong  
Still shall raid with rash hand  
The wide Marches of Song.

## A SONG FOR THE FLAG

(Presented to a Border School)

---

**B**LOW down, ye winds, from Eildon  
And set these folds a-swing!  
Shake forth this Flag of Empire  
To children of the king!  
The boldest knees have bowed to it,  
The bravest hearts have bled  
To guard that royal banner  
And hold its wings outspread!

See! Red that burns for courage,  
And Blue that shines for truth,  
And White that gleams for purity—  
Look up, clear eyes of youth!  
What homage will ye bring them,  
These colours twined and crossed  
With old-time grief and glory  
And battles won and lost?

## A SONG FOR THE FLAG

No manse so wrapped in moorland,  
No farm so far afield,  
But owes a son to Empire,  
A hand to sword and shield;  
No child of all our homesteads  
But honour holds him bound  
To fight that <sup>by</sup>yonder banner  
Rules aye on Border ground.

But till that day shall waken,  
And till that need shall call,  
Take for your sword the daily task  
That fills the hand of all;  
For best we build our Empire  
And best we serve our king  
Who do the simple duty  
The passing hour shall bring.

## A SONG OF BORDER RIVERS

---

### TWEED

**A**CROSS my once dividing barrier race and race  
Hold friendly hands, and bury helm and lance;  
I mirror wold and woodland in my face,  
And in my heart Romance!

### TEVIOT

I bring a song to you from out the laughing hills—  
A song the binding mill wheels leave unthralled,  
That I may whisper it in foam that fills  
Each cavern of the cauld!

### JED

Of all the Cheviot's dearest streams I am the first;  
The music of the Marches I have kept;  
I wake again in grey-walled Ferniehirst  
Old glories that have slept!

### YARROW

I win the hearts of more than my own sons, for I  
Am chosen idol of a thousand lyres;  
Yet have I wealth of witchery more high  
Than any song aspires!

## A SONG OF BORDER RIVERS

### TILL

Sorrow is mine. My tawny waves are muffled drums  
That beat beside the warrior in his grave;  
My step is slow and measured, as becomes  
A mourner of the brave!

### ETTRICK

I am the happy nurse of him, the fairies' friend,  
Whose harp shall ring while any song shall be;  
I bring the message that his hill flowers send  
Of love to the great sea!



## IF I WERE OLD

---

IF I were old, a broken man and blind,  
And one should lead me to Mid-Eildon's crest,  
And leave me there a little time to rest  
Sharing the hilltop with the Border wind,  
The whispering heather, and the curlew's cry,  
I know the blind dark could not be so deep,  
So cruel and so clinging, but that I  
Should see the sunlit curve of Cheviot's steep  
Rise blue and friendly on the distant sky!

There is no darkness—God! there cannot be—  
So heavy as to curtain from my sight  
The beauty of those Border slopes that lie  
Far South before me, and a love-found light  
Would shine upon the slow Tweed loitering by  
With gift of song and silver to the sea!—  
No dark can ever hide this dear loved land  
from me.

## SUNSET

---

**A** LONG the Ettrick hills a splendour wakes  
Of red and purple; dark the shadows run  
On Ruberslaw, but see! the Dunion takes  
The golden sword-thrust of the setting sun!

The evening sky one rolling cloudbank fills,  
Wrought in strange phantasy of tower and tree,  
Mocking the ramparts of our Border hills,  
Dwarfing their battlements of majesty.

A snowstorm drifting down the Bowmont vale  
A little hour ago made Cheviot white,  
And left him glistening in his silver mail,  
The day's last champion in the lists with night.

## THE FOLDING OF THE PURPLE

---

**H**IS plaid on his shoulder Cheviot twines  
In many a snow-white fold,  
And a low red star on the peak that shines  
Has clasped it with clasp of gold;  
For this is the time when the hill-kings sleep  
Folding their purple away  
Till the moorfowl nest and the sunbeams sweep  
Full-armed through the gates of May!

Good night! Good night! Though the winds  
blow loud  
Could thy slumber be less than sound  
With a pillowed head upon fairy cloud  
And a foot on enchanted ground?  
Uncrossed of care be thy sleep, O King!  
With thy purple folded away  
Till the moorfowl nest and the sunbeams swing  
Full-armed through the gates of May.

## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

(A Fragment)

---

FROM Cheviot's crest the wind blew cold  
And whirled the drift round byre and fold.  
The lonely pines that flanked the farm  
Tossed here and there a tasselled arm  
Above the brown burn's roaring spate,  
And moaned beneath the hill wind's hate.  
Within the house, whose window light  
Flung shafts of gold on shields of white,  
The fire-glow from the chimney wide  
Had forced the shadow elves to hide  
Where cobwebs to the rafters clung  
And spiders on their bridges swung.  
Half resting on his black-thorn crook  
The gudeman in the ingle-neuk  
With furrowed brow and lips apart  
Sat gazing in the fire's red heart.  
His lyart locks were thin and spare,  
His cheeks had lost their ruddy bloom,  
Time's burden and a weight of care  
Within his eyes had cast their gloom;  
Full four-score years in labour spent  
Had stolen his rugged strength and bent  
Those shoulders broad, that stalwart form  
Whose pride had trampled stress and storm.

## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

The gudewife sitting by his side  
Her busy needles deftly plied,  
While oft her loving glance would stray  
To where the old man, bent and grey,  
Recalled dim youth and lost desire  
From pictures glowing in the fire.  
The years had lightly dealt with her ;  
Still in her warmer veins astir  
The red blood ran ; her locks of white  
Framed eyes still full of happy light,  
Nor had the rose of beauty fled  
From comely cheeks and lips still red.

### II

The needles clicked with rise and fall,  
The clock tick-tacked upon the wall,  
The grey cat in the ingle purred,  
And still the old folk spoke no word.  
Then suddenly the door latch jarred,  
And chill and wintry from the yard  
Blew in the gale, and from the gloom  
Dave Elliot stepped into the room.  
Setting his shoulder to the blast  
He closed the door and barred it fast,  
Dusted the snow flakes from his cloak  
And, laying down the lantern, spoke—  
“There’s a right wind blowing along the burn,  
The dead leaves dance at an elfin kirk ;

## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

The firs are singing the wildest song  
I have heard them sing in this glen for long.  
If Boney rides on the sea to-night  
He'll be taking a toss from the horses white!"

### III

The gudewife laid her knitting by  
To greet her son with kindly eye,  
And coax the lamp to burn less dim  
And set his simple meal for him.  
Then, sitting at the ingle side,  
She watched him with a mother's pride.  
She noted well the shoulders broad  
That carried like a king's the maud;  
She marked the sinewy limbs and strong,  
The clear eyes innocent of wrong,  
The fearless glance, the quiet grace  
So common in the Border race.  
Meanwhile he told her of the farm,  
Of folded steers made safe from harm,  
Of sheep down-driven from the height  
And gathered in the bieldy glen  
Out of the turmoil of the night  
Beyond the searching storm wind's ken.  
Then, conscious of his work well done,  
He turned his thoughts to wider things.  
And talked of battles still un-won  
And strife of emperors and kings.

## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

### IV

The tale that Europe's heart had stirred  
Here in the hills was not unheard.  
Scarcely a cot could Cheviot claim  
That knew not dread Napoleon's name,  
Scarce farm or stell or shearing-stance  
But echoed with some jibe at France.  
Then came the whisper of a planned  
Invasion, how the French would land  
Before these winter months had passed  
And bind the sea-kings slaves at last!  
Thus yeoman troops were raised to stand  
As bulwark to the Borderland,  
And beacons piled upon the braes  
That so might all the Marches blaze  
And warn the watchful country round  
Should foe set foot on freeman's ground.

### V

Now seated by his sire a-dream  
And at his gentle mother's side  
Young Elliot raised the threadbare theme  
And bade the wraiths of conquest ride,  
Pictured the home he held so dear,  
Laid waste beneath the invader's spear,  
Saw sheep and cattle put to sword  
To feed the Frenchman's ravening horde,

## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

Saw golden hill and glorious glen

Made over to Napoleon's men.

In simple words the scene he drew ;

The old man shook his locks of snow,

And in his tired eyes of blue

A soft smile woke, serene and slow :—

“Nay, lad, these frog-fed foes of thine

Will meddle not with you or me ;

If they be seeking butchers' kine

They'll find them nearer to the sea.

Though half of France our isle should fill

Our ewes will feed on Cleuchburn still !”

### VI

With spirit bold the youth replied,

“I trust one day with my troop to ride,

When the beacons blaze and the bugles call

And the Border banners above us fall ;

When the farmers mount in the bends of Kale

And the hillmen arm in the Bowmont vale,

Then the French shall learn as their feet touch shore

That we count our Border worth fighting for !”

The old man shaking his grey head

Returned to his dreams of a day long dead,

But the dame spoke with flashing eyes—

“Safe in such hands our dear land lies !

Had I youth I would harbour but one desire :

To ride in your troop when the hills take fire !”



## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

### VII

“And is it so strange,” Dave asked her then,  
“That the need of our homes should find us men?  
Do you think it a hero’s task to dare  
To fight for a land God made so fair;  
To cross a sword for these hills of blue,  
These glens that the nut-brown burns run  
through,  
These scattered strips of the windy fir  
So dear to the heart of the Borderer;  
To carry a gun that shall guard from harm  
Each river-hamlet and upland farm,  
That shall keep the bounds our fathers drew,  
And prove ourselves to our Border true?”

### VIII

So speaking, he rose from the ingleside  
And wound his plaid round his shoulders wide:  
“Old Robin is stamping the stones in his stall,  
It’s time he was watered and bedded and all.  
I’ll pledge me he’s standing with eyes on the  
door  
Just to catch the first gleam should the beacons  
cry ‘war’!”  
And, laughing, he lifted his lantern and went.  
In the courtyard the storm wind was slackened  
and spent,

## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

The stars over Cheviot burned steady and white,  
And the Bowmont sang low in her love to the  
    night;  
There was no other sound but her ripple and fall  
And the click of the hill pony's hoofs in the stall.  
Young Elliot absorbed this new mood of the  
    night's,  
And wondered and listened, and looked to the  
    heights;  
Then suddenly, bound as it were by a spell,  
Saw a gleam on the shoulder of Yeavinger Bell,  
And far in the northward, alive in the gloom,  
An answering flare on the hill-top of Hume.  
Then brighter and bolder and nearer and higher  
From Caverton Edge broke a steeple of fire,  
And ere one could whisper the hill by its name  
The Dunion stood forth in a mantle of flame.  
One moment the watcher stood, robbed of his wit,  
Then he roared to the farmhouse: "The beacons  
    are lit!  
The lightnings are loosened, the war-dogs untied,  
And it's time for the Borders to saddle and ride!"

### IX

His mother came at his lusty cry  
And looked with awe on the reddening sky,  
And his father hobbled across the door  
Shaking his head at the name of war.

## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

The gudewife gazed at each flaming crest,  
Then she folded her hands on her patriot breast—  
“If our land is in danger our sons must ride;  
May the hand of God be a sword at their side!”  
Dave Elliot spoke no word at all  
But he turned his nag in the narrow stall,  
And buckled the girth and tightened the bit  
And crooned in a grey ear “The beacons are lit!”  
E’re half the sleeping farm had stirred  
He was cloaked and armed and booted and  
spurred,  
He had taken his father’s trembling hand,  
Had kissed his mother a fond good-bye,  
And answered the call of the Borderland  
And the red sign written across the sky.

### X

Down the path by the snow-fed burn  
That wound with many a twist and turn  
Young Elliot rode right cautiously  
Till he struck the road at the rowan tree,  
Then he stood in his stirrups and loosed the rein  
And Robin went galloping into the night  
With his shoulders grey and his streaming mane  
A-flash in the beacons’ golden light.  
A lantern gleamed at a cottage door,  
A light in the neighbouring farmyard shone;

## WHEN THE BEACONS BLAZED

“Swirehope’s awake to the word of war,  
And I’ll wager,” said Elliot, “Walter’s on!”  
Over the stones that strewed the way  
At the top of his speed went the cat-foot grey.  
Once his rider looked back to the west  
And far away on a Liddesdale crest  
Saw a new flame break, and “By Gad!” said he,  
“There are some that have further to ride than  
me!”

. . . . .



**OTHER VERSES**



## CLOTH OF GOLD

---

SOME spin in the light and the splendour,  
Some weave in the dark and the cold;  
But the least with a touch that is tender  
Makes cloth of his fancies of gold,  
As he twines the wide Earth and her glories,  
Warm love, and the passions of men  
Into poems and pictures and stories  
By toil of the brush and the pen.

They have taken the mountain and meadow,  
The wind and the river and rain,  
The star and the sunlight and shadow,  
The deep and the drift of the main;  
With their hearts they have broidered and bound  
them,  
With their hopes they have folded and sped,  
With the love of their lives they have crowned them,  
And twisted their faith in the thread.

My hand to you, weavers a-weaving!  
My heart to you, spinners that spin  
With your threads of love-laughter and grieving,  
Your threads of soul-beauty and sin!  
Though the world greet your labour with scorning  
In your toil your reward shall ye meet,  
For no song of the stars of the morning  
As the hum of your wheel is so sweet!



## A WOODLAND BOUQUET

---

NOT for you the rank and fashion  
Of the hollyhock and rose,  
But the twining reckless passion  
Of the wildest flower that grows,  
For the love you twined about me, clasping tendrils  
where you chose!

Not the spoil of any border,  
Not the wealth of garden-beds,  
Where the asters stand in order  
Primly nodding queenly heads,  
But the riot of wild flowers where the breezy  
upland spreads

Creamy elder from the coppice,  
Briar-roses wet with dew,  
And a bunch of scarlet poppies,<sup>1</sup>  
And a sheaf of cornflowers blue,  
Bound about with golden grasses; these, my  
woodland love, for you!

## IN HER SLEEP

---

THE days may be long ere she taketh  
The hand of the Summer to keep;  
The hours may be long ere she waketh;  
But to-day the Earth stirred in her sleep!

Was it glance of the Sun as he passed her  
To scourge the dry South with his whips  
That has bidden those pulses beat faster  
And brought the faint smile to those lips?

Hath she seen, as she dreamful reposes,  
This Prince in some vision too fleet  
Come again with his basket of roses  
To lay, as of old, at her feet?

Was the sigh that just rippled her bosom  
But a sensuous movement of rest,  
Or her thrill to some golden dream-blossom  
His loving hand laid in her breast?

Till the dawn of birds' song and buds breaking  
She hath dreams that are priceless to keep.  
Swift and soon come the hour of her waking—  
She has stirred, she has stirred in her sleep!

## THE FEBRUARY THRUSH

---

**A** GALLANT more daring  
Than all of his peers,  
The love he is sharing  
Is first of the year's!  
Let late laggard lovers  
Go wait for the rose,  
The joy he discovers  
Sweeps in with the snows.

The first growth of grasses,  
The first swell of bud,  
The first wind that passes  
With warmth for the blood,  
The first gleam of gold where  
The crocuses start,  
He gathers to fold where  
Love foldeth his heart.

A month—and each pleader  
Shall deafen the grove,  
But this one is leader  
Of Spring and its love!  
A month—and March brings in  
Her blossoms to cheer,  
But brave he who sings in  
The dark o' the year.

## A BUNCH OF SNOWDROPS

---

O LITTLE bunch of snowdrops, the messages ye  
bring  
Are music from the mating thrush and greeting from  
the Spring,  
Unfolding life and beauty as your snow-white cups  
unfold  
Their pale green inner petals and their hearts of  
yellow gold.

Warm, kindly hands have gathered you, and I shall  
not forget  
They gathered you this morning while still the woods  
were wet,  
And though the city's dust and grime have dried  
away the dew  
The freshness of the waking world is clinging still  
to you.

So, little bunch of snowdrops, I hold you doubly dear  
As pledge of lawns I may not tread and songs I shall  
not hear.  
A heart may borrow hope from you whose blind  
faith bids ye blow  
So long before the summer and so soon behind the  
snow!

## THE HERALD

---

THE ashleaves hide in their buds of jet,  
There is never a leaf on the beech-tree yet,  
But a new life stirs in the waking land  
As though the summer were near at hand,  
And down in the dell that the burn runs through  
A thrush is singing as if he knew.

It was only last night, or the night before,  
That the blackthorn branches were silvered o'er;  
It was only this morning, or yesterday,  
That the woods grew into a primrose way,  
That the South wind woke and the sky turned blue,  
Yet a thrush is singing as if he knew.

Perhaps he has heard from a lark in the sky  
Or an early bee as it wandered by,  
Or he may have learned when the winds are still  
That summer is waiting behind the hill.—  
I only know that the news is true,  
And a thrush is singing—because he knew.

## MARCH WINDS

---

THE winds of June are clowns in the clover  
Riding the tops of the early rye,  
Turning the swift-winged plovers over,—  
Silvery gleams on a purple sky.

Winds of September come roughly sweeping  
Like tyrant Kings through the ripening corn,  
And behind them the Summer lies weeping, weeping  
For poppies trampled and roses torn.

Winds of October are friends returning  
When orchard aisles are withered and brown,  
Breaking the twigs for our winter burning  
And flinging the ripe red apples down.

Winds of November that gather and follow  
With brooms that the Autumn mists obey  
Are housemaids busy on hill and hollow  
Sweeping the leaves from the Winter's way.

But the winds of March that are yonder gliding:  
Ah! these are the dearest winds that blow!  
Mothers they seem to me, stooping, guiding  
Little child-snowdrops out of the snow!

## DAFFODILS

---

HO! you there, selling daffodils along the windy  
street,

Poor drooping, dusty daffodils—but oh! so summer  
sweet!

Green stems to stab with loveliness, rich petal-cups to  
hold

The wine of Spring to lips that cling like bees about  
their gold!

What price to you for daffodils? I'll give what price  
you please,

For light and love and memory lie leaf by leaf with  
these!

And if I bought all London Town I could not hope  
to buy

What I have found in sunshine bound, and wrapped  
in open sky!

My money for your daffodils. Why do you thank  
me so?

If I have paid a reckless price, take up my gift  
and go,

And from the golden garden-beds, where April  
sunbeams shine,

Bring in more flowers to light the hours for lover-  
hearts like mine!

## AN APRIL SONG

---

AS pink and white as apple-flower,  
As graceful as the daffodils,  
For me she brightens every hour  
In this grey city of the hills.  
She is the Spring that fills my heart,  
She is the South winds as they blow,  
And like the winds she walks apart;  
She does not know—she does not know!

The days are long, away from her;  
But O those days on which we meet  
Set all my trembling heart a-stir  
With dreams too daring, hopes too sweet!  
And yet, withal she does not guess;  
I bid a staid “goodbye” and go  
Back to dark cells of loneliness;  
She does not know—she does not know!

I might have told her of my love,  
But April is a month of doubt,  
And rain clouds wrap the peaks above  
While down the vale the sun shines out;  
Her hand might cling no more to mine,  
Her eyes meet mine no more, and so  
The April sun would cease to shine—  
Perhaps 'tis best she does not know!



## FORGET-ME-NOT

---

DOWN in the glen that the burn runs through  
Is a tiny splash of the sky's own blue,  
A shy bloom hid in the summer grasses  
Asking this boon of the stream as it passes—  
“Forget-me-not!”

The careless ripple goes dancing by;  
There are blossoms to kiss that are not so shy;  
There are prouder maids more worth the wooing,  
And why should he wait for your plaintive sueing,  
“Forget-me-not?”

Better he stay for those eyes of blue,  
He will find no flower that is half so true;  
When the laugh of the vale is a memory only,  
He will dream again of your plaintive, lonely,  
“Forget-me-not!”

## THE MAGIC WAND

---

**I**T is only a mill-pond mean and small,  
And round it the nettles grow rank and tall,  
And the tangled duckweed is green with slime,  
But I knew that pool in a golden time  
When ribbons of bark from the fir tree's stem  
Were ships of the world and we played with them ;  
When the Tyrean barges hour by hour  
Coasted with cargoes of hemlock flower,  
And, loaded down to the bulwark rail,  
The Spanish galleons hoisted sail,  
And from every bay in yon broken wall  
Came a battleship at the Island call !

Once, I remember, when winds were low,  
A tall gift-yacht with her sails of snow  
Majestic moved through the sunset fire  
Like a wild white swan, and the ships of Tyre  
Dipped all their flags on her splendid way—  
And the sun went down too soon that day !

## THE MAGIC WAND

In a little cluster of oak trees set  
Is a spot where old memories linger yet;  
Since we played in its shadow long years have sped,  
But whenever that moss-grown bank I tread  
I remember it once as a forest aisled  
With vasty glades; to the eyes of a child  
Each acorn bonny, and smooth, and brown  
Was a fairy's gift from the sky flung down,  
And the acorn cups that the wind had spilled  
Were bowls for the pipes that fancy filled!

The path still leads us to copse and pond,  
But where, O Youth, is thy magic wand?

## NEW FOREST PONIES

---

YOU are free of the woodland meadows,  
Of swamp and thicket and ride;  
All day in the slanting shadows  
You lurk and loiter and hide,  
Till the moonlight silvers the bracken  
And the stars on the copses dance,  
And the fires of the sunlight slacken  
As the night comes up from France!

The night that by tower and steeple  
Comes up like a witch in the sky,  
Calling loud to the little people  
To mount while the moon is high;  
Setting legions of light feet twinkling  
Through the dewy marshland grass,  
And the bells on the heath-flower tinkling  
As the fairy horsemen pass!

## NEW FOREST PONIES

In the light of the stars they gather  
Between the mirk and the morn,  
With kirtle and cap and feather  
And hunting knife and horn;  
Then come from the deep glades swinging  
Their ropes of the twisted dew,  
Like gay little cowboys flinging  
Their lariat loops on you!

You are free of the woodland meadows,  
You are free of thicket and ride;  
All day in the slanting shadows  
You lurk and loiter and hide;  
All day unbitted and idle  
You wheel and whinny and prance,  
But you bend to an elfin bridle  
When the night comes up from France!

## THE HILL ROAD

---

O VERY fair the white roads are that run from town  
to town,  
The hedge-bound roads, the busy roads, where  
fashion passes down,  
But fairer is the fenceless track and many times more  
sweet  
That winds among the heather round the dark hills'  
feet.

By farm and lonely shieling, and past them far, it goes;  
A road that runs to nowhere, with a goal that no  
one knows;  
A road that runs to nowhere, growing less and less a  
trail  
Till it fades into the moorland where a tall scaur  
ends the vale.

O, seldom drones a hoof on it and seldom drums a  
wheel,  
But brown along its mossy marge you see the hill-  
burns steal;  
And now and then the shadow of a cloud above the  
ben,  
A cloaked and lonely traveller, rides down it through  
the glen.

## THE HILL ROAD

Green grows the grass upon it, and the scattered  
pebbles lie  
Where mountain storms have darkened them and hill  
winds blown them dry,  
But the blackface woos the sunlight in the warmth  
its bosom brings,  
And the ruffled grey-hen crouches <sup>to</sup> with its cool dust  
on her wings.

The last light hoof-mark falters, the last dim wheel-  
track dies,  
And there you'll find the pansies with their happy  
purple eyes.  
By rock-rose fair and silver-weed and butterwort so  
blue  
The traveller to nowhere shall find the path anew.

The broad white roads run splendid by wood and  
dale and down  
To seek the courts of Europe and the wealth of  
London Town,  
Yet though it lead to nowhere, as all the world can  
see,  
The hill road winding through the heath leads far  
enough for me.

## THE SHEPHERD

---

**K**EEN blows the wind over Braidhope, but close  
is my warm plaid wound;  
It's a gey bit step on the hirsel from the haugh to  
the hill-top ground,  
But there's lift in the heart of the heather, there's  
wine in the wind from the sea,  
And up o'er the shoulder of Braidhope's light  
tramping for Laddie and me.

Bord'ring the burn with their silver the swords of the  
fairies are bright;  
Hiding the grips and the hollows the snowwreaths lie  
crested and white;  
Near all of the flock is beneath us laid close in the  
lap of the lee,  
But there's aye a few wandering wastrels make labour  
for Laddie and me.



## THE SHEPHERD

The bent is all withered and yellow, the bracken all  
twisted and bow'd;

There's never a bee on the heather or a bird between  
me and the cloud.

The West wind rides over the moorland with ice-  
whetted lance at his knee,

He has never a foeman on Braidhope unless it be  
Laddie or me!

The shadows sweep up from the valley, the dark  
hirples down from the hill;

At the bend of the glen is a cottage and a candle  
burns bright on the sill;

Now the snowflakes may break from the purple, the  
snow-clouds roll up from the sea,

For the ewes are all bonnily bielled and home beckons  
Laddie and me.

There are roads that are smoother to travel, I grant  
you, but go where I will

There is never a pathway that calls me like this that  
leads over the hill,

When the West wind comes up from the Solway  
in the sleety chain mail of the sea

To trample the bracken on Braidhope and wrestle  
with Laddie and me.

## THE HARPER OF THE CAULD

---

**H**E sits above the flowing stream  
Just where its pebbly bed is walled  
By the low barrier of the cauld,  
And twines in song his river-dream.  
His song is sweet and void of care,  
This Harper old with snow-white hair.

He hears the May-day tide go by  
With promise of the early flowers,  
And looks, and lo! the hawthorn bowers  
Are whiter than the locks that lie  
About his shoulders; and he sings  
Of all the joy that May-time brings.

He hears the July ripples pass  
With tinkle on the stones laid bare,  
And lifts his harp; O fond and fair  
Their tale of gowans in the grass!  
He steals their whisper ere they go,  
And weaves it into music low.

## THE HARPER OF THE CAULD

And when September comes to crown

The year with gold, when the wind dips

Like little painted fairy ships

The withered oak leaves drifting down,

He finds a song to sing for them,

Then binds them in a diadem.

In summer suns, in winter snows,

The hill burn cradled in the peat,

The low stream winding through the wheat,

Have each a song; and each he knows,

And twines into a music rare,

This Harper with the foam-white hair.

## THE GIPSIES

---

**L**OITERING in the sunlight, O ye lotus-loving  
people,  
Dawdling through the daisies with your slow, slow  
feet,  
Every lane's an aisle for you and every tree's a  
steeple,  
And the wind your organ-music as it murmurs in  
the wheat!

You that know the splendour of the rosy risen  
morning,  
You that hold the secrets of the calm un-numbered  
stars,  
You that steal the brownness of the berries for  
adorning,  
You to whom the wide earth is a roadway for your  
cars!

## THE GIPSIES

You that wrap the white dust round your naked feet  
for ever

As you travel through wild roses to your goal of  
dim desires,

You that chase the South wind and the raindrops  
down the river,

You that seek contentment with a heart that never  
tires!

When my thoughts are carried over from your camp  
fires to the city,

When I follow in my fancy where the feet of  
fashion play,

Then my scorn is for the scornful and my heart goes  
forth in pity

To the people that would wean you from your  
royal, reckless way!

Live and loiter in the sunlight, O ye lotus-loving  
people,

In your azure-domed cathedral ye shall worship as it  
meet,

Where every lane's an aisle for you and every stem's  
a steeple,

And the wind is organ-music as it murmurs through  
the wheat!

## THE HUM OF THE BEE

---

THE lark may be too soon a comer,  
The bud be too soon on the tree,  
But, my Heart, you may say it is summer  
When you hear the first hum of the bee!

The South wind that ripples the clover,  
And rocks the green world at his feet,  
Blows soft for this little brown rover  
A-swing on his perilous seat.

The West wind that baffles the swallows,  
And lashes the poplars to foam,  
Stills the storm of his anger, and follows  
To waft this wing-wanderer home.

The sunbeams of morning come strewing  
Gold love on his russet and gold;  
The blossom-cups yield at his wooing  
Their hearts and the honey they hold.

There is many an earlier comer,  
But no one loved better than he;  
And, my Heart, it is never a summer  
Till you hear the first hum of the bee!

## THE CROSSING SWORDS

---

AS I lay dreaming in the grass  
I saw a Knight of Tourney pass—  
All-conquering Summer. Twilit hours  
Made soft light round him, rainbow flowers  
Hung on his harness.

Down the dells  
The fairy heralds rang blue-bells,  
And, even as they rocked and rang,  
Into the lists full-armed there sprang  
Autumn, his helm the harvest moon,  
His sword a sickle, the gleaner's tune  
His hymn of battle.

Each bowed full low,  
Knight to knight as to worthy foe;  
Then Autumn tossed as his gauntlet down  
A leaf of the lime tree, golden brown,  
And Summer bound it above the green  
Of his shining breastplate's verdant sheen.

They closed. Above them the driving mists  
Stooped and feathered—and hid the lists.  
Later the cloud mist rolled away  
But dead in his harness the Green Knight lay.

## THE LAST ROSE

---

IT is only a day and a day  
Till the storm-wind shall steal to your heart,  
Rending all your red petals apart,  
Taking perfume and beauty away;  
And the hours are now numbered and few  
Till the night in her pity shall pass  
And lay her soft tears of the dew  
On your leaf-covered grave in the grass.

And I think as I bid you good-bye,  
It is only a day and a day  
Till Death comes with his sickle to slay,  
And we lie where your torn petals lie:  
And I would, little rose, that we knew  
In the hour when our summer departs  
We had given such gladness as you  
From the sunlight God stored in our hearts.



## THE GLEANERS

---

**T**HROUGH Autumn's wide-flung doors  
The laden wains have rolled,  
Spilling on golden floors  
The dust of their bundled gold;  
And now from wood and wold,  
Where the dews of dawn are spun,  
God's gleaners, one by one,  
Come forth to the feast and, bold,  
Take the gift of the rain and sun.

Doves from the deep dark firs,  
Rooks from the elm-tops bare;  
And the oatfield trembles and stirs,  
And the barley stems are fair  
With the shimmering cloak they wear  
Of the sable and silver of wings;  
And the red sun, rising, brings  
Over the hill-top the hare  
And the wild, shy, woodland things.

By the patter of little feet  
In the dry dead leaves of the wood,  
By the rustle of wings in the wheat,  
As the wild birds stoop to their food,  
Shall ye know that our God is good,  
That the harvest shall never fail,  
That enough shall be spilled by the gale  
For the wandering moorfowl's brood  
And the gipsy-hearts of the vale.

## A FALLING LEAF

---

THE wings of the South wind scarcely stir  
The blue-grey tassels that fringe the fir,  
The tangled bracken grown bravely old  
Renews its pride with a touch of gold,  
There is life and colour on wood and wold,  
—Then, like a sudden sob of grief,  
“Tip-tap, tip-tap!”—a falling leaf!

There's a droning wheel on the far-off road,  
A waggon lifting the year's last load;  
The stacks stand yellow against the sky,  
The down of the thistle goes floating by,  
And hearts are happy and hopes are high,  
—Then, stealthily, like some slow thief,  
“Tip-tap, tip-tap!”—a falling leaf!

## THE WIND OF AUTUMN

---

I AM the Wind of Autumn,  
From fields afar I roam,  
I dry the sheaves of harvest,  
I blow the swallows home;  
I fling to earth the apples,  
I set the gleaners free;  
I twine a wreath of scarlet  
Around the rowan tree.

I break the withered branches  
And strew them in the glen  
To fill the hands of children  
And warm the hearths of men;  
I bear the wildfowl seaward,  
I pass the mother-call  
When the far-scattered coveys  
Close in at evenfall.

I kiss the rain-wet roses,  
I lift the tired leaves down;  
I toss the silver seagulls  
Behind the furrows brown.  
I am the Wind of Autumn,  
I bid the bluebells ring  
To speed the ships of Summer  
Across the world to Spring.

## THE FAIRIES OF THE FROST

---

**T**ELL me, where have you lain hidden  
All the long glad summer days,  
Fairies, little Fairies of the Frost,  
To the sunlight's feast unbidden,  
To the gloaming's love-lit ways  
And the laughter and the glamour of it lost?

Were you hid among the clover  
Or low down among the wheat  
With your sparkling diamond shoon,  
When the West wind rippled over  
With the shadows on his feet  
Going eastward to his meeting with the moon?

In the roses did ye settle?  
Lay ye watching in the lane,  
With a heart alert to learn  
Every leaf and stem and petal,  
So that every window-pane,  
When you etched it, might be true to flower  
and fern?

## THE FAIRIES OF THE FROST

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To the gloaming's love-lit ways  
And the glamour and the laughter of it lost?

## THE WOLVES

---

**W**INDS, ye are wolves of the night  
Far spurred by your fierce desires,  
Hunting the sleighs of the fading light,  
Siegeing the sunset fires!

Ye steal through a forest of stars,  
Ye sniff at the clouds' white stores;  
Hungry, ye howl at our window bars  
And ramp at our bolted doors!

Whining, ye gather and go;  
Restless, ye raven and roam.  
Ye follow our tracks in the trodden snow,  
Ye hound and hustle us home!

Sometimes a leader falls,  
And your ravening ranks are thinned,  
Till your wavering vanguard calls,  
Then—wolves, O wolves of the wind!—

## THE WOLVES

Your cubs creep out of the night,  
And your she-wolves heavy with young,  
To lend a tooth to the fight,  
To lend to the siege a tongue!

As dim nights follow the days  
Ye follow your fierce desires,  
Hunting the twilight's sleighs,  
Circling the sun's camp-fires!

## DECEMBER'S DIAMONDS

---

**D**ECEMBER in her diamonds! Down Winter's deep  
    she gleams  
Till the jewel-bordered highway is a path to silver  
    dreams,  
And every tuft of grass a ship that trails white nets  
    astern,  
And every leaf of lowly weed a frond of fairy fern.

December in her diamonds! Who caught the falling  
    dew  
And wove it into elfin chains to charm the world  
    anew?  
Who broke the barrier of the cloud and stole those  
    gems of night  
To sew them on the snowy shoes that speed  
    December's flight?



## DECEMBER'S DIAMONDS

No human hand may gather them however hard it  
try;  
No maid of earth may borrow them, no mortal man  
may buy;  
But all may see the sunlight glance along their royal  
sheen,  
And all may watch December dance more jewelled  
than a queen.

Though princely are the pendants that the dames of  
London wear,  
No gem in all their necklets with December's can  
compare;  
No countess claims a coronet so regal as the tree's,  
No queen may clasp a girdle set with richer stones  
than these.

The snow's own sunlit diamonds! Go search, if  
search ye will,  
The cavern deeps of Kimberley—and find them  
matchless still!  
What glory bought of mint or mine may with her  
pride compare:  
December in her diamonds, the fairest of the fair?

## THE SNOW

---

SOME would speak of the snow as a wonderful  
winding sheet

In the silence of forgetfulness wrapping December's  
dead;

I would rather dream of it as a white flower flung at  
the feet

Of the world and Winter wed.

Adrift from the balconies of some tall-towered golden  
city

Fall the soft snow-flakes in the magic of soundless  
flight,

And I see the hands of the angels, girl angels, flinging  
confetti

On the Earth in her bridal white.

## WILDFOWL

---

WHEN the day and the dark are meeting,  
And the first stars climb the sky,  
We can see you with brave wings beating  
Like shadows over us fly.

As ye speed through the daylight dying,  
As swift to the dark ye go,  
Will ye leave us no light word lying  
On the breast of the sunset glow?

Up there on your strong wings streaming,  
Down the bridle-track of the wind,  
Caught ye never the gold bits gleaming  
Of Summer riding behind?

Do ye bear from the buds no message,  
No tale from the roses bring?  
Do ye come with no hope, no presage,  
No sound or sign of the Spring?

In the calm of those clouds high over  
Have ye never a whisper heard  
Of a bee in the early clover  
Or the song of a nesting bird?

## THE INGLESIDE

---

WHEN the shadows downward glide  
Fancy rules the ingleside,  
And within the glowing fire  
Lie the dream fields of Desire.

Brighter than the lighted lamps  
Gleam the stars on far-off camps,  
Warmer than the pine-log glow  
Wait the lips of long ago.

There is not a lover fair  
But her face is pictured there,  
There is not a comrade true  
But goes redly riding through.

There is ne'er a dream of fame  
But takes shape in yonder flame,  
There is ne'er a song of love  
But is sung in yon red grove.

## THE INGLESIDE

Soft and grey a cinder falls:  
Camp and grove and castle walls  
Fade away in dust and flame  
With our dreams of love and fame.

Yet, when shadows downward glide  
Fancy rules the ingleside,  
And we find amid the fire  
Dream flowers of the old Desire.

## THE BRUMBIES \*

---

THERE are steeds upon many a Western plain  
That have never bowed to a bit or rein,  
That have never tightened a girth or chain.

They feed in the blue-grass, fearless, free  
As the curbless wind on the bit-less sea,  
And the life they lead is a song to me.

For I know there are those in the world to-day  
Who are just such rebels at heart as they,  
Running uncurbed in the brumby way.

Men that have never been bridle-bound,  
Bitted or girthed to the servile round,  
Men of the wide world's stamping ground.

Who have wheeled to the Dawn; have kept lone guard  
When the soft Bush nights crept golden-starred;  
Rebels that never the world shall yard.

\* "Brumby"; the Australian name for a wild horse.

## THE BRUMBIES

There is room on this earth for the toilers too,  
And some must draw where their grandsires drew,  
And some must lope on the trails anew.

But as long as the girth and the harness scar,  
As long as there's land unfenced and far,  
The wild mob feeds under moon and star.

## THE HOOFS OF THE HORSES

---

THE hoofs of the horses!—Oh! witching and sweet  
Is the music earth steals from the iron-shod feet!  
No whisper of lover, no trilling of bird  
Can stir me as hoofs of the horses have stirred.

They spurn disappointment and trample despair,  
And drown with their drum-beats the challenge of Care;  
With scarlet and silk for their banners above,  
They are swifter than Fortune and sweeter than Love.

On the wings of the morning they gather and fly,  
In the hush of the night-time I hear them go by—  
The horses of Memory thundering through  
With flashing white fetlocks all wet with the dew.

When you lay me to slumber no spot you can choose  
But will ring to the rhythm of galloping shoes,  
And under the daisies no grave be so deep  
But the hoofs of the horses shall sound in my sleep.



## THE OLD COACH DRIVER

---

**A**MONG his garden roses lone he sits  
And hears the traffic of the road roll past,  
But hears no more the jingle of his bits,  
His long whip's thunder or his guard's full blast.

He hears for rattle of his leading bars  
The throb of engines, and the motor's horn  
For the strong music blown against the stars  
On many a frosty night and windy morn.

With eyes grown dim, with old feet faltering,  
Scarce now he dares to cross that road, the same  
Where once in robe of scarlet he was king  
And all pulled out before him when he came.

Time will be served; new years new codes adjust;  
Old rules are banished and old days depart;  
The dust is on his roses, and the dust  
Of eighty years hangs, choking, round his heart.

## A MOTHER'S THOUGHT

---

**A** SNOW-WHITE spirit flying free  
Across God's vast eternity,  
Boasting her little wings the best,  
Went circling far beyond the rest.  
She left Heaven's starry gates behind,  
And down the pathway of the wind  
Flew on and on, and found no fear  
Though Earth itself grew dark and near.

Sudden those peerless wings and proud  
Were netted in a mountain cloud,  
And lay there bound in silver tether,  
White plume entangled in white feather.  
Long time forsaken and forlorn  
She struggled, from her shoulders torn  
The white wings quivered in the cloud;  
Then all the sky with song grew loud,  
And the child spirit pure as pearl  
Came down to earth—our baby girl.

## A MOTHER'S THOUGHT

And now we know when still she lies  
With that sweet smile across her eyes,  
She sees her white wings in the cloud  
And hears the gold harps harping loud,  
And when she stretches her pink hand  
We know—we know and understand!

Would we could guard her day and night  
And keep her pure soul pure and white,  
That nought might still that music's stir  
And no cloud keep her wings from her!

ON THE DEATH OF  
ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

---

**T**O-DAY falls the lyre from the hand  
That waked her wild music of passion, majestic  
and grand,  
Took circling white sea bird and cliff-hanging tree,  
Took motion and colour of wave-crest, of sea-flower  
and sand,  
And twined in a garland of love to lay on the lips  
of our land.  
—Is his death not *thy* sorrow, O Sea?

Mute, magical, passionate lyre!  
No more shall the sunbeams of laughter, the moons  
of desire,  
Make light for thy music when buds on the lilac  
bush cling,  
When daffodils dance and our red-budded tulips take  
fire,  
When green leaves of April leap suddenly forth on  
the briar.  
—Is his death not *thy* sorrow, O Spring?

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Is this not *your* sorrow, O Stars,  
You that he chanted so sweetly in bold measured bars,  
In song that shall live while your mystical glory  
endures?  
O birds, trilling now on the verge of the Summer by  
half-built nests!  
O roses, his friends, with the half-hidden buds in  
your breasts,  
Is this grief not a sorrow of *yours*?

## BARE FEET

---

TRAMP of gay feet on the pavement,  
Roar of the carts and the cars,  
And a sound that is only a silence  
That calls ye, compassionate stars!  
Heart of me! How can you hear them,  
Stumbling and painful and slow,  
For the little bare feet of the children  
Are making no sound in the snow!

Sweep of the swords of December,  
Gleam of the leaves and the light,  
Music and dancing and laughter  
And dazzle and dream in the night!  
Heart of me! See them beside you,  
Faltering;—where shall they go?  
Little bare feet of the children  
Making no sound in the snow!

The lamps shall burn low at our banquets,  
The holly leaves wither and die,  
But the Christ's crown is fadeless in Heaven,  
God's lamps burn undimmed in the sky!  
Heart of me! God hath his angels  
That stooping in pity shall bring  
The little bare feet of His children  
Safe home to the Courts of the King.

## A PRAYER

---

WITCH! take me back on your broom,  
Through the glimmer of tales I was told,  
To the rainbow whose arch in the gloom  
Is a guide to its treasures of gold!  
I am tired of Life's blame and its praises,  
And of Hope's inarticulate phrases,  
Let me lie once again in the daisies,  
While I link them in chains as of old!

Time has only a handful of days  
That are brimful of innocent joy;  
Life has only one garland of bays,  
And she binds them to give to a boy;  
And we know, who have suffered and striven,  
That the keys of the gateway of Heaven  
Shall but once to a mortal be given—  
To a child in the sun, for his toy!

Witch! take me back on your broom!  
Shall I bend to my trivial toil,  
While a rainbow's astride in the gloom  
With a cave at its foot to despoil?  
I am tired of Life's fortune and phases,  
Its mingling of moods, and its mazes,  
And I want to lie down in the daisies,  
And sleep with my cheek to the soil!

## THE COTTAGE

---

**S**TANDS a clearing in the woodland and the  
cottage it encloses  
Is the hall of Scotland's courage and the home that  
holds her pride,  
And the wallflowers in the border and the trailing  
yellow roses  
Twine a simple wreath for valour with its rightful  
wreath denied.

The sunlight floods the gables and the thin blue  
smoke goes sweeping  
To melt in mists of fancy, till it seems to sorrow's  
eyes  
Like smoke above old battles where our soldier sons  
lie sleeping—  
The smoke above the altar of old Scotland's sacrifice.



## THE COTTAGE

With chatter and with laughter come the children in  
the morning,  
Bare feet and sun-browned faces and limbs naked to  
the knee,  
With satchels on their shoulders, rugged road and  
rough wind scorning  
With the courage of the brave old land whose  
bulwarks they shall be.

As they pass the garden gateway you can hear far  
pipers playing,  
See the set and lifted faces while the drums before  
them beat,  
As those children grown to manhood take the battle-  
road, obeying  
The bugles of the regiments that never knew defeat.

Pass on, O merry children, up the hill-path, through  
the heather,  
Bare-footed, bravely hearted, on the road your fathers  
trod,  
With gay young voices lifted and with glad hands  
linked together,  
The strength of Scotland's future in the charge of  
Scotland's God!

## COTTAR AND KING

---

OVER a cottage the winds blew wild,  
Mocking the wail of a new-born child,  
But the fairies knew—and they only smiled,  
Rocking his wooden cradle!

His songs fly wide on their silver wings,  
Fame to his hand her sceptre brings,  
Over his shoulder as over a king's  
Time has folded the purple.

## A ROYAL HEART

---

RAGGED, uncomely, and old and grey,  
A woman walked in a Northern town,  
And through the crowd as she wound her way  
One saw her loiter and then stoop down,  
Putting something away in her old torn gown.

“You are hiding a jewel!” the watcher said.  
(Ah! that was her *heart*—had the truth been read!)  
“What have you stolen?” he asked again.  
Then the dim eyes filled with a sudden pain,  
And under the flickering light of the gas  
She showed him her gleaning. “It’s broken gless,”  
She said; “I ha’e gethered it up frae the street  
To be oot o’ the road o’ the bairnies’ feet!”

Under the fluttering rags astir  
That was a royal heart that beat!  
Would that the world had more like her  
Smoothing the road for its bairnies’ feet!

## SUNSET ON LOCHAILORT

---

**W**EARY of ocean, of ridge, and hollow,  
The seagull rests on his island tower,  
And butterfly-winged the grey sea-swallow  
Flits on the white foam-flower.

The burns are leaping through fern and heather,  
Spurning the rocks in a splendid glee,  
Singing a sunset song together,  
Glad to be safe to sea.

Out of the West comes the gold light gleaming,  
Paving a road to the headlands high,  
Where Rum and Eigg in the blue lie dreaming  
Under the hills of Skye.

From Arisaig comes a distant wailing,  
Ardneish sobs for a hope forlorn,  
In Loch Nanuagh a lone ship sailing  
Waits for a king forsworn.

## SUNSET ON LOCHAILORT

There is a grief upon moor and meadow,  
There is a hunted foot on the strand,  
By lore and legend, by wraith and shadow,  
This is Prince Charlie's land!

Dip to the slow swell soft, my wherry!  
Lie on the water light, mine oar!  
So shall we drift over Sunset Ferry  
Under Lochailort shore!

. . . . .

The dark has hidden Day's golden sheen,  
The sun's red rose has been plucked by night;  
The moon over Moidart climbs, a queen,  
Splendid and round and white.

## SIX HANDS

---

SIX hands linked for happiness!  
We ask no more, we need no less  
Than six hands for happiness!

Two that are brown and rough and scarred  
That have found the world and its labour hard,  
Two that are proud to toil and guard.

Two that are soft and dear and white,  
Loving and trustful day and night,  
Two that lead to the pure and right.

Two that are tiny and pink and sweet,  
Stealing our fond hearts' every beat,  
Making the magic ring complete.

Six hands linked for happiness!  
We ask no more, we need no less  
Than six hands for happiness!

## KINGS IN EXILE

---

**W**E were serfs; there were roads to us forbidden,  
There were barriers they would not let us pass,  
Till the fairies brought the purple they had hidden  
And the palfreys they had tethered in the grass.

Then we rode out past the wonder of the world,  
Past desire and disenchantment that it brings,  
Till on battlements we saw the flags unfurled  
Of faëry, and knew that we were kings!

We were kings and our playmates were princesses,  
We were rulers and our empire lay afar  
Beyond things proved, beyond the gate of guesses,  
And a thousand miles beyond the furthest star.

We were kings!—Now around us fall the shadows  
Of our serfdom like a raven's dropping wings.  
Not a footstep of a fairy in the meadows—  
Not a comrade who remembers we were kings!

## TO RIGHT THE WRONG

---

**W**ERE I this city's over-lord  
As but its humble serf am I—  
Were I this city's over-lord  
I would ride forth with naked sword  
And slay its heartless wrongs, or die!

Were I this city's armèd chief,  
And chief in something more than name,  
My arm should rob it of its grief  
And choke from it its crying shame.

No toiler then should cross its street  
With aching arms and tired eyes dim,  
While fashion's full-fed horses' feet  
Should fling the highway's filth on him.

No weak one, weary from his toil,  
Should spend his miserable dole  
In loathsome dens where spoilers spoil  
To gain the price that sells a soul.



## TO RIGHT THE WRONG

No women, loyal in their love,  
Should wait outside those poisoned bars  
Chilled and heart-weary, while above  
Gaze mockingly the wanton stars.

No hungry little child should stand  
With pale lips pressed against the pane,  
Looking on a forbidden land  
Of food and warmth—were I to reign!

No girl should walk these pitiless streets  
In the cursed mart of open shame,  
God witness! if this poor heart beats  
With manhood worthy of the name.

Were I this city's over-lord,  
As but its lowly serf am I,  
Were I this city's over-lord  
I would ride forth with naked sword  
And slay its heartless wrongs, or die!

## SCOTLAND'S SHRINE

---

I LEAVE the busy, crowded street  
To step within your silent aisles,  
Where the dead hearts of centuries beat  
Beneath your storied roof, St Giles' !  
Where choir and chapel void and vast  
Are filled with spirits of the Past !

In golden shafts and rainbow spears  
The light falls soft on oak and stone,  
So filters through nine hundred years  
The glory that is Scotland's own ;  
For these your sombre walls include  
Our country's pride of nation-hood !

The feet of heroes tread your pave  
While echo to their fame replies ;  
The voice of Knox still fills your nave ;  
Dead Stewart in your South Aisle lies !  
Your roof and steeple once again  
Are rampart for Queen Mary's men !

## SCOTLAND'S SHRINE

The sound of trampling feet intrude,  
A slow procession winds in state  
Out of the grey-towered Holyrood  
And up the mourning Canongate.  
'Tis great Montrose they carry home  
To his long rest beneath your dome!

Around me stand, Time's trusted fanes,  
The tributes to our later dead;  
The triumph faded, there remains  
But grief—the tears that Scotland shed;  
And dark upon your splendid walls  
The stained old colours droop like palls!

Deep falls the early winter eve,  
And deeper grows the winding spell  
That old Romance will always weave  
Around the shrine we love so well!  
Oh! House of heroes, proud, apart,  
How much you hold of Scotland's heart!

## THE WHITE PAVILIONS

---

WITH snow-white blossoms starred,  
With a snow-white cloud above,  
The White Pavilions guard  
Souls pure as the woodland dove.  
All day in the face of Death  
On the still wind's whispering breath  
The silver bugles of Faith  
Sound, and the trumpets of Love.

Angel and angel wait,  
With trembling white wings stirred,  
To speed from the silver gate  
At their lightest sign or word.  
They are neither checked nor chidden,  
No joy from their eyes is hidden,  
No gift to their hands forbidden,  
No wish of their hearts unheard.

These are the women who stayed  
Pure in a world of mire,  
Wife and mother and maid  
Filling their God's desire;  
Whose faith to the weaker and sadder  
Made all life brighter and gladder,  
Till hope was a rose-hung ladder  
And love was a golden lyre.

## THE WHITE PAVILIONS

These are the women who held  
White hands to us through the mist  
When we railed at Fate and rebelled,  
Or, tempted, failed to resist;  
And these when life's sad ships started  
Gave faith to the lovers parted  
And hope to the broken-hearted,  
With their own brave lips un-kissed.

And, taking their youth and beauty,  
They laid them, untouched of shame,  
On the lighted altar of Duty  
That burns with a changeless flame;  
And leaned from their own white places  
With cheer for the pale young faces  
Where Sin has furrowed her traces  
And Sorrow has carved her name.

To these has the great God given  
In the White Pavilions a throne  
And the love of the hosts of Heaven,  
For sake of an earth-love shown  
To the fainting hearts they nourished  
And the broken faiths they cherished,  
When all hopes human had perished  
And all faiths mortal had flown.

## A PURPLE THRONE

---

WE have bowed down to the roses, we have loved,  
we have laughed in the sun,  
We have paid court to the Summer; but now that  
the Summer is done,  
And the skies in the West are purple and mists on the  
moor are chill,  
The wild Norse blood of our fathers beats time to the  
wind on the hill.

The warmth of the sun grows fainter, the poppies  
have drooped and died,  
And September, the woodland painter, is at work on  
his canvas wide,  
And our roving hearts grow restless as he splashes his  
gold once more  
On the limes and the languorous beeches that sigh to  
us "Summer is o'er!"

What if the thrushes are silent! What if the swallows  
are fled!  
The heather is home to the blackcock, the sky to the  
gull and the gled;  
A breath of the boisterous Nor' wind blown in from  
the ultimate snows  
Is worth all the warmth of a Summer that sleeps in  
the scent of a rose!

## A PURPLE THRONE

For not of the Southron races, that bask in the golden  
shine  
With swarthy and sunkissed faces and hot hands  
stretched to their wine,  
Are we, who have drunk of the hill streams on the  
snow-clad mountain-steep;  
And why should we weep for the Summer who has  
friends—and enough—to weep?

When the last wain, laden, passes; when the last leaf,  
whispering, falls;  
When the first frost sears the grasses; then Winter,  
the White Queen, calls;  
And under the skies grown leaden we kneel at her  
purple throne,  
Where the ripening apples redden and the withering  
leaves are blown.

Not for us are the soft lawn trances and the lazy hum  
of the bees,  
But the heart in us throbs and dances to the gale in  
the leafless trees;  
And over the wasted garden a voice from the high  
hill pleads,  
So—goodbye to the scattered roses!—we go where the  
lone wind leads!

## GRACE DARLING

---

IT was striking five on the Longstone clocks,  
And the dawn was grey on a stormy sea,  
When the keeper climbed by the light-house stair  
To darken his lamps, and was swift aware  
Of a broken ship on the Harcar Rocks,  
Lying helpless less than a mile a-lee.

He called to his daughter, "Look thee, Grace,  
There's a steamer aground on the Harcar, girl!  
There are sailors clinging to mast and deck!  
'Twere a chance in ten we might reach the wreck  
Had I three strong men on this manless place  
And a boat that could live in yon cauldron swirl!

But with no one but women to bear me part  
I am helpless, indeed, as a man may be.  
It were madness to launch in those waves alone,  
For, swift as a shell in the breakers thrown,  
However so stout were the rower's heart  
My cobble would sink in so wild a sea!"

Lissome and brave, but in form so slight  
That a strong man's hand might have held her high,  
Grace Darling, daughter of sea-kings, said:  
"Shall we measure our chance till their chance is fled?"  
Then, her hair in the wind and her eyes alight,  
"They are men—shall we wait and watch them die?"



## GRACE DARLING

“I have rowed to the shore when the seas ran steep,  
And the old boat weathered it brisk and brave,  
And,” she laughed, “I was bred to the stretcher’s toil;  
If I’ve dared as much for a load of oil  
Shall I flinch if the waves on Harcar leap,  
With the life of a man in my hand to save?”

The seas broke white on the Longstone Bar,  
The gale still gathered from East by North,  
As they carried the oars from room to rock;  
And the sun on the ocean rose to mock,  
And the wild wind laughed, and the last pale star  
Alone in the heavens looked coldly forth.

O, the little wrists, they were white and thin,  
But tough as the strands of twisted wire,  
And the rounded arms seemed soft and white,  
But the clumsy blades were as lances light  
As they dipped to the deep seas, out and in,  
In the sweeping strength of a heart’s desire!

The spindrift lashed her on brow and cheek,  
The sea-salt shone in her wind-blown hair;  
Behind her the lighthouse rose and fell  
As they climbed or sank in the ocean swell,  
And she heard the oars in the rowlocks creak  
And the storm birds call as they cleft the air.

## GRACE DARLING

The tiny cobble was racked and tossed  
Backward and forward, and flogged and flung  
From gulf to crest like an autumn leaf,  
But they held her head to the Harcar Reef,  
And the sailors, seizing a hope half lost,  
To their broken masts with a new life clung.

With hands on the bucking oar-heads numb,  
With eyelids sore with the whip of the sea,  
With arms grown weary and shoulders strained,  
Rod after rod is the far goal gained,  
Till at last to the foam of the reef they come,  
And roll to the swell on the steamer's lee.

One after one, where the breakers comb,  
The sailors have dropped to the skiff o'erside  
That is held by a maiden's art in place,  
And, however the seas may roll or race,  
There are stout arms now that shall drive her home  
To the lighthouse tower in the teeth of the tide.

. . . . .  
Grace Darling! So long as by Longstone Bar  
The tides shall come and the tides depart,  
While Bamburgh walls on the steep shall stand,  
Thy fame shall live in Northumberland,  
And over its borders out and far  
To wherever men honour a hero-heart!

## ROBERT BURNS

---

A TEAM went forth in the wintry dawn to its  
labour upon the lea,  
A team came home in the early dark when the moon  
was above the tree,  
And a poet sang to the trampling feet as a sailor  
sings to the sea!

Battle-songs of Freedom, that were forged in a full  
heart's fire!  
Songs of Home for a humble hearth, and songs on  
the low sweet lyre,  
Of a true man's love, and a woman's worth, and a  
lonely soul's desire!

We wait in the drifting silence of the barren years  
since then.  
Ah! the closed eyes, and the splendid heart that will  
never throb again  
To the lover's sigh, and the nature-call, and the  
patriot pride of men!

Silence, and yet no silence—for the singer's voice returns  
From the mountain cliff and the carven tower, and  
the wide world listening learns  
Of the golden words that the fairies keep in the caves  
of Time—for Burns!

## A BALLAD OF GRETNA GREEN

---

I HELD her hand, and, "To-night at ten!"  
I whispered with lips in her golden hair,  
And I whispered it over and over again  
For love of her answering: "I will be there!"  
Then I mounted and rode from her father's hall,  
And I thought, as I galloped his oaks between,  
"Heart of my heart, ere the full moon's fall  
You shall sleep on my bosom at Gretna Green!"

With the moon and the stars for our only light  
We hooked up the dapples at Dingley Inn,  
And under the oaks it was coal-black night  
When the clock chimed ten with a cheery din.  
A white form moved in the cypress shade;  
I thrilled to the touch of a trembling hand:  
"Up, little love!" and she swift obeyed,  
Then I laughed, "You may follow us, Cumberland!"

## A BALLAD OF GRETNA GREEN

I called to the postboy, "Ride, now, ride!  
First to the March and I fee thee well!"  
Then I sprang to my seat at the maiden's side  
And the whip on the good grey roadsters fell.  
We had left the gate at one splendid bound  
With a swinging pole and a lurching load,  
And never to me was a dearer sound  
Than the clang of our hoofs on the dark North Road.

'Twas a narrow start, there was little to spare!  
I could see the lights in the windows blaze,  
I could hear the challenging, "Who goes there?"  
As they caught the roll of our parting chaise.  
I knew that the squire had guessed our flight,  
I knew that he knew what that flight might mean,  
And I said to myself, "'Tis a race to-night  
From the Dingley gateway to Gretna Green!"

I drew sweet lips to my own and kissed,  
And thrilled at the touch with a reckless joy,  
Then glanced at the shadows behind and hissed,  
"There are hoofs at the back of you. Ride,  
there, boy!"  
The greys stretched out at their topmost pace,  
And I laughed as my lady leaned to me,  
But I slipped my pistol out of its case  
And I laid it ready across my knee.

## A BALLAD OF GRETNA GREEN

The moon shone white upon Carter Fell,  
And it lit the eyes of my lady fair.  
I kissed her throat: ah! I loved her well!  
And I filled my hand with her golden hair.  
But loud hoofs broke on my dearest dream;  
I could feel her tremble. I kissed and kissed!  
Then the forehead stars of a sorrel team  
Leapt suddenly out of the moon-fed mist.

The whip cut deep on the dapple greys,  
And the sorrels dropped to the dark behind,  
Then we saw the lights of Carlisle blaze,  
And beyond them the road to the Borders wind.  
Our galloping hoofs from the stones struck stars,  
The men-folk guessed what our haste must mean,  
And the maidens waved from their window bars  
And shouted, "Safe journey to Gretna Green!"

We were clear of the town; before us, wide,  
Like a long white ribbon, the North Road ran,  
And I leaned from the window, "Ride, boy, ride,  
Let them catch us now if they've steeds that can!"  
Ere my lips on the latest word could close  
Came the din of hoof and the drone of wheel,  
And out of the dust at my shoulder rose  
A riding-boot and a rowelled heel.

## A BALLAD OF GRETNA GREEN

I pointed the muzzle, my pistol spoke.

I fired at the horse, I could spare the man.

The good beast reeled and dropped in his yoke,

And I roared, "You may catch us now if you can!"

Then I thought, as I turned to her witching charms,

Could a man have done less for such splendid spur?

And I knew as I gathered her into my arms

That a steed were but little to kill for her.

'Tis a merciless game when a true love plays

And the Border Line to that love spells home,

And weary and spent were our rare good greys

From their crests to their croups all splashed with  
foam;

But we stood at the blacksmith's door at last,

And he joined in the glimmering moonlight sheen

A fetter of silver to bind us fast,

Lover to lover, at Gretna Green.

## AN INVOCATION

---

THERE is never a full-throated minstrel that sings  
Where the shades of the laurel lie deep—  
There is never a bird in God's garden that brings  
Such a balm for man's spirit to keep,  
As the music that falls from your whispering wings,  
O, my beautiful Grey Dove of Sleep!

It is long since with passion a-tremble the star  
Bade his golden goodnight to the rose;  
Every moonbeam that slants to the earth is a bar  
On the amethyst gates of Repose,  
On the gates that the fingers of Dawn set ajar  
For the hand of the Darkness to close!

It is long since the shadows of Silence and Rest  
Drooped their wings on the sky and the sea;  
It is long since the breezes drew rein in the West  
With their tired steeds turned loose on the lea;  
There is never a bird that is out of its nest  
And abroad in the darkness—but thee!

Happy lovers lie sleeping. Full stars light the way  
For a splendour of home-coming ships  
That have gathered the opaline dreams of the day  
To bring down on their rudderless trips.—  
I, too, would be dreaming.—Ah! little bird, lay  
But a moment your beak on my lips!



## SONG

(From "Whaup o' the Rede")

---

**W**AKE, little bees; the sun is shining,  
The daisies are come and the oak buds break;  
The thorn's in bloom and the vetch is twining—  
Wake, little brown bees,  
Wake!

Go, little bees; the speedwell glistens,  
The gorse is out in a golden row;  
The lark is in song and the whole world listens,  
Go, little brown bees,  
Go!

Fly, little bees; in your brave disorder;  
Serried and single, low and high;  
Bear me a message beyond the Border,  
Fly, little brown bees,  
Fly!

Speed, little bees; my love-word taking;  
He that I love shall hear and heed;  
Tell him my heart is breaking, breaking—  
Speed, little brown bees,  
Speed!

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

---

**A** COCK crows in the darkness; loud and plain  
A rival answers; then the first again;  
And on and on, until the eastern sky  
Shows a grey wing and silences their cry.  
Then suddenly and swift the crimson dawn,  
Like roses from a silver bowl withdrawn,  
Moves forth resplendent from the mantling grey,  
And brings the daylight and the toil of day.

Within the stable there is darkness still,  
For dawn lies netted on the cobwebbed sill.  
An early foot has clanged upon the stones  
And stirred the starlings on the dew-wet rhones;  
An early hand has raised the corn-bin lid,  
And deep the measure in the gold oats hid,  
To serve each manger with the welcome swish  
That crowns the coming of the brim-ful dish.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

And now each greedy muzzle, nostril deep,  
Searches the bottom of the golden heap,  
And churns and slavers in a reckless haste,  
Afraid one grain of it should go to waste.  
Beneath, the clicking rope-blocks rise and fall;  
A restless hoof tap-taps in every stall;  
Scarce times remains, as each wise Clydesdale knows,  
To take this banquet that the dawn bestows.

Scarce have the swifter of their meal made end,  
When voices murmur at the courtyard-end;  
With clank of foot and loud good-natured din  
The gruff-voiced Masters of the Horse come in,  
And from the pegs that hang by every stall  
They lift their harness, with a cheery call  
To Bob or Bonny, Diamond or Maud,  
And fling the chain-bands over quarters broad.

Obedient to their masters' orders stern,  
Leaving their mangers still uncleaned, they turn  
And bend their necks to let the hames be tied,  
And let the bridles o'er their forelocks slide;  
Then take the bits between their great lips thrust,  
Shaking the while from giant manes the dust,  
And one by one across the uneven floor  
Tramp out to meet the sunlight at the door.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

The cool May morning to the courtyard sings  
New songs of summer. On the starlings' wings  
A glossier purple makes a prouder sheen;  
The sky is bluer and the grass more green.  
From the deep comfort of the moss-grown trough  
With buried muzzles now the Clydesdales quaff,  
While startled pigeons with half-wetted bills  
Clap wings and settle on the grain-loft sills.

Now, mounted on the broad brown backs astride,  
The horsemen, leading each a horse beside,  
Ride forth in double file upon the road  
With jerking arm and iron heel for goad.  
The tramp and jingle as they pass along  
Make mingling music with the morning's song,  
And golden sunbeams with a radiance rare  
Burnish the brasses that the collars bear.

Within the scented twilight of the byre  
The cows, grown restless with a vague desire,  
Turn soft brown eyes upon the golden lance  
Whose blade is swinging to the dust-elves' dance.  
A bolt is drawn, and rusty hinges jar,  
Then, like the croon of ocean on the bar,  
There swells a murmur as the shed grows bright  
—The long line lowing welcome to the light.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

The byreman enters. The cool breath of morn  
Stirs every hoof, sets glancing every horn  
In weirdest motion. Then he frees the bows,  
And one by one each soft wet questioning nose  
Turns outward to the doorway, one by one  
Each frontlet tosses to salute the sun,  
And capering with clumsy gait absurd  
Forth to its pasture goes the joyful herd.

Round-limbed and rosy-cheeked and clear of eye,  
The women-workers to a field out-by  
Step slowly, drinking in the wine of day.  
While far above the lav'rock chants his lay,  
And in the laurels on the farmhouse lawn  
A thrush is silent that has sung since dawn.  
The watch-dog leaps to challenge as they pass,  
And leaves his footprints on the spangled grass.

Now through the steading sounds the hen-wife's call,  
And swift from cattle-close and empty stall,  
From sty and stackyard, barn and turnip shed,  
Her charges gather with their wings outspread:  
The fussing Brahma with her hungry brood;  
The red-gilled turkey, masterful and rude;  
The waddling ducks, wide-stumbling on their way;  
The proud old rooster who discovered day.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

Swish!—on the pavement falls the scattered grain!  
Swish!—on the gathered crowd it falls again!  
Then every bill upon the stones is plied,  
Save where some timid pullet leaps aside  
Before the threat of lifted beak or spur,  
While one more pushful takes the place of her.  
Thus the gold banquet fades before the host,  
The boldest taking—as in life—the most.

Amid the turmoil of the tossing breasts  
The sparrows feed like rude unbidden guests,  
While the proud pigeons, watching from the slates,  
Roo-coo-coo-cooing to their murmuring mates,  
From time to time drop lightly to the ring,  
Or poise above it on superior wing,  
Preferring rather that they miss their meed  
Than join the feasting where such rabble feed.

The crowd disperses slowly. All in vain  
A laggard cockerel scours the ground for grain.  
A brace of chickens at the feed-house door  
Wait, still expectant; but the feast is o'er.  
Back to their foraging in barn and sty  
The brown hens wander and the sparrows fly;  
The pigeons wheeling on the lazy breeze  
Seek out the garden and the early peas.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

The slow ducks waddle upon yellow feet,  
With grim divergence to each grub they meet,  
Along the dusty roadway to the pond  
And sunny welcome of the beach beyond.  
Reaching the bank they climb in single file  
With notes of guttural delight the while,  
Then crowding on by one sweet purpose pressed  
Fall, like true lovers, on the water's breast.

The sows with grunting satisfaction hail  
The cheerful rattle of the skim-milk pail,  
And with deep twinkling eyes and rose-pink ears,  
Come heaving forward to the trough that cheers.  
Across the silent yard resounds the splash,  
As down the wood the milky wavelets dash,  
Till gurgling joy, displaced by grunt and squeal,  
Betrays the welcome of the morning meal.

Beyond the shadow of the farm's grey walls  
Green-girdled Nature to her children calls,  
Where hawthorn hedges in their summer dress  
The snow-white secrets of their buds confess,  
Where buttercups and daisies woo the sun,  
And tangled creepers in the ditches run,  
Where all things revel in the waking day,  
And all are glad because the month is May.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

On trampled mounds the lusty lambkins lead  
Their willing comrades in a match of speed;  
The calf that follows on the fawn cow's trail,  
Dives at the udder with a twinkling tail;  
The foal that staggers by the brown mare's side,  
Prances unsteadily on hoofs of pride;  
While bird and blossom but repeat the truth—  
'Tis Summer's triumph and the hour of Youth!

The bark of collies on the breeze is heard,  
With noise of shouting and of sheep bestirred;  
Down in the hollow shines the silver gleam  
Of spreading water from the dammed-up stream;  
On the blue sky a cloud of dust is rolled  
Above the hurdles of the washing-fold.  
. . . At last, the laggards of the flock inside,  
The dogs are silent and the gate is tied.

Now, forward to the open platform pressed,  
The frightened sheep their destiny have guessed;  
In vain with 'wilder'd eyes that seek retreat  
Each grips the battens with reluctant feet.  
Too late! For Nemesis with horny hand  
Has seized the leader of the luckless band  
By breech and brisket, in a bundle grey,  
And sped her stream-ward in a shower of spray.



## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

With weighted wool and white, bewildered face,  
Awkward she flounders to the landing place,  
Stands bleating in the shallows, climbs the bank  
With water streaming from her breast and flank,  
Then shakes herself and breaks into a run  
To join her comrades in the kindly sun,  
Nor gives a thought to men or dogs again  
Nor sees the pool behind her splashed to rain.

But see! the sun climbs high upon the dome!  
Hark to the trampling as the Clydes come home,  
Hungry and ready for their midday rest!  
By sweat-marked shoulders is their toil confessed;  
Their flanks are spattered, and their fetlocks spanned  
By the brown bracelets of the turnip land,  
But with a steady homeward step they swing,  
Making the tug-chains on the hame-hooks ring.

Deep in the trough their dusty lips they sink,  
Sliding their collars forward as they drink,  
Now biting at a comrade in rough play,  
Now, restless, stamping in the churned-up clay  
Till, satisfied at last, they back and bore  
A stalwart passage to the stable door,  
With ribs distended and a flank that dips,  
And water dropping from their lazy lips.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

Then, each one seeking his remembered stall,  
The straps are loosened and the bits let fall;  
Toil is forgotten in the shadows cool;  
With mouths unfettered and with mangers full  
The giants revel in their hour of grace,  
And silence falls upon the dim-lit place,  
Save for the crunching of the golden grain  
And fitful fretting of the collar chain.

The ploughmen, shaking from their feet the loam,  
In twos and threes turn down the path to home,  
Tramping unevenly as those whose care  
Is daily guidance of the devious share.  
The thin smoke signals from the quiet cots  
The savoury welcome of the cooking-pots,  
And one by one each whitened threshold-stone  
Admits a master till the last is gone.

Short is their leisure, for their labour waits,  
And soon the cobbles at the court-yard gates  
Are ringing newly to the calkined hoofs,  
Whose music echoes in the slated roofs.  
One ploughman only with his team is left,  
For one great Clydesdale, of a shoe bereft,  
Is standing idly at the smithy door  
With tense ears twitching as the bellows roar.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

Dumbly obedient he lifts his hoof;  
Patient, moves over at the smith's reproof;  
Leans not upon him nor evades his grasp,  
And flinches neither from the knife nor rasp,  
But watches with a calm unwinking eye  
The sledge descending and the red sparks fly,  
Till, shod and plated, at his comrade's side,  
He, too, goes field-ward in a new-found pride.

Here on the steepness of the fallow brows  
The rich earth reddens to the ribbing-ploughs,  
The low chain-harrows on the headlands turn,  
Behind them, smouldering, the weed-heaps burn;  
And he who looks beyond the Summer sees  
The wide leaf waving in September's breeze  
And Autumn riding in resplendent robes  
To rule the harvest of the golden globes.

No place is here but for the sons of toil,  
Who woo for lover the thrice generous soil;  
No idlers here the watching eye arrest,  
Even the pee-wits by their plundered nest  
Are busy mourners, and the lark on high  
A busy singer in his patch of sky,  
And the grey gulls, a wheeling silver horde,  
Most busy diners at earth's banquet board.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

Here from red morning till the set of sun  
The harrows rattle and the rib-ploughs run,  
Shaping the seed-bed, shattering the clod,  
Laying man's labour on the garth of God,  
Till white foam gathers over neck and rein  
And shoulders deaden to the constant chain,  
Till salt sweat stands in beads upon the brow  
And strong men stumble as they guide the plough.

While rude strength struggles thus with chain and bond  
In toil Titanic, from the road beyond  
Youth chimes her laughter resonant and gay,  
Setting light feet upon the flowery way :  
Youth that has worn her galling fetters, too,  
Debtor to duty, bankrupt of the blue,  
Till, freed at last from chains of rote and rule,  
Time, like a friend, has called her out of school.

Down from the village comes the childish band,  
Culls from the wayside with a reckless hand  
The pink and golden blossoms of the Spring,  
Hunts from the hedgerow every hiding wing,  
Shouts for the joy of living, leaps for pride,  
Climbs every paling, pulls each branch aside,  
Probes every ditch, lays every low bush bare,  
O'erlooking nothing, as it seems, but Care.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

But now the trampling of the horses' feet  
Where the long furrow and the headland meet,  
Recalls the rebels from their eager quest  
To taste the pleasure that delights them best;  
To them no lav'rock's lilt, however rare,  
Can with the creaking of the ploughs compare,  
To them no whisper of the scented breeze  
Can match the murmur of the swingle-trees.

Happy, they follow in the clasping clay  
Where the slow giants snort against the brae,  
Content if but a brother crown their dream  
With moment's handling of his steady team,  
Content if but a father let them stroke  
The broad white foreheads of his resting yoke,  
And proud as princes, when the long day ends,  
If home they ride upon their fat-backed friends.

The sun moves daintily a-down the sky,  
A carrier's noisy cart goes creaking by  
With harsh discordant wheels that seem to jar  
On the proud silence of that golden car.  
The shepherd, crossing where the hedgerow thins,  
His last long circuit of the flock begins,  
Footsore and shambling, with his shoulders bowed,  
Yet keenly reading the prophetic cloud.

## AN IDYL OF THE FARM

Softly the evening dews begin to fall.  
Hark! from the meadow comes the milking-call!  
Then the low murmur as the cows reply  
One and another to that silvery cry!  
With swinging udders they ascend the hill  
Each to his mistress and then, staid and still,  
Stand with glad eyes and busy switching tails  
While the milk foams into the tinkling pails.

At last the daylight to the gloaming yields,  
Night's wings are folded on deserted fields,  
The ploughs lie idle 'neath discarded chains,  
Above the valley strange sweet silence reigns.  
Surprised by darkness, in a sudden fear,  
The late ducks homeward to the duck-house steer.—  
At last, through willows where the shadows lurk  
The cows stalk slowly through the May-night mirk.

Thus have we often seen the long day end,  
The stars come sparkling, and the night descend.  
Scotland! what country in the world but thee  
Could weave such beauty for her sons to see?  
Could wake such ardour in her dawnings grey,  
Could hold such homage through the strenuous day,  
And when her toilers from their labour cease  
Could wrap their slumbers in such perfect peace?



BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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