

THE YEARS AT THE SPRING

AN ANTHOLOGY OF RECENT POETRY



COMPILED BY L. D'O. WALTERS ILLUSTRATED BY
HARRY CLARKE

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THE SPRING



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AN ANTHOLOGY OF RECENT POETRY
COMPILED BY L.D'O.WALTERS AND
ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY CLARKE
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY HAROLD MONRO



BRENTANO'S
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INTRODUCTION

I

THE best poetry is always about the earth itself and all the strange and lovely things that compose and inhabit it. When a 'great poet' sets himself the task of some 'big theme,' he needs only to hold, as it were, a magnifying glass to the earth. We who are born and live here like very much to imagine other worlds, and we have even mentally constructed such another in which to exist after dying on this one; but we were careful to make it a glorified version of our own earth, with everything we most love here intensified and improved to the utmost stretch of human imagination.

To each man his 'best poetry' is that which he is able most to enjoy. The first object of poetry is to give pleasure. Pleasure is various, but it cannot exist where the emotions or the imagination have not been powerfully stirred. Whether it be called sensual or intellectual, pleasure cannot be willed. It is impossible to feel happy because one wants to feel happy,

or sad because one wishes to feel sad. But such bodily or mental conditions may be induced from outside through a natural agency such as poetry, or music.

Now those dreary people who would maintain that poetry should deal (some say exclusively) with what they call 'big themes,' or 'the larger life,' are merely advocating more use of the magnifying glass as against intensive cultivation of the natural eye. The poet is essentially he who examines carefully, and learns to know fully, every detail of common life. He seeks to name in a variety of manners, and to define, the objects about him, to compare them with other objects, near or remote, and to find, for the mere sake of enjoyment, wonderful varieties of description and comparison. When he imagines better places than his earth, or invents gods, the impersonation and combination of the fortunate qualities in man, he is then using the magnifying glass with talent, occasionally with rare genius. But the poet who seeks, without genius, to magnify is simply a fool who sees everything too big, and boasts, in the loudest voice he can raise, of his diseased eyesight.

One of the peculiarities, or perhaps rather the essential quality, of the lyrical poetry of to-day is a minute concentration on the objects immediately near it and an anxious carefulness to describe these in the most appropriate and satisfactory terms. Thus it is often accused of a neglect to sublimate the emotions, and many critics have been at pains to suggest that this affection for the nearest and that careful

description of natural events denotes a smallness of mental range. Be it noted, however, that the eye which does not look too far often sees most. It is remarkable that English lyrical poetry should have learnt in this period of religious uncertainty to clasp itself at least to a reality that cannot be questioned or doubted. So far its faith reaches. It expresses a trustfulness in what it can definitely perceive, it hardly ventures outside the circles of human daily experience, and in this capacity it reveals an excellence of many kinds, sincerity often, and, at worst, a playfulness which, if ephemeral, is amusing at any rate to those whom it is intended to amuse, and appropriately irritating to those whom it wants to annoy.

But the most noticeable characteristic of the verse of our present moment is its dislike of the aloofness generally associated with English poetry. About twice a century language consolidates: phrases which were once soft and new harden with use; words once of a ringing beauty become dry and hollow through excessive repetition. This state of language is not much noticed by people who have no special use for it beyond the expression of daily needs. Moreover, they make new colloquial words for themselves as required without forethought or difficulty. Poets, however, must consciously search for new words, and a tired condition of their language is to them a great difficulty. The Victorians were absolute spendthrifts of words: no vocabulary could keep pace with their recklessness; they bequeathed a language

almost ruined for sentimental purposes—words and phrases had acquired either such an aloofness that for a long time no one any more would trouble to reach up to them, or had become so thin and common that to use them would have been something like hack-sawing a piece of cotton.

Now in the anthology which follows we may notice a characteristic escape from these difficulties. Words have been brought down from their high places and compelled into ordinary use. This has been accomplished not so much through any new familiarity with the words themselves as by a certain naturalness in the attitude of the people employing them. Rupert Brooke's "Great Lover" is an example.

In short, these are the chief reasons why present-day poetry is readable and entertaining—that it deals with familiar subjects in a familiar manner; that, in doing so, it uses ordinary words literally and as often as possible; that it is not aloof or pretentious; that it refuses to be bullied by tradition: its style, in fact, is itself.

II

If an excuse is to be sought for the addition of this one more to the large number of existent collections of recent poetry, let it be in the nature of an explanation rather than an apology. Good, or even representative, poetry requires, in fact, no apology, but where the poems of some thirty-two different

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authors have been extracted from their books and placed side by side in one collection, a discussion of the apparent aims of the anthologist may be interesting, and will perhaps lead to a fuller enjoyment of the collection thus produced.

Some readers approach a volume of poems to criticize it, others with the object of gaining pleasure. To give pleasure is assuredly the object of this volume. Moreover, it is adapted to the tastes of almost any age, from ten to ninety, and may be read aloud by grandchild to grandparent as suitably as by grandparent to grandchild. It is an anthology of Poems, not of Names. For instance, though Thomas Hardy is on the list, the lyric chosen to represent him is actually more characteristic of the book itself than of the mind of that great and aged poet. It is, in fact, Christian in atmosphere. It is not a typical specimen of Mr Hardy's style. It shows him in that occasional rather sad mood of regret for a lost superstition. It is not the best of Hardy, but rather a poem admirably suited to the book, which also happens, as by chance, to be by the author of "The Dynasts" and "Satires of Circumstance."

III

The collection as a whole is modern, and all except eight of its authors are living and writing. Of those eight, five died as soldiers in the European War, and are represented mainly by what is known as 'War poetry.' Otherwise such poetry is fortunately absent. This absence may be justified

by the fact that most of the verse written on the subject of the War turns out, surveyed in cooler blood, to be, as any sound judge of literature must always have known, definitely and unmistakably bad. Much of it is by now, or should be, repudiated by its authors. It was too often "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings"; it too seldom originated from "emotion recollected in tranquillity."

Rupert Brooke's sonnets "The Dead" and "The Soldier" were popular almost from their first publication. They belong undoubtedly to the best traditions of English poetry. Julian Grenfell's "Into Battle," and, in a lesser degree, the "Home Thoughts from Laventie" of Edward Wyndham Tennant, have acquired popularity among a larger number of folk than can be included in the general term 'literary circles.' Neither of the composers of these verses was a professional poet. Both were men of attractive personality and strong feeling, with education, taste, and an occasional impulse to write gracefully. Intrinsically either poem might as easily have been inspired by an Indian frontier raid as by a European war. They do not affect the traditions of English poetry by subject or by form. It will be found, as the years pass, that always fewer 'War poems' can still be read with pleasure, the incidents which gave rise to them having become dim in human memory. And these will not be read because of their association with the Great War, but for their qualities as poems and their power to stir enjoyment or surprise in the reader.

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Consider those four melancholy lines by which Edward Thomas is here represented, remarkable for their concentration and for the crowd of images they can suggest. At present the words "where all that passed are dead" alone associate this poem with the War. But death comes through so many causes that twenty years from now a footnote would be needed if it were desired to emphasize that association.

J. E. Flecker's "Dying Patriot," one of his three poems in this book, was written in 1914 in Switzerland, where he was dying of consumption. It is certainly less a 'War poem' than the same author's "War Song of the Saracens."

The verses entitled "A Petition," by R. E. Vernède, are of a different kind. They are written in conventional Henley-Kiplingese, and contain too many incidents of a type of poetic expression that has been used to excess, as "wider than all seas," "to front the world," "quenchless hope," "All that a man might ask thou hast given me, England." They are, nevertheless, useful in the collection as a set-off against the other 'War poems' and an instance of the more ephemeral type of patriotic verse.

Thus it would appear that the anthologist has displayed wisdom when including in this volume only few pieces that may be associated with the War, and those few (with one exception) on the score of their literary merit, and for no other reason.

IV

Poets of to-day write individually less than their predecessors, and most of them are satisfied to publish only a proportion of what they write. None of the eight referred to above left us any great bulk of verse. Four at least, however, are becoming daily better known to the reading public, and of these Rupert Brooke and J. E. Flecker have already their dozens of conscious or unconscious imitators. The form, rhythm, or Eastern atmosphere of Flecker's poetry, the cynicism and wit of Brooke's, recur somewhat diluted in the verse of almost every young undergraduate. Neither Lionel Johnson nor Mary Coleridge has ever become so well known or received so much attention from the average plagiarist, while the reputation of Edward Thomas has been of slow and uncertain growth. Johnson's poetry is too intellectual for the average reader. The wonderful, small lyrics of Mary Coleridge are esoteric rather than general. Nevertheless, this anthology includes, most advisedly, a good poem by Johnson, one indeed which has had a quiet, but strong, influence on modern lyrical poetry, namely, the lines to the statue of King Charles at Charing Cross, and also a charming impression by Mary Coleridge.

"Street Lanterns" is a good example of that poetry of close observation to which reference has already been made. It is a small, careful description of a London scene. It assumes that the reader has observed as much, and that he

will enjoy to be reminded and brought back for a moment in imagination to autumn and street-mending. The advocate of 'big themes' will inevitably condemn such verse, for the poet has aimed at neither size nor grandeur, has indeed sought rather to diminish her subject than enlarge it.

V

This anthology, it has been remarked above, is one rather of particular poems than of well-known authors. Several names of repute are not to be found in the index. William Watson is only represented by "April," a little catch that might come to any man of feeling on a spring walk. To think in terms of these verses is at once not to mind having left an umbrella at home. Hilaire Belloc gives a sharp impression of early rising; he also sings in a great voice all the glories of his favourite part of England. W. H. Davies brings sheep across the Atlantic, and he talks to a kingfisher. Mrs Meynell contributes "The Shepherdess," that well-known description of a pure and serene mind, also two London poems, of which one is the lovely "November Blue." John Masefield is not to be read in his best style, but the three poems we find here are thoroughly English, full of the love of the island soil and of its sea, and are probably in the book for that reason. So much for some of the well-known contributors. Side by side with them we find the unknown name of H. H. Abbott, whose "Black and White" is a sketch of remarkable clarity and interest.

Death, so favourite a subject with poets, is seldom allowed to figure in this book. Betsey-Jane would insist on going to Heaven, but is told, in the charming verses by Helen Parry Eden, that it simply "would not do." The whole book is too full of pleasure and the experience of being alive: Betsey-Jane should read it. She might remember all her life the advice given on page 117, and be saved hundreds of pounds in lawyers' bills when she is grown up.

Let the reader turn to page 114. Here is the style in which good poetry prefers to teach, and by which it achieves more in eleven lines than a Martin Tupper in 11,000. Mr Pepler has written down only one sentence, charmingly improved by a series of most natural rhymes. It is a very nasty hit at the lawyer. He does not tell him he is not a 'gentleman,' or anything so strong as that. He pays him what might be taken for a compliment. He assumes that he does understand his own job. Then he enumerates the things he does not understand. He attaches no blame: he makes a statement only; one that the lawyer certainly will not think worth arguing about, but that his client may advisedly take to heart.

Ralph Hodgson's "Stupidity Street" argues in somewhat the same manner. It does not suggest that anyone should become vegetarian, or that it is wrong to kill birds. It names a street and gives a reason for doing so. It is an angry little poem, but impersonal.

"The Bells of Heaven," by the same author, simply chances

a hint that something might happen if something else did. It is a suggestion only, but made by one who knows what he thinks, and how to think it. Into a few lines a whole philosophy is concentrated.

Thus Pepler or Ralph Hodgson nudge people's arms and draw attention to traditional stupidities.

Walter De la Mare puts the children to sleep with "Nod," or bewitches them with the Mad Prince's Song; or he takes us to an Arabia which never existed, but is one of those countries more beautiful than any we know, and therefore we love to imagine it.

Look at that full moon on page 53, which Dick saw "one night." Here is the possible experience of man, woman, child, dog, fox, bear—or even nightingale—all concentrated into the shortest and plainest account of something that happened to Dick. He and Betsey-Jane, though quite different in kind, belong to the same world. Betsey-Jane is plainly more romantic than Dick.

But, talking of the moon, we may turn back to Mr Chesterton on page 36. Here we find something incongruous in the collection: a poem that wishes deliberately to strike a note. The donkey is a much better fellow than Mr Chesterton seems to think: he does not ask for glorification, nor would he utter that boast of the last two lines. Would a man not rather "go with the wild asses to Paradise" than have the case for the donkey pleaded before him in this obtrusive manner?

Turn back four pages and you will find :

*For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle,
And the merry love to dance.*

This, by W. B. Yeats, represents a much pleasanter type of thought. In these verses of the Irish poet we have the gaiety of a man who, knowing all about religion, can afford not to be sentimental. And here is the spirit of the book.

The happiness of those who love the earth is so different from the pleasure by proxy of those that abide it in the idea of going to some Heaven afterward. Mr Yeats' "Fiddler of Dooney" is that type of fellow who accepts the symbolism of a national religion only in so far as it may help him to enjoy the condition of being alive. And in his "Lake Isle of Innisfree" he imagines a Paradise which is of the earth only. And he takes you there by reason of his own longing.

VI

This anthology, as a whole, is romantic ; its language is simple ; its philosophy is that of everyday life, and is entirely undisturbing. It contains a large proportion of poems by authors who write more particularly for children, such as P. R. Chalmers, Rose Fyleman, Queenie Scott-Hopper, and Marion St John Webb, or of children's poems by authors who do not actually specialize in that style, such as "The Ragwort,"

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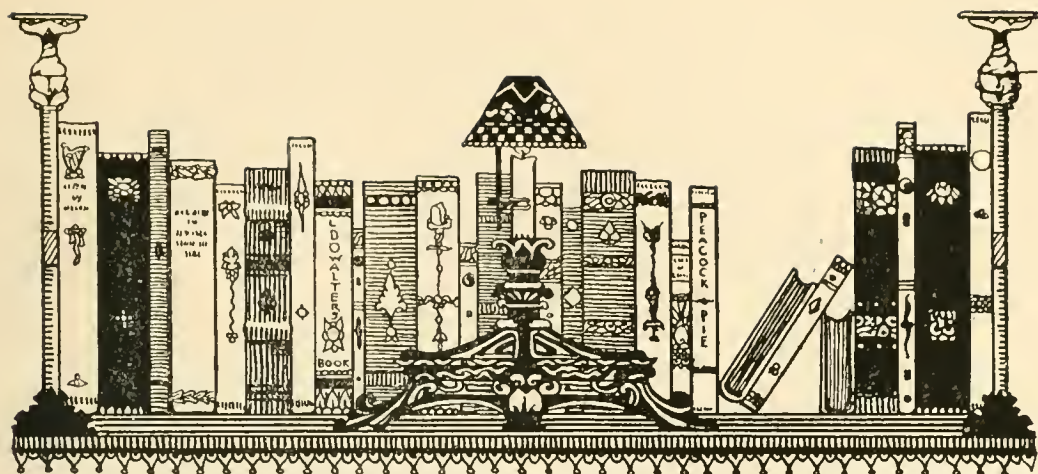
by Frances Cornford; "Cradle Song," by Sarojini Naidu; "Check," by James Stephens, and others. Two of its authors remain necessarily unmentioned here, namely, the compiler of the book and the writer of this Introduction.

Some people make it their business to pick anthologies to pieces, and they seem to enjoy themselves. "Why is this included?" they cry; "Why is that left out?"—a form of criticism nearly always beside the point. Inclusion or exclusion is in the taste and discretion of the anthologist.

This Introduction may, it is hoped, stimulate the reader of the poems which follow to think about them carefully in their relation to each other, and in their relation to English poetry as a whole. For though it has frequently been emphasized that the object of poetry (and particularly of lyrical poetry) is to give pleasure, it should nevertheless be added that intellectual pleasure cannot be gathered at random, or without certain preparation of the mind to receive it.

HAROLD MONRO





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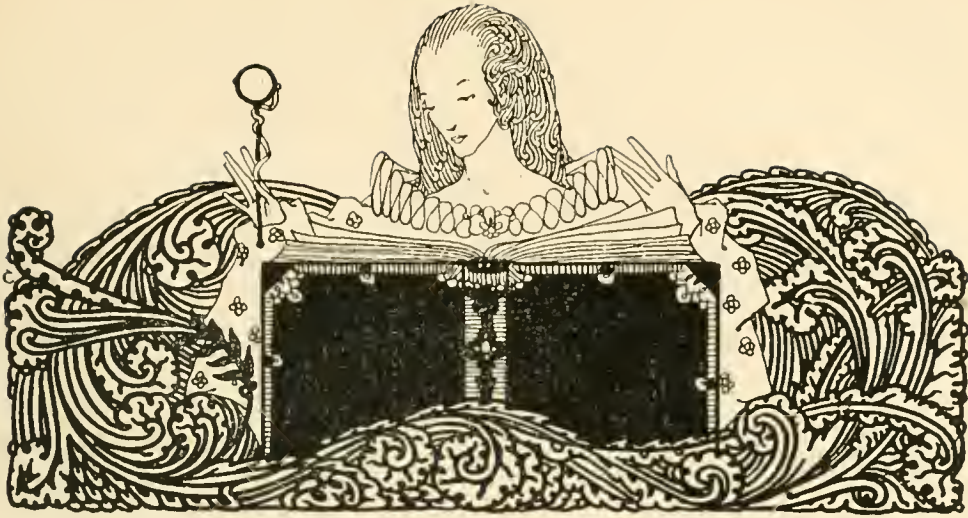
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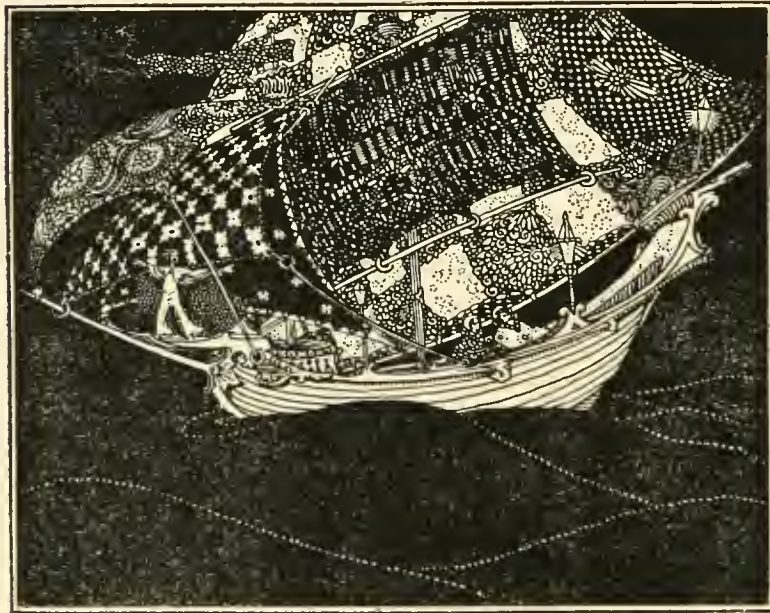


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HARRY CLARKE



"APRIL, APRIL, LAUGH THY GIRLISH LAUGHTER!"

April

APRIL, April,
Laugh thy girlish laughter ;
Then, the moment after,
Weep thy girlish tears !
April, that mine ears
Like a lover greetest,
If I tell thee, sweetest,
All my hopes and fears,
 April, April,
Laugh thy golden laughter,
But, the moment after,
Weep thy golden tears.

WILLIAM WATSON

The Fiddler of Dooney

WHEN I play on my fiddle in Dooney,
Folk dance like a wave of the sea ;
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Moharabuiee.

I passed my brother and cousin :
They read in their books of prayer ;
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.

When we come at the end of time,
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate ;

For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle,
And the merry love to dance :



“WHEN WE COME AT THE END OF TIME, TO PETER SITTING IN STATE”

And when the folk there spy me,
They will all come up to me,
With "Here is the fiddler of Dooney!"
And dance like a wave of the sea.

W. B. YEATS



The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles
made ;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the
honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes
dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where
the cricket sings ;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple
glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always, night and day,
I hear lake-water lapping with low sounds by the shore ;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements
grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

W. B. YEATS

Cradle-Song

FROM groves of spice,
O'er fields of rice,
Athwart the lotus-stream,
I bring for you,
Aglint with dew,
A little lovely dream.
Sweet, shut your eyes,
The wild fire-flies
Dance through the fairy *neem* ;¹
From the poppy-bole
For you I stole
A little lovely dream.
Dear eyes, good-night,
In golden light
The stars around you gleam ;
On you I press
With soft caress
A little lovely dream.

SAROJINI NAIDU

¹ A lilac-tree (Hindustani).

The Donkey

WHEN fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born ;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will ;
Starve, scourge, deride me : I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools ! For I also had my hour ;
One far fierce hour and sweet :
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

G. K. CHESTERTON

The Early Morning

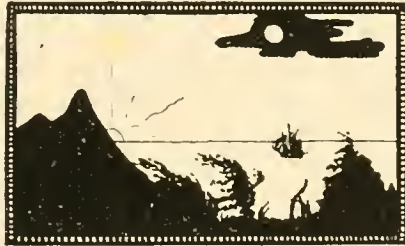
THE moon on the one hand, the dawn on the other :

The moon is my sister, the dawn is my brother.

The moon on my left and the dawn on my right.

My brother, good morning : my sister, good night.

HILAIRE BELLOC



The South Country

WHEN I am living in the Midlands
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening :
My work is left behind ;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea ;
And it's there walking in the high woods
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day :
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and grey ;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the Rocks,
And the oldest kind of song.

But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our Sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies ;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air ;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there.
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend :

And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will be there to comfort me
Or who will be my friend ?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex Weald,
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plough the field.
By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

HILAIRE BELLOC



"ALL I ASK IS A WINDY DAY WITH THE WHITE CLOUDS FLYING."

Sea Fever

I MUST go down to the seas again, to the lonely
sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer
her by ;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and
the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn
breaking.

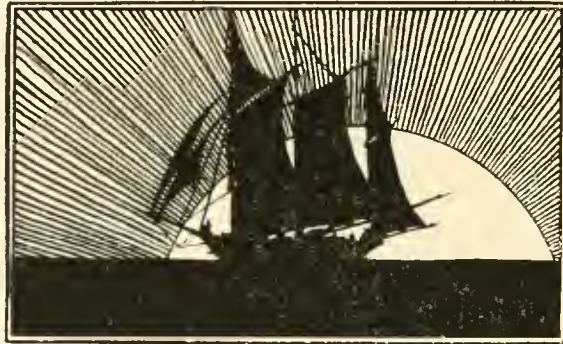
I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the
running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be
denied ;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds
flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the
sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant
gipsy life,

T H E · Y E A R ' S · A T · T H E · S P R I N G

To the gull's way and the whale's way where the
wind's like a whetted knife ;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing
fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long
trick's over.

JOHN MASEFIELD



Tewkesbury Road

IT is good to be out on the road, and going one
knows not where,
Going through meadow and village, one knows
not whither nor why ;
Through the grey light drift of the dust, in the keen
cool rush of the air,
Under the flying white clouds, and the broad blue
lift of the sky.

And to halt at the chattering brook, in the tall green
fern at the brink
Where the harebell grows, and the gorse, and the
foxgloves purple and white ;
Where the shy-eyed delicate deer come down in a
troop to drink
When the stars are mellow and large at the coming
on of the night.

O, to feel the beat of the rain, and the homely smell
of the earth,

T H E · Y E A R ' S · A T · T H E · S P R I N G

Is a tune for the blood to jig to, a joy past power
of words ;
And the blessed green comely meadows are all
a-ripple with mirth
At the noise of the lambs at play and the dear wild
cry of the birds.

JOHN MASEFIELD



The West Wind

IT'S a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds'
cries ;
I never hear the west wind but tears are in my eyes.
For it comes from the west lands, the old brown
hills,
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as tired as
mine ;
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's like
wine.
There is cool green grass there, where men may lie
at rest,
And the thrushes are in song there, fluting from the
nest.

“Will you not come home, brother? You have
been long away.
It's April, and blossom time, and white is the spray :
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is the rain,
Will you not come home, brother, home to us again ?

The young corn is green, brother, where the rabbits
run ;
It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm rain and
sun.
It's song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a man's
brain,
To hear the wild bees and see the merry spring
again.

Larks are singing in the west, brother, above the
green wheat,
So will you not come home, brother, and rest your
tired feet ?
I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep for
aching eyes,"
Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of birds'
cries.

It's the white road westwards is the road I must tread
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest for
heart and head,
To the violets and the brown brooks and the
thrushes' song
In the fine land, the west land, the land where I
belong.

JOHN MASEFIELD

A Ballad of the Captains

WHERE are now the Captains
Of the narrow ships of old—
Who with valiant souls went seeking
For the Fabled Fleece of Gold ;
In the clouded Dusk of Ages,
In the Dawn of History,
When the ringing songs of Homer
First re-echoed o'er the Sea ?

Oh, the Captains lie a-sleeping
Where great iron hulls are sweeping
Out of Suez in their pride ;
And they hear not, and they heed not,
And they know not, and they need not
In their deep graves far and wide.

Where are now the Captains
Who went blindly through the Strait,
With a tribute to Poseidon,
A libation poured to Fate ?

They were heroes giant-hearted,
That with Terrors, told and sung,
Like blindfolded lions grappled,
When the World was strange and young.

Oh, the Captains brave and daring,
With their grim old crews are faring
Where our guiding beacons gleam ;
And the homeward liners o'er them—
All the charted seas before them—
Shall not wake them as they dream.

Where are now the Captains
From bold Nelson back to Drake,
Who came drumming up the Channel,
Haling prizes in their wake ?
Where are England's fighting Captains
Who, with battle-flags unfurled,
Went a-rieving all the rieviers
O'er the waves of all the world ?

Oh, these Captains, all confiding
In the strong right hand, are biding
In the margins, on the Main ;
They are shining bright in story,
They are sleeping deep in glory,
On the silken lap of Fame.

Where are now the Captains
Who regarded not the tears
Of the captured Christian maidens
Carried, weeping, to Algiers?
Yes, the swarthy Moorish Captains,
Storming wildly 'cross the Bay,
With a dead hidalgo's daughter
As a dower for the Dey?

Oh, those cruel Captains never
Shall sweet lovers more dissever,
On their forays as they roll;
Or the mad Dons curse them vainly,
As their baffled ships, ungainly,
Heel them, jeering, to the Mole.

Where are now the Captains
Of those racing, roaring days,
Who of knowledge and of courage,
Drove the clippers on their ways—
To the furthest ounce of pressure,
To the latest stitch of sail,
'Carried on' before the tempest
Till the waters lapped the rail?

Oh, the merry, manly skippers
Of the traders and the clippers,
 They are sleeping East and West,
And the brave blue seas shall hold them,
And the oceans five enfold them
 In the havens where they rest.

Where are now the Captains
Of the gallant days ago?
They are biding in their places,
 And the Great Deep bears no traces
Of their good ships passed and gone.
 They are biding in their places,
Where the light of God's own grace is,
 And the Great Deep thunders on.

Yea, with never port to steer for,
And with never storm to fear for,
 They are waiting wan and white,
And they hear no more the calling
Of the watches, or the falling
 Of the sea rain in the night.

E. J. BRADY



"DEMI SILKED, DARK-HAIRED MUSICIANS"

Arabia

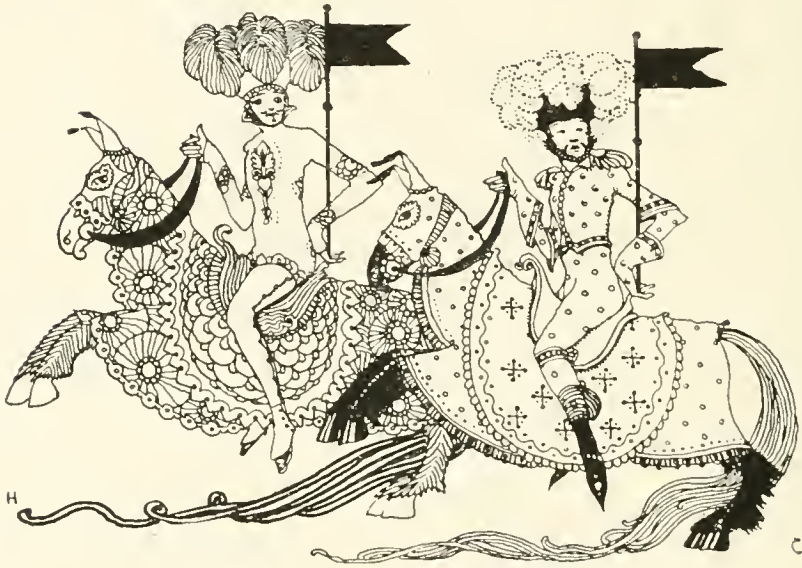
FAR are the shades of Arabia,
Where the Princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
Under the ghost of the moon ;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
In my heart, when out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gliding streams ;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the demi-silked, dark-haired Musicians
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests ;
No beauty on earth I see
But shadowed with that dream recalls
Her loveliness to me :

Still eyes look coldly upon me,
Cold voices whisper and say—
“He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,
They have stolen his wits away.”

WALTER DE LA MARE



Full Moon

ONE night as Dick lay half asleep,
 Into his drowsy eyes
A great still light began to creep
 From out the silent skies.
It was the lovely moon's, for when
 He raised his dreamy head,
Her rays of silver filled the pane
 And streamed across his bed.
So, for awhile, each gazed at each—
 Dick and the solemn moon—
Till, climbing slowly on her way,
 She vanished, and was gone.

WALTER DE LA MARE

Nod

SOFTLY along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew,
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

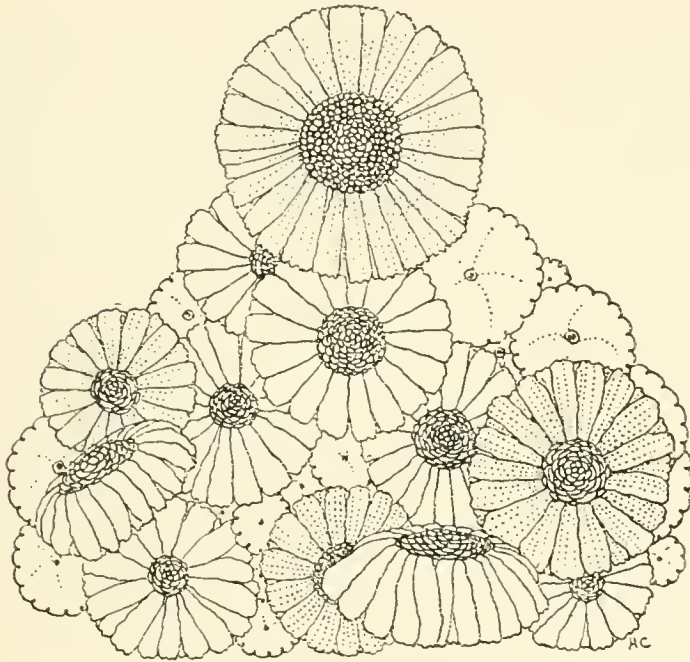
His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the sun's last beam leans low
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

The hedge is quick and green with briar,
From their sand the conies creep ;
And all the birds that fly in heaven
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses,
Yet, when night's shadows fall,
His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon,
Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,
The waters of no-more-pain,
His ram's bell rings 'neath an arch of stars,
" Rest, rest, and rest again."

WALTER DE LA MARE



The Song of the Mad Prince

WHO said, "Peacock Pie" ?
The old King to the sparrow :
Who said, "Crops are ripe" ?
Rust to the harrow :
Who said, "Where sleeps she now ?
Where rests she now her head,
Bathed in eve's loveliness" ?
That's what I said.

Who said, "Ay, mum's the word" ?
Sexton to willow :
Who said, "Green dusk for dreams,
Moss for a pillow" ?
Who said, "All Time's delight
Hath she for narrow bed ;
Life's troubled bubble broken" ?
That's what I said.

WALTER DE LA MARE

A Dead Harvest

IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

A LONG the graceless grass of town
They rake the rows of red and brown,—
Dead leaves, unlike the rows of hay
Delicate, touched with gold and grey,
Raked long ago and far away.

A narrow silence in the park,
Between the lights a narrow dark.
One street rolls on the north ; and one,
Muffled, upon the south doth run ;
Amid the mist the work is done.

A futile crop ! for it the fire
Smoulders, and, for a stack, a pyre.
So go the town's lives on the breeze,
Even as the sheddings of the trees ;
Bosom nor barn is filled with these.

ALICE MEYNELL

November Blue

The golden tint of the electric lights seems to give a complementary colour to the air in the early evening.

Essay on London

O HEAVENLY colour, London town
Has blurred it from her skies ;
And, hooded in an earthly brown,
Unheaven'd the city lies.
No longer standard-like this hue
Above the broad road flies ;
Nor does the narrow street the blue
Wear, slender pennon-wise.

But when the gold and silver lamps
Colour the London dew,
And, misted by the winter damps,
The shops shine bright anew—
Blue comes to earth, it walks the street,
It dyes the wide air through ;
A mimic sky about their feet,
The throng go crowned with blue.

ALICE MEYNELL

The Shepherdess

SHE walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them
white ;
She guards them from the steep ;
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night
The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right ;
She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

ALICE MEYNELL

The Dead

BLOW out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of
old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhop'd serene,
That men call age; and those who would have
been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our
dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.

RUPERT BROOKE

The Great Lover

I HAVE been so great a lover : filled my days
So proudly with the splendour of Love's praise,
The pain, the calm, and the astonishment,
Desire illimitable, and still content,
And all dear names men use, to cheat despair,
For the perplexed and viewless streams that
bear
Our hearts at random down the dark of life.
Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so far,
My night shall be remembered for a star
That outshone all the suns of all men's days.
Shall I not crown them with immortal praise
Whom I have loved, who have given me, dared
with me
High secrets, and in darkness knelt to see
The inenarrable godhead of delight?
Love is a flame ;—we have beaconed the world's
night.
A city :—and we have built it, these and I.
An emperor :—we have taught the world to die.

So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,
And the high cause of Love's magnificence,
And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,
And set them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and streaming. . . .
These I have loved :

White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,
Ringed with blue lines ; and feathery, faery dust ;
Wet roofs, beneath the lamp-light ; the strong crust
Of friendly bread ; and many-tasting food ;
Rainbows ; and the blue bitter smoke of wood ;
And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers ;
And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny
hours,

Dreaming of moths that drink them under the moon ;
Then, the cool kindness of sheets, that soon
Smooth away trouble ; and the rough male kiss
Of blankets ; grainy wood ; live hair that is
Shining and free ; blue-massing clouds ; the keen
Unpassioned beauty of a great machine ;
The benison of hot water ; furs to touch ;
The good smell of old clothes ; and other such—
The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,
Hair's fragrance, and the musty reek that lingers

About dead leaves and last year's ferns. . . .

Dear names,

And thousand other throng to me! Royal flames;
Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring;
Holes in the ground; and voices that do sing;
Voices in laughter, too; and body's pain,
Soon turned to peace; and the deep-panting train;
Firm sands; the little dulling edge of foam
That browns and dwindles as the wave goes home;
And washen stones, gay for an hour; the cold
Graveness of iron; moist black earthen mould;
Sleep; and high places; footprints in the dew;
And oaks; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-
new;—

And new-peeled sticks; and shining pools on
grass;—

All these have been my loves. And these shall
pass.

Whatever passes not, in the great hour,
Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power
To hold them with me through the gate of Death.
They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor breath,
Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's trust
And sacramented covenant to the dust.

—Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall wake,
And give what's left of love again, and make

New friends, now strangers. . . .

But the best I've known,
Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is
blown

About the winds of the world, and fades from
brains

Of living men, and dies.

Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again
This one last gift I give: that after men
Shall know, and later lovers, far-removed,
Praise you, "All these were lovely"; say, "He
loved."

RUPERT BROOKE



“MOIST BLACK EARTHEN MOULD ; . . . AND HIGH PLACES ; FOOTPRINTS IN THE DEW”

The Soldier

IF I should die, think only this of me :
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to
roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England
given ;
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;
And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

RUPERT BROOKE

By the Statue of King Charles at Charing Cross

SOMBRE and rich, the skies ;
Great glooms, and starry plains.
Gently the night wind sighs ;
Else a vast silence reigns.

The splendid silence clings
Around me : and around
The saddest of all kings
Crowned, and again discrowned.

Comely and calm, he rides
Hard by his own Whitehall :
Only the night wind glides :
No crowds, nor rebels, brawl.

Gone, too, his Court ; and yet,
The stars his courtiers are :
Stars in their stations set ;
And every wandering star.

Alone he rides, alone,
The fair and fatal king :
Dark night is all his own,
That strange and solemn thing.

Which are more full of fate :
The stars ; or those sad eyes ?
Which are more still and great :
Those brows ; or the dark skies ?

Although his whole heart yearn
In passionate tragedy :
Never was face so stern
With sweet austerity.

Vanquished in life, his death
By beauty made amends :
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life and hapless ? Nay :
Through death, life grew sublime.
Speak after sentence ? Yea :
And to the end of time.

Armoured he rides, his head
Bare to the stars of doom :

He triumphs now, the dead,
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,
Vexed in the world's employ :
His soul was of the saints ;
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe !
Men hunger for thy grace :
And through the night I go,
Loving thy mournful face.

Yet when the city sleeps ;
When all the cries are still :
The stars and heavenly deeps
Work out a perfect will.

LIONEL JOHNSON

Check

THE night was creeping on the ground ;
She crept and did not make a sound
Until she reached the tree, and then
She covered it, and stole again
Along the grass beside the wall.

I heard the rustle of her shawl
As she threw blackness everywhere
Upon the sky and ground and air,
And in the room where I was hid :
But no matter what she did
To everything that was without,
She could not put my candle out.

So I stared at the night, and she
Stared back solemnly at me.

JAMES STEPHENS

When the Leaves Fall

WHEN the leaves fall off the trees
Everybody walks on them :
Once they had a time of ease
High above, and every breeze
Used to stay and talk to them.

Then they were so debonair
As they fluttered up and down ;
Dancing in the sunny air,
Dancing without knowing there
Was a gutter in the town.

Now they have no place at all !
All the home that they can find
Is a gutter by a wall,
And the wind that waits their fall
Is an apache of a wind.

JAMES STEPHENS

In France

THE poplars in the fields of France
Are golden ladies come to dance ;
But yet to see them there is none
But I and the September sun.

The girl who in their shadow sits
Can only see the sock she knits ;
Her dog is watching all the day
That not a cow shall go astray.

The leisurely contented cows
Can only see the earth they browse ;
Their piebald bodies through the grass
With busy, munching noses pass.

Alone the sun and I behold
Processions crowned with shining gold—
The poplars in the fields of France,
Like glorious ladies come to dance.

FRANCES CORNFORD

The Ragwort

THE thistles on the sandy flats
Are courtiers with crimson hats ;
The ragworts, growing up so straight,
Are emperors who stand in state,
And march about, so proud and bold,
In crowns of fairy-story gold.

The people passing home at night
Rejoice to see the shining sight,
They quite forget the sands and sea
Which are as grey as grey can be,
Nor ever heed the gulls who cry
Like peevish children in the sky.

FRANCES CORNFORD

Lone Dog

I'M a lean dog, a keen dog, a wild dog, and lone ;
I'm a rough dog, a tough dog, hunting on my own ;
I'm a bad dog, a mad dog, teasing silly sheep ;
I love to sit and bay the moon, to keep fat souls
from sleep.

I'll never be a lap dog, licking dirty feet,
A sleek dog, a meek dog, cringing for my meat,
Not for me the fireside, the well-filled plate,
But shut door, and sharp stone, and cuff, and kick,
and hate.

Not for me the other dogs, running by my side,
Some have run a short while, but none of them
would bide.

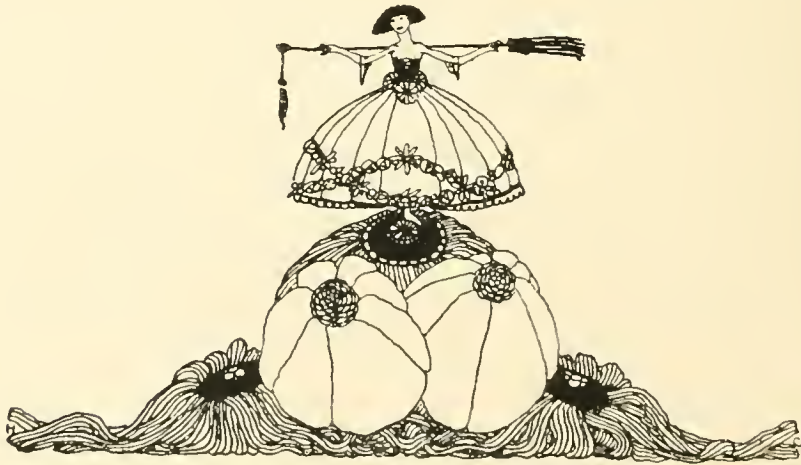
O mine is still the lone trail, the hard trail, the best,
Wide wind, and wild stars, and the hunger of the
quest !

IRENE R. McLEOD

If I had a Broomstick

IF I had a broomstick, and knew how to ride it,
I'd fly through the windows when Jane goes to tea,
And over the tops of the chimneys I'd guide it,
To lands where no children are cripples like me ;
I'd run on the rocks with the crabs and the sea,
Where soft red anemones close when you touch ;
If I had a broomstick, and knew how to ride it,
If I had a broomstick—instead of a crutch !

PATRICK R. CHALMERS



Roundabouts and Swings

IT was early last September nigh to Framlin'am-
on-Sea,
An' 'twas Fair-day come to-morrow, an' the time
was after tea,
An' I met a painted caravan adown a dusty
lane,
A Pharaoh with his waggons comin' jolt an' creak
an' strain ;
A cheery cove an' sunburnt, bold o' eye and
wrinkled up,
An' beside him on the splashboard sat a brindled
tarrier pup,
An' a lurcher wise as Solomon an' lean as fiddle-
strings
Was joggin' in the dust along 'is roundabouts and
swings.

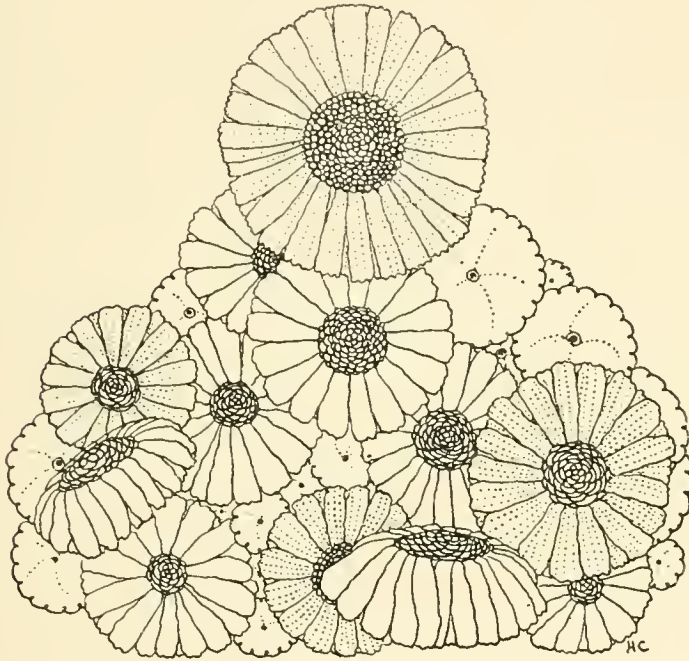
“Goo'-day,” said 'e ; “Goo'-day,” said I ; “an' 'ow
d'you find things go,
An' what's the chance o' millions when you runs a
travellin' show ?”

“ I find,” said 'e, “ things very much as 'ow I've
always found,
For mostly they goes up and down or else goes
round and round.”
Said 'e, “ The job's the very spit o' what it always
were,
It's bread and bacon mostly when the dog don't
catch a 'are ;
But lookin' at it broad, an' while it ain't no mer-
chant king's,
What's lost upon the roundabouts we pulls up on
the swings !

“ Goo' luck,” said 'e ; “ Goo' luck,” said I ; “ you've
put it past a doubt ;
An' keep that lurcher on the road, the gamekeepers
is out ” ;
'E thumped upon the footboard an' 'e lumbered on
again
To meet a gold-dust sunset down the owl-light in
the lane ;
An' the moon she climbed the 'azels, while a night-
jar seemed to spin
That Pharaoh's wisdom o'er again, 'is sooth of
lose-and-win ;

For “up an’ down an’ round,” said ‘e, “goes all
appointed things,
An’ losses on the roundabouts means profits on
the swings!”

PATRICK R. CHALMERS



A Town Window

BEYOND my window in the night
Is but a drab inglorious street,
Yet there the frost and clean starlight
As over Warwick woods are sweet.

Under the grey drift of the town
The crocus works among the mould
As eagerly as those that crown
The Warwick spring in flame and gold.

And when the tramway down the hill
Across the cobbles moans and rings,
There is about my window-sill
The tumult of a thousand wings.

JOHN DRINKWATER

Brumana

O H shall I never never be home again?
Meadows of England shining in the rain
Spread wide your daisied lawns: your ramparts
 green
With briar fortify, with blossom screen
Till my far morning—and O streams that slow
And pure and deep through plains and playlands go,
For me your love and all your kingcups store,
And—dark militia of the southern shore,
Old fragrant friends—preserve me the last lines
Of that long saga which you sung me, pines,
When, lonely boy, beneath the chosen tree
I listened, with my eyes upon the sea.

[*Continued*]

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

The Dying Patriot

DAY breaks on England down the Kentish hills,
Singing in the silence of the meadow-footing
rills,
Day of my dreams, O day!
I saw them march from Dover, long ago,
With a silver cross before them, singing low,
Monks of Rome from their home where the blue
seas break in foam,
Augustine with his feet of snow.

Noon strikes on England, noon on Oxford town,
—Beauty she was statue cold—there's blood upon
her gown:
Noon of my dreams, O noon!
Proud and godly kings had built her, long
ago,
With her towers and tombs and statues all
arow,
With her fair and floral air and the love that lingers
there,
And the streets where the great men go.

Evening on the olden, the golden sea of Wales,
When the first star shivers and the last wave pales :
O evening dreams !

There's a house that Britons walked in, long ago,
Where now the springs of ocean fall and flow,
And the dead robed in red and sea-lilies overhead
Sway when the long winds blow.

Sleep not, my country : though night is here, afar
Your children of the morning are clamorous for war :
Fire in the night, O dreams !

Though she send you as she sent you, long ago,
South to desert, east to ocean, west to snow,
West of these out to seas colder than the Hebrides
I must go
Where the fleet of stars is anchored and the young
Star-captains glow.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

November Eves

NOVEMBER Evenings! Damp and still
They used to cloak Leckhampton hill,
And lie down close on the grey plain,
And dim the dripping window-pane,
And send queer winds like Harlequins
That seized our elms for violins
And struck a note so sharp and low
Even a child could feel the woe.

Now fire chased shadow round the room ;
Tables and chairs grew vast in gloom :
We crept about like mice, while Nurse
Sat mending, solemn as a hearse,
And even our unlearned eyes
Half closed with choking memories.

Is it the mist or the dead leaves,
Or the dead men— November eves ?

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

Star-Talk

ARE you awake, Gemelli,
This frosty night ?”
“ We'll be awake till reveillé,
Which is Sunrise,” say the Gemelli,
“ It's no good trying to go to sleep :
If there's wine to be got we'll drink it deep,
But rest is hopeless to-night,
But rest is hopeless to-night.”

“ Are you cold too, poor Pleiads,
This frosty night ? ”
“ Yes, and so are the Hyads :
See us cuddle and hug,” say the Pleiads,
“ All six in a ring : it keeps us warm :
We huddle together like birds in a storm :
It's bitter weather to-night,
It's bitter weather to-night.”

“ What do you hunt, Orion,
This starry night ? ”
“ The Ram, the Bull and the Lion,
And the Great Bear,” says Orion,

“ With my starry quiver and beautiful belt
I am trying to find a good thick pelt
 To warm my shoulders to-night,
 To warm my shoulders to-night.”

“ Did you hear that, Great She-bear,
 This frosty night ? ”

“ Yes, he's talking of stripping *me* bare,
Of my own big fur,” says the She-bear.

“ I'm afraid of the man and his terrible arrow :
The thought of it chills my bones to the marrow,
 And the frost so cruel to-night !
 And the frost so cruel to-night ! ”

“ How is your trade, Aquarius,
 This frosty night ? ”

“ Complaints is many and various,
And my feet are cold,” says Aquarius,

“ There's Venus objects to Dolphin-scales,
And Mars to Crab-spawn found in my pails,
 And the pump has frozen to-night,
 And the pump has frozen to-night.”

ROBERT GRAVES

The Kingfisher

IT was the Rainbow gave thee birth,
And left thee all her lovely hues ;
And, as her mother's name was Tears,
So runs it in thy blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep.

Go you and, with such glorious hues,
Live with proud Peacocks in green parks ;
On lawns as smooth as shining glass,
Let every feather show its mark ;
Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.

Nay, lovely Bird, thou art not vain ;
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind ;
I also love a quiet place
That's green, away from all mankind ;
A lonely pool, and let a tree
Sigh with her bosom over me.

WILLIAM H. DAVIES

Sheep

WHEN I was once in Baltimore
A man came up to me and cried,
“Come, I have eighteen hundred sheep,
And we will sail on Tuesday’s tide.

“If you will sail with me, young man,
I’ll pay you fifty shillings down ;
These eighteen hundred sheep I take
From Baltimore to Glasgow town.”

He paid me fifty shillings down,
I sailed with eighteen hundred sheep ;
We soon had cleared the harbour’s mouth,
We soon were in the salt sea deep.

The first night we were out at sea
Those sheep were quiet in their mind ;
The second night they cried with fear—
They smelt no pastures in the wind.

They sniffed, poor things, for their green fields,
They cried so loud I could not sleep :
For fifty thousand shillings down
I would not sail again with sheep.

WILLIAM H. DAVIES



Home Thoughts in Laventie

GREEN gardens in Laventie !
Soldiers only know the street
Where the mud is churned and
splashed about
By battle-wending feet ;
And yet beside one stricken house there is a glimpse
of grass,
Look for it when you pass.

Beyond the Church whose pitted spire
Seems balanced on a strand
Of swaying stone and tottering brick
Two roofless ruins stand,
And here behind the wreckage where the back-wall
should have been
We found a garden green.

The grass was never trodden on,
The little path of gravel

Was overgrown with celandine,
No other folk did travel
Along its weedy surface, but the nimble-footed
mouse
Running from house to house.

So all among the vivid blades
Of soft and tender grass
We lay, nor heard the limber wheels
That pass and ever pass,
In noisy continuity, until their stony rattle
Seems in itself a battle.

At length we rose up from our ease
Of tranquil happy mind,
And searched the garden's little length
A fresh pleasance to find ;
And there, some yellow daffodils and jasmine hanging
high
Did rest the tired eye.

The fairest and most fragrant
Of the many sweets we found,
Was a little bush of Daphne flower
Upon a grassy mound,

And so thick were the blossoms set, and so divine
the scent,
That we were well content.

Hungry for Spring I bent my head,
The perfume fanned my face,
And all my soul was dancing
In that lovely little place,
Dancing with a measured step from wrecked and
shattered towns
Away . . . upon the Downs.

I saw green banks of daffodil,
Slim poplars in the breeze,
Great tan-brown hares in gusty March
A-courting on the leas ;
And meadows with their glittering streams, and silver
scurrying dace,
Home—what a perfect place !

EDWARD WYNDHAM TENNANT

Into Battle

THE naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze ;
And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these ;
And he is dead who will not fight ;
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth ;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth ;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-star and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend,
They gently speak in the windy weather ;
They guide to valley and ridges' end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, " Brother, brother,
If this be the last song you shall sing
Sing well, for you may not sing another ;
Brother, sing."

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers ;
O patient eyes, courageous hearts !

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only Joy of Battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind—

Though joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still,
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings ;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

JULIAN GRENFELL



Overheard on a Saltmarsh

NYMPH, nymph, what are your beads?
Green glass, goblin. Why do you stare
at them?
Give them me.

No.

Give them me. Give them me.

No.

Then I will howl all night in the reeds,
Lie in the mud and howl for them.

Goblin, why do you love them so?

They are better than stars or water,
Better than voices of winds that sing,
Better than any man's fair daughter,
Your green glass beads on a silver ring.

Hush, I stole them out of the moon.

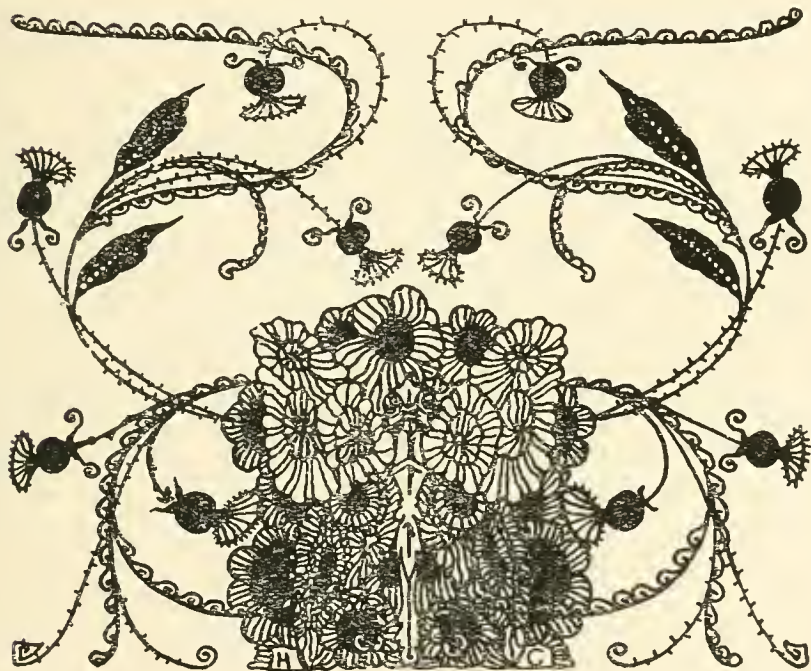
Give me your beads. I desire them.

No.

I will howl in a deep lagoon
For your green glass beads, I love them so.
Give them me. Give them.

No.

HAROLD MONRO

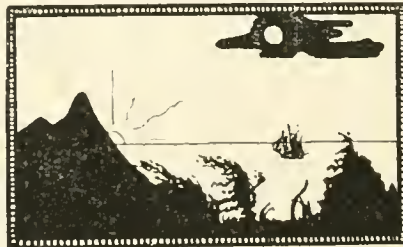


A Flower is Looking through the Ground

A FLOWER is looking through the ground,
Blinking at the April weather ;
Now a child has seen the flower :
Now they go and play together.

Now it seems the flower will speak,
And will call the child its brother—
But, oh strange forgetfulness !—
They don't recognize each other.

HAROLD MONRO



Man Carrying Bale

THE tough hand closes gently on the load ;
 Out of the mind, a voice
Calls 'Lift!' and the arms, remembering well
 their work,
 Lengthen and pause for help.
Then a slow ripple flows from head to foot
 While all the muscles call to one another :
 'Lift!' and the bulging bale
 Floats like a butterfly in June.

So moved the earliest carrier of bales,
 And the same watchful sun
Glowed through his body feeding it with light.
 So will the last one move,
And halt, and dip his head, and lay his load
Down, and the muscles will relax and tremble.
 Earth, you designed your man
 Beautiful both in labour and repose.

HAROLD MONRO

The Cherry Trees

THE cherry trees bend over and are shedding
On the old road where all that passed are dead,
Their petals, strewing the grass as for a
wedding
This early May morn when there is none to wed.

EDWARD THOMAS

The Bells of Heaven

'**T**WOULD ring the bells of Heaven
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses
And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers
For tamed and shabby tigers
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares.

RALPH HODGSON

The Song of Honour

I CLIMBED a hill as light fell short,
And rooks came home in scramble sort,
And filled the trees and flapped and fought
And sang themselves to sleep ;
An owl from nowhere with no sound
Swung by and soon was nowhere found,
I heard him calling half-way round,
Holloing loud and deep ;
A pair of stars, faint pins of light,
Then many a star, sailed into sight,
And all the stars, the flower of night,
Were round me at a leap ;
To tell how still the valleys lay
I heard a watch-dog miles away,
And bells of distant sheep.
I heard no more of bird or bell,
The mastiff in a slumber fell,
I stared into the sky,
As wondering men have always done
Since beauty and the stars were one,
Though none so hard as I.

It seemed, so still the valleys were,
As if the whole world knelt at prayer,
 Save me and me alone ;
So pure and wide that silence was
I feared to bend a blade of grass,
 And there I stood like stone.

[*Continued*]

RALPH HODGSON

Stupidity Street

I SAW with open eyes
Singing birds sweet
Sold in the shops
For the people to eat,
Sold in the shops of
Stupidity Street.

I saw in vision
The worm in the wheat,
And in the shops nothing
For people to eat ;
Nothing for sale in
Stupidity Street.

RALPH HODGSON

To the Coming Spring

O PUNCTUAL Spring !
We had forgotten in this winter town
The days of Summer and the long, long eves.
But now you come on airy wing,
With busy fingers spilling baby-leaves
On all the bushes, and a faint green down
On ancient trees, and everywhere
Your warm breath soft with kisses
Stirs the wintry air,
And waking us to unimagined blisses.
Your lightest footprints in the grass
Are marked by painted crocus-flowers
And heavy-headed daffodils,
While little trees blush faintly as you pass.
The morning and the night
You bathe with heavenly showers,
And scatter scentless violets on the rounded
 hills,
Drop beneath leafless woods pale primrose posies.
With magic key, in the new evening light,
You are unlocking buds that keep the roses ;

T H E · Y E A R ' S · A T · T H E · S P R I N G

The purple lilac soon will blow above the wall
And bended boughs in orchards whitely bloom—
We had forgotten in the Winter's gloom . . .
Soon we shall hear the cuckoo call!

MARGARET MACKENZIE

Alms in Autumn

SPINDLE-WOOD, spindle-wood, will you
lend me, pray,
A little flaming lantern to guide me on my
way?

The fairies all have vanished from the meadow and
the glen,

And I would fain go seeking till I find them once
again.

Lend me now a lantern that I may bear a light
To find the hidden pathway in the darkness of the
night.

Ash-tree, ash-tree, throw me, if you please,
Throw me down a slender branch of russet-gold
keys.

I fear the gates of Fairyland may all be shut so fast
That nothing but your magic keys will ever take
me past.

I'll tie them to my girdle, and as I go along
My heart will find a comfort in the tinkle of their
song.

Holly-bush, holly-bush, help me in my task,
A pocketful of berries is all the alms I ask :
A pocketful of berries to thread in golden strands
(I would not go a-visiting with nothing in my
hands).
So fine will be the rosy chains, so gay, so glossy
bright,
They'll set the realms of Fairyland all dancing with
delight.

ROSE FYLEMAN

I Don't Like Beetles

I DON'T like beetles, tho' I'm sure they're very
good,
I don't like porridge, tho' my Nanna says I
should ;
I don't like the cistern in the attic where I play,
And the funny noise the bath makes when the
water runs away.

I don't like the feeling when my gloves are made
of silk,
And that dreadful slimy skinny stuff on top of hot
milk ;
I don't like tigers, not even in a book,
And, I know it's very naughty, but I don't like
Cook !

ROSE FYLEMAN

Wishes

I WISH I liked rice pudding,
I wish I were a twin,
I wish some day a real live fairy
Would just come walking in.

I wish when I'm at table
My feet would touch the floor,
I wish our pipes would burst next winter,
Just like they did next door.

I wish that I could whistle
Real proper grown-up tunes,
I wish they'd let me sweep the chimneys
On rainy afternoons.

I've got such heaps of wishes,
I've only said a few ;
I wish that I could wake some morning
And find they'd all come true !

ROSE FYLEMAN

Very Nearly !

I NEVER *quite* saw fairy-folk
A-dancing in the glade,
Where, just beyond the hollow oak,
Their broad green rings are laid :
But, while behind that oak I hid,
One day I very nearly did !

I never *quite* saw mermaids rise
Above the twilight sea,
When sands, left wet, 'neath sunset skies,
Are blushing rosily :
But—all alone, those rocks amid—
One night I very nearly did !

I never *quite* saw Goblin Grim
Who haunts our lumber room
And pops his head above the rim
Of that oak chest's deep gloom :
But once—when Mother raised the lid—
I very, very nearly did !

QUEENIE SCOTT-HOPPER

What the Thrush Says

COME and see! Come and see!"
The Thrush pipes out of the hawthorn-tree :
And I and Dicky on tiptoe go
To see what treasures he wants to show.
His call is clear as a call can be—
And "Come and see!" he says :
"Come and see!"

"Come and see! Come and see!"
His house is there in the hawthorn-tree :
The neatest house that ever you saw,
Built all of mosses and twigs and straw :
The folk who built were his wife and he—
And "Come and see!" he says :
"Come and see!"

"Come and see! Come and see!"
Within this house there are treasures three :
So warm and snug in its curve they lie—
Like three bright bits out of Spring's blue sky.

We would not hurt them, he knows ; not we !
So “ Come and see ! ” he says :
“ Come and see ! ”

“ Come and see ! Come and see ! ”
No thrush was ever so proud as he !
His bright-eyed lady has left those eggs
For just five minutes to stretch her legs.
He’s keeping guard in the hawthorn-tree,
And “ Come and see ! ” he says :
“ Come and see ! ”

“ Come and see ! Come and see ! ”
He has no fear of the boys and me.
He came and shared in our meals, you know,
In hungry times of the frost and snow.
So now we share in his Secret Tree
Where “ Come and see ! ” he says :
“ Come and see ! ”

QUEENIE SCOTT-HOPPER

The Sunset Garden

I CAN see from the window a little brown house,
And the garden goes up to the top of the hill.
And the sun comes each day,
And slips down away
At the end of the garden an' sleeps there . . . until
The daylight comes climbing up over the hill.

I do wish I lived in the little brown house,
Then at night I'd go out to the garden, an' creep
Up . . . up . . . then I'd stop,
An' lean over the top,
At the end of the garden, an' so I could peep,
And see what the sun looks like when it's asleep.

MARION ST JOHN WEBB

Sweet as the Breath of the Whin

SWEET as the breath of the whin
Is the thought of my love—
Sweet as the breath of the whin
In the noonday sun—
Sweet as the breath of the whin
In the sun after rain.

Glad as the gold of the whin
Is the thought of my love—
Glad as the gold of the whin
Since wandering's done—
Glad as the gold of the whin
Is my heart, home again.

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON

The Law the Lawyers Know About

THE law the lawyers know about
Is property and land ;
But why the leaves are on the trees,
And why the winds disturb the seas,
Why honey is the food of bees,
Why horses have such tender knees,
Why winters come and rivers freeze,
Why Faith is more than what one sees,
And Hope survives the worst disease,
And Charity is more than these,
They do not understand.

H. D. C. PEPLER

All is Spirit and Part of Me

A GREATER lover none can be,
And all is spirit and part of me.
I am sway of the rolling hills,
And breath from the great wide plains ;
I am born of a thousand storms,
And grey with the rushing rains ;
I have stood with the age-long rocks,
And flowered with the meadow sweet ;
I have fought with the wind-worn firs,
And bent with the ripening wheat ;
I have watched with the solemn clouds,
And dreamt with the moorland pools ;
I have raced with the water's whirl,
And lain where their anger cools ;
I have hovered as strong-winged bird,
And swooped as I saw my prey ;
I have risen with cold grey dawn,
And flamed in the dying day ;
For all is spirit and part of me,
And greater lover none can be.

L. D'O. WALTERS

Street Lanterns

COUNTRY roads are yellow and brown.
We mend the roads in London Town.
Never a hansom dare come nigh,
Never a cart goes rolling by.

An unwonted silence steals
In between the turning wheels.

Quickly ends the autumn day,
And the workman goes his way,

Leaving, midst the traffic rude,
One small isle of solitude,

Lit, throughout the lengthy night,
By the little lantern's light.

Jewels of the dark have we,
Brighter than the rustic's be.

Over the dull earth are thrown
Topaz, and the ruby stone.

MARY E. COLERIDGE

To Betsey-Jane, on her
Desiring to go Incon-
tinently to Heaven

MY Betsey-Jane, it would not do,
For what would Heaven make of you,
A little, honey-loving bear,
Among the Blessèd Babies there?

Nor do you dwell with us in vain
Who tumble and get up again
And try, with bruised knees, to smile—
Sweet, you are blessèd all the while

And we in you: so wait, they'll come
To take your hand and fetch you home,
In Heavenly leaves to play at tents
With all the Holy Innocents.

HELEN PARRY EDEN

The Bridge

HERE, with one leap,
The bridge that spans the cutting; on its
back
The load
Of the main-road,
And under it the railway-track.

Into the plains they sweep,
Into the solitary plains asleep,
The flowing lines, the parallel lines of steel—
Fringed with their narrow grass,
Into the plains they pass,
The flowing lines, like arms of mute appeal.

A cry
Prolonged across the earth—a call
To the remote horizons and the sky;
The whole east rushes down them with its light,
And the whole west receives them, with its pall
Of stars and night—
The flowing lines, the parallel lines of steel.

And with the fall
Of darkness, see! the red,
Bright anger of the signal, where it flares
Like a huge eye that stares
On some hid danger in the dark ahead.
A twang of wire—unseen
The signal drops; and now, instead
Of a red eye, a green.

Out of the silence grows
An iron thunder—grows, and roars, and sweeps,
Menacing! The plain
Suddenly leaps,
Startled, from its repose—
Alert and listening. Now, from the gloom
Of the soft distance, loom
Three lights and, over them, a brush
Of tawny flame and flying spark—
Three pointed lights that rush,
Monstrous, upon the cringing dark.

And nearer, nearer rolls the sound,
Louder the throb and roar of wheels,
The shout of speed, the shriek of steam;
The sloping bank,
Cut into flashing squares, gives back the clank

And grind of metal, while the ground
Shudders and the bridge reels—
As, with a scream,
The train,
A rage of smoke, a laugh of fire,
A lighted anguish of desire,
A dream
Of gold and iron, of sound and flight,
Tumultuous roars across the night.

The train roars past—and, with a cry,
Drowned in a flying howl of wind,
Half-stifled in the smoke and blind,
The plain,
Shaken, exultant, unconfined,
Rises, flows on, and follows, and sweeps by,
Shrieking, to lose itself in distance and the sky.

J. REDWOOD ANDERSON

February

THE robin on my lawn
He was the first to tell
How, in the frozen dawn,
This miracle befell,
Waking the meadows white
With hoar, the iron road
Agleam with splintered light,
And ice where water flowed :
Till, when the low sun drank
Those milky mists that cloak
Hanger and hollied bank,
The winter world awoke
To hear the feeble bleat
Of lambs on downland farms :
A blackbird whistled sweet ;
Old beeches moved their arms
Into a mellow haze
Aerial, newly-born :
And I, alone, agaze,
Stood waiting for the thorn

To break in blossom white,
Or burst in a green flame. . . .
So, in a single night,
Fair February came,
Bidding my lips to sing
Or whisper their surprise,
With all the joy of spring
And morning in her eyes.

FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG

Sea-Foam

A FLECK of foam on the shining sand,
Left by the ebbing sea,
But richer than man may understand
In magic and mystery—
Transient bubbles rainbow-bright,
Myriad-hued and strange,
Tremble and throb in the noonday light,
Flower and flush and change.

A million tides have come and gone,
Great gales of autumn and spring,
A million summoning moons have shone
To bring to birth this thing—
A foam-fleck left on the ribbed wet sand
By the wave of an outgoing sea,
With all the colour of Faeryland,
Wonder and mystery.

TERESA HOOLEY

A Petition

ALL that a man might ask, thou hast given
me, England,
Birth-right and happy childhood's long
heart's-ease,
And love whose range is deep beyond all sounding
And wider than all seas.

A heart to front the world and find God in it,
Eyes blind enow, but not too blind to see
The lovely things behind the dross and
darkness,
And lovelier things to be.

And friends whose loyalty time nor death shall
weaken,
And quenchless hope and laughter's golden
store ;
All that a man might ask thou hast given me,
England,
Yet grant thou one thing more :

T H E · Y E A R ' S · A T · T H E · S P R I N G

That now when envious foes would spoil thy
splendour,

Unversed in arms, a dreamer such as I
May in thy ranks be deemed not all unworthy,
England, for thee to die.

R. E. VERNEDE

Black and White

I MET a man along the road
 To Withernsea ;
Was ever anything so dark, so pale
 As he ?

His hat, his clothes, his tie, his boots
 Were black as black
 Could be,
And midst of all was a cold white face,
And eyes that looked wearily.

The road was bleak and straight and flat
 To Withernsea,
Gaunt poles with shrilling wires their weird
 Did dree ;
On the sky stood out, on the swollen sky
 The black blood veins
 Of tree

After tree, as they beat from the face
Of the wind which they could not flee.

And in the fields along the road
 To Withernsea,

Swart crows sat huddled on the ground
 Disconsolately,
While overhead the seamews wheeled, and
 skirled
 In glee ;
But the black cows stood, and cropped where
 they stood,
 And never heeded thee,
O dark pale man, with the weary eyes,
 On the road to Withernsea.

H. H. ABBOTT

The Oxen

CHRISTMAS EVE, and twelve of the
clock.

“Now they are all on their knees,”
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few believe
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve
“Come; see the oxen kneel

In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,”
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

THOMAS HARDY

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