

THE OXFORD BOOK  
OF ENGLISH VERSE

*Nineteenth Century*



THE OXFORD BOOK  
OF ENGLISH VERSE

*Part 4*

*Nineteenth Century*

Chosen and Edited

by

*Arthur Quiller-Couch*

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TO  
THE PRESIDENT  
FELLOWS AND SCHOLARS  
OF  
TRINITY COLLEGE OXFORD  
A HOUSE OF LEARNING  
ANCIENT LIBERAL HUMANE  
AND MY MOST KINDLY NURSE



## PREFACE

FOR this Anthology I have tried to range over the whole field of English Verse from the beginning, or from the Thirteenth Century to this closing year of the Nineteenth, and to choose the best. Nor have I sought in these Islands only, but wheresoever the Muse has followed the tongue which among living tongues she most delights to honour. To bring home and render so great a spoil compendiously has been my capital difficulty. It is for the reader to judge if I have so managed it as to serve those who already love poetry and to implant that love in some young minds not yet initiated.

My scheme is simple. I have arranged the poets as nearly as possible in order of birth, with such groupings of anonymous pieces as seemed convenient. For convenience, too, as well as to avoid a dispute-royal, I have gathered the most of the Ballads into the middle of the Seventeenth Century; where they fill a languid interval between two winds of inspiration—the Italian dying down with Milton and the French following at the heels of the restored Royalists. For convenience, again, I have set myself certain rules of spelling. In the very earliest poems inflection and spelling are structural, and to modernize is to destroy. But as old inflections fade into modern the old spelling becomes less and less vital, and has been brought (not, I hope, too abruptly) into line with that sanctioned by use and familiar. To do this seemed wiser than to discourage many readers

for the sake of diverting others by a scent of antiquity which—to be essential—should breathe of something rarer than an odd arrangement of type. But there are scholars whom I cannot expect to agree with me; and to conciliate them I have excepted Spenser and Milton from the rule.

Glosses of archaic and otherwise difficult words are given at the foot of the page: but the text has not been disfigured with reference-marks. And rather than make the book unwieldy I have eschewed notes—reluctantly when some obscure passage or allusion seemed to ask for a timely word; with more equanimity when the temptation was to criticize or ‘appreciate.’ For the function of the anthologist includes criticizing in silence.

Care has been taken with the texts. But I have sometimes thought it consistent with the aim of the book to prefer the more beautiful to the better attested reading. I have often excised weak or superfluous stanzas when sure that excision would improve; and have not hesitated to extract a few stanzas from a long poem when persuaded that they could stand alone as a lyric. The apology for such experiments can only lie in their success: but the risk is one which, in my judgement, the anthologist ought to take. A few small corrections have been made, but only when they were quite obvious.

The numbers chosen are either lyrical or epigrammatic. Indeed I am mistaken if a single epigram included

fails to preserve at least some faint thrill of the emotion through which it had to pass before the Muse's lips let it fall, with however exquisite deliberation. But the lyrical spirit is volatile and notoriously hard to bind with definitions; and seems to grow wilder with the years. With the anthologist—as with the fisherman who knows the fish at the end of his sea-line—the gift, if he have it, comes by sense, improved by practice. The definition, if he be clever enough to frame one, comes by after-thought. I don't know that it helps, and am sure that it may easily mislead.

Having set my heart on choosing the best, I resolved not to be dissuaded by common objections against anthologies—that they repeat one another until the proverb *δὶς ἢ τρὶς τὰ καλὰ* loses all application—or perturbed if my judgement should often agree with that of good critics. The best is the best, though a hundred judges have declared it so; nor had it been any feat to search out and insert the second-rate merely because it happened to be recondite. To be sure, a man must come to such a task as mine haunted by his youth and the favourites he loved in days when he had much enthusiasm but little reading.

A deeper import  
Lurks in the legend told my infant years  
Than lies upon that truth we live to learn.

Few of my contemporaries can erase—or would wish to erase—the dye their minds took from the late Mr. Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*: and he who has returned to it again and again with an affection born

of companionship on many journeys must remember not only what the *Golden Treasury* includes, but the moment when this or that poem appealed to him, and even how it lies on the page. To Mr. Bullen's *Lyrics from the Elizabethan Song Books* and his other treasuries I own a more advised debt. Nor am I free of obligation to anthologies even more recent—to Archbishop Trench's *Household Book of Poetry*, Mr. Locker-Lampson's *Lyra Elegantiarum*, Mr. Miles' *Poets and Poetry of the Century*, Mr. Beeching's *Paradise of English Poetry*, Mr. Henley's *English Lyrics*, Mrs. Sharp's *Lyra Celtica*, Mr. Yeats' *Book of Irish Verse*, and Mr. Churton Collins' *Treasury of Minor British Poetry*: though my rule has been to consult these after making my own choice. Yet I can claim that the help derived from them—though gratefully owned—bears but a trifling proportion to the labour, special and desultory, which has gone to the making of my book.

For the anthologist's is not quite the *dilettante* business for which it is too often and ignorantly derided. I say this, and immediately repent; since my wish is that the reader should in his own pleasure quite forget the editor's labour, which too has been pleasant: that, standing aside, I may believe this book has made the Muses' access easier when, in the right hour, they come to him to uplift or to console—

ἄκλητος μὲν ἔγωγε μένοιμί κεν· ἐς δὲ καλεούντων  
θαρήσας Μοῖσαισι σὺν ἀμετέραισιν ἰκοίμαν.

October 1900

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## HENRY ROWE

1750–1819

507.

### *Sun*

**A**NGEL, king of streaming morn;  
Cherub, call'd by Heav'n to shine;  
T' orient tread the waste forlorn;  
Guide ætherial, pow'r divine;  
Thou, Lord of all within!

Golden spirit, lamp of day,  
Host, that dips in blood the plain,  
Bids the crimson'd mead be gay,  
Bids the green blood burst the vein;  
Thou, Lord of all within!

Soul, that wraps the globe in light;  
Spirit, beckoning to arise;  
Drives the frowning brow of night,  
Glory bursting o'er the skies;  
Thou, Lord of all within!

508.

### *Moon*

**T**HEE too, modest tressèd maid,  
When thy fallen stars appear;  
When in lawn of fire array'd  
Sov'reign of yon powder'd sphere;  
To thee I chant at close of day,  
Beneath, O maiden Moon! thy ray.

HENRY ROWE

Throned in sapphired ring supreme,  
Pregnant with celestial juice,  
On silver wing thy diamond stream  
Gives what summer hours produce;  
While view'd impearl'd earth's rich inlay,  
Beneath, O maiden Moon! thy ray.

Glad, pale Cynthian wine I sip,  
Breathed the flow'ry leaves among;  
Draughts delicious wet my lip;  
Drown'd in nectar drunk my song;  
While tuned to Philomel the lay,  
Beneath, O maiden Moon! thy ray.

Dew, that od'rous ointment yields,  
Sweets, that western winds disclose,  
Bathing spring's more purpled fields,  
Soft 's the band that winds the rose;  
While o'er thy myrtled lawns I stray  
Beneath, O maiden Moon! thy ray.

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES

1762–1850

509. *Time and Grief*

**O** TIME! who know'st a lenient hand to lay  
Softest on sorrow's wound, and slowly thence  
(Lulling to sad repose the weary sense)  
The faint pang stealest unperceived away;  
On thee I rest my only hope at last,  
And think, when thou hast dried the bitter tear  
That flows in vain o'er all my soul held dear,  
I may look back on every sorrow past,  
And meet life's peaceful evening with a smile:  
As some lone bird, at day's departing hour,

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES

Sings in the sunbeam, of the transient shower  
Forgetful, though its wings are wet the while:—  
Yet ah! how much must this poor heart endure,  
Which hopes from thee, and thee alone, a cure!

JOANNA BAILLIE

1762–1851

510. *The Outlaw's Song*

THE chough and crow to roost are gone,  
The owl sits on the tree,  
The hush'd wind wails with feeble moan,  
Like infant charity.  
The wild-fire dances on the fen,  
The red star sheds its ray;  
Uprouse ye then, my merry men!  
It is our op'ning day.

Both child and nurse are fast asleep,  
And closed is every flower,  
And winking tapers faintly peep  
High from my lady's bower;  
Bewilder'd hinds with shorten'd ken  
Shrink on their murky way;  
Uprouse ye then, my merry men!  
It is our op'ning day.

Nor board nor garner own we now,  
Nor roof nor latchèd door,  
Nor kind mate, bound by holy vow  
To bless a good man's store;  
Noon lulls us in a gloomy den,  
And night is grown our day;  
Uprouse ye then, my merry men!  
And use it as ye may.

## MARY LAMB

1765–1847

### 511. *A Child*

**A** CHILD'S a plaything for an hour;  
Its pretty tricks we try  
For that or for a longer space—  
Then tire, and lay it by.

But I knew one that to itself  
All seasons could control;  
That would have mock'd the sense of pain  
Out of a grievèd soul.

Thou straggler into loving arms,  
Young climber-up of knees,  
When I forget thy thousand ways  
Then life and all shall cease.

## CAROLINA, LADY NAIRNE

1766–1845

### 512. *The Land o' the Leal*

**I**'M wearin' awa', John  
Like snaw-wreaths in thaw, John,  
I'm wearin' awa'  
To the land o' the leal.  
There 's nae sorrow there, John,  
There 's neither cauld nor care, John,  
The day is aye fair  
In the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairn 's there, John,  
She was baith gude and fair, John;  
And O! we grudged her sair  
To the land o' the leal.

*CAROLINA, LADY NAIRNE*

But sorrow's sel' wears past, John,  
And joy 's a-coming fast, John,  
The joy that 's aye to last  
    In the land o' the leal.

Sae dear's the joy was bought, John,  
Sae free the battle fought, John,  
That sinfu' man e'er brought  
    To the land o' the leal.

O, dry your glistening e'e, John!  
My saul lang's to be free, John,  
And angels beckon me  
    To the land o' the leal.

O, haud ye leal and true, John!  
Your day it 's wearin' through, John,  
And I'll welcome you  
    To the land o' the leal.

Now fare-ye-weel, my ain John,  
This warld's cares are vain, John,  
We'll meet, and we'll be fain,  
    In the land o' the leal.

**JAMES HOGG**

1770–1835

**513.**

***A Boy's Song***

**W**HERE the pools are bright and deep,  
Where the grey trout lies asleep,  
Up the river and over the lea,  
That 's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,  
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,  
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,  
That 's the way for Billy and me.

*JAMES HOGG*

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,  
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,  
There to track the homeward bee,  
That 's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,  
Where the shadow falls the deepest,  
Where the clustering nuts fall free,  
That 's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away  
Little sweet maidens from the play,  
Or love to banter and fight so well,  
That 's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play  
Through the meadow, among the hay;  
Up the water and over the lea,  
That 's the way for Billy and me.

514.

*Kilmeny*

**B**ONNIE Kilmeny gaed up the glen;  
But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,  
Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,  
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.  
It was only to hear the yorlin sing,  
And pu' the cress-flower round the spring;  
The scarlet hypp and the hindberrye,  
And the nut that hung frae the hazel tree;  
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.  
But lang may her minny look o'er the wa',  
But lang may she seek i' the green-wood shaw;  
Lang the laird o' Duneira blame,  
And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame!

514. yorlin] the yellow-hammer. hindberrye] bramble.  
minny] mother. greet] mourn.

*JAMES HOGG*

When many a day had come and fled,  
When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,  
When mess for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,  
When the bedesman had pray'd and the dead bell rung,  
Late, late in gloamin' when all was still,  
When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,  
The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,  
The reek o' the cot hung over the plain,  
Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane;  
When the ingle low'd wi' an eiry leme,  
Late, late in the gloamin' Kilmeny came hame!

'Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?  
Lang hae we sought baith holt and den;  
By linn, by ford, and green-wood tree,  
Yet you are halesome and fair to see.  
Where gat you that joup o' the lily scheen?  
That bonnie snood of the birk sae green?  
And these roses, the fairest that ever were seen?  
Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?'

Kilmeny look'd up with a lovely grace,  
But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face;  
As still was her look, and as still was her e'e,  
As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,  
Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.  
For Kilmeny had been, she knew not where,  
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare;  
Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,  
Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew.  
But it seem'd as the harp of the sky had rung,  
And the airs of heaven play'd round her tongue,  
When she spake of the lovely forms she had seen,  
And a land where sin had never been;

westlin] western. its lane] alone, by itself. low'd] flamed.  
eiry leme] eery gleam. linn] waterfall. joup] mantle.

*JAMES HOGG*

A land of love and a land of light,  
Withouten sun, or moon, or night;  
Where the river swa'd a living stream,  
And the light a pure celestial beam;  
The land of vision, it would seem,  
A still, an everlasting dream.

In yon green-wood there is a waik,  
And in that waik there is a wene,  
And in that wene there is a maike,  
That neither has flesh, blood, nor bane;  
And down in yon green-wood he walks his lane.

In that green wene Kilmeny lay,  
Her bosom happ'd wi' flowerets gay;  
But the air was soft and the silence deep,  
And bonnie Kilmeny fell sound asleep.  
She kenn'd nae mair, nor open'd her e'e,  
Till waked by the hymns of a far countrye.

She 'waken'd on a couch of the silk sae slim,  
All striped wi' the bars of the rainbow's rim;  
And lovely beings round were rife,  
Who erst had travell'd mortal life;  
And aye they smiled and 'gan to speer,  
'What spirit has brought this mortal here?'—

'Lang have I journey'd, the world wide,  
A meek and reverend fere replied;  
'Baith night and day I have watch'd the fair,  
Eident a thousand years and mair.  
Yes, I have watch'd o'er ilk degree,  
Wherever blooms femenity;

swa'd] swelled. waik] a row of deep damp grass.  
wene] ? whin, a furze-bush. maike] a mate, match, equal.  
his lane] alone, by himself. happ'd] covered. speer] inquire.  
fere] fellow. eident] unintermittently.

*JAMES HOGG*

But sinless virgin, free of stain  
In mind and body, fand I nane.  
Never, since the banquet of time,  
Found I a virgin in her prime,  
Till late this bonnie maiden I saw  
As spotless as the morning snaw:  
Full twenty years she has lived as free  
As the spirits that sojourn in this countrie:  
I have brought her away frae the snares of men,  
That sin or death she never may ken.'—

They clasp'd her waist and her hands sae fair,  
They kiss'd her cheek and they kemed her hair,  
And round came many a blooming fere,  
Saying, 'Bonnie Kilmeny, ye're welcome here!  
Women are freed of the littand scorn:  
O blest be the day Kilmeny was born!  
Now shall the land of the spirits see,  
Now shall it ken what a woman may be!  
Many a lang year, in sorrow and pain,  
Many a lang year through the world we've gane,  
Commission'd to watch fair womankind,  
For it's they who nurice the immortal mind.  
We have watch'd their steps as the dawning shone,  
And deep in the green-wood walks alone;  
By lily bower and silken bed,  
The viewless tears have o'er them shed;  
Have soothed their ardent minds to sleep,  
Or left the couch of love to weep.  
We have seen! we have seen! but the time must come,  
And the angels will weep at the day of doom!

'O would the fairest of mortal kind  
Aye keep the holy truths in mind,  
That kindred spirits their motions see,

kemed] combed.

*JAMES HOGG*

Who watch their ways with anxious e'e,  
And grieve for the guilt of humanity!  
O, sweet to Heaven the maiden's prayer,  
And the sigh that heaves a bosom sae fair!  
And dear to Heaven the words of truth,  
And the praise of virtue frae beauty's mouth!  
And dear to the viewless forms of air,  
The minds that kyth as the body fair!

'O bonnie Kilmeny! free frae stain,  
If ever you seek the world again,  
That world of sin, of sorrow and fear,  
O tell of the joys that are waiting here;  
And tell of the signs you shall shortly see;  
Of the times that are now, and the times that shall be.'—  
They lifted Kilmeny, they led her away,  
And she walk'd in the light of a sunless day;  
The sky was a dome of crystal bright,  
The fountain of vision, and fountain of light:  
The emerald fields were of dazzling glow,  
And the flowers of everlasting blow.  
Then deep in the stream her body they laid,  
That her youth and beauty never might fade;  
And they smiled on heaven, when they saw her lie  
In the stream of life that wander'd bye.  
And she heard a song, she heard it sung,  
She kenn'd not where; but sae sweetly it rung,  
It fell on the ear like a dream of the morn:  
'O, blest be the day Kilmeny was born!  
Now shall the land of the spirits see,  
Now shall it ken what a woman may be!  
The sun that shines on the world sae bright,  
A borrow'd gleid frae the fountain of light;  
And the moon that sleeks the sky sae dun,  
Like a gouden bow, or a beamless sun,

kyth] show, appear.    gleid] spark, glow.

*JAMES HOGG*

Shall wear away, and be seen nae mair,  
And the angels shall miss them travelling the air.  
But lang, lang after baith night and day,  
When the sun and the world have elyed away;  
When the sinner has gane to his waesome doom,  
Kilmeny shall smile in eternal bloom!' —

They bore her away, she wist not how,  
For she felt not arm nor rest below;  
But so swift they wain'd her through the light,  
'Twas like the motion of sound or sight;  
They seem'd to split the gales of air,  
And yet nor gale nor breeze was there.  
Unnumber'd groves below them grew,  
They came, they pass'd, and backward flew,  
Like floods of blossoms gliding on,  
In moment seen, in moment gone.  
O, never vales to mortal view  
Appear'd like those o'er which they flew!  
That land to human spirits given,  
The lowermost vales of the storied heaven;  
From thence they can view the world below,  
And heaven's blue gates with sapphires glow,  
More glory yet unmeet to know.

They bore her far to a mountain green,  
To see what mortal never had seen;  
And they seated her high on a purple sward,  
And bade her heed what she saw and heard,  
And note the changes the spirits wrought,  
For now she lived in the land of thought.  
She look'd, and she saw nor sun nor skies,  
But a crystal dome of a thousand dyes:  
She look'd, and she saw nae land aright,

elyed] vanished.

*JAMES HOGG*

But an endless whirl of glory and light:  
And radiant beings went and came,  
Far swifter than wind, or the linkèd flame.  
She hid her e'en frae the dazzling view;  
She look'd again, and the scene was new.

She saw a sun on a summer sky,  
And clouds of amber sailing bye;  
A lovely land beneath her lay,  
And that land had glens and mountains gray;  
And that land had valleys and hoary piles,  
And marlèd seas, and a thousand isles.  
Its fields were speckled, its forests green,  
And its lakes were all of the dazzling sheen,  
Like magic mirrors, where slumbering lay  
The sun and the sky and the cloudlet gray;  
Which heaved and trembled, and gently swung,  
On every shore they seem'd to be hung;  
For there they were seen on their downward plain  
A thousand times and a thousand again;  
In winding lake and placid firth,  
Little peaceful heavens in the bosom of earth.

Kilmeny sigh'd and seem'd to grieve,  
For she found her heart to that land did cleave;  
She saw the corn wave on the vale,  
She saw the deer run down the dale;  
She saw the plaid and the broad claymore,  
And the brows that the badge of freedom bore;  
And she thought she had seen the land before.

She saw a lady sit on a throne,  
The fairest that ever the sun shone on!  
A lion lick'd her hand of milk,  
And she held him in a leish of silk;  
And a leifu' maiden stood at her knee,

marlèd] variegated, parti-coloured. leifu'] lone, wistful.

JAMES HOGG

With a silver wand and melting e'e;  
Her sovereign shield till love stole in,  
And poison'd all the fount within.

Then a gruff untoward bedesman came,  
And hundert the lion on his dame;  
And the guardian maid wi' the dauntless e'e,  
She dropp'd a tear, and left her knee;  
And she saw till the queen frae the lion fled,  
Till the bonniest flower of the world lay dead;  
A coffin was set on a distant plain,  
And she saw the red blood fall like rain;  
Then bonnie Kilmeny's heart grew sair,  
And she turn'd away, and could look nae mair.  
Then the gruff grim carle girn'd amain,  
And they trampled him down, but he rose again;  
And he baited the lion to deeds of weir,  
Till he lapp'd the blood to the kingdom dear;  
And weening his head was danger-preef,  
When crown'd with the rose and clover leaf,  
He gowl'd at the carle, and chased him away  
To feed wi' the deer on the mountain gray.  
He gowl'd at the carle, and geck'd at Heaven,  
But his mark was set, and his arles given.  
Kilmeny a while her e'en withdrew;  
She look'd again, and the scene was new.

She saw before her fair unfurl'd  
One half of all the glowing world,  
Where oceans roll'd, and rivers ran,  
To bound the aims of sinful man.  
She saw a people, fierce and fell,  
Burst frae their bounds like fiends of hell;  
There lilies grew, and the eagle flew;

girn'd] snarled.

weir] war.

gowl'd] howled.

geck'd] mocked.

arles] money paid on striking a bargain; *figuratively*, a beating.

*JAMES HOGG*

And she herkèd on her ravening crew,  
Till the cities and towers were wrapp'd in a blaze,  
And the thunder it roar'd o'er the lands and the seas.  
The widows they wail'd, and the red blood ran,  
And she threaten'd an end to the race of man;  
She never lened, nor stood in awe,  
Till caught by the lion's deadly paw.  
O, then the eagle swink'd for life,  
And brainyell'd up a mortal strife;  
But flew she north, or flew she south,  
She met wi' the gowl o' the lion's mouth.

With a mooted wing and waefu' maen,  
The eagle sought her eiry again;  
But lang may she cower in her bloody nest,  
And lang, lang sleek her wounded breast,  
Before she sey another flight,  
To play wi' the norland lion's might.

But to sing the sights Kilmeny saw,  
So far surpassing nature's law,  
The singer's voice wad sink away,  
And the string of his harp wad cease to play.  
But she saw till the sorrows of man were bye,  
And all was love and harmony;  
Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,  
Like flakes of snaw on a winter day.

Then Kilmeny begg'd again to see  
The friends she had left in her own countrye;  
To tell of the place where she had been,  
And the glories that lay in the land unseen;  
To warn the living maidens fair,  
The loved of Heaven, the spirits' care,  
That all whose minds unmeled remain  
Shall bloom in beauty when time is gane.

lened] crouched. swink'd] laboured. brainyell'd] stirred, beat.  
mooted] moulted. sey] essay. unmeled] unblemished.

*JAMES HOGG*

With distant music, soft and deep,  
They lull'd Kilmeny sound asleep;  
And when she awaken'd, she lay her lane,  
All happ'd with flowers, in the green-wood wene.  
When seven lang years had come and fled,  
When grief was calm, and hope was dead;  
When scarce was remember'd Kilmeny's name,  
Late, late in a gloamin' Kilmeny came hame!  
And O, her beauty was fair to see,  
But still and steadfast was her e'e!  
Such beauty bard may never declare,  
For there was no pride nor passion there;  
And the soft desire of maiden's e'en  
In that mild face could never be seen.  
Her seymar was the lily flower,  
And her cheek the moss-rose in the shower;  
And her voice like the distant melodye,  
That floats along the twilight sea.  
But she loved to raike the lanely glen,  
And keepèd afar frae the haunts of men;  
Her holy hymns unheard to sing,  
To suck the flowers, and drink the spring.  
But wherever her peaceful form appear'd,  
The wild beasts of the hill were cheer'd;  
The wolf play'd blythly round the field,  
The lordly byson low'd and kneel'd;  
The dun deer woo'd with manner bland,  
And cower'd aneath her lily hand.  
And when at even the woodlands rung,  
When hymns of other worlds she sung  
In ecstasy of sweet devotion,  
O, then the glen was all in motion!

her lane] alone, by herself.    seymar] = cymar, a light covering.  
raike] range, wander.

*JAMES HOGG*

The wild beasts of the forest came,  
Broke from their bughts and faulds the tame,  
And goved around, charm'd and amazed;  
Even the dull cattle croon'd and gazed,  
And murmur'd and look'd with anxious pain  
For something the mystery to explain.  
The buzzard came with the throstle-cock;  
The corby left her houf in the rock;  
The blackbird alang wi' the eagle flew;  
The hind came tripping o'er the dew;  
The wolf and the kid their raike began,  
And the tod, and the lamb, and the leveret ran;  
The hawk and the hern attour them hung,  
And the merle and the mavis forhooy'd their young;  
And all in a peaceful ring were hurl'd;  
It was like an eve in a sinless world!

When a month and a day had come and gane.  
Kilmeny sought the green-wood wene;  
There laid her down on the leaves sae green,  
And Kilmeny on earth was never mair seen.  
But O, the words that fell from her mouth  
Were words of wonder, and words of truth!  
But all the land were in fear and dread,  
For they kendna whether she was living or dead.  
It wasna her hame, and she couldna remain;  
She left this world of sorrow and pain,  
And return'd to the land of thought again.

bughts] milking-pens. goved] stared, gazed. corby] raven.  
houf] haunt. raike] ramble. tod] fox. attour] out over.  
forhooy'd] neglected.

# WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

1770–1850

## *Lucy*

515.

I

**S**TRANGE fits of passion have I known:  
And I will dare to tell,  
But in the lover's ear alone,  
What once to me befell.

When she I loved look'd every day  
Fresh as a rose in June,  
I to her cottage bent my way,  
Beneath an evening moon.

Upon the moon I fix'd my eye,  
All over the wide lea;  
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh  
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reach'd the orchard-plot;  
And, as we climb'd the hill,  
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot  
Came near and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!  
And all the while my eyes I kept  
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof  
He raised, and never stopp'd:  
When down behind the cottage roof,  
At once, the bright moon dropp'd.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide  
    Into a lover's head!  
'O mercy!' to myself I cried,  
    'If Lucy should be dead!'

516.

II

**S**HE dwelt among the untrodden ways  
    Beside the springs of Dove,  
A Maid whom there were none to praise  
    And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone  
    Half hidden from the eye!  
Fair as a star, when only one  
    Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
    When Lucy ceased to be;  
But she is in her grave, and oh,  
    The Difference to me!

517.

III

**I** TRAVELL'D among unknown men,  
    In lands beyond the sea;  
Nor, England! did I know till then  
    What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!  
    Nor will I quit thy shore  
A second time; for still I seem  
    To love thee more and more.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Among thy mountains did I feel  
The joy of my desire;  
And she I cherish'd turn'd her wheel  
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings show'd, thy nights conceal'd,  
The bowers where Lucy played;  
And thine too is the last green field  
That Lucy's eyes survey'd.

518.

IV

**T**HREE years she grew in sun and shower;  
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown;  
This child I to myself will take;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A lady of my own.

'Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse: and with me  
The girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

'She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn  
Or up the mountain springs;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

'The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her; for her the willow bend;  
Nor shall she fail to see

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Even in the motions of the storm  
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

'The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.

'And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell.'

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—  
How soon my Lucy's race was run!  
She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be.

519.

V

**A** SLUMBER did my spirit seal;  
I had no human fears:  
She seem'd a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;  
She neither hears nor sees;  
Roll'd round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

520. *Upon Westminster Bridge*

**E**ARTH has not anything to show more fair:  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty:  
This City now doth like a garment wear  
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie  
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;  
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.  
Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;  
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

521. *Evening on Calais Beach*

**I**T is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the sea:  
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,  
If thou appear untouch'd by solemn thought,  
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;  
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,  
God being with thee when we know it not.

522.        *On the Extinction of the  
Venetian Republic, 1802*

ONCE did she hold the gorgeous East in fee;  
And was the safeguard of the West: the worth  
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,  
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.  
She was a maiden City, bright and free;  
No guile seduced, no force could violate;  
And, when she took unto herself a mate,  
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.  
And what if she had seen those glories fade,  
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;  
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid  
When her long life hath reach'd its final day:  
Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade  
Of that which once was great is pass'd away.

*England, 1802*

523.

I

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must look  
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,  
To think that now our life is only drest  
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,  
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook  
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:  
The wealthiest man among us is the best:  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry; and these we adore:  
Plain living and high thinking are no more:  
The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household laws.

524.

II

**M**ILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:  
England hath need of thee: she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
Oh! raise us up, return to us again,  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power!  
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

525.

III

**G**REAT men have been among us; hands that penn'd  
And tongues that utter'd wisdom—better none:  
The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,  
Young Vane, and others who call'd Milton friend.  
These moralists could act and comprehend:  
They knew how genuine glory was put on;  
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone  
In splendour: what strength was, that would not bend  
But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis strange,  
Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.  
Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!  
No single volume paramount, no code,  
No master spirit, no determined road;  
But equally a want of books and men!

526.

IV

IT is not to be thought of that the flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flow'd, 'with pomp of waters, unwithstood,'  
Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,—  
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands  
Should perish; and to evil and to good  
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
Armoury of the invincible Knights of old:  
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue  
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold  
Which Milton held.—In everything we are sprung  
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

527.

V

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed  
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart  
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert  
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed  
I had, my Country—am I to be blamed?  
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,  
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,  
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.  
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find  
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;  
And I by my affection was beguiled:  
What wonder if a Poet now and then,  
Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

528. *The Solitary Reaper*

**B**EHOLD her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland Lass!  
Reaping and singing by herself;  
Stop here, or gently pass!  
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,  
And sings a melancholy strain;  
O listen! for the Vale profound  
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt  
More welcome notes to weary bands  
Of travellers in some shady haunt,  
Among Arabian sands:  
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,  
Breaking the silence of the seas  
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago:  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of to-day?  
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang  
As if her song could have no ending;  
I saw her singing at her work,  
And o'er the sickle bending;—  
I listen'd, motionless and still;  
And, as I mounted up the hill,  
The music in my heart I bore,  
Long after it was heard no more.

529.

*Perfect Woman*

**S**HE was a phantom of delight  
When first she gleam'd upon my sight;  
A lovely apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;  
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;  
A dancing shape, an image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin liberty;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine;  
A being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A traveller between life and death;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect Woman, nobly plann'd,  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of angelic light.

530.

*Daffodils*

**I** WANDER'D lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the Milky Way,  
They stretch'd in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

531.

*Ode to Duty*

**S**TERN Daughter of the Voice of God!  
O Duty! if that name thou love,  
Who art a light to guide, a rod  
To check the erring and reprove;

*WILLIAM WORDSWORTH*

Thou, who art victory and law  
When empty terrors overawe;  
From vain temptations dost set free;  
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye  
Be on them; who, in love and truth,  
Where no misgiving is, rely  
Upon the genial sense of youth:  
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot;  
Who do thy work, and know it not:  
O, if through confidence misplaced  
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,  
And happy will our nature be,  
When love is an unerring light,  
And joy its own security.  
And they a blissful course may hold  
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,  
Live in the spirit of this creed;  
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;  
No sport of every random gust,  
Yet being to myself a guide,  
Too blindly have reposed my trust:  
And oft, when in my heart was heard  
Thy timely mandate, I deferr'd  
The task, in smoother walks to stray;  
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,  
Or strong compunction in me wrought,  
I supplicate for thy control;  
But in the quietness of thought.  
Me this uncharter'd freedom tires;  
I feel the weight of chance-desires;

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

My hopes no more must change their name,  
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Yet not the less would I throughout  
Still act according to the voice  
Of my own wish; and feel past doubt  
That my submissiveness was choice:  
Not seeking in the school of pride  
For 'precepts over dignified,'  
Denial and restraint I prize  
No farther than they breed a second Will more wise.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear  
The Godhead's most benignant grace;  
Nor know we anything so fair  
As is the smile upon thy face:  
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,  
And fragrance in thy footing treads;  
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;  
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!  
I call thee: I myself commend  
Unto thy guidance from this hour;  
O, let my weakness have an end!  
Give unto me, made lowly wise,  
The spirit of self-sacrifice;  
The confidence of reason give;  
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live!

532.

*The Rainbow*

**M**Y heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Or let me die!  
The Child is father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

*The Sonnet*

533.

I

**N**UNS fret not at their convent's narrow room,  
And hermits are contented with their cells,  
And students with their pensive citadels;  
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,  
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,  
High as the highest peak of Furness fells,  
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:  
In truth the prison unto which we doom  
Ourselves no prison is: and hence for me,  
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound  
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;  
Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)  
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,  
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

534.

II

**S**CORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frown'd,  
Mindless of its just honours; with this key  
Shakespeare unlock'd his heart; the melody  
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;  
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;  
With it Camöens sooth'd an exile's grief;  
The Sonnet glitter'd a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante crown'd  
His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,  
It cheer'd mild Spenser, call'd from Faery-land

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

To struggle through dark ways; and when a damp  
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand  
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he blew  
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!

535. *The World*

THE world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:  
Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!  
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gather'd now like sleeping flowers;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

536. *Ode*

*Intimations of Immortality from Recollections  
of Early Childhood*

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,  
The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem  
Apparell'd in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—  
Turn wheresoe'er I may,  
By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

*WILLIAM WORDSWORTH*

The rainbow comes and goes,  
And lovely is the rose;  
The moon doth with delight  
Look round her when the heavens are bare;  
Waters on a starry night  
Are beautiful and fair;  
The sunshine is a glorious birth;  
But yet I know, where'er I go,  
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
And while the young lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound,  
To me alone there came a thought of grief:  
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
And I again am strong:  
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;  
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;  
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,  
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,  
And all the earth is gay;  
Land and sea  
Give themselves up to jollity,  
And with the heart of May  
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—  
Thou Child of Joy,  
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy  
Shepherd-boy!

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call  
Ye to each other make; I see  
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;  
My heart is at your festival,  
My head hath its coronal,  
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.  
O evil day! if I were sullen  
While Earth herself is adorning,

*WILLIAM WORDSWORTH*

This sweet May-morning,  
And the children are culling  
On every side,  
In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,  
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm:—  
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!  
—But there 's a tree, of many, one,  
A single field which I have look'd upon,  
Both of them speak of something that is gone:  
The pansy at my feet  
Doth the same tale repeat:  
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?  
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,  
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy;  
The Youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,

*WILLIAM WORDSWORTH*

And, even with something of a mother's mind,  
    And no unworthy aim,  
    The homely nurse doth all she can  
To make her foster-child, her inmate Man,  
    Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,  
A six years' darling of a pigmy size!  
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,  
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
With light upon him from his father's eyes!  
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,  
Some fragment from his dream of human life,  
Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art;  
    A wedding or a festival,  
    A mourning or a funeral;  
    And this hath now his heart,  
And unto this he frames his song:  
    Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;  
    But it will not be long  
    Ere this be thrown aside,  
    And with new joy and pride  
The little actor cons another part;  
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'  
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,  
That Life brings with her in her equipage;  
    As if his whole vocation  
    Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
    Thy soul's immensity;  
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep  
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,  
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—

*WILLIAM WORDSWORTH*

Mighty prophet! Seer blest!  
On whom those truths do rest,  
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;  
Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
Broods like the Day, a master o'er a slave,  
A presence which is not to be put by;  
    To whom the grave  
Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight  
    Of day or the warm light,  
A place of thought where we in waiting lie;  
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might  
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,  
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke  
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?  
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,  
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!  
    O joy! that in our embers  
    Is something that doth live,  
    That nature yet remembers  
    What was so fugitive!  
The thought of our past years in me doth breed  
Perpetual benediction: not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be blest—  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—  
    Not for these I raise  
    The song of thanks and praise;  
    But for those obstinate questionings  
    Of sense and outward things,  
    Fallings from us, vanishings;  
    Blank misgivings of a Creature  
Moving about in worlds not realized,

*WILLIAM WORDSWORTH*

High instincts before which our mortal Nature  
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:  
    But for those first affections,  
    Those shadowy recollections,  
    Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,  
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,  
    To perish never;  
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,  
    Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy!  
    Hence in a season of calm weather  
    Though inland far we be,  
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea  
    Which brought us hither,  
    Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!  
    And let the young lambs bound  
    As to the tabor's sound!  
We in thought will join your throng,  
    Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
    Ye that through your hearts to-day  
    Feel the gladness of the May!  
What though the radiance which was once so bright  
Be now for ever taken from my sight,  
    Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;  
    We will grieve not, rather find  
    Strength in what remains behind;

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

In the primal sympathy  
Which having been must ever be;  
In the soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering;  
In the faith that looks through death,  
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
Forebode not any severing of our loves!  
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;  
I only have relinquish'd one delight  
To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
I love the brooks which down their channels fret,  
Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they;  
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
Is lovely yet;  
The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;  
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

537.

*Desideria*

**S**URPRISED by joy—impatient as the Wind  
I turned to share the transport—O! with whom  
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,  
That spot which no vicissitude can find?  
Love, faithful love, recall'd thee to my mind—  
But how could I forget thee? Through what power,  
Even for the least division of an hour,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Have I been so beguiled as to be blind  
To my most grievous loss?—That thought's return  
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,  
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,  
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;  
That neither present time, nor years unborn  
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

538. *Valedictory Sonnet to  
the River Duddon*

**I** THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,  
As being pass'd away.—Vain sympathies!  
For, backward, Duddon! as I cast my eyes,  
I see what was, and is, and will abide;  
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;  
The Form remains, the Function never dies;  
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,  
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied  
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!  
Enough, if something from our hands have power  
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;  
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,  
Through love, through hope, and faith's  
transcendent dower,  
We feel that we are greater than we know.

539. *Mutability*

**F**ROM low to high doth dissolution climb,  
And sink from high to low, along a scale  
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;  
A musical but melancholy chime,  
Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,  
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Truth fails not; but her outward forms that bear  
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,  
That in the morning whiten'd hill and plain  
And is no more; drop like the tower sublime  
    Of yesterday, which royally did wear  
His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain  
    Some casual shout that broke the silent air,  
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

540.                   *The Trosachs*

**T**HERE 's not a nook within this solemn Pass,  
But were an apt confessional for one  
    Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,  
That Life is but a tale of morning grass  
Wither'd at eve. From scenes of art which chase  
    That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes  
    Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,  
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass  
Untouch'd, unbreathed upon. Thrice happy quest,  
    If from a golden perch of aspen spray  
    (October's workmanship to rival May)  
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast  
    That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,  
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!

541.                   *Speak!*

**W**HY art thou silent! Is thy love a plant  
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air  
    Of absence withers what was once so fair?  
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?  
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant—  
    Bound to thy service with unceasing care,  
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

For nought but what thy happiness could spare.  
Speak—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold  
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,  
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold  
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow  
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—  
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

SIR WALTER SCOTT

1771–1832

542. *Proud Maisie*

**P**ROUD Maisie is in the wood,  
Walking so early;  
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,  
Singing so rarely.

'Tell me, thou bonny bird,  
When shall I marry me?'  
—'When six braw gentlemen  
Kirkward shall carry ye.'

'Who makes the bridal bed,  
Birdie, say truly?'  
—'The grey-headed sexton  
That delves the grave duly.

'The glow-worm o'er grave and stone  
Shall light thee steady;  
The owl from the steeple sing  
Welcome, proud lady!'

543.

*Brignall Banks*

**O** BRIGNALL banks are wild and fair,  
And Greta woods are green,  
And you may gather garlands there,  
    Would grace a summer queen:  
And as I rode by Dalton Hall,  
    Beneath the turrets high,  
A Maiden on the castle wall  
    Was singing merrily:—

‘O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,  
    And Greta woods are green!  
I’d rather rove with Edmund there  
    Than reign our English Queen.’

‘If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me  
    To leave both tower and town,  
Thou first must guess what life lead we,  
    That dwell by dale and down:  
And if thou canst that riddle read,  
    As read full well you may,  
Then to the green-wood shalt thou speed  
    As blithe as Queen of May.’

Yet sung she, ‘Brignall banks are fair,  
    And Greta woods are green!  
I’d rather rove with Edmund there  
    Than reign our English Queen.

‘I read you by your bugle horn  
    And by your palfrey good,  
I read you for a Ranger sworn  
    To keep the King’s green-wood.’  
‘A Ranger, Lady, winds his horn,  
    And ’tis at peep of light;  
His blast is heard at merry morn,  
    And mine at dead of night.’

*SIR WALTER SCOTT*

Yet sung she, 'Brignall banks are fair,  
And Greta woods are gay!  
I would I were with Edmund there,  
To reign his Queen of May!

'With burnish'd brand and musketoon  
So gallantly you come,  
I read you for a bold Dragoon,  
That lists the tuck of drum.'  
'I list no more the tuck of drum,  
No more the trumpet hear;  
But when the beetle sounds his hum,  
My comrades take the spear.

'And O! though Brignall banks be fair,  
And Greta woods be gay,  
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,  
Would reign my Queen of May!

'Maiden! a nameless life I lead,  
A nameless death I'll die;  
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead  
Were better mate than I!  
And when I'm with my comrades met  
Beneath the green-wood bough,  
What once we were we all forget,  
Nor think what we are now.'

*Chorus.* Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,  
And Greta woods are green,  
And you may gather flowers there  
Would grace a summer queen.

544. *Lucy Ashton's Song*

**L**OOK not thou on beauty's charming;  
Sit thou still when kings are arming;  
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens;  
Speak not when the people listens;  
Stop thine ear against the singer;  
From the red gold keep thy finger;  
Vacant heart and hand and eye,  
Easy live and quiet die.

545. *Answer*

**S**OUND, sound the clarion, fill the fife!  
To all the sensual world proclaim,  
One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name.

546. *The Rover's Adieu*

**A**WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,  
A weary lot is thine!  
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,  
And press the rue for wine.  
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,  
A feather of the blue,  
A doublet of the Lincoln green—  
No more of me ye knew,  
My Love!  
No more of me ye knew.

'This morn is merry June, I trow,  
The rose is budding fain;  
But she shall bloom in winter snow  
Ere we two meet again.'

*SIR WALTER SCOTT*

—He turn'd his charger as he spake  
Upon the river shore,  
He gave the bridle-reins a shake,  
Said 'Adieu for evermore,  
My Love!  
And adieu for evermore.'

*Patriotism*

547. *1. Innominatus*

**B**REATHES there the man with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
'This is my own, my native land!'  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd  
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd  
From wandering on a foreign strand?  
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;  
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;  
High though his titles, proud his name,  
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;  
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,  
The wretch, concentred all in self,  
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,  
And, doubly dying, shall go down  
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

548. *2. Nelson, Pitt, Fox*

**T**O mute and to material things  
New life revolving summer brings;  
The genial call dead Nature hears,  
And in her glory reappears.  
But oh, my Country's wintry state  
What second spring shall renovate?

*SIR WALTER SCOTT*

What powerful call shall bid arise  
The buried warlike and the wise;

The mind that thought for Britain's weal,  
The hand that grasp'd the victor steel?  
The vernal sun new life bestows  
Even on the meanest flower that blows;  
But vainly, vainly may he shine  
Where glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine;  
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom  
That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallow'd tomb!

Deep graved in every British heart,  
O never let those names depart!  
Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,  
Who victor died on Gadite wave!  
To him, as to the burning levin,  
Short, bright, resistless course was given.  
Where'er his country's foes were found  
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,  
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,  
Roll'd, blazed, destroy'd—and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perish'd worth,  
Who bade the conqueror go forth,  
And launch'd that thunderbolt of war  
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar;  
Who, born to guide such high emprise,  
For Britain's weal was early wise;  
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,  
For Britain's sins, an early grave!  
—His worth, who in his mightiest hour  
A bauble held the pride of power,  
Spurn'd at the sordid lust of pelf,  
And served his Albion for herself;  
Who, when the frantic crowd amain  
Strain'd at subjection's bursting rein,

*SIR WALTER SCOTT*

O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,  
The pride he would not crush, restrain'd,  
Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,  
And brought the freeman's arm to aid the freeman's laws.

Hadst thou but lived, though stripp'd of power,  
A watchman on the lonely tower,  
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,  
When fraud or danger were at hand;  
By thee, as by the beacon-light,  
Our pilots had kept course aright;  
As some proud column, though alone,  
Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne.  
Now is the stately column broke,  
The beacon-light is quench'd in smoke,  
The trumpet's silver voice is still,  
The warder silent on the hill!

O think, how to his latest day,  
When Death, just hovering, claim'd his prey,  
With Palinure's unalter'd mood  
Firm at his dangerous post he stood;  
Each call for needful rest repell'd,  
With dying hand the rudder held,  
Till in his fall with fateful sway  
The steerage of the realm gave way.  
Then—while on Britain's thousand plains  
One polluted church remains,  
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around  
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,  
But still upon the hallow'd day  
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;  
While faith and civil peace are dear,  
Grace this cold marble with a tear:—  
He who preserved them, PITT, lies here!

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,  
Because his rival slumbers nigh;  
Nor be thy *Requiescat* dumb  
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.  
For talents mourn, untimely lost,  
When best employ'd, and wanted most;  
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,  
And wit that loved to play, not wound;  
And all the reasoning powers divine  
To penetrate, resolve, combine;  
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow—  
They sleep with him who sleeps below:  
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save  
From error him who owns this grave,  
Be every harsher thought suppress'd,  
And sacred be the last long rest.  
*Here*, where the end of earthly things  
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;  
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,  
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;  
*Here*, where the fretted vaults prolong  
The distant notes of holy song,  
As if some angel spoke agen,  
'All peace on earth, good-will to men';  
If ever from an English heart,  
O, *here* let prejudice depart,  
And, partial feeling cast aside,  
Record that Fox a Briton died!  
When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,  
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,  
And the firm Russian's purpose brave  
Was barter'd by a timorous slave—  
Even then dishonour's peace he spurn'd,  
The sullied olive-branch return'd,  
Stood for his country's glory fast,  
And nail'd her colours to the mast!

*SIR WALTER SCOTT*

Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave  
A portion in this honour'd grave;  
And ne'er held marble in its trust  
Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endow'd,  
How high they soar'd above the crowd!  
Theirs was no common party race,  
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;  
Like fabled gods, their mighty war  
Shook realms and nations in its jar;  
Beneath each banner proud to stand,  
Look'd up the noblest of the land,  
Till through the British world were known  
The names of PITT and FOX alone.  
Spells of such force no wizard grave  
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,  
Though his could drain the ocean dry,  
And force the planets from the sky.  
These spells are spent, and, spent with these,  
The wine of life is on the lees.  
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,  
For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,  
Where—taming thought to human pride!—  
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.  
Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,  
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;  
O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,  
And Fox's shall the notes rebound.  
The solemn echo seems to cry,  
'Here let their discord with them die.  
Speak not for those a separate doom  
Whom fate made Brothers in the tomb;  
But search the land of living men,  
Where wilt thou find their like agen?'