

WALT WHITMAN.

STRONG poet of the sleepless gods that dwell
As far above the stars as we beneath,
Whose melody disdainful the soft sheath
Of dainty modern music, snaps the spell,
And careless of all form or fettering plan
Clothes itself slovenly in rough, free words,
And strikes with no soft touch the inner chords
That vibrate with the strong and healthy man.
What if the ages that are yet to be,
Emerging from the bloodless wars of thought,
Seize hollow custom, and at one keen blow
Smite off its seven heads, and having smote,
Turn round, and with their larger veins aglow
With new found vigour mould themselves to thee ?

GOETHE.

UP went the finger, but that royal eye,
Whose cunning saw through human life, was dim,
And fast becoming traitor unto him
Who used it with such magic. Ever nigh
And nigher, death crept to the feeble heart;
But, as the misty darkness came apace,
There slowly rose upon the sinking face
The soul's desire of Faust—the better part,
Which, working through a long, long life, became
A second being. Wrapt in earthly bands,
That now were giving way for other lands,
Whose light, slow dawning, was not held the same
As his—but as a darkness unto him—
“More light.” It came, and all grew still and dim.

GETHSEMANE.

I WILL go into dark Gethsemane,
In the night when none can see;
I will kneel by the side of Christ my Lord,
And He will kneel down with me.

I will bow my head, for I may not look
On that brow with its bloody dew,
Nor into those eyes of awful pain,
With the dread cross shining through.

Then my soul rose up, as a man will rise
Who hath high, stern words to speak,
And said, "Now what wilt thou do by Him
With that sweat on brow and cheek?"

"Canst thou drink from the cup he proffers thee?
Canst thou quaff it at a breath?
For the dregs are sorrow and scorn and shame,
The crown of thorns and death.

"Stand thou from afar, for thou canst not know
That hour in Gethsemane.
Thou canst only know, in thine own dim way,
That He strove that night for thee."

So I stand afar, and I bow my head;
But I dare not look into those eyes,
Whose depths have the depths of the night around,
With the starlight in the skies.

And my soul, as a friend will talk to a friend,
Still whispers and speaks unto me,
"Thou canst only know in thine own dim way
That hour in Gethsemane."

THE POET.

LIKE a great tree beside the stream of life
The visioned poet stands,
And scatters forth his leaves of thought all rife,
As if from fairy hands.

And down, forever down the stream they float,
And work into the heart,
And there, by virtue of the magic thought,
Can never more depart.

But sleep unseen through all the weary day,
And waken up betimes
In the sweet night to cheer our gloom away
With their most pleasant chimes.

And in the hurry and the fret, the jar
Of restless things they come,
And act like oil upon the tempest's war
Till all the strife is dumb.

The labour of the wood and field, the slim
White clouds within the sky,
Have secrets Nature only shows to him
Who hath a poet's eye.

The unheard music and the gentle tones
Which float along her breast,
Give up their being unto him alone,
To tell it to the rest.

He is the necromancer who hath thrown
Open a wealth untold,
And placed within our hands the fabled stone
Whose touch turns all to gold.

O, noble poet, firm in thy great faith,
And in thy truth and love,



She's an Awfu' Lassie, Jenny R. Gemmell Hutchison, R.S.A., R.S.W.

THE POET

I prize thee as I do the dead, whose death
Has swelled the ranks above.

So in all earnestness my spirit sends
Its homage unto thee;
But this is naught, for from the sky descends
Thine immortality.

ON THE STATUES OF GOETHE AND SCHILLER AT FRANKFORT - ON - THE MAINE.

Two master spirits of German song, they stand
Each by the side of each; the sculptor's thought
Has guided the sure chisel, as it ought,
And placed the laurel wreath in Goethe's hand.
He holds it with that calm repose of face,
True reflex of his life, and looks straight on;
While Schiller, as if hearing some high tone
Playing within his life, has time to place
His finger tips within the wreath, but lifts
His vision upward; type, too, of his life,
That struggled, through thick clouds of early strife,
To the calm sunshine of all noble gifts.
Two spirits of melody—one broad and wise,
The other pure, and yearning still to rise.

SHE'S AN AWFU' LASSIE JENNY.

SHE's an awfu' lassie, Jenny,
No' her like in a' the toon,
For her heid is fu' o' mischief,
And her hair is hingin' doon.

SHE'S AN AWFU' LASSIE

What a faught maun ha'e her mither
Frae the mornin' till the nicht,
But she's awfu' like her granny,
An' that pits wee Jenny richt.

I ha'e tried to coort wee Jenny
But she'll no' ha'e me ava',
She wad raither ha'e a penny
To buy sweeties or a ba',
When I speak o' oor sweetheartin',
Just as lown as lown can be,
Wad ye think it for a moment?
She pits oot her tongue at me.

She's an awfu' lassie Jenny,
Yet a denty, bonnie quean,
An' there's licht, an' love, an' lauchter
A' at ance within her een.
Yet I ken fu' weel her mither
Maun get mony an unco fricht,
But she's awfu' like her granny
An' that pits wee Jenny richt.

YARROW.

THE simmer day was sweet an' lang,
It had nae thocht o' sorrow,
As my true love and I stood on
The bonnie banks o' Yarrow.

I took her han' in mine an' said,
"Noo smile, my winsome marrow;
The next time that we come again
You'll be my bride on Yarrow."

YARROW

A tear stood in her sweet blue ee,
An' sair she sighed in sorrow,
" I dinna like the sugh that rins
Alang your bonnie Yarrow.

" It soun's like some auld dirge o' wae,
It chills my bosom thorough,
An' it makes me creep close to your side;
Oh, I dinna like your Yarrow.

" For aye I think on the wae an' dule
That auld, auld sang brings o'er me;
An' aye I see that bluidy fecht,
An' the deid, deid men afore me."

I clasped my true love in my arms,
I kissed her sweet lips thorough,
Her breast lay saft against my ain,
On the bonnie banks o' Yarrow.

" A tear is in your sweet blue ee,
A tear that speaks o' sadness.
Noo what should dim its happy hue,
This simmer day o' gladness?

" The Yarrow rins fu' fresh an' sweet,
The licht shines bricht an' clearly,
An' why should ae sad thocht be ours,
We wha lo'e ither dearly?

" The Yarrow rins, an' as it rins
Nae sadness can it borrow
Frae that auld sang that's far awa',
When I'm wi' thee on Yarrow."

I pu'd a daisy at my feet,
A daisy sweet an' bonnie,
I put it in my true love's breast,
For she was fair as ony.

YARROW

But aye she sighed, an' aye she said,
" I fear me for the morrow.

Oh, tak' awa' your bonnie flower,
For see, it grew on Yarrow.

" The bluid still dyes its crimson tips,
It speaks o' dule an' sadness,
An' the deid that lay on the gowany brae,
An' woman's wailing madness."

I took the daisy from her breast,
I flung it into Yarrow,
An' doon the stream wi' heavy heart
I cam' wi' my sweet marrow.

Oh simmer months, hoo swift ye flew,
Wi' a' your bloom an' blossom!
Oh Death, how waefu' was thy touch
That took her to thy bosom!

For my true love, sae sweet an' fair,
Lies in her grave sae narrow,
An' in my heart is that eerie moan
She heard that day in Yarrow.

THE STEPPING STONES.

WE met upon the stepping stones,
She blushed and looked at me;
The river turned its short, sharp moans
Into sweet melody.

I heard the music in my heart,
I said, " Sweet maid, I find
That I will have to turn again,
And let you come behind."

THE STEPPING STONES

Thereat she hung her dainty head,
The river's melody
Grew sweeter, and methought it said,
"The maid will follow thee."

I turned upon the stepping stone,
The maiden came behind;
She whispered in her sweetest tone,
"Dear sir, but you are kind."

"Nay, nay," I said, and took her hand;
"But shall I turn again,
Or wait until a tender band
Be bound about us twain?"

She hung her head, then, blushing, said,
"Dear sir, but you are kind;
If you will cross the stepping stones,
I will not stay behind."

ROW, KELLO, ROW.

Row, Kello, row frae rocky linn,
An' through amang thy grassy braes,
Where gowans grow an' hawthorns blaw,
An' sunshine sleeps on summer days.
Slip saftly by the quarry howm,
Where hingin' hazels hap thy tides;
Then murmur through aneath the brig,
An' by the cot where Annie bides.

Row, Kello, row to where the Nith
Half waits to clasp thy floods sae clear,
But leave ahin' the happy soun'
That Annie still delights to hear.

ROW, KELLO, ROW

She walks by thee when gloamin' dims
An' darkens doon the vocal glen,
But what her ain sweet thochts can be
Nane but hersel' an' thee may ken.

Row, Kello, row when summer flings
A wealth o' licht the hills along,
An' row when autumn's yellow han'
Shakes doon the nits the leaves among.
An' row when winter's rouky breath
Strips a' the cleedin' frae the tree,
But leave to Annie still the thochts
At gloamin' when she walks by thee.

THE DOVE.

A DOVE went up, and struck the air
Impatiently with all her wing;
I said, "O bird thy journeying
Is like the flight of thought. But where,
"In all the regions of the sky,
When weary, and you wish to roam
No longer, do you find a home?"
And meekly did the dove reply—
"I own no fancy; I am free,
And, shooting through the yielding air,
I look and find that all is fair.
And beautiful and sweet to me.
"And wish, when tired, no sweeter rest
Than drooping down with folded wing
Within a wood whose shadows cling
Across the river's dreaming breast."

THE DOVE

“ Well said, O bird, whose days are rife
With all the peace of rest and love,
And linked to quiet things that move
Around the orb of poet-life.”

THE PIPER'S TREE.

COME in, gudeman, to your ain fireside,
There's a cauld, cauld grup in the air,
An' the win' blaws snell frae Corsencon,
For the winter's snaw is there.

It sughs down Glenmuckloch Dryfestane glens
Wi' an eerie, eerie soun',
It whussles an' roars in the muckle tree
That stan's afore Nethertoon.

Come in, come in to the weans an' me,
The fire is lowin' bricht;
If ye stan' ony langer there, ye'll get
Your death o' cauld this nicht.

Do you hear me speak? What can mak' him turn
His back on his ain dear wife,
Wha has stood by him through mony a faucht
For fifty years o' her life?

Is he coontin' his purse? Oh, waes me noo,
Oh, wae for my bairns an' me;
The curse that my grannie tauld me has come—
He has sat on the Piper's Tree!

For after she tauld me, when I was a wean,
That, whaever sat by nicht
On the Piper's Tree, took a lust for gowd,
And made it their hale delicht.

THE PIPER'S TREE

An' the sign o' the Piper's curse was this:
That, whaever it micht be,
They wad coont their purse at pleuch or cairt,
Wi' a greedy look in their ee.

Come in, gudeman, for my heart is sair,
Come in to the lowin' licht,
An' I'll tell ye the doom o' the Piper's Tree,
For the gude o' us a' this nicht.

Langsyne, afore my grannie was born,
On a nicht o' win' an' rain,
Auld Eadie Buchan, the miser, was faun',
Lyn' dead on his ain hearthstane.

He was killed for the sake o' the siller he had,
For he made it his only pride,
But, whaever it was that had dune the deed,
They fled frae the kintra side.

An' years an' years gaed by, until
The tale took anither turn,
An' they said that his gowd was aneath a tree
By the side o' the Laggeray Burn.

But a curse wad be sure to fa' on him
Wha wad try to howk for it there,
For ilk' coin was red wi' bluid, and still
The miser's ghaist was there.

But lang Tam Cringan lauched an' lauched,
An' said, wi' a lood guffaw,
"It's an auld wife's story to fricht the bairns,
As a bogle frichts a craw."

But aye after that he was seen to stan'
By himsel' an' coont his purse,
While the look in his ee was the look that comes
At the back o' the Piper's curse.

THE PIPER'S TREE

In a week after that what a change took place,
For white, white grew his hair;
He never lookit ye straucht in the face,
An' he jokit an' leuch nae mair.

He dwined and dwined on his feet, until
He took to his bed an' lay,
But the neebors whispered, "Afore he dees
He has something yet to say."

So ae drear nicht, as they sat by his bed,
He said, wi' mony a mane,
"Since the nicht that I socht for the miser's gowd
My peace o' mind has been gane.

"An' I canna rest wi' this wecht on my breast,
Sae, afore I steek my ee,
I maun tell ye sights that I saw, an' the soun's
That I heard by the Piper's Tree.

"For days an' days, like ane in a dream,
I daun'ered oot an' in;
For my heart was set on the miser's wealth,
Though I kenned fu' weel 'twas a sin.

"I coontit my purse ilk' hour o' the day,
An' whenever I heard the clink
O' the siller I faun' my heart grow hard,
An' closer an' closer shrink,

"Till at length, with an aith, I said to mysel',
In the heicht o' greed an' despair,
'I will venture the lastin' gude o' my saul,
For the sake o' the siller there.'

"Sae I slippit oot on a munelicht nicht,
Took a gude stoot pick an' shule,
Stood aneath the Piper's Tree an' heard
The Laggeray Burn sing dule.

THE PIPER'S TREE

- “ I wrocht, an’ I wrocht, as ane will work
Wha works for life an’ death,
Till the black sweat fell in draps frae my brow,
An’ I scarce could draw my breath.
- “ But, aye the deeper I howkit, my heart
Grew harder an’ harder still;
An’ every thocht that cam’ into my heid
Was a thocht o’ sin an’ ill.
- “ I faun’ that if even a brither o’ mine
Had come to help me there,
The sin o’ his bluid wad been on my heid,
For the sake o’ gettin’ his share.
- “ But a’ at ance, an’ abune my heid,
I heard the bagpipes play,
An’ at the soun’ the munelicht fled
Frae hill, an’ glen, an’ brae.
- “ An’ I saw the glint o’ an eerie licht,
That seemed like a ghaist to rise
Frae the breckaned heicht o’ the steep Knowe Hill,
Where gude Saint Connel lies.
- “ An’ doon it cam’ like a wauf o’ the win’,
Wi’ the sugh o’ the Laggeray Burn,
An’ aye the bagpipes skirled an’ played,
But my heid I couldna turn.
- “ I faun’ the sweat rin cauld doon my back,
An’ trickle into my shune,
But I hadna the power to lift my heid,
To see wha played abune.
- “ But, just as that licht gaed flauffin’ by,
I saw what made me grue,
A lang, thin shape, wi’ its heid bent doon,
An’ a red, red mark on its broo.

THE PIPER'S TREE

“ An' I saw its han's gang up an' doon,
What they did I couldna tell,
But I thocht they were coontin' the ghaists o' coin,
As I used to do mysel'.

“ It glided doon to the side o' the Nith,
Then turned as if to come back,
But the win' took it doon till it sank frae my sicht
On the lang green howms o' the Rack.

“ An' aye the bagpipes skirled an' played,
An' looder an' looder grew;
An' aye the hair stood up on my heid,
An' the cauld sweat fell frae my broo.

“ Then a' at ance the bagpipes ceased,
While an eerie, ghaistly cry
Rang oot on the nicht, an' took to the air
To dee on the hills ootbye.

“ ‘ Howk on,' it said, ‘ an' gang deeper yet,
It wants but an hour o' twal';
I wuss ye may licht on the miser's gowd,
For I want to be sure o' yer saul.'

“ Then I lookit up, an' abune my heid
(Oh, whatna sicht did I see
In the mirk, mirk nicht by the deein' mune,
On the tap o' the Piper's Tree!)

“ I saw twa een that werena like een,
They were red as a lowin' peat;
A pair o' horns that were three feet lang,
An' feet that werena like feet.

“ But I saw nae mair, for, wi' ae lood cry
That took the last o' my breath,
I lap frae the hole that was like my grave,
An' I ran for life an' death.”

THE PIPER'S TREE

Oh, ye needna lauch at me, gudeman,
For grannie wadna lee,
An' said there was mair than fowk wad own
O' truth in the Piper's Tree.

That nicht Tam Cringan dee'd, an' juist
As they laid him oot in his shrood,
They heard a soun' like the bagpipes skirl,
An' it cam' frae the Laggeray Wood.

Fu' weel did they ken wha was playin' there;
The thocht sent the bluid frae their cheek,
An' siccan a fear was on ane an' a'
That nane o' them daur to speak.

The soun' cam' up like a risin' win'
When the winter nights are lang,
They heard it skirl at the chimla tap,
Till a voice was heard in the thrang—

“Howk on,” it cried, “for the miser's gowd,
Howk on wi' a' your micht;
Had the deid ye watch got my wuss, I ken
Where his saul wad ha'e been the nicht.”

The win' fell doon, an' the eerie soun'
Creepit up to the hills ootbye,
An' there they sat wi' the deid at their side
Till the licht cam' into the sky.

It's an auld wife's havers, ye say, gudeman!
But still, to this very day,
When the mune draps owre the Kirkland Hills
Ye can hear the bagpipes play.

But nane daur venture up the burn
To see wha is playin' there,
For they ken o' the curse that is sure to fa'
Wi' its weird baith lang an' sair.

THE PIPER'S TREE

Sae ye needna lauch at me, gudeman,
For my grannie wadna lee,
An' said there was mair than fowk wad own
O' truth in the Piper's Tree.

AIMLESS LONGINGS.

I AM full of an aimless longing
As I wander about to-day;
I turn from the light and shadow
As they chase each other at play.

I hear a wild bird calling—
A lonely cry from the hill;
And the haunting sense in my bosom,
Grows deeper and lonelier still.

What it can be I know not,
I cannot read it aright;
And I wander as men will wander
That stray from the path in the night.

Is it a sense of something
That to-day still follows me;
That out of my life has vanished,
As a ship goes down at sea?

BALLOCHMYLE.

A SWEET love-song, whose early touch—
Ere yet the master-hand grew strong
To strike the chords that felt at such
The wondrous magic of his song—
Was with me, speaking soft and sweet
From leaf-clad tree, and from the smile

BALLOCHMYLE

Of half-hid flowers among my feet,
That summer night in Ballochmyle.

The Ayr was hushed from bank to bank;
Its murmur, coming through the trees,
Was as of fairies when they prank
Their moonlight revels o'er the leas.
It mingled with the tender tone
Of lover's earnest plea and wile,
As I stood listening all alone,
That summer night in Ballochmyle.

There was no breath of wind to stir
The grass that grew beside my feet,
But silent as a worshipper,
When thought and silence are most sweet,
I stood: I felt my heart grow warm
With that soft dew of unshed tears
That comes, when, as beneath a charm,
We slip back into vanished years.

The spot was fair, but fairer still
In that high light which falls from song—
So fair that, bending to its will,
I only did this gentle wrong—
I plucked some grass, a token meet,
To take with me. No idle toil!
Since it perchance had kissed the feet
Of her, the "Lass o' Ballochmyle."

The night came on, and in the sky,
A little space of which was seen
Between the trees, upon the eye
One star shone out with wondrous sheen.
It wore the tender look of love,
As if some link to me unknown

BALLOCHMYLE

Had bound it to this spot, and strove
To make this haunted place its own.

Sweet dream! for here love's very soul
Might dwell, and feel no taint of earth,
But wander to its passionate goal,
Or dream, and, dreaming grow to birth.
Here might his feet for ever stay,
And here his heart for ever dream,
Without one wish to roam or stray
Beyond the music of the stream.

The moon rose up, and, all at once,
From leafy branch and trembling grass,
A murmur, like a sweet response,
Came forth, and sweet to hear it was.
And with that murmur came the light,
That flung o'er all a tender smile;
And deepened still the fairy sight
That held me bound in Ballochmy!-.

But is there not a softer gleam,
Which is not of the moon, that lies
On grassy bank and wood and stream,
And touching makes them sanctities—
A light that, shining far apart,
Is only for the inner eye,
That sees the glory of that art
Which speaks in burning melody?

Hush! do I wake or dream? for lo!
A spirit wanders up the glen,
And as he comes a deeper glow
Bathes all that lies within his ken.
He moves as in some mood of thought,
And in the glory which he throws

BALLOCHMYLE

Around him his dark eye has caught
That frenzy which the poet knows.

He leans against a tree, he turns
His eye upon the shining stream,
And in its burning depths there yearns
The first sunrise of passion's dream.
Where have I seen that swarthy face
Which now is radiant with the light
Of that high look that wears no trace
Of earth or death to mortal sight?

Lo! yet another spirit comes
With lighter foot and fairer face,
Each leaf in murmurous music hums
As on she moves with pensive pace.
The Ayr grows hushed, and will not speak,
And only one sweet breath of wind
Kisses the roses on her cheek,
And sways the grass that throbs behind.

She pauses, slowly turns her eye
On him, the poet spirit, bent
In half-adoring ecstasy,
As to some angels heaven-sent.
Then with a low yet tender sigh
She beckons him: they both pass on,
And all the light grows dim, and I
Am left in Ballochmyle alone.

I wake up. Am I still beneath
The spell of all that early tone,
Whose music, like the spring's sweet breath,
Hath made this fairy spot its own?
The star shines through the open space,
The moonlight quivers all around,

BALLOCHMYLE

And lays sweet hands of tender grace
Upon this consecrated ground.

Oh, early love-song haunting yet
The spot where the immortal trod,
And breathing, where his feet were set,
The music of the singing god.
Oh, maid for ever young! for who,
When caught and held by magic song,
Can feel the years that bear from view
The common lot that plods along?

Ah me! we pass. But through this wood
Our swarthy singer still will roam,
And muse in high poetic mood
Apart from all the years to come.
While she, his sister-spirit, strong
In her unfading beauty's smile,
Will move throughout the land of song,
"The bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle."

THINKING OF MICHAEL.

(A Letter from the "Dead."—Upon the tin water-bottle of one of the dead men brought out of the Seaham Pit, Michael Smith, there was scratched, evidently with a nail, the following letter to his wife:—"Dear Margaret,—There was forty of us altogether at 7 a.m., some was singing-hymns, but my thought was on my little Michael, I thought that him and I would meet in heaven at the same time. Oh, my dear wife, God save you and the children. Be sure and learn the children to pray for me. Oh, what a terrible position we are in.—Michael Smith, 54, Henry Street." The Little Michael he refers to was his child whom he had left at home ill. The lad died on the day of the explosion.)

IN the chamber of death underground,
Came these words to touch men to the heart,
Bring tears to the eyes, and a sound
Of a sorrow that strikes like a dart.

THINKING OF MICHAEL

Hear you not that low wail coming through
The death-gloom of that chamber so grim?
“I was thinking of Michael and you
When the others were singing a hymn.

“I thought—not of death that would come—
It was nothing, dear wife, unto me;
I was thinking of you and our home,
And how little Michael would be.
My God, what a fate we can view
In this deep vault that drips like our tears!
But still I was thinking of Michael and you,
With the sound of a hymn in my ears.

“Then I thought I would meet him above,
Both at once enter in at the gate,
Clasp his hand, hear his whisper of love,
With no hint of the earth and my fate,
Lead him into the light of that land,
Where no shadow may enter to dim—
All this in the midst of a band
Of my mates who were singing a hymn.

“Oh, pray for me, wife, when at night
Our children climb up on your knee;
When the hearth is still dark from the blight,
Oh, teach them a prayer for me!
Let their voices go up to our God,
Who through this dark shadow can see;
He will hear from the heights of His sinless abode
Their prayers for you and for me.

“Farewell! and afar in the years
That will deaden thy sorrow's deep smart,
And thine eyes only soften with tears
When my name stirs and leaps at thy heart,

THINKING OF MICHAEL

You will say, when you think upon me
And this death-cavern, rugged and grim,
'He was thinking how Michael would be
When the others were singing a hymn.' "

Oh, fathers and mothers that peer
Down into that terrible mine,
See ye not, far too deep for a tear,
A love that was almost divine?
That father, waiting for death to come,
But still, in the midst of his fears,
Thinking of poor little Michael at home,
With the sound of a hymn in his ears.

CONNELBUSH.

I HEAR the winds of summer rush
Above my head to-day,
As here I sit by Connelbush
To dream one hour away.

Beside the old green walls are seen,
Half hid amid the grass,
Stray flowers that peep out from their screen
In sorrow as you pass.

The garden lies a wilderness
Of growth untrained and free;
There is no hand to touch and dress
To bounds the life I see.

The walls still stand to mourn and sigh
For mirth that once was there,
In other years when youth was high
And days and nights were fair.

And still the winds round Connelbush
 Blow sweet through glen and wood,
 As when we heard them with the rush
 Of youth through all our blood.

But still they do not seem to blow
 With that sweet force we felt
 When, in the years of long ago,
 Our hearts were quick to melt.

The garden fence is broken down,
 Unhinged the garden gate,
 The roof of thatch has sunk and flown,
 And all is desolate.

There is no welcome at the door,
 No kindly voice to greet;
 And on the path is heard no more
 The sound of human feet.

I hear the tinkle of the stream
 That slips beneath the grass;
 I hear, and as I hear I dream,
 And into visions pass.

I enter through the narrow door,
 The fire gleams bright within;
 And all, as it was once of yore,
 Is full of mirth and din.

I hear the sound of dancing feet,
 Of rustic revelry,
 Of voices rising clear and sweet—
 And each is known to me.

Beside the fire, and in her place,
 Sits one to sympathise;
 The light is on her kindly face,
 And in her kindly eyes.

CONNELBUSH

She watches with a quiet smile
The mirth and pastime there,
And, watching, she is young the while,
Though snow-white is her hair.

Beside her, in the hearth's sweet blaze
And leaning on her knee,
Is one—a woman in her ways—
Though but a child is she.

She, too, is full of quick reply
When laughing questions pass;
And catches with a ready eye
The wiles of lad and lass.

Another, too, who bears a part
In all this rustic life—
True woman of a daughter's heart,
Who art as true a wife.

Thou walkest other paths this hour,
For life's paths so divide;
And thine are full of gracious dower,
With children by thy side.

What can I wish to-day for thee,
If human joys should last,
But that the future years may be
As calm as were the past.

Hush, as I look a strange sad shade
Falls down upon the hearth,
And dame and grandchild slowly fade,
And pass from all the mirth.

Ah, me, that shade is death, and they
Look through its tender haze
With that half-joy that fades away,
And saddens as we gaze.

CONNELBUSH

Fades, too, the sound of dance and song
The last good-night is said,
And up the pathway pass along
The last fond youth and maid.

The twilight sinks, the shadows fall,
A sense of something lost
Comes down and settles over all,
And haunts it like a ghost.

The ashes dwindle in the grate,
The last dull spark is gone,
The walls and roof are desolate,
And here I stand alone.

The winds blow sweet by Connelbush,
They fan my brow and cheek,
And in the pauses, when they hush,
I hear the streamlet speak.

I mark on hills the shadowings
That march in sad array
From clouds that float above, like wings
Of angels flung away.

And from low-lying meadow lands
Along the Nith I hear,
Uprising from haymaking bands,
Sweet laughter swift and clear,

And down the valley, further on,
Lies Sanquhar dim, and grey,
Still guarded by its pile of stone,
That crumbles day by day.

I look, and right in front is seen,
Beyond the wood and stream,
A long and narrow bank of green,
On which the metals gleam.

CONNELBUSH

And up and down, with rush and roar,
Trains crash with seven-leagued stride;
Ah me, this moaning human shore
Must have its iron tide.

But here from lonely Connelbush
All life has fled away,
And nought is heard but winds that rush
And sport with its decay.

No welcome at the door to wake
The silence into mirth;
No sound but that of winds that shake
The weeds upon the hearth.

Farewell, but as I turn, my thought
Perforce is backward set,
And shadows all this lonely cot
With mists of vain regret.

Alas for human dreams that leave,
Instead of after-glow,
Cold memories that pine and grieve,
And sadden as we go.

Till, battling with the years, at last
They sink into decay,
And lie a ruin in the past,
Like Connelbush to-day.

A VOICE IS IN THE WIND TO-DAY.

A VOICE is in the wind to-day,
And sweet its breath is blowing;
O, welcome summer wind I say,
From where the flowers are growing.