

## A VOICE FROM DREAMLAND.

A VOICE from dreamland said to me—  
“Poet, what music is in thee?  
Ring it out until it find  
A nook for rest within thy kind.”

I stood and heard the voice speak out,  
Then answered, bowing low in doubt,  
“Of what use is a simple song,  
That vainly wrestles to be strong?”

“For, ever as I shape my lips,  
A darkness comes and, rising, dips  
In misty folds the vain, weak words  
That creep by fits along the chords.”

The voice then questioned, “Art thou sure  
If all thy purposes be pure?  
If whim or low conceit is in  
Thy singing: singing thus is sin.”

I answered to that ready voice,  
“I sing not as if making choice;  
The impulse bearing me along  
Has driven me against my song,

“And all my soul, like flax at fire,  
Leaps up to grasp but one desire—  
That I may touch the lower strings,  
And fit them unto noble things.”

I waited for the voice again,  
But silence fell between us twain;  
At last, like a low breath in spring,  
The voice made answer, saying, “Sing!”

## CUDDLE DOON.

THE bairnies cuddle doon at nicht,  
Wi' muckle faucht an' din—  
“O, try and sleep, ye waukrife rogues,  
Your faither's comin' in”—  
They never heed a word I speak;  
I try to gi'e a froom,  
But aye I hap them up, an' cry,  
“O, bairnies, cuddle doon.”

Wee Jamie wi' the curly heid—  
He aye sleeps next the wa'—  
Bangs up an' cries, “I want a piece”—  
The rascal starts them a'.  
I rin an' fetch them pieces, drinks,  
They stop awee the soun',  
Then draw the blankets up an' cry,  
“Noo, weanies, cuddle doon.”

But ere five minutes gang, wee Rab  
Cries oot, frae 'neath the claes,  
“Mither, mak' Tam gi'e owre at ance,  
He's kittlin' wi' his taes.”  
The mischief's in that Tam for tricks,  
He'd bother half the toon;  
But aye I hap them up an' cry,  
“O, bairnies, cuddle doon.”

At length they hear their faither's fit,  
An', as he steeks the door,  
They turn their faces to the wa',  
While Tam pretends to snore.  
“Ha'e a' the weans been gude?” he asks,  
As he pits aff his shoon.



Cuddle Doon

Miss H. C. Preston Macgoun, R.S.W.

## CUDDLE DOON

“The bairnies, John, are in their beds,  
An’ lang since cuddled doon.”

An’ just afore we bed oorsel’s,  
We look at oor wee lambs;  
Tam has his airm roun’ wee Rab’s neck,  
An’ Rab his airm roun’ Tam’s.  
I lift wee Jamie up the bed,  
An’, as I straik each croon,  
I whisper, till my heart fills up,  
“O, bairnies, cuddle doon.”

The bairnies cuddle doon at nicht  
Wi’ mirth that’s dear to me;  
But sune the big warl’s cark an’ care  
Will quaten doon their glee.  
Yet, come what will to ilka ane,  
May He who rules aboon  
Aye whisper, though their pows be bald,  
“O, bairnies, cuddle doon.”

## WAUKEN UP.

*A Sequel to “Cuddle Doon.”*

WULL I ha’e to speak again  
To thae weans o’ mine?  
Eicht o’clock, an’ weel I ken  
The schule gangs in at nine.  
Little hauds me but to gang  
An’ fetch the muckle whup—  
O, ye sleepy-heidit rogues,  
Wull ye wauken up?

Never mither had sic faught—  
No’ a moment’s ease;

WAUKEN UP

Cleed Tam as ye like, at nicht  
His breeks are through the knees.  
Thread is no' for him ava'—  
It never hauds the grup;  
Maun I speak again ye rogues—  
Wull ye wauken up?

Tam, the very last to bed,  
He winna rise ava'  
Last to get his books an' sklate—  
Last to won awa'.  
Sic a limb for tricks an' fun—  
Heeds na' what I say,  
Rab and Jamie—but thae plagues—  
Wull they sleep a' day?

Here they come, the three at ance,  
Lookin' gleg an' fell,  
Hoo they ken their bits o' claes  
Beats me fair to tell.  
Wash your wee bit faces clean,  
An' here's your bite an' sup—  
Never was mair wiselike bairns  
Noo they've waukened up.

There, the three are aff at last,  
I watch them frae the door,  
That Tam, he's at his tricks again,  
I coont them by the score.  
He's put his fit afore wee Rab,  
An' coupit Jamie doon,  
Could I but lay my han's on him  
I'd mak' him claw his croon.

Noo to get my wark on han'  
I'll ha'e a busy day,

## WAUKEN UP

But losh! the hoose is unco quate  
Since they are a' away.  
A dizzen times I'll look the clock  
When it comes roun' to three,  
For, cuddlin' doon, or waukenin' up,  
They're dear, dear bairns to me.

## THE LAST TO CUDDLE DOON.

I SIT afore a half-oot fire,  
An' I am a' my lane,  
Nae frien' or fremit daun'ers in,  
For a' my fowk are gane.  
An' John, that was my ain gudeman,  
He sleeps the mools amang—  
An auld frail body like mysel'—  
It's time that I should gang.

The win' moans roun' the auld hoose en',  
An' shakes the ae fir tree,  
An' as it sughs it waukens up  
Auld things fu' dear to me.  
If I could only greet, my heart  
It wadna be sae sair;  
But tears are gane, an' bairns are gane,  
An' baith come back nae mair.

Ay, Tam, puir Tam, sae fu' o' fun,  
He faun' this warld a fecht,  
An' sair, sair he was hauden doon,  
Wi' mony a weary wecht.  
He bore it a' until the en',  
But, when we laid him doon,  
The grey hairs there afore their time  
Were thick amang the broon.

## THE LAST TO CUDDLE DOON

An' Jamie wi' the curly heid,  
Sae buirdly, big an' braw,  
Was cut doon in the pride o' youth  
The first amang them a'.  
If I had tears for thae auld een,  
Then could I greet fu' weel,  
To think o' Jamie lyin' deid  
Aneath the engine wheel.

Wee Rab—what can I say o' him?  
He's waur than deid to me,  
Nae word frae him thae weary years  
Has come across the sea.  
Could I but ken that he was weel,  
As here I sit this nicht,  
This warld wi' a' its faucht an' care  
Wad look a wee thing richt.

I sit afore a half-oot fire  
An' I am a' my lane,  
Nae frien' ha'e I to daun'er in,  
For a' my fowk are gane.  
I wuss that He wha rules us a',  
Frae where He dwalls aboon,  
Wad touch my auld grey heid, and say—  
“It's time to cuddle doon.”

## RAB COMES HAME.

WAS that a knock? Wha can it be?  
I hirple to the door;  
A buirdly chiel' is stan'in' there,  
I never saw afore.

RAB COMES HAME

He tak's a lang, lang look at me,  
An' in his kindly een  
A something lies I canna name,  
That somewhere I ha'e seen.

I bid him ben; he tak's a chair,  
My heart louns up wi' fricht,  
For he sits doon as John wad do  
When he cam' hame at nicht.  
He spreads baith han's upon his knees,  
But no' ae word he speaks;  
Yet I can see the big, roun' tears  
Come happin' doon his cheeks.

Then a' at ance his big, strong airms  
Are streekit out to me—  
“Mither, I'm Rab, come hame at last,  
An' can ye welcome me?”  
“O, Rab!”—my airms are roun' his neck—  
“The Lord is kind indeed;”  
Then hunker doon, an' on his knees  
I lay my auld grey heid.

“Hoo could ye bide sae lang frae me,  
Thae weary, weary years,  
An' no' ae word—but I maun greet,  
My heart is fu' o' tears;  
It does an' auld, frail body guid,  
An' oh! it's unco sweet.  
To see ye there, though through my tears,  
Sae I maun ha'e my greet.

“Your faither's lang since in his grave  
Within the auld kirkyaird,  
Jamie an' Tam they lie by him—  
They werena to be spared;



RAB COMES HAME

An' I was left to sit my lane  
To think on what had been,  
An' wussin' only for the time  
To come an' close my een.

“ But noo ye're back, I ken fu' weel  
That no' a fremit han'  
Will lay me, when my time comes roun',  
Beside my ain gudeman.”  
Noo, wad it be a sin to ask  
O' Him that rules aboon,  
To gi'e me yet a year or twa  
Afore I cuddle doon?

THE TWO SOWERS.

DEATH came to the earth, by his side was Spring,  
They came from God's own bowers,  
And the earth was full of their wandering,  
For they both were sowing flowers.

“ I sow,” said Spring, “ by the stream and the wood,  
And the village children know  
The gay glad time of my own sweet prime,  
And where my blossoms grow.

“ There is not a spot in the quiet wood  
But hath heard the sound of my feet,  
And the violets come from their solitude  
When my tears have made them sweet.”

“ I sow,” said Death, “ where the hamlet stands,  
I sow in the churchyard drear;  
I drop in the grave with gentle hands,  
My flowers from year to year.

## THE TWO SOWERS

“The young and the old go into their rest,  
To the sleep that awaits them below;  
But I clasp the children unto my breast,  
And kiss them before I go.”

“I sow,” said Spring, “but my flowers decay  
When the year turns weak and old,  
When the breath of the bleak wind wears them away,  
And they wither and droop in the mould.

“But they come again when the young earth feels  
The new blood leap in her veins,  
When the fountain of wonderful life unseals,  
And the earth is alive with the rains.”

“I sow,” said Death; “but my flowers unseen  
Pass away from the land of men,  
Nor sighs nor tears through the long sad years  
Ever bring back their bloom again.

“But I know they are wondrous bright and fair  
In the fields of their high abode;  
Your flowers are the flowers that a child may wear,  
But mine are the blossoms of God.”

Death came to the earth, by his side was Spring;  
The two came from God's own bowers;  
One sowed in night and the other in light,  
Yet they both were sowing flowers.

## CARLYLE.

ENGLAND, amid thy great in this great time  
One man, white-haired, with misty, flashing eyes  
Looms from the rest, in his life's toil sublime,  
And all that hath the power to make us wise.

CARLYLE

We hail him teacher, not as now they teach,  
With soulless flow of ever-ready words;  
He shapes his own life to his uttered speech,  
As deft musicians to the air the chords.

So in this age when the quick growth of creeds  
Grows up, as if to choke God's primal plan,  
Ye who still waver in your higher needs,  
Come and look nearer at this grey old man.

The Hebrew spirit, with its fervent fire,  
Its vatic utterances of rapt word force  
Is in him, bursting in explosive ire,  
Like lightning when it takes its blinding course.

And Cant, girt in her armour o'er and o'er,  
Lifting her putrid wings as if to fly,  
Sinks in the slime of her own tracks, before  
The word bolts of this thunderer to die.

He will not rest himself on other ground  
Than that which God's own workers have made  
smooth;

All other is to him the heave and bound,  
And the volcanic motion of untruth.

This struggle for firm footing for his feet  
Hath made his inner vision far and clear,  
Piercing the under current, and the heat  
That nourishes the action we have here.

Stern Cromwells, Luthers, Knoxes unto him  
Rise from the world's wild clamour, and serene  
Stand in heroic light that cannot dim  
The virtue and the duty that have been.

All work is noble, but a nobler kind  
Is that whose task is ever piercing through  
The mummy folds of ignorance to find  
True worth in man and hold it up to view.

High privilege this; but he upon whose head  
 It lights must ever walk and speak in fear,  
 Knowing the ages listen what is said,  
 And God above him bending down his ear.

Thus has he ever written, knowing well  
 What kind of heed to give the countless strings  
 Of those who, like the Corybantes, yell  
 When some slow good grows out of human things.

Not looking to the right nor to the left,  
 But conscious of the guide he had within,  
 He, armed with his strong battle words, has cleft  
 Paths for the feebler soul to take and win.

“Thou shalt believe in God,” he cries, “and own  
 The sacredness of this poor life, though dim;  
 It is a part of His, in darkness thrown  
 Upon the earth to wander back to Him.

“Let no cant be within thy soul, but stand  
 Upon thy manhood, thy most sure defence,  
 Working at all true work with willing hand,  
 And growing up to God-like reverence.”

For reverence with this man is the source  
 Of all those virtues which, like golden threads,  
 Draw man still upward with an unseen force  
 To where his spirit with the higher weds.

Be thou real also, be no sham or quack,  
 Half seen as manhood sickens and expires,  
 Two beings in thee resting back to back,  
 And turning vane-like as the world desires.

It may be that the force in him for this  
 Has borne him past his distance, as a steed,  
 The nostrils filling out with snorting hiss,  
 Tears up the ground before he checks his speed.

For all the early earnestness to wage  
 Battle with evil, is in him the soul  
 Of all his thought and life, that now in age  
 Moves grandly ripening to the wrought-for goal.

Then, brother, take him for thy teacher, let  
 The spirit of his words flash full on thine,  
 And thou shalt feel a dignity in sweat,  
 And all thy life and labour half divine.

I too can feel a pride to think I stand  
 A worker on a dusty railway here,  
 Pointing to this man with a feeble hand,  
 As one by whom the weaker ought to steer.

But he has strengthened me, as teachers ought  
 Who wrestle onward to the purer change,  
 Has fused more earnestness into my thought,  
 And made this manhood take a higher range.

Enough, the shadows lengthen far ahead  
 When the sun turns his feet to meet the west;  
 So this man's power shall broaden out and spread  
 When he, too, takes his well-earned sleep and rest.

But the full day beats on us, and the night  
 Is yet afar; so with strong heart and limb  
 Let us go onward, upward, and upright,  
 Until we take a twilight rest like him.

#### A VILLAGE SCENE—EVENING.

THE merry children are playing  
 In the little village street;  
 The old men sit by the doorway:  
 Their evening rest is sweet.

A VILLAGE SCENE—EVENING

And careful mothers are busy,  
They hurry out and in;  
Or pause by the door for a moment  
To smile at their children's din.

And farther away in the distance,  
From the playground comes a shout,  
As quick-eyed youths at their pastimes  
Run, strong of limb, about.

The old men sit by the doorway;  
The children play in the street;  
The dead are up in the churchyard,  
Their rest is long and sweet.

OH, FOR THOSE DAYS.

OH, for those days that had no doubt,  
When I, a simple village laddie,  
Sang with much glee the rhyme about  
The devil's grave in old "Kirkcaldy!"  
"Some say the de'il's dead," thus it ran;  
I thought it very nice and witty,  
So sang, unwitting, when a man,  
He'd rise and pay me for my ditty.

Of course, I knew not then how much  
He works with men and all their actions—  
How all their plans are at a touch  
Split into half-a-dozen factions.  
Nor had I read those books that teach  
The line between the good and evil;  
Nor knew I what poor Faust could preach  
When in the clutches of the devil.

OH, FOR THOSE DAYS

I sang with little thought of this,  
Or any such dim speculations;  
And proved that ignorance was bliss  
By very candid demonstrations.  
He never came to me, nor did  
I bother him with my intrusions,  
But followed where I wished, and hid  
Myself from all his deep illusions.

At last when halfway through my 'teens,  
And life became a shade impassioned,  
He rose up, full of all his spleen,  
Just as my various bents were fashioned.  
Then found I, to my grief, that he  
Had risen from his grave, to wander,  
A very poodle, after me,  
To act as sworn and faithful pander.

He seemed at first so very sweet,  
So full of nice polite attention,  
I could have kissed his very feet,  
Like others whom I need not mention.  
He led me into many things,  
Each very simple, fresh and pleasing,  
Yet leaving always after stings,  
That at the first were very teasing.

But in a little while they ceased,  
And left me to my own enjoyment;  
Nor did they come to mar my feast,  
Like Banquo at the same employment  
Of pale Macbeth; but, if their sting  
I felt, true to my human nature,  
I bounced and blamed some other thing  
In philosophic nomenclature.

OH, FOR THOSE DAYS

Ah, well, I'm rough and bearded now,  
And given less to quick impulses;  
Nor can I run away and bow  
To that which one swift moment dulces.  
But still I yearn to have that heart  
I had when, yet a simple laddie,  
I sang that song with little art  
About that grave in old Kirkcaldy.

THE DYING COVENANTER.

LET me lie upon the heather  
Where the heath fowl have abode,  
In my hand the open Bible,  
On my lip the psalm of God.  
I have kept the faith and conquered,  
Slipped not foot nor quailed an eye;  
Gather round, and in the moorland  
See a Covenanter die.

In the might of kingly sanction,  
As the mountain torrents sweep,  
Came the foe, athirst for slaughter,  
And their oaths were loud and deep.  
But we drew ourselves together,  
Broke the still, yet pitying calm  
With the music of our fathers,  
And the worship of the psalm.

Then we heard our leader's question,  
"Is there one within our band  
Faint of heart to go to battle  
For his God and for his land?"



THE DYING COVENANTER

Is there one who, seeing foemen  
Coming from the plain below,  
Puts his sword back in the scabbard?<sup>18</sup>  
And we sternly answered, "No.

"For we fight against oppression,  
For the weak against the strong,  
For the right to God's own freedom,  
And against the wrong of wrong,  
For our homes in glen and valley,  
For a thing of grander worth,  
The old worship of our fathers  
In the kirk and by the hearth."

Then we took a deeper breathing  
For the fight that was so near,  
Put our Bibles in our bosoms,  
With no sign of doubt or fear,  
Felt upon our lips a prayer,  
Drew forth to a man the sword,  
Rushed upon the ranks of Satan,  
For our Covenant and the Lord.

Ye have seen, beside the river,  
The tall bulrush, thick and strong,  
Bend before the summer whirlwind  
As it swept in might along.  
Lo, the foe at the first onslaught  
Backward went in their alarm,  
Ours we knew would be the battle,  
For the Lord held up His arm.

Ay, we knew that He was with us,  
Israel's mighty God of old.  
Felt His spirit clasp our spirit,  
And His presence made us bold;

THE DYING COVENANTER

And we raised our thrilling slogan  
Till it ran from tongue to tongue—  
“God and Covenant, God and Covenant!”  
And the bleak, bare moorland rung.

Had you seen the wild rough troopers,  
Pale with very rage and hate,  
As our steel still sent them backwards  
To a flight or sterner fate.  
“Canting dogs!” they cried, “and martyrs  
For their heaven’s paltry crown.”  
“Soldiers now,” we hurled for answer,  
And we shore the godless down.

Ay, they well may con their lessons  
In their revels of to-night,  
Tell, with all their newest curses,  
That the babes of God can fight.  
Did they think us sheep for slaughter,  
Weak as weakest children be?  
So they want that question answered,  
Let them turn to their Dundee.

How the frown upon his forehead  
(For I saw him in the fight)  
Deepened till it burst in anger,  
As the thunder peals by night!  
And, when column after column  
Shrank and withered at our brunt,  
Onward came he like some devil,  
With his black steed to the front.

“Are ye cowards?” forth he thundered,  
As he rallied back his men.  
“Fly from those that ye have hunted  
Like the hare by field and glen?”

THE DYING COVENANTER

What am I to send for answer  
In your own, and in my name?  
Give me better, or, by heaven!  
Die, and so escape the shame!"

Ye have seen, beside the river,  
The tall bulrush, thick and strong,  
Springing upward when the whirlwind  
Spent its force and passed along;  
So came backward horse and trooper  
On our firm, yet desperate few,  
But our trust was not in princes,  
And we knew what God could do.

Wild and high the conflict thickened  
As a thunder-spout adds force  
To the stream, and in the struggle  
Down went rider, down went horse.  
Foot by foot we drove them backward,  
But they went like sullen seas,  
Till I came against a war-horse,  
And I knew it was Dundee's.

Swift as lightning's gleam at midnight,  
When the stars are hidden dark,  
Swift my sword upon the charger,  
And I did not miss my mark.  
Back he reared upon his rider,  
And the two fell on the plain;  
Had we not been such a handful  
Black Dundee was with the slain.

But his troopers rallied round him,  
Fought like devils at their need,  
Drove us back and raised their master,  
Brought him up another steed,

THE DYING COVENANTER

Made a front to stand our onset;  
But they shrank as on they came,  
Like the willow in the winter,  
Like the heath before the flame.

Then we raised a shout of triumph  
As the whelps of Satan fled,  
But my death-wound came that moment,  
And I fell among the dead.  
Steeds and men, like one great whirlwind,  
Thundered o'er me, and I knew  
That our God had swept the godless  
As the sun sweeps off the dew.

Closer, closer come around me,  
Lift the grand old psalm again,  
For I want to hear its music  
Ere I pass away from men.  
Shame to Scotland and to Scotsmen,  
If they turn away in pride  
From the songs that were our bucklers  
On the bare, bleak mountain-side.

Let the Bible still lie open,  
That my failing sight may see  
My own blood upon that promise  
Of the crown awaiting me.  
I have kept the faith nor faltered,  
Slipped not foot nor quailed an eye;  
Gather round, and in the moorland  
See a Covenanter die.

ROBERT BURNS.

On the Inauguration of the Burns' Monument at Kilmarnock,  
August, 1879.

*"See projected through time  
For HIM an audience interminable."*

WALT WHITMAN.

Ho! stand bare-browed with me to-day, no common  
name we sing,  
And let the music in your hearts like thunder-marches  
ring;  
We hymn a name to which the heart of Scotland ever  
turns,  
The master singer of us all, the ploughman—  
ROBERT BURNS.

How shall we greet such name that stands a beacon in  
the years?  
With smiles of joy and love, or bursts of laughter and  
sweet tears?  
Greet him with all—a fitting meed for him who came  
along,  
And wove around our lowly life the splendours of his  
song.

What toil was his; but, know ye not, that ever in their  
pride  
The unseen heaven-sent messengers were walking side  
by side;  
He felt their leaping fire, and heard far whispers shake  
and roll,  
While visions, like the march of kings, went surging  
through his soul.

"Thou shalt not sing," they cried, "of men low set  
in sordid life,  
Nor statesmen strutting their brief hour in rancour  
and in strife,

Nor the wild battle-field where death stalks red, and  
where the slain  
Lie thicker than in harvest fields the sheaves of shining  
grain.

“Sing thou the thoughts that come to thee, to lighten  
all thy brow,  
When, with a glory all around, thou standest by the  
plough,  
Sing the sweet loves of youth and maid, the streams  
that glide along,  
And let the music of the lark leap up within thy song.

“Sing thou of Scotland till she feels the rich blood  
fill her veins,  
And rush along like mimic storms at all thy glorious  
strains;  
A thousand years will come and pass, and other poets  
be,  
But still within her heart of hearts shall beat the soul  
of thee.”

He came, and on his lips lay fire that winged his fervid  
song,  
And scathed like lightning all that rose to walk  
behind a wrong;  
He sang, and on the lowly cot beside the happy stream,  
A halo fell upon the thatch, with heaven in its gleam.

And love grew sweeter at his touch, for full in him  
there lay  
A mighty wealth of melting tones, and all their soft  
sweet way;  
He shapes their rapture and delight, for unto him was  
given  
The power to wed to burning words the sweetest gift  
of heaven.

O blessing on this swarthy seer, who gave us such a  
 boon,  
 And still kept in his royal breast his royal soul in tune;  
 Men looked with kindlier looks on men, and in far  
 distant lands  
 His very name made brighter eyes and firmer clasp of  
 hands.

The ploughman strode behind his plough, and felt  
 within his heart  
 A glory like a crown descend upon his peaceful art;  
 The hardy cotter, bare of arm, who wrestled with the  
 soil,  
 Rose up his rugged height, and blessed the kingly  
 guild of toil.

And sun-browned maidens in the field among the  
 swaying corn,  
 Their pulses beating with the soft delight of love new  
 born,  
 Felt his warm music thrill their hearts, and glow to  
 finger tips,  
 As if the spirit of him who sang was throbbing on  
 their lips.

What gift was this of his to hold his country's  
 cherished lyre,  
 And strike, with glowing eye, the chords of passion's  
 purest fire;  
 Say, who can guess what light was shed upon his  
 upturned brow,  
 When in the glory of his youth he walked behind the  
 plough?

What visions girt with glorious things, what whispers  
 of far fame,  
 That from the Sinai of his dreams like radiant angels  
 came;

What potent spells that held him bound, or swift, and  
 keen and strong,  
 Lifted to mighty heights of thought this peasant king  
 of song!

Hush, think not of that time when Fame her rainbow  
 colours spread,  
 And all the rustling laurel-wreath was bound about  
 his head;  
 When in the city, 'mid the glare of fashion's living  
 light,  
 He moved—the whim of those that wished to see the  
 novel sight.

Oh, heavens! and was this all they sought? to please  
 a moment's pride,  
 Nor cared to know for one short hour this grand soul  
 by their side;  
 But shook him off with dainty touch of well-gloved  
 hand, and now—  
 Oh, would to God that all his life had been behind  
 the plough?

And dare we hint that after this a bitter canker grew,  
 That all his aspirations sank, and took a paler hue;  
 That dark and darker grew the gloom till in the heedless  
 town,  
 The struggling giant in his youth heart-wearied laid  
 him down?

What were his thoughts, that sad last hour, of earth—  
 ah, who can tell!—  
 When, by the column of his song our laurelled Cæsar  
 fell?  
 We ask but questions of the Sphinx; we only know  
 that death,  
 Unclasped his singing robes in tears, but left untouched  
 the wreath.



Thou carper; well we know at times he sung in wilder  
 mirth,  
 Till the rapt angel of his song had one wing on the  
 earth;  
 But canst thou wild volcanoes tame, to belch their  
 hidden fire,  
 Without one stain of darker red to shame its glowing  
 pyre?

Back to thy native herd, and spend thy little shrunken  
 day,  
 And if thou sting—for sting thou must—let it be  
 common clay;  
 There live, nor step across this pale, but leave the  
 right to heaven  
 To judge how far this soul has dimmed the splendours  
 it has given.

For us who look with other eyes he stands in other  
 light,  
 A great one stumbling on with hands outstretched to  
 all the right;  
 Who, though his heart had shrunk beneath the doom  
 that withers all,  
 Still wove a golden thread of song to stretch from cot  
 to hall.

And now as when the mighty gods had fanes in  
 ancient days,  
 And up the fluted columns swept great storms of  
 throbbing praise,  
 So we to all, as in our heart this day with tender hand,  
 Uprear the marble shape of him, the Memnon of our  
 land.

ROBERT BURNS

And sweeter sounds are ours than those which from  
that statue came,  
When the red archer in the East smote it with shafts  
of flame;  
We hear those melodies that made a glory crown our  
youth,  
And wove around the staid man their spells of love  
and truth.

And still we walk within their light—a light that  
cannot die;  
It streams forth from a purer sun and from a wider sky;  
It crowns this heaven-born deputy of Song's supremest  
chords,  
And leaps like altar flame along his soul-entrancing  
words.

Lo! take the prophet's reach of sight, and pass beyond  
the gloom,  
Where thousands of our coming kind in thronging  
legions loom;  
They, too, will come as we this hour with passionate  
worship wrung,  
And place upon those mute, white lips, the grand great  
songs he sung.

Ho! then, stand bare of brow with me, no common  
name we sing,  
And let the music in your hearts like thunder marches  
ring;  
We hymn a name to which the heart of Scotland ever  
turns,  
The master singer of us all, *our* ploughman—  
ROBERT BURNS!