Shrines, Old and New

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SHRINES OLD AND NEW

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

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TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1913

TO THE MEMORY

OF

Those Illustrious Two

WHO

"GAZING ON NATURE'S NAKED LOVELINESS" AND
FOLLOWING HER IN SINGLENESS OF HEART

REVIVED AND RESTORED THE PURITY OF ENGLISH POETRY

AND WHOSE DUST FOREVER HALLOWS
TESTACCIO'S HILL AT ROME,

AN OBSCURE AND UNWORTHY DISCIPLE
DEDICATES
THESE HUMBLE EFFORTS

PREFACE

THE following stanzas entitled "SHRINES OLD AND NEW," and many of the short poems which follow, were hurriedly put into verse form with little or no intention of publication, during a trip through South-Western Europe with my family, in 1911-12. They are made up of daily casual thoughts and ideas which arose before me, or of incidents which occurred as I travelled, and of impressions formed concerning some of the social, political, and historical conditions of the people with whom, and the places where, I happened to be when I wrote them.

Incidentally the larger work refers to the lives, works, characters, and last resting-places of many of the English, and a few of the other European, poets.

No particular effort was made to select for my theme, as I gathered it together, scenes or personages

of momentous importance, so that while some of the matters, places and individuals referred to here will be of world-wide repute and interest, others will be merely local, and of no public or general concern.

Wherever I have touched upon social or political conditions as they occurred to me at the time, I have endeavored to be as fair in my criticism of one class of society, or of the body politic, as of the other, and have tried to show with impartiality the weaknesses and errors of each extreme of thought as I saw them. And where conditions existed that were to my mind foreign to the genius of a free people, or out of touch with the modern spirit of our times, I have not hesitated to condemn, and, to the best of my power, to expose them.

I fear that there may be here and there found in these pages what the kindly critic may term "platitude," or what the less indulgent and more relentless one may place in the even worse category of "farrago," or "banality"; that the language may be found commonplace, and the literary effort and finish lacking in that spontaneity, brilliancy and depth of thought which make for true poetry. It may be, too, that a lack of continuity may be de-

tected in places in the larger poem, and that it may be condemned by the exacting reader on the ground of transiliency. My only excuse for all these failings must be that most of what now appears for the first time in print was hastily and disconnectedly written "along the way," as it were, with many interruptions, little if any quiet, no bibliothecal assistance, and with many counter-attractions to divert the mind. Usually the thoughts of the day were hurriedly gathered up the same night, and took the form of a stanza carelessly put together the next morning, and thus it has remained until now.

In "Shrines Old and New" I have adopted the Spenserian nine-line stanza, a form used by the most famous Italian poets, by Lord Byron in "Childe Harold," also by Shelley and Thomson, and some others of the best English poets; although, on the other hand, ridiculed in verse by Pope. Admitting, as it does, of every variety of thought—the droll, the pathetic, the descriptive, the sentimental, the tender or the satirical—I deemed it the best adapted and the easiest adjusted to a work like this, which of necessity spreads itself over many regions, includes such a variety of subject, incident, person and locality, and

necessitates, too, such frequent and sudden leaps from one particular line of thought to an entirely different one.

An apology may also be in order here to the reader for the great length of "Shrines Old and New," and for the inclusion of such an apparent medley of subject-matter under one title. The aim of modern writers is, I know, to be brief if they wish to be popular, but a glance at the index will show that each subject dwelt upon in the major poem appears there under a separate heading, and thus can be readily found without necessitating what might prove to be a tedious perusal of the whole work.

Some of my friends have flattered me by saying that my verses (with the illustrations I have gathered as I travelled) are worthy of publication, so I have yielded to the temptation to embody the long poem along with some of my shorter efforts in the form of a volume.

Whatever frailties and blemishes in thought and diction or in literary and artistic finish (and they are many) the work may contain, I hope the critic will overlook. To the pedestal of the lofty and accomplished poet deeply versed in the lore of the classics

and of mythology, and in the romance of mediæval times—whose life-efforts have been chiefly or entirely devoted to the muse, and who has been crowned with success and fame, and the applause and reverence of his fellows—I dare not presume, and cannot hope to attain. The vicissitudes and cares, the worries and exactions, of a busy but all the time to me soul-starving and distasteful professional life, have, no doubt, left their traces in a paucity of poetic thought and language and a narrowness of poetic vision, and have prevented the full development of any small talent which might have been inherent in me for literary study or poetic pursuits, until a very recent period, and one usually too late in life to allow of much being accomplished along the present lines.

And so, if I have here and there clothed some old but imperishable truth in a new dress, or expressed some simple thought in befitting language, if I may have struck some happy expression, some harmonious chord, or if any of my readers may find somewhere between the covers of this little book some ennobling or inspiring sentiment, some vivid historical description, some appropriate word-painting, some high ideal outlined, some chaste or grace-

ful imagery, or even some faint suggestion of anything pertaining to the lofty, the grand or the sublime in life, and will with charity overlook my many shortcomings for the rest, I will feel with gratitude that my feeble efforts and aims have not gone entirely unrewarded.

T. D. J. F.

Winnipeg, November, 1912.

"In Tivoli, among the Sabine mountains,
Where Anio leaps in silvery cascades."

(See page 150.)

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". . . And yonder thro' the opening glade
Killarney's lakes, arbutus-fringed, beneath."

(See page 109.)

Shrines Old and New

I.

ONE glorious evening in bright, sunny May,
With verdure bursting on the prairies round—
Those unshorn gardens stretching far away,
For which the speech of England has not found
A name—I sat me list'ning to the sound
Of preparation for departure from the West.
On my first trip to Europe I was bound
For pleasure, learning, travel, and that rest
Physicians say an ocean voyage gives the best.

II.

We're off! and in the darkness of the night
Pass thro' Kenora, hear Keewatin's roar.
Fort William and Port Arthur loom in sight
At morn, fair twins of North Superior's shore.
Now waves foam-silver'd splash the roadbed o'er;
Tunnel and cliff in continuity
Are hurried by; which interests me the more
I know not, the shore's wild sublimity
Or contemplation of this mighty inland sea.

III.

Then a vast stretch of forest, stream and lake,
Which only foot of beast or Indian trod.
Here surely man his toil of life may break
And dwell alone with solitude and God.
These are the thoughts that o'er one's fancy flood
For hours, when, past Superior's wide main,
This great wild stretch so much the senses aw'd.
I wondered, languid, restless, if the train
Would ever reach the haunts of man and life again.

IV.

But just as morning breaks the second day,
The bustling town of Sudbury meets the sight;
And then I feel the languor slip away
As all around seems animate and bright.
And with what new experience of delight
Does fair Muskoka burst upon the view.
And Bala, with her pine groves exquisite,
Waiting the tourist like the lover true,
Forever charming, and to me forever new.

V.

I stayed at Barrie on Lake Simcoe's strand,
Nestling serene along her sea-green bay;
A gem of beauty, set in fairyland,
Fit theme for painter's brush or poet's lay.
Would that my time allowed a longer stay
'Mid her enchanted hills and villas, where
Hours, seeming moments, fled too soon away.
Was there one spot than all the rest more fair?
O Barrie, beautiful! I surely found it there.

VI.

We're in Toronto, with her busy streets,
Ontario's pride and queenly capital,
Where law and education have their seats
And dignity rules monarch over all.
Here I was tempted to be critical
O'er street cars that arouse the traveller's ire;
And wondered in a mood satirical
Did not her city fathers ever tire
Of gazing on the ruins of her ancient fire?

VII.

To native Wentworth then I wander on;
Among her verdant slopes my steps I trace.
There is no spot beneath the glorious sun
More charming than this restful, hill-crown'd place.
Here near a week ('twas far too short a space)
I trod old footpaths 'mid her vales and rills,
Her winding roads, her vistas that embrace
Dundas's spires, Ancaster's ruined mills,
And Flamboro's distant wooded azure-tinted hills.

VIII.

Spring's first flow'ring hepaticas had left;
An emerald veil was spreading on the haws;
And trilliums peep'd from round each boulder cleft
With the pale bloodroot, and a filmy gauze
Hung o'er the maples, and the green sward was
Dotted with early dandelion gold;
And prickly beech buds glistened on the shaws,
And all around peer'd longing to unfold
Their greenery, fern and mandrake struggling thro' the mould.

"Was there one spot than all the rest more fair?
O Barrie, beautiful! I surely found it there."

(See page 25.)

IX.

How soft the music of the winnowing wind
Creeps dreamy thro' these hilly Wentworth woods,
Odorous of May-time, and it leaves behind
A poetry of stillness. Nought intrudes
Of life's mad rush and its vicissitudes.
How crisp the freshness of the morning sun;
How calm the quiet which at noontide broods,
Soft soothing here, o'er tree and brook and stone;
How sweet the night's aroma when the day is done.

X.

While others more bestirring scenes may tempt,
I fain would satiate my soul with these:
This rural life from public haunt exempt;
These tongues familiar speaking in the trees;
These running brooks, nature's rare libraries;
Stones preaching sermons; and the genial spring
Lending her spices to the fecund breeze,
Making creation animate, doth bring
A glad reminder that there's good in everything.

XI.

Wherever there is life there beauty is.
The more one looks on nature the divine
Is found: e'en in the plant and boulder 'tis.
These leaves do breathe, this sap mounts as life's wine
At morning's gray or eve's incarnadine.
And tho' these trees around seem motionless,
They utter to the poet truths benign.
He listens, and from nature's vernal dress
Learns her great universal echo to express.

XII.

But time is pressing on, I must away
From Wentworth's wooded heights and scented air
To Ottawa for one short single day
To view her stately piles and scenery rare;
The wonderful maelstrom of Chaudiere;
The Chateau Laurier, majestic, tall;
Rockliffe's famed drive and gorgeous landscape there.
Here, too, our sojourn's but a hurried call—
Our ship lies waiting at her port at Montreal.

XIII.

Great modern City, once French Ville Marie!
Thou still art leader of Canadian marts.
Thy trade and commerce drawn from every sea
Lead all the rest, and from thy port departs
More shipping than from any other starts
Of small craft and of huge leviathan.
Here is McGill, in Medicine and in Arts
Far famed, and here are to be seen
Superb Mount Royal, and the rapids of Lachine.

XIV.

We're passing old Quebec! What thoughts spring forth!
The cove of Wolfe, Abram's historic plain.
What deeds of valor here were given birth
By Frontenac, Montcalm and brave Champlain!
I see them stand in fancy once again,
As their heroic lives the scene recalls;
And France's battles fight again in vain.
And lo! to north as evening shadow palls,
Like bridal veil I welcome Montmorency's Falls.

XV.

Saint Lawrence widens. With th' approach of day
The narrow homestead of the habitant
Recedes; the barren coast line of Gaspé
Tells of the Gulf at hand, the river gone;
Magdalen's isles and lonely Miquelon,
Sole relics of old France's empire grand
In the New World, we pass, then border on
The Ancient Colony of Newfoundland,
With icebergs sparkling in the sun along her strand.

XVI.

Hark, now! the roll of the abysmal deep,
Where Neptune reigns unchallenged and alone;
Wakes with its roar and lulls again to sleep,
O King on thine unconquerable throne!
Thy power sublime, Omnipotence thine own,
Vast, boundless image of Eternity!
Thy depths unsearched, thy caverns all unknown,
Well hath the Psalmist, wrapp'd in ecstacy,
Likened the judgments of Almighty God to thee.

"Thro' Dunloe's Gap, that glorious mountain ride."

(See page 110.)

XVII.

Thou holdest in thy briny cradle bed
  Things that poor mortals cannot contemplate.
And down in thy profoundest depths are bred
  Wonders both living and inanimate.
  To thee is borne what doth contaminate
From every stream and lake and lesser sea,
  And yet, O Ocean, wide, and deep, and great,
Thou dost, and shalt for all futurity,
Stand forth the emblem of Divinest purity.

XVIII.

And, Ocean, thine uncheck'd immensity
  Tells in the calm and in the hurricane
Of that Great Ruler of the winds and sea
  Who stills the waves and curbs the wat'ry main.
  Against whose will thy billows strike in vain;
He only more than thee inscrutable;
  He the Controller of thy boundless plain;
And when thy breakers thunder and appal,
Out of the mighty deep, O Lord, to Thee I call.

XIX.

But I have dwelt enough, O deep, on thee,
Thine awful space, thy fury, and thy moan;
Grand teacher of sublime humility
In gentle calm, and in the tempest's groan
Sweeping from torrid up to frigid zone.
We feel our stay on thee is nearly o'er,
Our trusty ship no longer sails alone,
And to the south in place of ocean's roar
We hear its wavelets lap against the Emerald Shore.

XX.

Behold to left the beacon of Cantyre!
Lending her rays to ships from many seas.
At early dawn there lifts in green attire *
Before us Sodor's head, high, and devoid of trees,
Famed for her Manxmen and her House of Keys.
Now there's a stir! Our pilot's at the fore
To guide us safe thro' the intricacies
Of Mersey's shoals, and now, our sea trip o'er,
Exhilarant and glad we tread old England's shore.

* The green sward of the Isle of Man is peculiarly attractive to the eye after such a long continuity of the dazzling blue ocean.

XXI.

A new sensation! as one hurries forth,
  New cars, new bridges, hedges, everything,
On that first railway journey from the north
  To London, as around the curves we swing;
  With summer just emerging from the spring.
What contrast to the prairie's broad expanse!
  Of green, what varied shades and coloring!
Gardens and parks and villas that entrance;
Tranquility and beauty met at every glance.

XXII.

What shall I say of London? What can I
  Of that great citadel of Empire say?
My pen fails when I try to testify
  Of a small part of London of to-day;
  Vast, seething, noisy, profligate and gay;
Where in a surging stream are drawn and swirl'd,
  From lands both near at hand and far away,
Races of many men, and where is whirl'd
In one great vortex all the commerce of the World.

XXIII.

Here may be met hot Afric's swarthy son;
The pig-tailed merchant from the far Cathay;
The planter from the tea-fields of Ceylon;
The dusky Indian and the bronzed Malay.
Here of all tribes and tongues, a vast array,
Attracted to the world's great capital.
Canadian, Australian, Maori, they
Strangers before, here mix and commingle
And greet here, too, their erstwhile foe of the Transvaal.

XXIV.

Here one may feast the eye with rare delight,
Pass weeks and months and still see something new;
Galleries and theatres for day and night;
Parks, churches, monuments, and Regent's Zoo;
Abbeys and palaces, museums, too;
Windsor, the dwelling-place and tomb of Kings;
The circling Thames at Richmond and at Kew;
Old Hampton Court, and countless other things,
Surround us everywhere and charm our wanderings.

XXV.

England's proud Abbey! first of Norman styles,
Built for the great Confessor's holy pride!
While at the Reformation other piles
Where did the abbot and his monks preside,
Bearing thy title sanctuary were denied,
Thou they didst spare! and could a nation save,
Where she could see her makers deified,
More fitting place? And thus thine aisles, thy nave,
Are rich with statues of her great, her wise, her brave.

XXVI.

From yon triforium gallery look down
Beneath the shade of clerestory windows' light,
On these rare marks of England's sons' renown;
The nation's choice, the muse's favorite;
Her statesmen here, her poets opposite,
And own these things demand our veneration
And worship, and our higher thoughts invite;
This place and stone of royal coronation,
This silent temple of men's reconciliation.

XXVII.

Here to the north are they who governed men,
Whose lives were given thro' good and evil fate,
By warrior's sword or statesman's tongue or pen
To mould and shape the fortunes of the State.
And rightly, Britain, dost thou consecrate
Such worthy lives, as thou for ever hast!
That future ages these may emulate,
Fitting it is that they should rest at last
In this thy cloister's honor'd temple of the past.

XXVIII.

And yonder to the south, as twilight falls
Upon the busts of Britain's bards, they seem
As if they spoke and moved—these sculptur'd walls
Seem animated 'neath the dying beam
Of daylight—do they move or do I dream?
Those clarion spirits who in airy flights
Of measured cadence used of old to teem,
Who in their palmy days from lofty heights
Pour'd forth in honey'd verse their exquisite delights.

XXIX.

Now I turn eastward and my journey brings,
  Past sanctuary and Confessor's ancient shrine,
My footsteps to the chapel of the Kings,
  Which Henry founded, where the Tudor line
  Sleep with the Stuarts, Kings by right Divine,
And George the Second's Hanoverian dust:
  'Neath a carved pendant ceiling whose design
Of fanwork tracery above them must
Form a rich cov'ring for those here sarcophagus'd.

XXX.

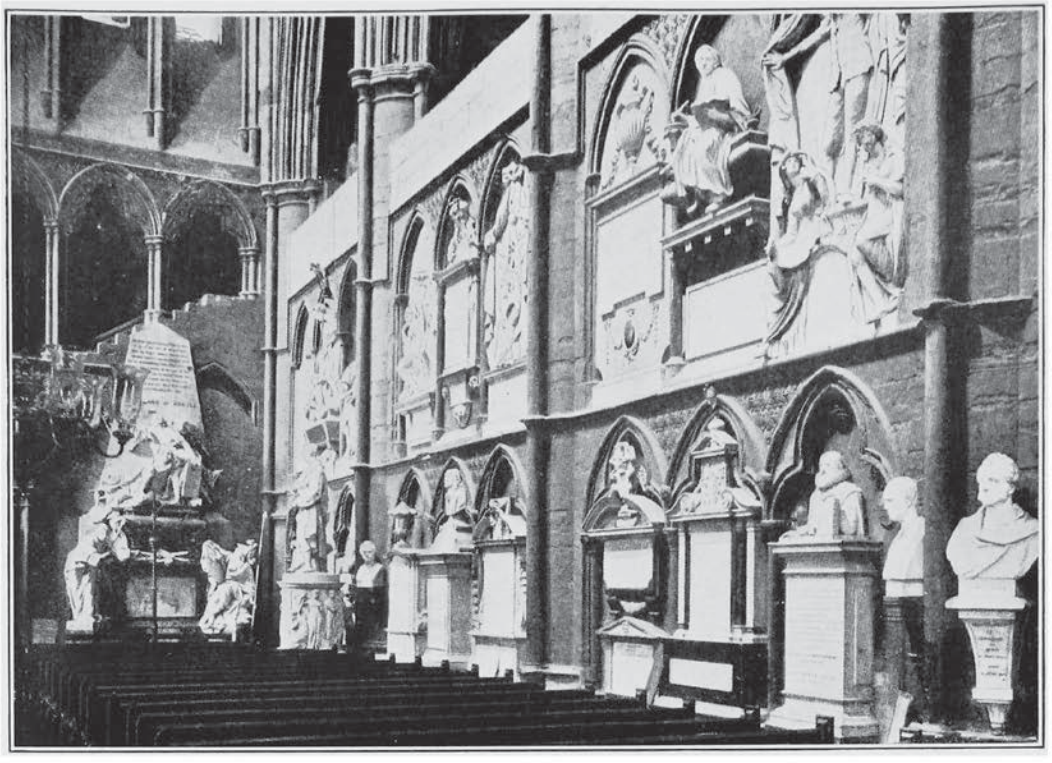
Now passing outward down the long-drawn nave
  Are other, perhaps more worthy, sepulchres.
Here the great African explorer's grave;
  Here Newton's, first of all philosophers;
  And Herschel's, he who dwelt among the stars
And called them each one by their name—so well
  Are these men's deeds their best interpreters
They need no bust or monument to tell
Of their illustrious lives, their works incomparable.

XXXI.

I saw the Coronation of the King;
The Royal march along the verdant Mall;
I saw each colony and nation bring
Their tribute of respect from one and all.
And this vast host in Britain's capital
Join in acclaim of George's glorious reign.
And thro' this throng, this mighty living wall,
Saw sixty thousand troops, a brilliant train,
Pass proudly in review to martial music's strain.

XXXII.

What thoughts arise within the Briton's breast
At this great pageant that to-day we see!
Was there in other age made manifest
Such perfect blend of form and liberty,
Best marked by all this stately pageantry?
And both time only all the more endears,
And strengthens more the people's loyalty;
These forms well hallowed by a thousand years,
This freedom which our fathers won in blood and tears.



"As if they spoke and moved—these sculptured walls
Seem animated . . . . . ."

(See page 40.)

XXXIII.

This more than any other was the thought
That uppermost revealed itself to me,
That they who have this hard-won freedom ought
A people privileged indeed to be—
In this fact, that they have a monarchy
Between which and themselves no longer stands
The curse of class rule and monopoly;
A constitution firm set which commands
World-wide respect as true democracy expands.

XXXIV.

I found a spot 'mid all this noise and stir,
Where I could linger pensive, and review
The scenes, the times, the work, the character
Of statesmen, scholars, poets, artists, too,
Hallow'd by Johnson,* where the craze for new
Doth not yet age's sanctity invade.
Such spots, alas! they're left a dwindling few,
And 'cross the way, beneath Old Temple's shade
I reverent stood where Goldsmith's dust is laid.

* The old "Cheshire Cheese Inn" on Fleet Street.

XXXV.

No cloister'd Abbey, such as other men,
  Less worthy followers of the muse, have sought,
Received thy dust, O gentle Goldsmith, when
  The lessons by thy Hermit and thy Traveller
    taught,
  Thy race was won, thy life's work nobly wrought.
Thou need'st no bust to mark thy resting-place;
  No laurel wreath need to thy tomb be brought,
For tho' thou sleepest in this quiet space
Thy works shall live when time the cloister shall
    deface.

XXXVI.

What memories do these ancient haunts recall,
  This Wine Court Inn, this church multangular.
Each nestling near the shadow of St. Paul,
  What triumphs of the muse, of state, of war,
  Of mellow'd past, a wondrous calendar!
Here Burke and Reynolds sat, here was outpour'd
  The wine which celebrated Trafalgar;
And here perchance, around the festive board
Nell Gwynne enjoyed the favors of her royal lord.

XXXVII.

On Ludgate Hill, 'mid traffic's busy train,
'Mid hum of commerce and of hurrying men,
The great Apostle to the Gentiles' fane
Towers high—the monument of mighty Wren.
Here sleep fam'd wielders of both sword and pen;
The authors of Napoleon's tragic fall,
Nelson and Wellington, and here again
Milman! Donne! Heber! sweetest of them all;
These glorious names enrich the shades of old St. Paul.

XXXVIII.

And that of Philip Sidney, valiant knight!
Who fighting for the Dutch at Zutphen fell;
Brave soldier, poet, statesman, genius bright,
About whose varied gifts historians tell.
Here rest his ashes, here his funeral knell
'Mid pageant grief profound was fitting heard,
Of English chivalry the beau ideal,
Flower of her knighthood, he is here interr'd,
Tho' of his fame, alas, these walls say not a word.*

*Sidney was buried in the chapel of Old St. Paul's (afterwards destroyed by fire). His obsequies were such as befit a king, the most pompous ever accorded an English poet. The present cathedral has no monument to this distinguished Englishman—the first gentleman of the Elizabethan period—but it is now proposed to erect a fitting memorial to him at Zutphen.

XXXIX.

Here, too, the lover of the chis'l and brush
Entranced may pore o'er Gibbons and Thornhill.
I stood within the whisp'ring gallery's hush
And gazed high up above its solemn still
On peerless paintings—the Athenian Hill,
The stricken scoffer on Damascus' way,
The fate of Elymas—these pictures thrill
As far below there rests the mould'ring clay
Of mighty painters, Reynolds, Landseer and Millais.

XL.

'Tis told how Thornhill with a friend had come,
So saith the legend, on a certain day,
To work upon these paintings in the dome,
And how he critical stepped back a way
To view his work, but to his friend's dismay
He stepped too far. The other with one blow
Of brush destroyed the artist's fine display,
Who leaped to save the work, and doing so
Rescued himself from death upon the flags below.

XLI.

But there's another name—illustrious Pope!
The lettered world still homage pays to thee;
And I had cherished from a boy the hope
One day thy haunts, thy resting-place, to see;
To seek at Windsor Lady Gower's beech tree

"The great Apostle to the Gentiles' fane
Towers high—the monument of mighty Wren."

(See page 47.)

On which she carved the record of thy fame;
  Where sprang thy muse from earliest infancy;
Who lisped in numbers, for the numbers came;
And tread thy garden and thy grot at Twickenham.

XLII.

Here was the centre of a brilliant throng;
  The statesmen, poets, scholars of that day.
Here often met leaders in prose and song,
  Swift, Walpole, Peterboro, Bathurst, Gay,
  First of the land—a notable array,
Whose fame here yet around a halo flings,
  Here now thy treasure crumbling to decay—
Bust, urn and statue *—to the thoughtful brings
Reminder of the vanity of human things.

* The author spent a day wandering thro' these once famous precincts at Twickenham. The poet's villa was taken down early last century, it is said, to avoid the annoyance of a constant stream of curiosity-seekers, though the garden and grotto are still as Pope left them; but the images and statuary, including those of Christ and the Virgin, several goddesses and some of the poet's favorite animals, are fast crumbling to ruin. In the stone arch over the fountain in the rear of the garden is a bust of the architect, Stanhope, with two famous lion heads, one on each side, with this inscription:

"The humble roof, the garden's scanty line,
Ill spoke the genius of a bard divine;
But fancy now displays a fairer scope
And Stanhope's plans unfold the soul of Pope."

XLIII.

How truly Warburton has said of thee,*
  Whom none have equalled, tho' all imitate,
That thou declinedst to stoop to flattery
  Of kings and heroes whom men call the Great;
  But did by reason, satire, sense, create
A fame that lesser poets could not find;
  That in thy mighty brain there dwelt innate
Polish and scorn, praise and contempt combin'd.
Diminutive thy stature, but how rich thy mind!

XLIV.

Who hath not seen, laden with fragrant bloom,
  Some poor fruit tree distorted, all awry,
And when the welcome harvest time hath come
  That ill-shaped tree borne down with choice supply,
  While nobler trees barren and fruitless die?
So in our famed Parnassus, those sweet lays,
  Blooms of thy person's poor deformity,
Have ripened well to future ages' praise,
And all the sweeter grown with length of passing days.

* In Twickenham Church, where Pope sleeps near his parents, Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, placed a memorial to his poet friend, with this inscription:

"Heroes and kings, your distance keep;
In peace let one poor poet sleep,
Who never flattered folks like you;
Let Horace blush, and Virgil too."

XLV.

After the storm one gladly greets the calm,
And now to London's surging crowds adieu;
I journey on to tranquil Buckingham,
Shrine of great poets, statesmen, martyrs too,
And scientists and scholars not a few.
Where gentle Cowper penn'd his sacred lays,
And wrote his "Task," and Gilpin's picture drew;
Where that oft-quoted elegy of Gray's
Enrich'd mankind, and won its author deathless praise.

XLVI.

At Olney Cowper breathed his sweetest song,
Which so much nature, so much truth, displays;
And tho' in mental darkness lingering long
So far excelled the forced, affected lays
Of copiers of Pope's and Dryden's days.
O Providence! what dispensation kind
Brought from this stricken soul that flood of praise
And piety and joy? How didst Thou find
Such gleams of heavenly hope in a despairing mind?

XLVII.

He rests not here, alas! amid those scenes
  Where with kind friends his better days were spent
Altho' the century which intervenes
  Has placed here his museum-monument.
  But far more lasting and more eloquent
That sacred verse which here was given birth—
  Sung now in every isle and continent;
Cast on the waters—bread of priceless worth
Which he and Newton gave to lift and cheer the earth.

XLVIII.

Not far from Olney, that historic spot,
  Called Gayhurst Manor, with its stately oaks,
Brings to our memory the Gunpowder Plot,
  First started here with Catesby's schemes and jokes;
  And Owen's cells, and subterranean walks,
The proud seat of the Digbys, one of whom,
  Everard by name, with daring Guido Fawkes,
Winter and Catesby, met the traitor's doom
And fouled his ancient name for centuries to come.

XLIX.

Close by to Eton, with its lawns and bowers,
  Endeared to him by boyhood's fondest ties,
In sight of Royal Windsor's stately towers
  The home of Gray—Stoke Poges—dreamy lies;
  With all that there inspires and sanctifies.
The old church down the well trod Avenue,
  Dearest of England's Muse's sanctuaries;
The ivy-mantled tower, the family pew,
The grave among his rugged elms and shady yew.

L.

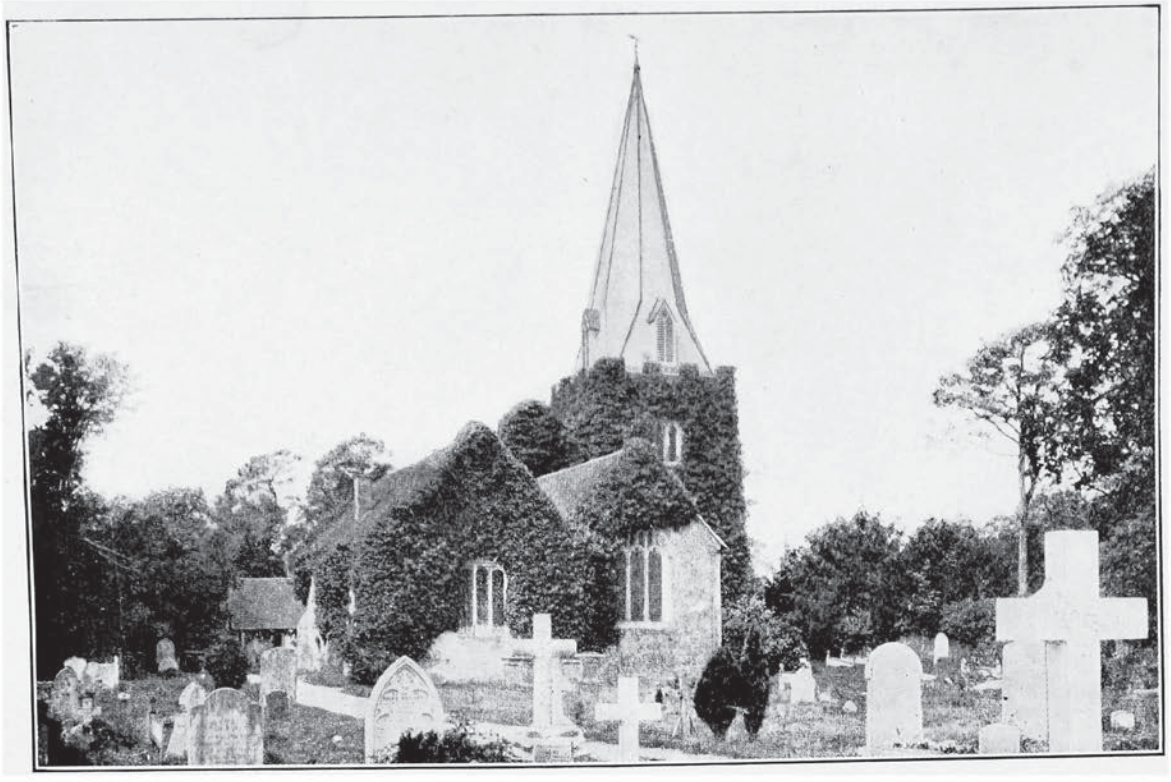
Think not, O Gray, this tomb which all revere,
  Where now I stand amid the gazing throng,
Hid all thy sweetness when they laid thee here,
  Where thou hast slept these many ages long.
  Oh, no! the fragrance of thy matchless song
Each spring returns in every flower and tree;
  Thy gentle voice re-echoes from among
The warbling birds, the drowsy humming bee—
All witnesses of thy songs' immortality.

LI.

Thy poetry is that which doth not die,
  But, like the music of the rolling spheres,
Or memory of some childhood lullaby,
  Grows sweeter with the soft'ning of the years.
  And, 'mid to-day's impostures and veneers
And trumpery rhymes which everywhere abound,
  Can rouse to ecstasy, or move to tears.
Thy deathless spirit hovers yet around
And falls like welcome rain upon the thirsty ground.

LII.

Near by is Denham Court where Dryden's pen
  Stooped to the flatteries of a cringing age,
Now nauseating in praise of worthless men;
  Now steeped in satire or in persiflage.
  Here, mingling in the bigotry and rage
Of those tumultuous times, he in a hell
  Of scorn enveloped Shadwell; here his page
Told of the treachery of Achitopel;
Of Heavenly Hind pursued by beasts heretical.



"The ivy-mantled tower, the family pew,
The grave among his rugged elms and shady yew."

(See page 55.)

LIII.

And here, St. Giles gave Milton's epic birth,
Whose dauntless spirit blindness could not tame.
What other Shire can boast of nobler worth,
Or point in song or state to loftier name
Than those which honor'd thee, O Buckingham?
Thou numberest Burke among thy chosen men;
From thee did Edmund Waller rise to fame;
Thou gavest America her glorious Penn,
And England Beaconsfield, who sleeps at Hughenden.

LIV.

And thou canst boast of patriot martyrs, too,
Who died to give the nation liberty.
I only need to here pass in review
The names of England's halo-crownèd three,
Whose blood was shed to make her people free:
Hampden, who fighting bravely fell at Thame;
Coke, who resisted Royal tyranny,
And William Russell, that reverèd name,
Whose unjust death redounded to his country's shame.

LV.

And thou hast victors in the world of peace
As well as war, and can of scholars tell—
Of Grote, whose knowledge of the Greeks and Greece
In history's realm none other could excel,
And who at Burnham Beeches came to dwell;
Of the great Herschel, conqueror of the skies,
And heavenly searcher without parallel;
Who saw at Slough th' Uranian planet rise,
And to the world revealed night's wondrous mysteries.

LVI.

A day in Oxford old, and redolent
Of learning of long centuries ago;
Of Wolsey and of Wickham eloquent,
And martyr's stake, and Amy Robsart's woe,
Betrayed by Dudley; in the vault below
St. Mary's chancel this fair woman sleeps,
'Mid crumbling quadrangle and portico,
Relics of Saxon walls and Norman keeps;
Here myriad years of lore th' antiquary reaps.

LVII.

In vale of Thame, to Oxford close at hand,
Is Chalgrove field with Hampden's monument,
Where dashing Rupert and his Royal band
From Oxford slew the leader of the Parliament;
And Oxford boasts that rising; yet unrent,
Saint Michael's lifts her ancient Saxon tower;
And that New College walls and battlement
Are hers, reminders of that long gone hour
When Roses, White and Red, disputed kingly power.

LVIII.

And Marlboro's seat lies within easy reach,
Great English home, whose ducal history dates
Back to Queen Anne, with lebanon and beech
Unmatched; and Woodstock sleeping at its gates,
Which Sarah finished, so the Arch relates,
When cruel death removed her warrior lord,
Whom a tall shaft nearby commemorates.
This heritage his country could afford
For Blenheim, Ram'lies, Malplaquet and Oudenarde.

LIX.

Toward Wales and Scotland then our travel lay,
The first part of the trip by motor car.
And as we journeyed forward on our way,
Along those perfect roads without a jar
Past tiller of the soil and villager,
Flying by town and stream and wood and grot,
Grazing perchance the swift or loiterer,
I thought what space destroyer had I got,
A " poetry of motion " bards of old had not.

LX.

Bidding farewell to Bucks early one morn,
We start for Severn's vale, which artists rave on;
Saw Banbury Cross, in childhood's rhyme well worn,
And scanned th' inscription on its side engraven;
Sojourn'd a while at Stratford on the Avon;
Thro' Shakespeare's home, and Hathaway's cottage stroll'd,
Mecca of travellers! Tourists' welcome haven.
But anything by me of Shakespeare told
Would be unequal to poor gilt on finest gold.

LXI.

To whom from heights above the common ground
'Twas given alone impartially to view
The weaknesses and frailties that abound
In human life, and to discern the true
From the unreal—he of all men knew
The villain's good, the hero's villainy.
He had that tolerance which alone the few
Possess—rare wisdom without vanity,
And the world's master-poet's gift—humanity.

LXII.

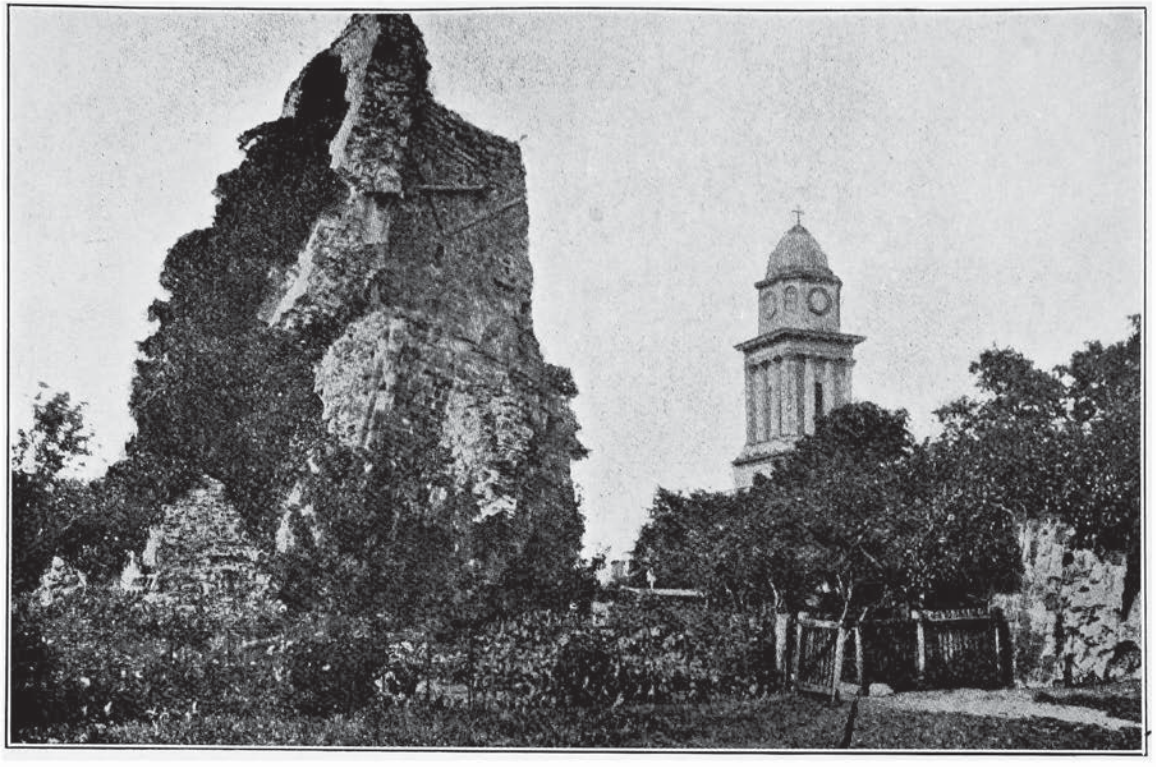
Whose tyrants live in hatred and in fear,
And die unpitied, and besmirched with blood;
Whose murderers in a hell on earth appear;
Whose crafty persons perish in a flood
Of their own craft; nor do his rogues elude
That law of compensation which frustrates
Their evil deeds, condemns their turpitude;
Whose every character his brain creates
The justice of God's providence well vindicates.

LXIII.

He held the scales of Justice equally,
  Becoming the character he portray'd;
Nowhere yet everywhere his sympathy;
  He rose above all imitation's aid.
  Each individual personage was made
By him to live in the imagined scene.
  Poetry, passion, humor—all these play'd
With him their part, nor did self intervene,
As others' works are spoil'd when "Ego" comes
    between.

LXIV.

Who stood so high above all other men,
  On genius's lofty pinnacle;
A Sophocles returned to earth again
  To bind men's thoughts to his commanding will;
  Into decadent drama to instil
New life and light, in imagery to climb
  Uncheck'd to vision's boundless cloud-topp'd hill;
Whose mighty mind, whose attributes sublime
Annihilated space and spanned the seas of time.



"This castle ruin, bower'd in foliage."

(See page 68.)

LXV.

Quickly we sped along, often too fast,
Past lovely park surrounding ancient seat;
By clock-tower'd church built in the reverent past;
By yew and beech of noblemen's retreat.
Of all these objects which the motorist greet
He takes in but a few, he misses more,
And, hurried on, longs for the obsolete—
The good old easy-going coach and four,
And the slow creeping travel of the days of yore.

LXVI.

Bridgnorth! a Queen upon her rocky throne,
She stands 'mong England's other towns unique
In eminence and outline all her own.
Nature hath almost played with her a freak,
Baring those red cliffs, rising gaunt and bleak,
Where stands her leaning castle, now a wreck.
Of her as like Jerusalem some speak;
I likened her as, gazing from some deck,
One views high up the battlements of old Quebec.

LXVII.

Behold the vale of Severn from the edge
Of castle hill, stretching for miles around.
One casts the eye from Bridgnorth's red-cliffed ledge
O'er panoramic scene not often found:
The castle ruins which the walks surround,
Standing as sentry over town and glen;
Entrancing scenes so frequent here abound,
One realizes soon why Shropshire men
Are greeted with the title " Proud Salopian!"

LXVIII.

Not only is she rich in scenic view,
But Salop takes high place in history's page,
And Bridgnorth makes her boast, and justly, too,
Of valor of her men in bygone age.
This castle ruin, bower'd in foliage,
Has witnessed many a long and bloody strife,
Seen White and Red Rose their fierce conflicts wage,
And this old town, when Cromwellism was rife
Bravely held out for Charles, his army and his life.

LXIX.

I wandered forth amid ancestral shades,
To Worfield's hamlet and its piercing spire;
Its sloping churchyard and its chestnut glades,
And up the Severn, twenty odd miles higher,
Found Shrewsbury, County seat of this good Shire.
I stood 'neath Charles' royal oak—from there
Found time to tour across to and admire
Buildwas and Wenlock, Abbeys old and rare,
Which ardent zeal of reformation could not spare.

LXX.

I climbed the Wrekin, lonely mount and old,*
To sing whose praise Salopian never tires,
From whose majestic crest one may behold
The fields of seventeen far distant Shires,
Their hills and dales, their County seats and spires.
I passed where Uriconium's ruins stare,
And Ludlow, which literary fame acquires
Because great Milton wrote his "Comus" there;
And her once famous castle, desolate now and bare.

* Local tradition says that the Wrekin is the oldest mountain in the world.

LXXI.

Fair Apley Park! with castellated gates,
Where once proud Whitmore made his princely home;
With hollowed cavern in her rocks which dates
Back to when Cromwell's troops were troublesome.
I watched her browsing deer in hundreds roam,
And viewed her mansion from the terrace bold,
And mirror'd Severn north from shadows come.
What loss of pride when this fair seat was sold,
And family lineage fell to ironmaster's gold!

LXXII.

But this rare beauty spot is only one
Of many English mansions, where the new
Replaces old, and family pride is gone,
And vulgar wealth reigns lord of all in view.
In England now the plutocrat, the Jew,
The once fair name of country seat debases;
His tentacles the church encircle, too;
And he is filling up these sacred places
With men who love the world and lack the Christian graces.

LXXIII.

And yet men wonder why the house of God
To-day is empty, withering with decay,*
When these old fanes, this consecrated sod,
Are in the gift of men whom gambler's play,
Corner in iron, or a lucky day
On stock exchange causes in wealth to roll!
To whom land, game, and fish are given away;
Who, themselves godless, godlessly control
All these, and worse, the sanctuaries of the human soul.†

* I was struck by the very small congregations I saw in the churches. I heard a preacher in St. Paul's read from official figures that only one-fourth of the population of Great Britain now attend any place of worship.

† I make no reflection on the present owner of Apley, or on any of those who now hold the four or more ecclesiastical gifts attached to this extensive and beautiful estate. So far as I am aware, these are each and all above reproach; I am merely referring to Apley as an example coming under my notice of how the lords of trade and finance have undermined the old aristocracy. and of the absurdity of the effete and out of date system prevailing which allows the spiritualities of many miles of thickly populated country, including, as here, large and thriving towns, to be absolutely at the whim and dictation of one man whom chance may make a churchman, a non-conformist, a unitarian, a Jew, a libertine, or an atheist. The system was bad enough when surrounded with the halo of ancient family pride and prestige, but how much worse under the irreligious and material conditions I am here depicting and which are increasing rapidly every day? In Scotland, to its credit be it said, the established church there long ago recognized and abolished such an unnatural, improper and contradictory alliance.

LXXIV.

Would that some Milton might again appear,
And put these Belials of to-day to shame;
These modern sons of Eli, who besmear
With lust and violence God's house and name,
And England's altars, once revered, defame.
Time was when loud against such an array
The great blind poet saddened did declaim,
And strive their carnival of vice to stay.
What England needed then does she not need to-day?

LXXV.

Doth not the noise of riot loud ascend
In her luxurious cities? Once again
Above her loftiest towers doth there not blend
Injury and outrage? Doth there not lurking reign
In England's palaces a wanton train
Who love vice for itself, for evil pine?
When sheltering night doth o'er her streets obtain,
Can one not presently discern the sign
Of Belial's offspring flown with insolence and wine?

LXXVI.

Are there not many Bladesovers to-day
Where Lichenstein usurps the place of Drew?*
All evidencing that broad, slow decay
In England's social organism. The Jew
Could never make nor can replace, tho' true
He gets and spreads out saprophytical,
Bringing in naught creative, fresh or new
Except that in the ancient lordly hall
The Bond Street show-room casts its trail around it all.

LXXVII.

These parvenus assume the rôle of lord
Without the old and lordly family tree,
Without pride, knowledge, training or the sword,
Essential to true aristocracy.
In dullness they are only a degree
Above th' old gentry less intelligent;
Active, not passive, their stupidity;
To make aristocrats their aims are bent
In vain from trade and finance rather than from rent.

* See H. G. Wells' novel, "Tono-Bungay," pages 70, 71, 72, for a description of the Hebrew invasion of England.

LXXVIII.

But here I pause! which is the greater curse—
  That vulgar rich now buy and grasp and hoard
The most of England's land, or is it worse
  To pay rent to an absent spendthrift Lord?
  I'm told about an Earl who owns a third
Of a whole Shire which he has never seen;
  And I rejoice that our Canadian sward
Is each man's own, and I am thankful that
We bend no knee to Earl or Jew or Plutocrat.

LXXIX.

But now to Wales our wanderings are bent,
  Where Snowdon lifts his barren, dreary head;
'Neath this and thro' Llanberis Pass we went,
  And by the hills and Falls of Bettws-y-coed.
  Carnarvon next, dull, unco guid—and dead.
'Twas Sabbath when I reached this godly seat.
  Hotels were barr'd, and on the streets no tread.
'Tis told that here the stocks enclose the feet
Of him who dares on Sabbath whistle on the street!

"The Devil's Punchbowl and the Torc Cascade
It feeds . . . . . ."

(See page 109.)

LXXX.

What's bad turns good, what's been quite wrong is
right!
These Welsh dissenters do detest a throne,
But presto! one of them's created Knight,
And, glittering Star and Garter all their own,
'Tis wondrous how in loyalty they're grown;
And praise of Prince enthroned doth never cease.
Yet in the great Investiture just gone,
These little saints, to save a crown apiece,
Hired and then starved the Metropolitan Police!*

LXXXI.

A pity 'tis, Carnarvon men like these
Rule and oppress thee, blest with Nature's charms;
These narrow Calvinistic pharisees,
Who view men's common actions with alarms,
And see in mirth and laughter nought but harms,
In sport and play the devil's deadly sting;
And tho' among themselves dissension swarms,
Unanimous they are about one thing—
Lloyd George their little god, their idol, uncrown'd
King!

* In the House of Commons on August 25th, 1911, in answer to a question, Mr. Churchill said that catering for the Metropolitan Police at the Carnarvon Investiture was done by the local authorities, but it was so unsatisfactory that the Commissioner intimated to the men that they could purchase their own meals, and that they would receive allowance accordingly.

LXXXII.

To Nonconformists he stands large and grand,
A mighty leader, like some Moses sent
To lead this Israel to its Promised Land
Of disendowment, disestablishment!
But 'twixt themselves I found there's many a rent,
Each leader wrangling to maintain his sway.
In one Welsh congregation of dissent
Not very long ago I'm told that they
Split up on whether they should stand or kneel to pray!

LXXXIII.

On Conway's ancient castle walls I roved,
Saw in St. Mary's old churchyard near by
The grave which Wordsworth's story oft has moved
In his famed "We are Seven" elegy.
And 'mid those crumbling, battered ruins I
Had easily in fancy backward trod,
And seen King Edward here his foes defy;
Or with the poet in Gray's Bard have stood,
Haggard of eye and woeful, over Conway's flood.

LXXXIV.

Behold Lake Vernwy, shady, deep and cool,
A wondrous feat of engineering skill,
Which gives to distant, busy Liverpool
The purest water from the Welshman's hill.
And now the Clwyd doth wanton clear and still.
Past Ruthyn, with her spires and castle tall
Crowning the hilltop, we press on, until
Wales falls behind, and England we recall
By Chester's old Cathedral and encircling wall.

LXXXV.

A day's long journey, and at length I find
Myself in Wordsworth's land, and gaze upon
Those reverend recesses of the mind—
Lakes, falls and ghylls, the poet's Helicon.
I climbed up to Helvellyn's tow'ring crown
Purpled with heather, swarmed by murmuring bees,
And from this dizzy eminence look'd down
On Ulswater's fair valley—scenes like these
Inspired the poet's soul, and well the fancy please.

LXXXVI.

In quiet village churchyard at Grasmere
He sleeps whom abbey's tomb could not attract;
The glorious English Lake bard's dust is here;
Poet of nature, student close, exact,
Lover of small things, he who could extract
More from the tiny drops of dew which wet
The grass around than from the cataract!
Who, passing mightier themes, could always get
Music in stone and tree, song in the violet.

LXXXVII.

But sad it is that as one moves about,
Drinks in and feels the lofty and sublime,
The sordid and the worldly will crop out
And soil and mar the beauty every time.
Here man's base love of greed approaches crime.
However quaint the spot, the place how fair—
A bridge to cross, an old church tower to climb,
I found with almost feelings of despair
The "perquisited varlet" flourished everywhere.*

* Richard Savage, early in the 18th century, in a poem entitled "On Public Spirit With Regard to Public Works," condemns this reprehensible practice in the following lines:

"But what the flow'ring pride of gardens rare,
However royal, or however fair,
If gates which to access should still give way,
Ope but like Peter's Paradise, for pay?
If perquisited varlets frequent stand,
And each new walk must a new tax demand,

". . . . . And how, too, there rang
The voice of Cicero where now the warbler sang."

(See page 152.)

LXXXVIII.

When I was seeing Conway's old purlieus,
I paid sixpence to climb her castle wall;
Officials said 'twas necessary to use
These funds to prop the ruins or they'd fall.
But surely this must be what we would call
A petty theft, or swindling sharper's game,
For when I started off I found that all
The stairs and towers and wall (they're all the same)
Were barr'd, forbidden ground to everyone that came.

LXXXIX.

At Windermere I heard the porter tell
Of a much noted church and priory
Down near the sea—the place was called Cartmell;
So I ran down there one day in July,
And found the noble Duke who lives near by *
Allow'd a sixpence toll from all who trod
Inside its walls—can anyone tell why
What should be free to all, the house of God,
Is used to perpetrate this piece of petty fraud?

What foreign eye but with contempt surveys?
What muse shall from oblivion snatch their praise?"

What vast sum is annually wrung out of tourists by these "perquisited varlets" of the British Isles it might be interesting to estimate. Millions of people directly and indirectly make an indolent, degraded living out of the filching and hawking and toll-collecting that is permitted to be carried on in public and semi-public places of interest that the tourist visits, and which, like our Niagara Falls and other famous new world resorts, should be free as air.

* This living is in the patronage of the Duke of Devonshire.

XC.

Not far away a hotel called Lodore
Stands, and behind this far-famed hostelry
There rise some rugged boulders, nothing more,
Altho' the tourist is informed that he
A wondrous cataract will surely see;
And pays to pass inside th' enclosing fence,
Because he's told " 'tis private property,"
And he parts with his quickly dwindling pence
To see these rocks—which is it, fraud or false pretence?

XCI.

From Windermere's fair scenes our journey turns
Northward 'mid winding mountain rill and glen
To Scotland, land of heather and of Burns;
Where Johnson, who in satire dipped his pen,
Says that the food which here is given to men
In England horses eat—but of her Isles,
Staffa, Iona, Jura, tell me when
Before I saw the like, and Bute's fair Kyles,
And further on the ancient seat of the Argyles.

XCII.

I tour'd one day from Glasgow down to Ayr.
No traveller comes to Glasgow but avails
Himself of seeing Burns' birthplace there.
And I observed that here, too, there prevails
The same fell curse of England and of Wales;
Three fees were charged to enter 'stead of one!
I mused as I responded to these calls
Could he but know of all this plund'ring done
What Scotland's bard would say—her honest, worthy son!

XCIII.

Thou'rt cursed, fair Scotland, for alas! thou'rt bound
By tolls and fees where'er the traveller goes.
I climbed the Trossachs, at their feet I found
Ere I this charming spot of nature rose
I paid eighteen-pence to His Grace, Montrose—
Another of these glaring landlord fakes
Is now asserted, and the tyrant throws
His coils 'round Lomond, and thy Queen of Lakes
The lordly clan Colquhoun, like grasping despot, takes.*

* A decision of the Court of Sessions has just given Sir James Colquhoun, one of the landed proprietors adjacent to this lake, the right to exclude the public from its shores. But the people having enjoyed the privilege from time immemorial are up in arms, and as I write a strong Committee is being organized to appeal from, and it is hoped to upset, this unpopular decision.

XCIV.

Thy sacred fanes are barr'd by tolls and fees,
To see them he of slender purse despairs.
At palace and at castle, if not these
Rapacious guide or sprawling soldier glares,
And noisy hawkers scream their common wares.
In these once lordly haunts of Marmion
Gone the old pride, the glory of the Stairs.
O Burke, immortal! not in France alone,
In Scotland, too, the age of chivalry is gone.

XCV.

As I survey these beauty spots on high;
These castles, drives, old kirks, and scenery,
And hear the peasant's and the tourist's cry,
The question bold presents itself to me—
Cannot these great romantic places be
Instead of sink holes, people's gold to drain,
By the State owned and by the State made free?
Why is this whole great nation's wide domain
Given o'er to pedlar's vulgar lust and landlord's gain?

XCVI.

'Twere well for thee, O Scotland, in the end
To stop the hawker, church and shrine make free;
On landed noble, if it must be, spend
Thy gold to give the people liberty
Untoll'd to mount thy hills, unfettered see
These relics of the men who made thee great.
Thy beauty spots thy patriot shrines should be
Shorn of these barbarous things, held by the State,
Free as thy heather-scented air immaculate.

XCVII.

And royal Edinburgh, once so fair,
Full of romance, of song, and chivalry,
Thou'rt fallen from those lofty heights, and here
Doth sordid gain now too hold revelry.
E'en old St. Giles, famous in history,
Taxes threepence to pass within her doors.
At Scott's tall shaft th' official predatory
Is met; at Knox's house a janitor's
Stern voice demands sixpence to walk its ancient floors.

XCVIII.

And Burns, her bard, rests not in native place,
  But in a lonely grave in far Dumfries,
And sordid Scotland stands for this disgrace,
  Yet claims his fame athwart the distant seas.
  On Calton's Hill still brave the salt Forth's breeze
Twelve crumbling columns, bleak, unfinished things,
  Poor mimics of the piles of ancient Greece.
Shame on the times! with shame the welkin rings!
Down from the Royal eyrie of the Stuart Kings.*

XCIX.

But while o'ercome with serious thoughts like this
  I sought 'mid Scotia's natural charms to find
In this Sahara vast an oasis
  Where loftier thoughts might slake the thirsty mind;
  Where lost the base, might enter the refined;
And so I turned to Melrose, Abbotsford,
  And round Dalmeny's shores where Forth doth wind,
And 'mongst the ruins of Craigmiller, stored
With tales of honeymoon of Mary and her lord.

* Edinburgh Castle.

C.

God rest thy soul! about me here are seen
At Holyrood, Lochleven, Linlithgow,
Thy palace, prison, birthplace, gentle Queen,
Scenes of thy pride, thy trials, and thy woe.
Ere Langside saw thy final hopes laid low,
And the base Moray did thy cause betray;
How oft in anguish here thy tears did flow.
Saddened I viewed these sights which led the way
To thy inglorious doom at cruel Fotheringay.

CI.

Our motor we have left behind, and now
Have taken ship for Scotland's island shores
At Glasgow, and our little vessel's prow
Points down the Clyde, and passes many scores
Of spectral ships, coming competitors
For ocean's trade, and now ahead I see
Dumbarton's rock, famous in Scotland's wars,
Whose castle high frowning there gloomily
Recalls old days of song and strife and chivalry.

CII.

Greenock's vast shipping yards are pass'd, and soon
Clan Lamont's death hill there before us lay,*
With Highland Mary's monument—Dunoon,
And Arran's peaks and island of Cumbrae;
And Bute's proud seat † and glittering Rothesay;
And stretching out for forty miles there ran
Macallum More's domain fading away
In distance, while upon our left doth beckon,
With its white hooded reefs, the eddying Corry-
vrechan.‡

* In 1646 the Campbells carried off two hundred of the clan Lamont from Toward Castle, the seat of their chief, and brought them to the Castle Hill of Dunoon, where, at the instance of the Marquis of Argyll, they were all barbarously massacred.

† Mount Stuart, the home of the Marquises of Bute, descendants of King Robert II.

‡ The whirlpool of Corryvrechan is formed by the Atlantic tide rushing in through a narrow strait between Jura and Scarba. A sunken rock causes the waves to leap mountains high. There are many legends connected with this famous maelstrom, which Scott describes in his "Border Minstrelsy."

"And royal Edinburgh, once so fair,
Full of romance, of song and chivalry."

(See page 87.)

CIII.

From sea-girt Oban one may wander forth
To each fair spot where fancy bids him go;
To Mull and Skye, those dreamlands of the north;
To Fingal's Cave, or vale of old Glencoe,
Where Campbells wrought the clan Macdonald's woe;
Or Iona, the sacred Isle, which gave
Columba that the Gospel faith might grow;
Or Triochatan's loch, whose waters lave
The foot of ancient Ossian's high o'erhanging cave.

CIV.

Watch the red sun sink into Oban's sea;
The mirror'd lights at evening in her bay
From some high overhanging promontory
Or from the pulpit of revered Macrae.*
Then let the veriest landscape critic say
What other spot he thinks more soft beguiles;
What sights sublimer in this realm than they,
Or of all lands where Nature beauteous smiles
What can surpass in grandeur Scotland's western isles.

* On an eminence south of the town and overlooking the sea, David Macrae has erected, to the memory of his father, who ministered to the spiritual wants of Oban's people for over forty years, an octagonal iron seat with a flagpole in its centre. This commanding spot, which is much frequented by tourists, is called "The Minister's Pulpit."

CV.

Now rises Eigg's green Isle, with Scuir, so steep,
Perched on the apex of a pyramid.
It frowns o'er the surrounding ocean deep,
And nought from its o'ertow'ring peak is hid.
Three hundred years ago it witnessèd—
So saith tradition—in a nearby cave,
A tragedy barbaric, and which rid
The Isle of its whole people, made one grave
Of that dark grot for all, from child to chieftain brave.

CVI.

The story saith for insult to their clan
The angry tribe, Macleod, came o'er from Skye,
Resolved to slaughter each Macdonald man
Who fell in view of their avenging eye.
But how they wrought this woeful tragedy,
More fit pertains to sad and mournful rhymes.
No heed they gave to wife or children's cry;
Their victims' tortures were their own pastimes;
They marr'd Eigg's Isle with worst of Scotland's history's crimes.

CVII.

Macdonald's clan, their wives and babes to save
Had left Eigg's huts, wherein they humble dwelt,
And refuge sought in Francis' gloomy cave.
How little reck'd they of the death it spelt,
Or of the torture which Skye's murderous Celt
Intended, when, their dwellings burnt and lost,
He block'd the cave with faggots, and they felt
Fire's roasting heat as each in anguish toss'd,
And all died martyrs to this dreadful holocaust!

CVIII.

But now Skye's mountains show their summits proud;
Behold Ben-Cailleach's lofty peak appear,
Caparison'd in heather, tipp'd in cloud,
A long and rugged climb, tho' seeming near.*
And all around are evidences here
Of Britain's curse. Like many another case,
A lordly idler tolls each port and pier;
Another drone of a decaying race
But adds another page to Scotland's worst disgrace.

* It took the writer three hours to climb this mountain, which is 2,466 feet high.

CIX.

Poor lovely Skye! this lordly imbecile
With tolls and taxes levies rates and feus,
Sucks out the very lifeblood of the Isle.
Her capital he owns and her purlieus;
To islander or traveller he'll refuse
A landing free—to free men what a plight!
Is there no law to stop these cursèd dues?
Where do these titled vampires get the right
Of power so vast o'er every soul and thing in sight?

CX.

'Tis written! clear and plain on history's page
The answer to this burning question's told:
How powerful chieftain in a byegone age,
For King or countryman betrayed and sold,
Or spurious sons of Kings bad, lustful, bold,
Were wanton given these vast possessions free,
Which still to-day their idle scions hold,
Or got them thro' some godless piracy
Of the religious houses of antiquity.

"And white San Salvador."

(See page 127.)

CXI.

No British freeman who industrious toils,
And gives for what he has equivalent,
Should be deprived of honest, hard-earned spoils
He or his fathers won by labors spent;
Nor do I grudge from them the gifts that went
To Marlboro and the like, old leaders brave,
Whose valor made this realm magnificent,
But sovereign State, the hand that wanton gave
Should check these titled idlers who the lands enslave.

CXII.

I scorn a nation's proletariat
Who will not gladly, richly, compensate
The scholar, patriot, statesman, diplomat,
Who, poor, his genius given to the State,
Has toiled and striven to make the nation great.
And glorious peaceful triumphs help'd to win.
But a great landlord incurs righteous hate
Who cares not who's cast out so he is in,
Who toils not, neither did his worthless forbears spin.

CXIII.

Whose family tree is laden with the fruit
Of desecrated shrines and monasteries;
Tho' now his Lordship's taste it doesn't suit,
To talk about unpleasant things like these.
And when he's asked his share of taxes he's
Indignant at the insult, he'll allege
It's theft, the basest of iniquities—
This drone, whose fortune in a bygone age
Was built on plunder, treachery, or sacrilege.

CXIV.

Stript Scotland's vales now of that hardy race
Of toilers who once dwelt there happy, such
The Law which gives the lord of earth more place
To hunt his deer, hold in his grasping clutch
The hare and grouse the needy dare not touch.
Driven from her soil to some far distant shore,
These men to whom the nation owes so much.
And should Great Britain be embroil'd in war,
The loss of them, perhaps, too late she will deplore.

CXV.

Upon whose ears doth skirl of bagpipes fall,
Now that these sturdy men no more are here?
Whose bounty fills the old ancestral hall
With feast magnificent and gorgeous cheer?
Who roam those runnel'd slopes in search of deer?
Where once these exiles made their sojourn brief,
What lordly spender, generous financier?
If not the titled drone or Gaelic chief,
The rich Oil King, the Lord of Copper, Hogs and Beef.

CXVI.

'Tis but a span from Skye to Inverness,
That stately, prosperous city of the north;
Surrounded by a land of fruitfulness,
Beyond which stretches Moray's silv'ry Firth;
And of pathetic memory the swarth
Of dire Culloden, with its deadly well,
That field from which the Prince was driven forth
Where trench and mound and tomb in sadness tell
How Stuart cause was crushed and Highland chieftain fell.

CXVII.

Here Tomnaheurich lifts her wooded head,
A fairy hill! a legendary spot,
A monument itself for all its dead,
Thy marble may, thy granite circled plot.
But thou, fair hill, canst never be forgot,
Like other piles of dead men's vanities,
Which, long upkept, at length dissolve and rot.
Thou shalt remain, and every traveller please
Who roams between the Eastern and the Western seas.

CXVIII.

My space does not permit that I should dwell
Upon the many charms, th' entrancing sights
Of Caledonia and Loch Ness, nor tell
Of all those panoramic scenes' delights,
The sail thro' these romantic haunts invites;
Of Lovat's seat, and of the Foyer's Falls,
Of jutting crags and ruined castles, sprites
Of bygone Highland days; lochs and canals,
Skirted with dreamy towns, umbrageous littorals.

CXIX.

Mighty Ben Nevis! Monarch, heaven-kiss'd,
Tow'ring away above Loch Linnhe's shore.
I saw the sun dispel thy morning mist,
Uncrowning thee, thou hoary warrior,
Beneath whose heights had swept the echoing blore
Of battle, when on Inverlochy's plain,
Montrose the Campbells slew, and here forlore
Among thy straths the gallant Prince in vain
Gathered once more his men Culloden had not slain.

CXX.

I've touched on England, of her men and laws,
Her poets, statesmen, history, capital;
Of Wales and Scotland, and the many flaws
Which 'mong their customs and their sons prevail.
To Ireland's shores I now expectant sail,
And first sight hill-crown'd Howth and Dublin Bay;
Sorento's point, Killiney's summit tall,
And landing, drive by coach the selfsame day
To charming Powerscourt Falls, just up the glen from Bray.

CXXI.

And Tinnahinch, where patriot Grattan dwelt,
It nestles, too, in Dargle's fairy glen;
A gift from Ireland to that worthy Celt
For his life's efforts for his countrymen.
To Ireland's metropolis I journeyed then,
With her great Phoenix Park of fame world wide;
Of no mean city is he citizen
Whose home is here, tho' to the spot's allied
The tale of Cavendish, and how he barbarous died.

CXXII.

And Ireland's capital reminds us, too,
Of names of famous men of history.
In passing I recall to mind these few:
Grattan, O'Connell, Parnell, Burke, McGee.
She has her dark side, streets where poverty
Glares hideous, a breeding-ground of crimes.
She has her " Michan's," gruesome mystery,*
And that repository of bygone times,
Saint Patrick's, with its massive tower and silv'ry chimes.

* The vaults under this church show open to the air, and exposed to full view at a head charge of 6d., within reach of and actually handled by many morbid visitors, hundreds of decaying corpses of people of all classes, from lords to paupers and traitors of the 1798 rebellion. The mystery consists of there being no dampness and offensive odor, though some of the burials are quite recent, and veils of cobwebs stretching from the ceiling to the coffins and the loose bones give the place a most weird appearance.

CXXIII.

Tread gently, reader, in this hallowed place,
Which to his lasting fame a noble Lord
Has saved from ruin, ignomy, disgrace,
And to its present elegance restored.*
Well can the reverent, thoughtful mind afford
To pass a half hour here, unwearied,
In calm reflection on life's slender cord.
Step softly, then, and let thy silent tread
Pay tribute to the dust of Ireland's honor'd dead.

CXXIV.

For scarce within its groinèd nave we turn,
When we scan o'er us that self-written scroll
Of him whose satire keen like fire could burn;
Great in his day, yet reached he not his goal.
O Swift, thy virtues I would fain extol,
But reading next I feel how can I dare,
For 'tis of Stella, patient, wounded soul,
Who rests with thee beneath the marble there,
And I recall her sorrows, and the lock of hair.

* The Guinness family (father and son) during the past fifty years have expended £250,000 in the restoration of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

CXXV.

Only a woman's hair, 'twas all she left
  Of a life given in faith and love to thee,
And thou, vain trifler, this poor heart bereft
  Of love, and mocked her sweet fidelity,
  Her tender care, unsullied purity;
But for her wrong'd thou sharedst the bitter fate
  Of guilt, remorse, and blighted memory;
And so with charity we contemplate
Thy life as like the ruin of an Empire great.*

CXXVI.

Time, the great mellower, levels men and things;
  Similitude advances with decay.
And Swift and Rome, on time's fast fleeting wings
  More like appear the more they glide away.
  In distance, his great gifts and her proud sway
Both wrecked upon the perishable sands
  Of unattained desires of mortal clay;
He fretting like a bird in prison bands;
She rotting mid her glut of slaves from foreign lands.

* William M. Thackeray says: "To think of Swift is like thinking of the ruins of a great Empire."

". . . . . Tho' to the spot's allied
The tale of Cavendish and how he barbarous died."

(See page 104.)

CXXVII.

But come, my muse, from sombre thoughts and scenes,
From harrowing things and dead men's epitaphs.
Seek me a spot which from the morbid weans,
A land where Nature overjoyous laughs,
And where her lover unobstructed quaffs
Her richest bounties; where the mountains drest
In azure mantles rise, with autographs
Of angels written deep upon their crest;
Who soaring earthward loved to linger there and rest.

CXXVIII.

Macgillycuddy's Reeks, with purple heath
O'erspread, and yonder thro' the opening glade
Killarney's Lakes, arbutus-fring'd, beneath
The Devil's Punchbowl and the Torc Cascade
It feeds—the rushing, dashing enfilade
Between the Lakes; what charmed variety
Of mount and lake and stream are here displayed,
Of beauteous sights what an infinity!
Where Laune flows gently down to Dingle and the sea.

CXXIX.

Kenmare's proud seat, with its red sandstone towers,
And Muckross, Herbert's ancient family pride;
Ross castle's walls, which ivy dense embowers,
Where once O'Donoghue ruled far and wide,
And where Muskerry Cromwell's hosts defied;
The Serpent's Grave, the Cottage of Kate Kearney;
Thro' Dunloe's Gap, that glorious mountain ride;
Then, best of all, a day's run from Killarney,
The home of Munster's ancient Kings, the Castle Blarney.

CXXX.

On that famed hill, beyond the walls of Cork,
How legend doth enrich this classic place,
And story and romance around it lurk
Whose origin 'tis interesting to trace.
Some say Macarthy, coming from the chase,
A witch from drowning saved, who blest the stone;
Some Jacob's pillow say the walls encase;
While other candid narrators depone
'Twas given by Bruce, part of the famous one at Scone.

CXXXI.

To him whose lips have press'd this wondrous stone
Are conquests given greater than of war:
In woman's eyes he triumphs; he alone
Can make wrong right with juries at the bar;
Of Courts and Senates he's the rising star.
O magic stone, whence comes thy virtue rare?
How many eager pilgrims from afar
Have kissed thy surface, and there are who dare
To risk e'en life for charms they think are centred there.

CXXXII.

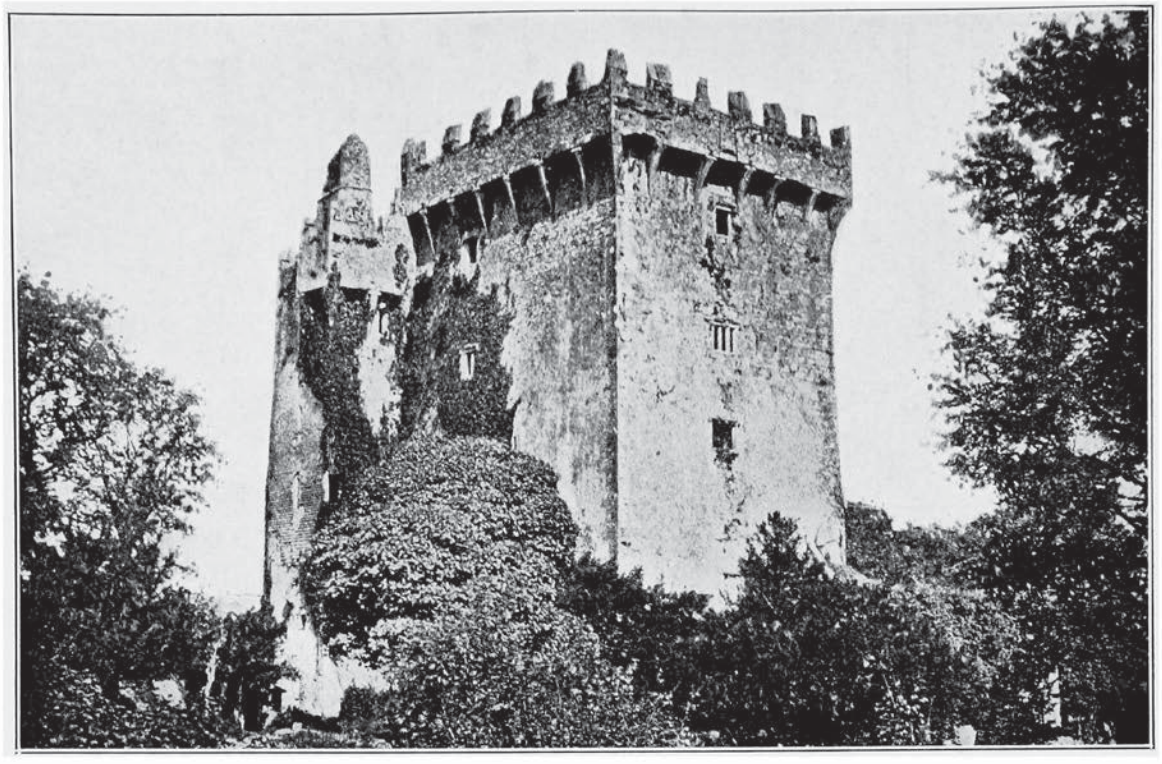
But now my stay in Erin's Isle must close.
So well she's famed in story, and in songs
Her honored sons the world all over knows,
It knows, too, of her frailties and her wrongs;
And how the one the other but prolongs.
Ireland's peculiarities and habits queer
Must be described by other pens and tongues;
Her sorrows have drawn many a patriot tear,
Her hopes are soaring high that brighter days are near.

CXXXIII.

And so one autumn eve we sailed from Cork;
How ravishingly exquisite the scene:
The sun was setting, but th' approaching dark
Hung on a mirage of the palest green,
Crown'd with a coronet of crimson sheen;
Mirror'd like blood along Lee's merchant file,
With Shandon's tower outstanding bold between.
That sublime sunset, hov'ring there awhile,
Lent a befitting farewell to the Emerald Isle.

CXXXIV.

When husbandmen had gathered in their sheaves,
And fall had chased the summer heat away,
And gold and sombre hues had dyed the leaves,
Chance sent me to North Devon's slopes to stay.
And were it given to me to well forelay
Over again a rural sojourn where
The landscape Epicurean can survey
Rich pastoral scenes and undulations rare
I'd choose again the hills and dells of Devonshire.



"The home of Munster's ancient Kings, the Castle Blarney."

(See page 110.)

CXXXV.

High up upon those heights above that vale
Thro' which the Taw threads tortuous to the sea,
Lovely at morn, or by the twilight pale
Lies Nethergrove, and 'neath it Umberleigh,
Tree-hidden, yet at night how cheerily
Twinkle her lights when 'neath the western hills
Sinks Phoebus to his rest. Here wood and lea
And hedge and pasture cleft with many rills
A sense of love of English country life instils.

CXXXVI.

And little Bickington's soft chime of bells
Filling the air with silver-toned delights;
Those dingles fair, those rugged Devon fells
Back to their charms the memory still invites,
And with their tree-clad Chittlehampton heights
Recall the Wentworth azure slopes to me;
In these the same expansive stretch unites;
Here, too, as there, is landscape scenery,
Where hill and glen and copse and spire blend beautifully.

CXXXVII.

'Twas in that season when the autumn wanes,
When driving winds sweep over vale and hill;
When falling leaves choke up the narrow lanes,
And morns are gray and evening shadows chill;
When yellow fogs the streets of London fill,
And old Sol rarely sheds a downward glance;
But leaves fall, rains to drench at their sweet will,
And Devon's vistas blurr'd no more entrance,
I quitted Albion's shores for charms of sunny France.

CXXXVIII.

"Great is our London!" Englishmen exclaim:
The world's vast centre with her trade renown'd;
So Paris rests her title to the name
Of "Beautiful" on uncontested ground.
In art, in luxury, there is not found
Her rival—splendid in the day, at night
With sparkling streets and gardens all around;
A dazzling prospect, exquisitely bright.
How well has she been christen'd "The City of Light."

CXXXIX.

Look from the Arc de Triomphe, at the Star
On which are blazon'd France's valorous deeds
And records of her famous men of war.
A panorama sweeps, which far exceeds
Our utmost thoughts as one by one succeeds:
Palace, and dome, and garden, matchless views,
Which winding Seine between her pathway leads.
While from our feet all round the eye pursues
The vistas of twelve radiating Avenues.

CXL.

A city, fair, with wondrous things to see,
So many here I cannot touch upon;
Bois de Bologne and broad Champs Elysees,
Sky-piercing Eiffel, massive Pantheon,
Where rests great Hugo, her most gifted son;
The Louvre, whose walls rare pictures beautify.
But now my journey leads towards Trianon
And palace, drives and gardens of Versailles,
Those vanished glories of the kingly days gone by.

CXLI.

Th' unconquer'd Bourbons built these lordly halls,
These fairy gardens of a royal race;
These terraces, these fountains and these walls,
And thro' these woods for miles pursued the chase.
Here Kings reclined in woman's fair embrace,
Here Maintenon, Dubarry, Pompadour
Ruled, while their sires reign'd, and woman's face
Seductive sway'd the State, and that fell hour
Saw the decadence start of France's kingly power

CXLII.

And led to revolution. A weak King,
Well meaning, he, but lacking a firm will,
Ruled by a comely Queen, that was the thing
Which caused that blood and war which sent a thrill
Of horror world-wide. The cloud darkened till
The mob, with hatred of the Court embued,
Went forth to plunder, desecrate and kill,
And from the despotism of Kings subdued
There rose the worse one of the enrag'd multitude.

CXLIII.

O France! it may be—is, I take it—true
That thou to-day enjoyest liberty;
But when on history's darkened page I view
Those crimes it cost to make a people free,
How scourged by these was poor humanity,
How fallen low thy vaunted chivalry,
An awful price was paid, it seems to me,
And I recall poor Roland's mocking cry
As she passed 'neath the shaft of Liberty to die.

CXLIV.

What crimes there were committed in that name!
Come back to where the lordly Tuileries stood;
'Tis now a garden, since the Commune flame
Devour'd it, but what thoughts and dreams of blood
Are here, of Gironde, and the Mountain feud;
Danton and Robespierre's short-lived power, a spell
Ere they in turn increased the crimson flood.
Each, raised by faction, by the scaffold fell;
That which grim ruin builds it soon destroys as well.

CXLV.

For in these scenes of carnage and of war,
Which were to work their own swift retribution,
New replaced old, even the calendar,
And France broke on the rock of revolution.
There perish'd in their turn the Constitution,
The Mountain's enemies, the Mountain cower'd,
The Commune, too. This chain of execution
Each one by one destroyed and overpower'd
And, Saturn-like, its own weak offspring soon devoured.

CXLVI.

The Decemvirs and Reign of Terror o'er,
But anarchy and carnage in their train,
Left France embroiled in internecine war
And plotting " coups " of the Directory's reign.
'Twas thought Napoleon, then on Egypt's plain,
Could quell these factions, stem these crimson streams,
And bring stability to France again.
But all these peaceful, freedom-loving dreams
Soon vanished in the unwise meeting of extremes.

CXLVII.

He came a victor from th' Egyptian field,
The people's darling, saviour of the race;
His arms had forced the neighboring States to yield;
His name was worshipp'd in the market-place.
He stay'd to play the tyrant, not efface;
That which men hoped he'd save, he stay'd to kill;
Force assumed sway, 'twas but a little space
Till liberty was dead, and all was still,
Save his troops' march, and voice of his commanding will.

CXLVIII.

Let us to ancient Notre Dame now stray,
Where in the Reign of Terror Reason sate.
Here, ten years later, one December day,
Tired of the little name of Consulate,
With pontificial unction, regal state,
With suppliant mob, with nations at his feet,
This man was crown'd Napoleon the Great.
In what short space the circle was complete:
Weak tyrants slain! A giant in the tyrant's seat!

CXLIX.

Tho' on the seas this tyrant had been check'd,
When Britain's great unwhipp'd Commander took
Captive his fleet, which Nile's dark day had wreck'd,
Yet his grand army no reserve would brook
From German, Austrian, Czar or Mameluke;
Only those ships Aboukir's shells had hurl'd,
Ships upon which his army'd cast no look,
Distant, storm-swept, with Nelson's flag unfurl'd,
Had stood between that Army and a conquer'd world.

CL.

But hush! we reach th' Eglise des Invalides,
And underneath her dimly-lighted dome,
Frescoed with many Saints, our wandering leads
To an encrypted, laurel-circled tomb!
O man of destiny, the like of whom
Never before had lived, or ever will,
'Twas mad ambition lured thee to thy doom,
Who made and unmade Kings and States until
The world lay at thy feet, thy sway invincible.

"Palace and dome and garden, matchless views,
Which winding Seine between her pathway leads."

(See page 117.)

CLI.

Great conqueror of Austerlitz's field!
If only then thou'dst stayed thy lust of power,
Content to see the Czar and Prussian yield;
Could there have been foretold to thee the hour
When Waterloo should crush the might, the flower
Of France, this tomb, adorn'd, encrypted, here
Kingly might be, not of an exile poor,
Nor 'neath this tomb been brought a prisoner's bier,
Nor history tell of a great sad, undone career.

CLII.

But, history, thou must not engross my theme,
For I would fain on wings of poesy fly
To brighter climes, where days of winter seem
To melt in gladness 'neath a summer sky;
Where soft mimosa waves her saffron dye
On some Rivierian slope, whose balmy air
Breathes of the flower and bee, whose summits high
Look over grove and sea and villa rare,
And, found this haven for my muse, would linger there.

CLIII.

Till spring once more my home with soft'ning ray
Calls back to life. So Var's vineclad demesne,
Where " les Maurettes " slant down to Hyères Bay;
And Hyères herself rests dreamily between,
'Mid terraced plots and cork groves darkling green,
We chose, and chose well, for our winter stay.
Bright, peaceful, charming, every turn and scene.
And there, one long unclouded summer's day
I stroll'd and mused and dreamt th' Elysian months away.

CLIV.

Here in this garden, wreathed in fruits and flowers,
And domed with cloudless blue Italian skies,
'Mid violet and rose-encircled bowers
The tired soul finds a restful Paradise,
Far moved from life's upheaving, struggling cries,
Or call of commerce, or the mart's alarms,
Or rival's keenly penetrating eyes.
Here vine-clad peaks with verdant tap'ring forms
Appal not like their Alpine fellows' thund'ring storms.

CLV.

Here mimosean banks of yellow glory
Relieve one's sombre days of all their gloom;
There hillside gardens, story upon story,
Cast over all their hyacinth perfume;
And seaward stretch whole fields of varied bloom,
From lordly villas, roofed with redden'd tiles;
Behind, St. Bernard's Cross and Chateau loom;
While o'er her Bay, 'mid scintillating smiles
Rise from the blue the crests of Hyères' golden Isles.

CLVI.

Lo! Giens, with emerald pea-fields flow'ring sweet,
And drooping, odor-laden asphodel,
Bordered with rows of creamy marguerite.*
I lingered here one evening as there fell
Shoreward upon the ear the moan and swell
Of rock-rent seas; to north there loomed afar
Des Oiseaux's mount, o'ertow'ring Costebelle;
And white San Salvador, and like a star
Just rising, shone the villa light of Almanarre.

* The marguerite daisy in Southern France. unlike our small plant of that name, grows on a large shrub or tree, which often attains a height of five or six feet or more. The mountain heather here also assumes tree-like proportions.

CLVII.

Across the Bay, and on this restful eve,
With moaning surge, with Oiseaux tow'ring high,
And further on Feneuillet's crags which cleave
Like some dark silhouette the summer sky,
Crown'd with their cross—a mimic Calvary.
Methought the water's dirgeful, sadd'ning moan
Told of the wail of human misery.
And those far heights the dusk around them grown,
Distant and deep and still, heaven's mysteries seem'd
t' enthrone.

CLVIII.

The starry cistus covers every hill,
Here purple spangled, there a faultless white;
Sweet flowering lavenders the valleys fill
With their aroma of a rare delight.
The laurel in its varied garments bright
Here dwells in many species high and low.
The almond-tree, prophetic in the sight
Of the great Preacher,*on these slopes doth grow,
And sheds its blossom like great banks of driven
snow.

*"And the almond tree shall flourish."—Ecclesiastes xii. v.

"While o'er her bay 'mid scintillating smiles
Rise from the blue the crests of Hyères' golden isles."

(See page 127.)

CLIX.

O flowery land of never-failing bloom,
Where violet vies with eucalyptus tree,
In shedding forth each its own rare perfume;
And cactus, aloe, and spiked agavi
Stand 'mid great palms in verdant rivalry.
Where laurestinus' blue with white entwines,*
And tall drœcinas rise in symmetry.
Regretful I depart from thy confines,
Where every breeze wafts fragrance thro' thy spreading pines.

CLX.

But ere I seek Italia's marble halls,
And tell of Venice's decadent star,
I have to sing again of battle calls,
And stir and sound, and strategy of war,
And armies marching eager to the fore;
But yet there flashed no glittering sabres bare,
Artillery's thund'rings were not heard afar;
Nor were there wails nor groans to rend the air;
Nor were grim visaged Death, nor tears nor sorrow there.

* A peculiarity of the laurestinus is the presence at the same time amid its green foliage of bunches of white bloom, much resembling our white thorn blossoms, alternated with deep blue clusters of the ripe berry.

CLXI.

The field was Nice, the ammunition flowers,
And Flora in the lead, their Goddess Queen,
Led forth her hosts 'mid changing sun and showers,
And tho' no other signs of war were seen,
Of wounds and prisoners there were scores, I ween,
For Cupid fought and aimed his arrows straight,
And captives took, this love god hymenean;
Nor did I see that aught deplored their fate
As I surveyed that field despoiled and desolate.

CLXII.

A field with soilèd rose, and violet trodden,
Which but an hour before bloomed fresh and sweet;
With boughs of almond and white lilac sodden,
Still fragrant, tho' begrim'd beneath my feet.
What scene of desolation more complete,
Had mortal men instead of flowers warr'd!
And from this floral ruin and defeat
There rose the thought, how many fair ones marr'd
Of choicest flowers of life by hate and malice scarr'd.

CLXIII.

Malice, thou scorpion! Hate, thou poisonous snake!
What sorrow and undoing flow from thee;
The names ye blacken and the hearts ye break
Fill up a space vast as eternity!
For women's virtue, man's integrity,
Ye care but nought, your belchings never cease;
Ye do eat up the innocent with glee.
Ruthless destroyers of man's life and peace,
Deadlier than trampling hosts that soiled the flowers of Nice.

CLXIV.

'Twas from Italian shores that our first school
Of poetry was brought, that kindling spark,
By the famed Chaucer lit, to overrule
Our former styles and manners, crude and dark.
The School of Dante, and the great Petrarch,
Which too inspired Surrey's purity,
And Wyatt's lofty thought. Here we embark
On modern verse, and thus we owe to thee
And thy learned sons a priceless debt, O Italy.

CLXV.

Hail, Genoa! glittering 'neath Sperone's hill,*
  Worthy in history is thy career!
For tho' by war and faction harass'd, still
  Thou wert upon the deep the pioneer.
  Thou gav'st that mighty sailor, born to steer
The way to newer worlds and destinies;
  Who found o'er trackless waves a hemisphere,
And bore light's banner over darkened seas.
Columbus! worthiest of th' undaunted Genoese.

CLXVI.

Near where Bisagno's swollen torrent pours
  Between Genoa's hills, there is a space
Where Campo Santo's storied corridors
  Form for her dead a peerless resting-place.
  For ne'er did craftsman chisel with more grace,
Nor sculptor's hand such priceless art supply,
  Which cuts Carraran tears upon the face,
Streaming in sorrow from the weeping eye,
And carves the look of grief, and even the mourner's sigh.

* There are fourteen fortified hills, spurs of the Ligurian Alps, surrounding the city, of which the chief, Sperone (meaning a spur) attains a height of 1,700 feet.

CLXVII.

But Campo Santo has another spot
Beneath those treasures on her hillside steep,
Where richly carven images are not,
Where not the great, but just the lowly sleep.
And here at night do myriads vigil keep
And burn their many-colored funeral lamps;
A wondrous vision, as the eye doth sweep
Over those graves—the passing thought it stamps
Is of a field on which at night an army camps.

CLXVIII.

I stood among the dazzling minarets
On old Milan's white marble temple, where
Charmed and entranced the traveller forgets
Amid the saints and martyrs carven there *
Life's bustling calls. To north a vista rare
Of snow-tipp'd Alps tow'ring majestically
Reflects the sunlight's distance-mellow'd glare.
While stretching far around him he may see
Fertile in wheat and silk the plains of Lombardy.

* There are no less than 6,000 carved marble figures on the exterior alone of this remarkable building. Every point and pinnacle represents some saint, martyr, apostle or father of the church.

CLXIX.

I saw Lake Como mountain-circled creep
  Northward, and whiten'd peaks their shadows throw
Into her mirror many fathoms deep,
  Fed by eternal streams from Alpine snow.
  I saw along her shore Bellagio,
Studded with villas of the Milanese,
  Around which palms and rare exotics grow;
And bays, where mighty glaciers towered, these
Recall'd in mimic our fam'd emerald-dyed Louise.

CLXX.

Venice! thou ancient city of the sea,
  Where sands of centuries from Alps defiles
Had formed those shoals on which men fashioned thee;
  None other like thee rising on thy piles.
  Artistic bridges threading 'twixt thine Isles;
And many a dome and sea-girt portico,
  Sparkling with Oriental gems and styles.
Thou art not of to-day—no longer glow
Thy fires, thy greatness and prestige of long ago.

"I stood among the dazzling minarets
On old Milan's white marble temple."

(See page 135.)

CLXXI.

Where are those scenes on which the artists dwell,
  Of which rare tales attracted childhood's ear?
Where are those songs of which the poets tell;
  The sensuous carols of the Gondolier,
  Whose only canticles that now we hear
Are yells and curses on the midnight air?
  Where thy old customs men did once revere?
That faith with reverence calling men to prayer?*
The long dead echoes of the past alone say where.

* Of all the evidences of Venice's decadence, none is more apparent than that of the church. Scores of dingy, grimy-looking, empty churches may be seen, only resorted to by curiosity seekers, beggars, and a few feeble-looking women, and the figures of whose once beautiful marble facades are now defaced and clogged with pigeons' nests and other filth. Dusty, broken and abandoned shrines of the Virgin are also met with on nearly every corner. Only in Saint Mark's, where, as William Dean Howells says in his work entitled "Venetian Life," "the sublimity of the early faith honors the superstition which succeeded it," can the traveller find any evidence of the old sincerity and dignity of Catholic worship. "The droning and murmuring spirit of the Renaissance churches," he goes on to say, "has deprived all young and generous men in Italy of religion, has made the priests a bitter jest and byword, has rendered the population ignorant, vicious and hopeless, destroying the life of the church that it may sustain the power of the Pope."

CLXXII.

Once thou wert Victor! Turk and Genoese
  Owned to thy sway. Five centuries ago
The talons of thy lion spread o'er these
  And Greece and Egypt, conquered every foe.
  But what a change! now crumbling, mute and low,
Paupered thy commerce, shorn thine ancient glory,
  Thou grasp'st for what the tourist can bestow;
And tho' still rich in art, with treasure hoary,
Sad is the page of doom which tells thy ruined story.

CLXXIII.

But Venice! 'mid thy spoiling and decay,
  Thou still hast charms which round the heart entwine,
Unhurt by all thy ruin of to-day;
  The music of thy bells upon the brine;
  The crimson shadows of thy day's decline;
Saint Mark's rare jewels and her thronging doves.
  But what to me doth most thy name enshrine
Are Byron's haunts, for here where'er one moves
Are memories of his joys, his sorrows and his loves.

CLXXIV.

O Byron! fretting child of destiny;
Maligned and sour'd by slander's cruel blast;
A wanderer from thy home and patrimony;
First fêted, then by whilom friends outcast.
By Scotch reviewers mocked, reviled, harass'd.
Like meteor bursting on the starlit night,
Thy wondrous verse outshone that of the past;
And, like th' impalèd Eastern insect's light,
Thine anguish only made thy genius burn more bright.

CLXXV.

'Twas here, O bard, thou spent thy brightest days,
When charms of Albion and thy kin were gone.
Of Venice thou hast penn'd thy noblest lays.
Here thou couldst drink in freedom, here alone
Thou felt thy shackles fall, thy miseries done.
And what a blessed privilege to be free!
No other gift could for thy wrongs atone,
No more than human fount could satisfy
A parched soul, thirsting for immortality!

CLXXVI.

Nor did thy championship of freedom cease
When here thou felt thy galling fetters fall.
Thy heart was moved for crush'd, downtrodden Greece,
And answering quick th' enslaven Hellene's call,
Thou freely gave thy means, thy life, thine all,
And liberty's proud banner grandly led.
And Missolonghi, weeping, saw thy pall
Refused a tomb 'mid England's honor'd dead.*
O'er thee than over these more genuine tears were shed.

CLXXVII.

Thou hadst thy faults, and great ones—who has not?
Wayward thou wert, and egotistical;
Thou soil'd life's page with many a marring blot,
Yet playing in thy time thy part full well,
Thy poetry remains imperishable.
The saint may shun, the prude may banish it,
But nowhere else doth genius more excel;
No utterances than thine more apt or fit,
Kindled with passion's fire, or brimming o'er with wit.

* It was proposed to bury Byron in Westminster Abbey, but the Dean and Chapter refused their consent. He had himself expressed a wish to be buried on the Venetian Lido, his favorite resort when a resident of Venice, but his remains rest in the ancestral vault at Hucknall, near Newstead.

CLXXVIII.

Florence! once rent by Guelph and Ghibelline,*
How glorious is thine ancient history.
What lustrous names around thee do entwine.
Worthiest of all the matchless Angelo, he
Alone of men who triumphed in all three
Of the fine arts; Machiavelli, patriot, sage;
Galileo, brightest light of Italy,
And of the world, Raphael, than whom no age
Gave loftier name to master-painter's page.

CLXXIX.

And Dante! he who wrote of heaven and hell,
Who in those allegoric visions trod
The infinite, consigning men to dwell
Many in realms of darkness, some with God.†
On whom in after years affliction's rod
Fell sore, whose well-spent life and noble race
Gave no reward, not even an abode
In thee his home, and who to thy disgrace
Even in death thou didst refuse a resting-place.

* These two factions disputed for sway in Florence from the year 1215 for over 150 years, till the rise of the Medici.

† Some writers, including Rogers, suggest that this habit of prejudging prominent Florentines and consigning their souls during life to punishment or reward (mostly the former) in the other world, may have had much to do with Dante's subsequent un-

CLXXX.

But not alone in olden days in thee
  Dwelt glorious names in art and prose and song;
Shaded by many a spire-like cypress tree
  On Donatello's hill I strolled among
  Thy modern poet sleepers who have sung
Time-conquering verse, not that of Italy,
  But written in our own familiar tongue.
Browning, Clough, Landor, these illustrious three
On this flower-bordered hallow'd knoll rest peacefully.

CLXXXI.

Here, thro' the long unclouded summer hours
  The golden light upon their graves doth lie,
And aromatic trees and shrubs and flowers
  Caressingly wave o'er them standing by.
  The yellow oriole and the butterfly
Here make their home, and when the moonlight pale
  Turns to a deeper blue this Tuscan sky,
And all around night's quiet doth prevail,
Here pipes its song of love the lonely nightingale.

popularity and banishment. For instance, we are told that Donatti, an influential kinsman of his wife's, was placed by Dante in the circle of the gluttons in purgatory. Dante wandered a homeless exile for nineteen years, always longing but unable to return to Florence, and to rest his bones there. He died and was buried at Ravenna, in 1321. Michael Angelo desired to construct a tomb in Florence worthy of the great poet, but was prevented from doing so.

"And many a dome and sea-girt portico
Sparkling with oriental gems and styles."

(See page 136.)

CLXXXII.

And Parker, fam'd American, lies here;
  And on San Miniato's lofty height
Lies England's great rejected Labouchere;*
  And near, O Florence, where thy streams unite†
  There is a sacred spot where bards delight
To linger, passing o'er its shadowy road.
  Cascine's Wood! for here they feel the sprite
Of Shelley—here, while winds around him strow'd
One day the autumn leaves, was penn'd his noblest
    ode‡

* Henry Labouchere, Editor of "Truth," and Liberal member for Northampton, on the return of Gladstone to power in 1892, expected to be called to the British Cabinet. Disappointed in this ambition, he immediately withdrew from all active participation in his country's affairs and retired to Florence, where he died in January, 1912, in his 82nd year.

† The confluence of the Rivers Arno and Mugnone. At this point the monument to the Indian Prince, Raja Cuttra, Putti of Kolapoor, now stands.

‡ The "Ode to the West Wind," the divinest of English lyrics.

CLXXXIII.

What brought these gifted spirits to thy gates,
  Enchanting city of the Apennines?
Was it that here one better contemplates
  The treasure hid in thy unrival'd shrines
  Of art which educates, uplifts, refines?
Was it some charm about thy sky, thine air,
  Or that the sun on thee more genial shines?
Is there more peace in thee, less harrowing care?
What found these beings here they could not find
    elsewhere?

CLXXXIV.

These questions are unanswered, for there falls
  While I thus muse o'er charms of Tuscany
Upon the ear th' Eternal City's calls;
  And visions of the proud old Medici;
  And Pitti Palace, with its Boboli,*
Whose frescoed walls once made a royal home,
  Fade , as against the setting sun I see,
Dark'ning the crimson sky, a mighty dome
Which tells the traveller he like Lothair " beholds
    Rome."†

* Cosmo, greatest of the Medici, purchased the Pitti Palace in 1549 and constructed the Boboli Gardens the next year for his wife. The palace was built by the famous Brunelleschi for Lucca Pitti, a wealthy private Florentine ambitious to outrival

CLXXXV.

How superstition crowds upon the truth
With our supposedly enlightened race.
We're shown in Rome to-day for very sooth
In her great Forum the once gaping place
Where Curtius paid the debt of Rome's disgrace,
And horse and rider leapt o'er chasm's brink,
Leaving behind no memory nor trace
Of the great hero's grave—we're told to sink
Our scepticism, nor even give a doubting wink!

CLXXXVI.

And on the slope of royal Palatine
A spot is marked where Tiber's kindly flood
Washed up the twins, wrecking the base design
Amulius formed to extirpate the blood
Of Numitor, and where life-giving food
Was furnished by the mother wolf until
A kindly herdsman of the neighborhood
Rescued the babes their uncle strove to kill,
And saved the founder of the City on the Hill.

royalty, in 1440, and while Florence was the capital of Italy it was the residence of its kings. The palace and gardens are now exhibited as an art gallery and ornamental grounds in connection therewith.

† The concluding words of chapter 61 of Disraeli's novel "Lothair."

CLXXXVII.

How many flights did Pilate's house contain,
If they are real, all these holy stairs?
If holy boards are genuine they would drain
The mangers of all Palestine. If prayers
Are made to real bones of martyrs, where's
There left a corpse in any of Rome's tombs?
Despoiled must be her vaults and sepulchres.
For so replete with these remains are Rome's
Altars and shrines she must have robbed her catacombs.

CLXXXVIII.

In Tivoli, among the Sabine mountains,
Where Anio leaps in silvery cascades,
I saw a garden of a hundred fountains
Still beautiful, tho' time's encroaching raids
Have marr'd its urns, its busts, its colonnades.
Here the great D'Este, son of the Borgian,
Once strolled amid his gods and nymphs and shades
Above the kingly seat that Hadrian
Ages before in lust of pride and power began

CLXXXIX.

But did not finish, for death's stronger hand
  Claimed the great builder ere his work was done.
He who had sought in every foreign land
  Each new device in porphyry and stone,
  And brought from Greece her Delphic odeon
Her Doric column, and her fluted pier—
  No common things would Hadrian look upon;
No plan too vast to crown his great career.
A shrine of Isis and a vale of Tempe here!

CXC.

O vanished glories of ambitious men,
  The one a Cæsar—one of mediæval age!
Crumbled away the pile of Hadrian,
  O'ergrown with moss D'Este's hermitage,
  Both now the shrine of tourists' pilgrimage,
Who marvel 'mid these ancient architraves
  Carv'd by poor workmen who were given no wage.
The dust of him who own'd these myriad slaves
Is one long since with that which fills their pauper
    graves.

CXCI.

I stood on the Tarpeia, whence were hurled
To death, thro' an immensity of space,
The malefactors of the Roman world.
But long ago has vanished every trace
Of what suggests an execution place
Or retribution on a traitrous foe.
No more does death Tarpeia's rock disgrace.
Above are garden paths where flowers grow,
While peaceful dwellings cluster 'round its base below.

CXCII.

Near Severus' Arch one day a linnet trill'd,
Entreed above an excavated moat.
His little voice that ancient Forum fill'd.
One wondered how from such a tiny throat
Could swell so strong yet sweet a piping note.
I thought of sounds of discord, battle clang
Which used in ages long ago to float
Among these arches, and how, too, there rang
The voice of Cicero where now the warbler sang.

CXCIII.

Behold on Titus' triumphant arch,
A figured frieze extends in bas-relief;
'Tis of Vespasian's army's homeward march,
Bearing from Zion's holy place the chief
Of Jewish vessels 'mid the Hebrews' grief,
Who follow captive—How was it designed,
O sacrilegious act of unbelief!
Which robb'd God's Temple, to the flames consign'd,
That thou in Rome His Holy Seat should help to find.

CXCIV.

Near San Paola's gate, with filth and noise *
Surrounding, shadow'd over, almost hid
By tomb of Gaius Cestius, who enjoys
The fame of an Egyptian pyramid,
I found the grave of Keats oft visited
Tho' poor the spot his hallow'd bones adorn.
How of the two? and what in life they did?
While one will ever shine as radiant morn
The pyramided name is lost, the tomb forlorn.

* A police barracks, some factories and the din of the trolley have now encroached close upon this sacred spot, and the stench from the surrounding excrement, etc., is so unbearable that one can with difficulty remain long enough to read thro' an aperture in the wall the inscription on the joint tombs of the poet and his friend Severn. Inside the wall conditions are somewhat improved, though the place is flat, bare and abandoned as a burying-place.

CXCV.

And what a modest stone this youthful Greek
(For Greek in spirit and in art he was),
And what a poor inscription did he seek.†
"His name was writ in water." Why? Because
He feared the malice of his powerful foes
Had conquered; but 'twas not to be, his name
Outlives them all, and thro' the ages grows
Brighter and brighter, writ in lasting flame
Which time can never quench, nor criticism tame.

CXCVI.

A little further, in a choicer spot,*
Sleeps the great heart of Shelley, shadow'd o'er
With dark'ning cypress. Tell me! did I not
Speak of a debt which we in days of yore
Owed to this land for poet's borrow'd lore?
'Twas given to these that debt to fully pay,
Shelley and Keats, had England given no more;
For where, O Muse, can rest sublimer clay,
Where mingle dust and ashes worthier than they?

† The exact words carved on the small, white marble headstone are: "This grave contains all that is mortal of a young English poet, who on his deathbed in the bitterness of his heart at the malicious power of his enemies desired these words to be engraven on his tombstone: 'Here lies one whose name was writ in water.' February 24th, 1821."

* There is a great contrast between the resting-place of each. While Keats' grave is in a bare, flat, and sometimes, I am told, inundated part of the cemetery, Shelley's lies at the head of a

"There stood the Coliseum ruin-rent;
There ghosts of Cæsar's mammoth palaces."

(See page 158.)

CXCVII.

In the Piazza d'Espagna, where Keats died
'Neath Trinita Del Monte's towers twain,
Admirers from both hemispheres provide
A well stored sanctuary, chaste if plain;
Where lovers of these glorious two obtain
Their relics—'tis the fittest of retreats,
High up above the noisy and profane.
Here in these upper rooms one silent greets
Cherished remembrances of Shelley and of Keats.

CXCVIII.

'Tis Easter! and Rome's lenten fast is done;
Her penitential Tenebraes are o'er,
And homes are blest, and citizens put on
Their garb of festival and joy once more.
I watched her thousands in thanksgiving pour
Into Saint Peter's, an inspiring sight!
Those hosts on its vast tesselated floor;
'Mid sweeping trains in red and gold and white
Of cardinal and priest and lowly acolyte.

beautiful shaded slope. While the joint graves of Keats and his friend Severn are practically isolated, Shelley has many of the titled and the great resting near him. Within a few yards of his tomb I noticed among others the headstones of the following: A daughter of the Earl of Beverly, the fifth Viscount Barrington, Lady Meredith, daughter of the Marquis of Conyngham, Lady Nicolls, Lady Page Turner, Sir John Conroy, Bart., F.R.S., the Hon. Henry Walpole, son of the Earl of Oxford, Henry S. Winterbottom, M.P., British Under-Secretary of State in 1873, Baron Vivian, Mary and William Howitt, and those of Story, Gibson and Wyatt, the famous sculptors.

CXCIX.

One evening I was looking over Rome
For the last time from that superb ascent,
Embracing town and hill, Janiculum,
Crown'd by great Garibaldi's monument.
There stood the Coliseum ruin-rent;
There ghosts of Cæsar's mammoth palaces;
The range how vast, the spot how reverent,
For here the oak where Tasso rested is,
And Italy's renown in poetry is his.

CC.

With Petrarch's and with Ariosto's name
His famed " Jerusalem " she'll ever link.
Imprison'd, 'twas not given to him to claim
That which his fertile mind, his pen and ink
Produced, 'twas purloin'd;* while upon the brink
Of madness he was tortured, sorely tried.
Bitter remorse's dregs were his to drink;
A restless wanderer, by the world decried,
Peace on Janiculum he found and here he died.

* While Tasso was confined in a mad-house at St. Anna, through the machinations of some of the D'Este family, one Battista Guarini, a rival poet, got possession of his manuscript of " Jerusalem Delivered," and published it for his own benefit.

CCI.

Undone by woman's wiles, the same sad tale
That told of mighty Samson's power shorn,
Of Eve's deceit, of Sisera and Jael;
Of Herod's dancer—in a charger borne,
Because he had to female tempter sworn,
Had come the Baptist's head; so fickle fell
Ferrara's bard when hardly had the morn
Of his bright genius pass'd, the siren spell
Of the D'Este sisters proved invincible.

CCII.

Lucrezia first displays her amours bold,
And woos the bard within her palace walls;
Then Leonora's passion doth unfold,
And he whom princes, popes and cardinals
Had honor'd, before female onslaught falls
A victim to love's charms. Thrice doth he go
Forth from Ferrara. His sad case recalls
Odysseus' homeless wanderings, and so
Fate brings him bowed and bent to Saint Onifrio.

CCIII.

I said my range was vast, for it in space
Swept o'er the Sabine and the Alban Hills;
And the Campagna, which these Hills embrace
Bursting in verdure where the gardener tills.
But what a world of time this vision fills!
While Rome first rose, and fell, and rose again,
What deeds of valiant men it chronicles;
What acts of heroes crowd upon my brain;
Of crimes and cruelties and judgments what a train!

CCIV.

That Forum yonder which Rome's founders till'd,
And Cæsars piled with rostrum and with fane,
In mediæval centuries was filled
With ruins and became once more a plain.
Thus history repeats itself again.
That Coliseum, massive, broken, bare;
Where cruel tyrants saw the Christians slain
By beasts, what Saturnalian carnage there!
Could spectral walls have words what tales would
these declare!

"In the Piazza d'Espagna where Keats died."

(See page 157.)

CCV.

Built by the captive Jews Vespasian brought
From Zion on the site of Nero's Lake;
Here, too, poor gladiators met and fought
And died that Rome might her amusement take.
It trembled, partly fell in the great quake
Six centuries ago, but was restored
And for the Christians' and the martyrs' sake,
Who fell there, to the passion of our Lord
Was consecrate until the modern vandal horde

CCVI.

Pillaged its treasure.* But the eye runs on
Over the tombs along the Appian Way,
And—exquisitely poised—Rome's Pantheon
Agrippa built,† and which unkind decay
Hath left unharm'd from that long distant day;
The pride of Italy, thro' whose opening
Above there falls, on entering, a ray
Of the sun's light, softly illumining
The sculptured tombs of painter, cardinal and king.‡

* Edward Hutton (p. 68) says: "The tourist and an extraordinary crowd of people from Piedmont have descended upon Rome for spoil. The Coliseum is but an indication of what has been wantonly destroyed by the same gang of vandals who have turned the Cappella Rucellai in Florence into a museum."

† So say the architraves of the Portico, but the best authorities tell us that Hadrian, Severus and Caracalla had more to do with the erection of the Pantheon in its present shape than Agrippa, who was merely its founder.

‡ The chief attraction of the Pantheon beside the wonderful symmetric proportions of the building itself are the richly carved

CCVII.

What medley of strange peoples, things, ideas,
  Italian farm life in the mind instils.
We pass between whole hedges of spireas;
  Young peasant women laving in the rills;*
  Old aqueducts which from the Alban Hills
Brought Cæsar water. Here the yeoman plows
  With milk-white oxen; here the gardener tills
His newly leafing vineyard as it grows
On slender bamboos or across the orchard rows.

CCVIII.

Here stand great gnarlèd olives that have seen
  Close on a thousand years; and avenues
And groves of ilex. And amid the green
  Grass on our way are crimson-dotted hues
  Of poppies, which like drops of blood infuse
Their dye. And herds of goats encircle us,
  Whose milk, in place of kine's, th' Italians use.
And nearing Naples, fertile, beauteous,
Orchards stretch up the slope of vast Vesuvius,

tombs of Raphael, the famous painter, of Cardinal Consolvi and of Italy's two Kings, Immanuel II. and Humbert I. Although it is a consecrated church, services are seldom held there. It is regarded more as a spot sacred to the country's great men, and to the achievements and architecture of the past.

* One of the striking incidents of country life in Italy, and in France as well, is the large number of peasant women one sees everywhere, and every day, washing clothes in the streams.

CCIX.

Whose vaprous peak I climb'd to and surveyed;
From whence had belched forth on the plains beneath
Ashes and lava, that in ruins laid
Two once fair cities,* brought their people death,
Tho' idle now is that destroying breath
That nineteen centuries past o'erwhelmed Pompeii.
There rose behind me but a filmy wreath
As I looked over Naples and her bay,
And on to where the blue Mediterranean lay.

CCX.

I wandered down those spectral streets, I stood
In Pompeii's temples open to the sky;
Palaces once, now wrapp'd in solitude
Save for the sound of tourists sauntering by,
Or vendors of her curios as they ply
Their trade among her ruined, naked walls.
I strolled among her fountains long since dry;
Eloquent yet her Doric capitals
Of the once kingly splendors of those roofless halls.

* Pompeii and Herculaneum.

CCXI.

Capri! the traveller should surely see
This tow'ring sentinel of Naples' bay;
Nor overlook in his itineracy
Its sapphire shore upon a sunny day;
Its beetling crags of azure-tinted grey,
From whence Imperial Tiberius threw
His victims and that surging wave and spray;
Against its grotto's mouth that changing hue,
Entering within its caves from dark to lighter blue.

CCXII.

What dreadful news is this the heralds cry
On Naples' streets of that great human price
The sea hath claimed in its stern majesty,
The greatest known. Upon the hidden ice
Hath struck the giant ship.* What sacrifice
Of precious life! How many mourners weep!
For near two thousand souls sent in a trice
In inky darkness to their final sleep
To feed the monsters of the great unconquered deep.

* The author was in Naples, waiting himself to sail for America, when the news came on April 16th, of the foundering of the White Star Liner "Titanic," the largest passenger ship afloat, about 300 miles off the coast of Newfoundland on her way to New York, with a loss of over 1,600 souls, among whom were several of his own prominent fellow-citizens.

CCXIII.

But this appalling story that we've heard
Hath one bright spot that shines from out its gloom,
No cowards there! when the fell stroke occurr'd
The best and greatest bravely met their doom,
Waiting behind so that there might be room
For weaker ones and poor, they stayed to face
The dark, cold precincts of th' unfathomed tomb;
And thus their triumph over death doth place
A wreath of glory on the Anglo-Saxon race.

CCXIV.

Naples! thine azure hills, thy wavelets bright,
Shall form for this rude song a fitting close;
Where steep Sorrento gave her Tasso light;
Where Virgil's mound around a lustre throws.
My muse's sun 'mid Western scenes arose,
'Mid thy wisteria's blossom it shall set,
With Ischia's shades to lull it to repose;
And tho' I leave thee, perhaps forever, yet
Thy varied charms are such the mind doth not forget.

CCXV.

But we are fickle creatures, and we range
In search of the great unattainable;
Rarely content and always seeking change,
And often barter great things for the small.
And life glides on and our ambitions pall;
Our energies decline, our once keen zest,
And foiled, we see too late that after all
Fruitless has been that restless wandering quest—
That which we left behind has proved to be the best!

CCXVI.

And so my tale is told, my task is done;
My Western home, again I yearn for thee;
Thou standest well in the comparison
With all these ancient lands beyond the sea,
In nation's manhood, young and strong and free.
And if I kindle in some soul a flame
Of patriot zeal who scans my minstrelsy,
My guerdon won, tho' in the years my name
Be all unworthy of and all unknown to fame.

Naples, April 19, 1912.

"I stood
In Pompeii's temples open to the sky;
Palaces once, now wrapp'd in solitude."

(See page 165.)

Poems and Sonnets

TO A ROSE

Which the author plucked in Pope's garden at Twickenham.

Thou fair red rose, unfolding late to view,
  Fam'd emblem of the old Lancastrian kings;
  How the tradition of this garden flings
Around thee, sparkling with October dew,
A mellow'd fragrance, given alone to you
  Away above all common budding things!
  How is't thou hast escaped the ravishings
Of visitors? nor do thy petals strew
Yet the box-bordered pathway where I tread,
  And as I pluck thee on this autumn day,
    Methinks thy perfume savors of the time
When the great bard 'mid these surroundings led
  With grace and culture the refined and gay,
    And charmed the muse with sweet transcendent rhyme.

Twickenham, Oct. 7, 1911.

SUNSET AT HYÈRES.

Where Alpine foothills meet the sapphire blue
Of that Algerian-tempered, classic sea,
Whose triremes once made Roman history;
Where violets mirror deep their wond'rous hue
In the cerulean arch above, and strew
Over whole fields their perfumed purity;
And wall and hedge form one long rosary
Of bloom perennial ever fresh and new,
High up one evening 'mid a crimson calm
I stood, and viewed below a scene as fair,
Of flower, and sea, and olive grove, and palm,
As dreams are made of, while upon the air
From Costebelle's grey tower her vesper psalm
Breathed its soft benediction over Hyères.

Hyères, Jan. 1, 1912.

AT POINT FARM.

Ye waves that beat upon this rugged shore
  In wild unrest, how strange ye come and go,
Now plunging headlong with a maddening roar,
  Now tiny wavelets rippling soft and low.

Is not, O lake, thine ever-changing crest,
  So seldom seen from wind or tempest free,
A stern reminder of the vague unrest
  That mars the calm of life's untranquil sea?

Behold yon billow, see it proudly roll,
  And, life-like, strive to reach the distant shore;
But watch! when almost bordering on its goal
  It gently murmuring sinks, to rise no more.

So on the sea of time, by Hope's bright star
  Lured on, man longing sees before his eyes
Some cherished object beaming from afar,
  And almost grasps, but in the grasping dies.

O surging billow, wavelet, soft, sublime,
  That swell and toss in turn on Huron's sea!
Roll onward thus, till quickly fleeting time
  Is lost in measureless eternity!

Goderich, August, 1906.

WHERE THE RIVERS MEET.

Away from west and southern hills
  Two rivers issue forth;
The one meanders easterly,
  The other travels north;
They, serpentining round about,
  In circling paths are led,
Till shadow-lined Assiniboine
  Meets slowly-creeping Red.

The place these tortuous waters meet,
  Far-distant years ago,
Was trysting-place for red-faced men
  In search of buffalo.
They, with the swift " coureurs-du-bois,"
  Now long-forgotten, dead,
Pitched tent upon the Assiniboine
  And paddled o'er the Red.

WHERE THE RIVERS MEET

Then came the men of Hudson's Bay
With blanket, gun, and ball,
To trade with breed and Indian
For furs most prized of all.
In summer-time in birch canoe,
In winter-time in sled,
The trapper sought the Assiniboine
At junction of the Red.

And then Lord Selkirk's Pioneers
Came in the traders' place,
And tilled their soil and sowed their seed,
A sturdy Scottish race;
They mingled with the Indian tribes,
And native women wed,
And peopled where Assiniboine
Flows winding into Red.

They suffered untold hardships, too,
These settlers brave and bold;
In springtime floods swept o'er their land,
In winter cruel cold;
Gaunt famine often stalked the plains;
They sometimes lacked for bread;
Where waters of Assiniboine
Turn northward into Red.

But many cycling years have flown
  Since Selkirk's men held sway;
Their part well played on Life's great stage,
  They, too, have passed away;
And now a city strong and grand
  Stands in their place and stead,
Where verdant-banked Assiniboine
  Unites with sluggish Red.

The iron horse's shriek is heard,
  The trolley's constant roar,
Fair villas, tree-embosomed, stand
  Where wigwams stood before;
Majestic bridges span the streams,
  Wide streets with commerce fed;
Gardens bedeck the Assiniboine,
  And parks adorn the Red.

From distant European shores
  Here myriads yearly come
In search of land and liberty
  Denied to them at home;
Here people of all climes and tongues
  From morn till evening tread
The streets where the Assiniboine
  Rolls silent into Red.

WHERE THE RIVERS MEET

Could Whittier, who sublimely sang
  Of Boniface's bells,
Foretell the transformation scene
  This simple story tells?
Could we into the future peer,
  Time's scroll again outspread,
What changes! where Assiniboine
  Sweeps gently into Red.

Hold! leafy sloped Assiniboine,
  Stay! muddy, straggling Red,
Can man not draw a lesson from
  Thy slimy, crooked bed?
Life's waters foul, Life's devious ways
  May cleansed and straightened be,
Like thine transmuted ere they reach
  Th' illimitable sea.

Winnipeg, May, 1911.

ANCASTER.

Wooded summits, tow'ring high,
Seem to kiss the summer sky.
Eastward lies the lake at rest,
Sleeps the city 'neath yon crest.
Cloudlets soaring heavenbound
Seem to fondly linger round
Bright, hilly Ancaster!

In the gentle vernal spring,
When life pulsates everything;
Bursts the dogwood's fleecy bloom,
Driving off chill winter's gloom.
Oak and maple branching wide
Umbrageous dot the countryside
In sunny Ancaster.

"Tell me! distant, silv'ry calls
Of her murmuring waterfalls."

(See page 181.)

ANCASTER

Men from many a clime and strand
Wandering o'er this pleasant land,
Drinking in her fresh, pure air,
Feasting eyes on scenes so fair,
Testify no other place
Serener smiles on Nature's face
    Than charming Ancaster!

Breezes sigh amid her trees,
Soft Æolian melodies!
Gently winding, limpid streams,
Such as cool in fev'rish dreams,
Wend their way thro' every vale,
Intercepting hill and dale
    In shady Ancaster.

Tell me, winds, as thro' her trees
Whisper sweet your harmonies;
Tell me, distant silv'ry calls,
Of her murmuring waterfalls,
Surely spirit things are ye
Placed here by some deity
    In fairy Ancaster!

SHRINES OLD AND NEW

On the mirror of my mind,
Absent, do I hourly find
'Mid her verdant hills and leaves,
Scenes which fancy fondly weaves;
All that memory doth revere
Seems to meet and centre here,
In lovely Ancaster!

The Riviera, France,
Christmas, 1911.

OFTEN.*

Often at break of day, before the din
And stir of city life or song of bird
Disturbs the air and wakens all within,
Thy voice by me is heard.

Often at noontide hour, when all is life,
And commerce fills the busy, rushing street,
And footsteps tread in constant toil and strife,
I seem to hear thy feet.

Often at even, when the crimson sun
Sinks glorious to his rest o'er western plain,
In fancy's weaving when the day is done
I kiss thy cheek again.

Often in silent night, when all is still
And naught but contemplation doth beguile,
Far from my love these eyes with tears do fill;
I long to see thy smile.

* These lines were prompted by the disconsolate grief of a young Western friend who had left his lady love behind him in the East.

Often in dreams, bereft of nature's power,
  This fever'd brain declines to take its rest;
I yearn to lay for one short, passing hour
  This head upon thy breast.

Often when, heartsick, wandering here and there
  Aimless and lonely through this strange new
    land,
New faces and new problems everywhere,
  Would I could take thy hand.

And often, dear one, there comes over me,
  Burdened with sorrow and with care oppress'd,
A deep, long yearning to return to thee
  And be again at rest.

Winnipeg, February, 1911.

THE DECLINE OF CHIVALRY.

'Tis told in legend how
In olden days the armored knight
In furth'rance of his given plighted vow
Rode to the rescue of his lady fair;
How virtue, honor, love and loyalty
Formed in men's hearts resolve to do the right.
Such was the age of chivalry,
Of motive high, of courage rare,
When noble child of tender years,
Both called to act the part of menial page
And taught great deeds to do and dare,
An Esquire next we're told was proudly made;
And last attaining knightly age
Knelt and received the " accolade."

Bravery the ideal then,
Not wealth; combine and trust, alike unknown,
Ate not like canker to the heart of men.
Religion's light burned strong:
To-day 'tis dim; we hear the groan
Of millions clamoring for redress of wrong.

Burke vividly
Over a cycle since, in lurid gloom,
Pictured in words those sordid, evil times
Which brought so dire a fate
To beautiful Queen Antoinette, on whom
For lack of chivalry
Men dared in lust of blood to perpetrate
The worst of revolution's crimes.

O gifted Celt! We say
With thee, deploring high ideals lost,
Wealth gained and power secured at honor's cost,
Beholding the degeneracy of to-day—
The poor oppressed, the weak asunder drawn,
Courts, Governments and Councils sold and bought,
Heroic character a thing of naught—
"The Calculator's age salutes the dawn;
The age of chivalry is gone."

Winnipeg, January, 1911.

TO A VIOLET.

Gathered on the grave of Keats at Rome.

While others sought their pleasure on a round
Of Palace, Arch and Temple of old Rome,
And Pantheon and royal Caesar's tomb,
I wandered toward Testaccio's hill, and found
The grave of Keats, to me more sacred ground.
For here rests that sweet flower of song, than whom
No sweeter ever faded in its bloom.
I plucked a violet from this humble mound
And, press'd between his poems, I shall keep
Though thy leaf wither and thy perfume fade,
Thee—little flower; thou wilt be to me
In far-off western land beyond the deep
Of Beauty's bard, who rests near Cestius' shade,
An Inspiration and a Memory!

Rome, April 3, 1912.

ODE TO CHRISTMAS DAY.

Thou charming day of unalloyed content,
Thou fantasy of childhood's happy hour,
Creator of all joy and merriment,
Distributor of Love's and Kindness' power;
What is it marks thine advent among men
In this and every other Christian clime
With gladness and with gay festivity?
Chiefly because thou point'st to us the time,
And call'st to our remembrance yet again
The wondrous theme of Christ's Nativity.

And too, because at this especial time
Thou mak'st the discord of the bygone year
Give place to love and unison and rhyme,
And all harsh thoughts and actions disappear,
Thou causest all in contest warm to vie
And eagerly in one accord engage
And use their best endeavors to disperse
Kindness about, and self-denial try;
Others to please, our own base ends immerse,
From childhood on to winter's hoary age.

"For here rests that sweet flower of song, than whom
No sweeter ever faded in its bloom."

(See page 187.)

ODE TO CHRISTMAS DAY

Let strains of music then be heard to-day,
Let melody be wafted near and far,
Let light be kindled in the darkened way,
To lead men onward like the Eastern Star
To kindly deeds and gentle words of love;
We cannot hear the sweet seraphic voice
As shepherds heard the song outpoured to them,
Nor see the Guiding Star in heaven above;
But in good-will can equally rejoice
With those who saw the Star of Bethlehem.

Fair Bethlehem! that sound of melody
Which echoed o'er thy housetops long ago,
Those angel voices in sweet harmony
Along thy valleys floating clear and low;
And that bright vision bursting on the view,
Of shepherds watching near thy snowclad hills;
Told of the Child, the Light of All the World;
Sweeter than song from out th' empyrean blue,
Brighter than sunlight which the dew distills,
God's gift to man in Song and Light unfurl'd.

O festive day! thou time of gladsome mirth,
Crowned with rejoicing and with memories dear,
With laughter and with stories round the hearth
What can we do on thee for other's cheer,

Whose lines are cast in darker shades than ours,
Whom chill misfortune may have stricken sore,
Who may have fallen by stern Fate's caprice
From high estate to low, from rich to poor?
He who on such his Christmas bounty showers
Keeps best the Birthday of the Prince of Peace.

Winnipeg, Christmas, 1910.

RAINBOWLAND.

There is a land, so saith an Iceland tale,
  Upon whose shining, iridescent shore
  Rainbows drift to and fro for evermore.
Immortal flowers of vapour without fail
In Devonshire where I have come to spend
  An Autumn month and roam her hillsides o'er;
  Each day I see brighter than that before,
A brilliant, seven-hued arch in glory bend
From Bickington to Chittlehampton's heights,
  Spanning across the lovely Vale of Taw.
    Peaceful beneath rests wooded Umberleigh,
The hills beyond the sunshine radiant lights,
  And gazing on this scene, without a flaw,
    Methinks 'tis Norseman's Rainbowland I see.

High Buckington,
Nov. 13, 1911.

ODE TO CANADA.*

First land in all the Universe,
  None other may transcend!
O Canada, thy prayers rehearse,
  Thy thankful praises blend;
And in thy best last golden West
  Has each succeeding year,
Filled by God's hand with all things grand,
  Been crowned with goodlier cheer.

Each passing bounteous year thou'st seen
  On land, on sea, in air,
Discoveries greater than have been,
  Advancement everywhere;
On history's page, in any age
  No mightier strides were made;
No other state so soon grown great,
  In commerce, wealth and trade.

* Written for the Winnipeg Board of Education.

ODE TO CANADA

No war, nor plague, nor pestilence,
  No restless discontent,
No base corrupting influence
  Have on thy shores been sent;
But vast and wide, Great Britain's pride,
  Thou stand'st supreme to-day,
Pulsing with life, devoid of strife,
  Dissension or decay.

Thankful to-day thy people are,
  And should they not have cause?
For King and Flag, for Hope's bright star,
  For just and equal laws;
For family ties and bright, clear skies,
  For sun and rain and flower,
For Word of Truth, for glorious Youth,
  And charm of Manhood's power.

Winnipeg, Empire Day, 1911.

MILAN CATHEDRAL.

Midway between the terrace and the crest
  Of this rare marble pile, I saw there, hung,
  A figure which I noticed most among
The many—Christ asleep on Mary's breast.
And there some pigeons had contrived a nest,
  Tho' poor and frail the hold by which it hung;
  And fed and guarded well their callow young,
And warded off th' intrusions of the rest;
And as I watched them there a passing thought
  Of grandeur, mingled with humility,
    Came flooding o'er this sordid heart of mine:
How the great Author of all Love had brought
  Those gentle birds to nestle near the knee
    Of that Bless'd Mother, with her Child Divine.

Milan, March 6, 1912.

". . . . . In a choicer spot
Sleeps the great heart of Shelley, shadow'd o'er
With dark'ning cypress . . . . . ."

(See page 154.)

ODE TO SPRING.

Hail! Season of soft winds and budding flowers,
  Dispeller of fierce winter's frigid bounds,
Come with thy pleasant germinating showers,
  Greening the gardens and the meadow grounds;
Hark! thro' the pines, in cadence sweet, I hear
  The music of thine advent, waited long,
And on the air I catch the whispering
  Of the approaching summer. Birds in song
Over the plowman's head pipe far and near,
New emerald tints on field and tree appear,
  And herald all around thy birth, O Spring.

See! in the orchard and the scented wood,
  Sure tokens of thy coming everywhere,
The gnarled old apple white again 't has stood,
  And whitened there thro' many a yester-year;
And playing children lift their hands and reach
  Bunches of fleecy cherry bloom and plum,
And fright the bees from out the blossoming
  Of the immaculate pink-tinted peach.
Yes! 'mid this drowsy ceaseless insect hum,
In joyous ecstasy we feel thou'rt come,
  Genial lifegiver, balmy odorous Spring!

The village lad, weary of skate and sled
Now stored away, at end of daily school
Hies him with rod in hand to streamlet's bed,
And whips the finny haunts of brook and pool,
Just cleared from freshet's overflowing flood,
And freed from icy covering of frost,
And here stays till the nightfall, lingering,
Not thinking of the hours that he has stood
Trying to tempt again the beauties lost,
Nor of the times his line in vain he's tossed,
On this his first excursion of the Spring.

Nor is the boy who haunts the limpid stream,
Nor child at play amid the bloom so fair,
Nor plowman following afield his team,
The only lover of thy fragrance rare,
Sweet vernal Season. In yon hilly mead
Are lowing cattle winding up the trail,
And browsing ewes content meandering,
While sportive lambs alternate skip and feed,
Their joyous bleatings echoing thro' the vale;
The brute creation, too, on thee regale,
And thankful greet thy dawn, O glorious Spring!

Ancaster, May, 1911.

TO MORNING

I.

Thou who of old didst gild the fretted skies,
Upon Olympus, when goat-footed Pan
Piped to the sylvan nymphs of mythic Greece,
And from fair Syrinx formed his shepherd's reed!
Thou metaphor by which the tongue of man
Hath clothed from the foundations of the world
And from the birth of language, similies
Of all the bright and good and true in life!
Thou period in which the mounting lark
Doth pour from out the vault of England's skies,
Unseen by man, its wondrous silver note
Hid in the vortex of the glimmering dawn!

II.

Whose long, white fingers cast their mantle bright,
Of new-born life throughout all time and space,
On the far islands of the Southern seas.
Whose verdure lasts throughout the changeless year,
Whose waters ne'er are frost-bound, and whose fruits
Hang mellow and bespice the tropic winds.

On the high mountains whose eternal snows
Pierce through the clouds and send their melting floods
To freshen and make green the vales beneath.
Or on the prairie vast, where distant honk
Of goose and trumpet of awakening crane,
Announce the morning flight to stubble field.

III.

Say, smiling child, why bards of bygone days
Dwell most on that forerunner of dark night,
Thy dusky sister Eve, with shadows chill
And dying sunset. I would fain attune
My lyre to sing of brighter scenes and things,
And how the dark and gloom do flee away
Rather than whelm poor mortals with their pall.
Glad Morn! to thee my song I dedicate;
Precursor of the bright and glorious day,
Dispeller of the vicious things of night,
Awakener of the world and of all life,
On mount, o'er vale, and in th' abysmal deep.

IV.

When Lucifer hath vanished, and the moon,
Pursued by Phoebus from his orient couch,
Sheds yet a sickly light from western sky,
When meads are grey, o'ersprinkled all around

TO MORNING

With summer's dew or fall's first ashen hoar,
And mist obscures the valleys, tho' beyond
'Tis pierced by crowning hilltop, or mayhap
By some dead warrior of primeval wood
The logger's axe hath spared to stand and rot,
Entranced we see from out the crimson East
The first rays flash of thy all-welcome light,
Begemming every leaf and blade and flower.

v.

Now Eos, mother of the Stars of Heaven,
And of the winds and of Eosphorus,
Comes forth from out her eastern palace gates
In chariot of yellow, piloting
Her steeds of snowy white, and doth diffuse
The light, and grasp and slay the fleeing Dark.
Bewitching goddess! who with equal flame
Inspired the loves of deities and men,
Who with her brother Helius hath been steer'd
Across Latona's dismal northern skies
In the celestial artist's Golden Cup*
To guide the Sun-god back o'er heaven's dome.

* The ancient Greeks believed that Aurora or Eos, the Titan goddess of the dawn, dwelt in a palace in the East, and preceded her brother Helius, the Sun-god, across the sky each morning in a yellow chariot, drawn by four white steeds, shedding light as she passed along; and that in the evening the god and goddess with their chariots and horses were all received in the West into a golden cup made by Vulcan, and carried around the northern part of the earth in time to start again the next morning.

VI.

Now do the venturous wanderers of the night
Shrink from thy glance, O light-revealing Morn.
The blind and spooky bat a sudden leave
Doth take, and maketh thee his resting-time.
The solemn owl, Minerva's favorite,
Whose ghostly hoot disturbs the midnight still,
While prowling near the barnyard for his prey,
Or troubled by the moonbeams through the woods,
Now finds his sanctu'ry in the jungle dense;
And the soft-noted, gentle whip-poor-will,
That favorite cheerer of the Summer's dark,
Seeketh his wonted forest hiding-place,
And Philomela shuns the haunts of men.

VII.

Now Chanticleer, rude wakener of repose,
Sends challenge to his rival far away,
Who quick responds, and soon the air is fill'd
With many challenges destined to end
In nothing, like the vanities of men.
And hark! the iron horse plunging along
With precious load of men and merchandise
At lightning speed, gives forth its warning shriek,
Shriller than in the busy noontide hour,
More weird methinks than in the dead of night.

"And cactus, aloe, and spiked agavi
Stand 'mid great palms in verdant rivalry."

(See page 131.)

And now the slumbering swain, these warnings
heard,
Bestirs himself and seeks his daily toil.

VIII.

The air is laden with the gladdened voice
Of the awakening birds, and with the scent
Of ripening orchards dripping with the dew,
And with th' aroma of milk-laden kine.
But crouching still in sheltered cove or nook
Are sheep and swine and little calves, all loath
To stir until the sunshine's genial warmth
Hath chased the damp and chill of night away.
And frogs are helpless, still beneath the weight
Of the wet swale, and grasshopper and bee
With sodden wing are fearful yet to tempt
Fate on their wanderings over field and wood.

IX.

What part of earth's revolving day than thee
In the four seasons gladder? Doth not Spring
The morning of the year more softly breathe
Her daintiest odors with thy opening rays?
Were sweltering blasts of summer's sun not cool'd
By thy refreshing breath, could they be borne?
And in the Indian summer's halcyon hours
Thy smoky blue and softened grey soothe best.

What diamonds in a crown more brilliant shine
Than when the rays of winter's rising sun
Shoot forth their darts across the snowbound hills
And pale the glory of the waning stars?

X.

And in the crowded cities thou art, too,
A cheering guest, whether in mansion rare
Or humble workman's home, where are laid low
With sickness those to whom the cloak of night
Brings no repose; who long to see the sun.
Or those whom horrid dreams have sorely racked
To whom once more thou bringest peace and calm.
The lone night-watchman on his weary beat
Awaits thy coming that he may have rest.
And where Vice hideous stalks 'neath friendly dark,
And revelry and riot rule o'er all,
How joy'd doth Virtue greet the day again?

XI.

Where on the sacred page of Holy Writ
Are words indited loftier than those
By which the great Creator of the Spheres
Called thee to being? Aught more rich with hope
To fallen man, of promise more full-fraught,
Of truth more sure, of prophecy more clear,

Than that glad sentence which th' Omnipotent
The heavens and earth create gave utterance to,
When, chaos brooding o'er the new-form'd deep,
He saw that it was good, that thou shouldst be,
And drove the Stygian gloom of night away
In that sublime decree, " Let there be Light."

XII.

O glorious morn of life! when Youth's desires
And hopes and struggles had not undergone
The disappointments of reality!
O morning of the year, when leaf and flower
Were still untouched by summer's withering heat,
Or blasted by the frosts of autumn's night.
O morn of nations, ere their rulers' hearts
Had felt the blight of a decadent age,
And they, like Athens, once were pure and free!
The dawn hath broken into garish day,
And, day far-spent, night's shadows round me fall
And naught remains of thee but memory's sigh.

XIII.

Salute, ye sons of men, the new-born rays
Of morning, breaking as they do the chain
Of darkness which hath cast her ebon folds
O'er dreamy Nature! Hearken to the song

Of birds with gladness, they that do prevent
The arrows of the dawn with melody,
And pour their canticles athwart the sun.
But welcome most that brighter, happier birth
Of Knowledge, heav'nly child, whose radiant beam
Like thine, fair Morn, is penetrating deep
Into the dark recesses of the world,
And banishing the night of Ignorance!

XIV.

And thou, poor jaded toiler on life's road!
What if the piercing briers of To-day
Do lacerate thy tired arms and feet,
And, hindered by the rocks of Care and Fear
Thou comest to the River of To-night
Only to shudder at its deep and gloom.
Be of good courage! o'er the Bridge of Sleep
There waits for thee to give new lease of life,
To take thy hand and guide thy steps anew,
Bright visaged Morn! and in that garden fair,
The rose embower'd, To-morrow thou shalt rest
Refreshed with all the odorous bloom of Hope.

Ancaster, October, 1912.

VENICE.

Where Brenta cast up her alluvial sands
  In the dim centuries of long ago
  She rose a child of pride and pomp and show,
Outrivalling all her other neighboring lands,
And wealth and commerce fell into her hands
  From subject cities. And to-day altho'
  'Mong the world's business marts she ranketh low,
In Art's rich treasury she still commands;
But 'mid her golden domes, her carved façades,
I sought in vain for verdant, spreading shades.
I listened, but upon mine ear there rang
Of horses' hoofs no distant echoing clang,
Nor sound of rumbling wheels, she hath not these
Because her paths are o'er th' untrodden seas.

Venice, March 16, 1912.

ADVERSITY.

Composed at Sea.

In Holy Writ 'tis taught that Job of old,
Greatest of men, with riches manifold,
Perfect and upright and eschewing evil,
By heaven's decree is tempted of the devil.
His cattle fall beneath the Sabean rod,
His sheep are slain by angry fire of God;
Chaldean sword his men and camels slaughters,
The wilderness' wind his sons and daughters.
And then to this extreme humiliation
Sore boils are added as an aggravation.
But yet this saint, 'mid all this dire correction,
And grievous loss, and soul's supreme dejection,
Patiently bearing fire and rod and sword,
Blesses the name of his afflicting Lord.

And, as affliction's devastating breath
Refined Job's life and added to his faith,
In man, in nature, and in fable, we
May see the blessings of Adversity.

"Where steep Sorrento gave her Tasso light."

(See page 167.)

ADVERSITY

Look around, reader, and you'll find 'tis true;
Whatever theme or prospect you pursue,
If 'tis the forest or the ocean tide,
If 'tis the stream where leaves of autumn glide,
The boy who plods with tireless energy,
Or chastened martyr of mythology;
If the proud ship which rides upon the storms,
If man's frail soul surrounded with alarms;
This lesson's taught, the way that's strewn with thorns
The better and the higher life adorns.

The stately oak sprang not at once to sight,
To majesty and beauty in the light,
But many a storm-wind rudely sweeping o'er,
Bent its young branches in the days of yore.
Stern was it press'd by many an autumn wind,
By lightning's flash, by winter's frost unkind;
But all these foes but multiplied its strength,
And gave new vigor to its breath and length;
And thus we see it standing proud to-day,
Impervious to wind and rain's decay,
The monarch of the forest and the grove,
Pride of our land, and object of our love,
Strong in the sunlight of God's glorious earth,
Made stronger by Adversity from birth.

The surging tide which all around us we
In wonder gaze on o'er the moonlit sea,
Did not attain its fulness at a bound,
But slowly crept along the sloping ground.
The wave which would submerge th' opposing shore
Must first recede so it may add the more
To that vast effort hurl'd against the strand,
By which old Ocean claims the golden sand.
The river flowing peaceful thro' the vale
Can also tell Adversity's stern tale,
Of hill and mountain obstacles o'ercome
By age of toil and struggle wearisome.
The law of nature and the law of life
Make all things smoother after years of strife.

The man who stands pre-eminent to-day,
Is not the boy who spent his youth in play,
Petted and pampered in his father's home,
Allowed in wealth and indolence to roam;
But he whom hardship made to slave and toil,
Who early rose and struggling till'd the soil,
Devoid of luxury, deprived of cash,
Press'd on beneath misfortune's cruel lash,
Till, manhood reach'd, there dawned on him the truth,
How good had been his struggling, toiling youth,

ADVERSITY

How easy 'twas to leave behind the man
Who, child of luxury, his life began.
The youthful toiler, victor in the end,
Has found Adversity his truest friend.

See the starved vultures round the vitals flock,
Of the chain'd Titan on Caucasus' rock;
Death doubly welcome is to him denied
That he may be through age of torture tried.
Three thousand years of bitterest anguish roll
While awful pangs consume his stricken soul;
Blistered each day with sun's tormenting rays,
And frosts of night worse than the fire of days,
At length by Hercules vouchsafed release,
How pure his joy, how exquisite his peace!
Who fainted not at Hell's relentless throes,
Who faltered not against o'erwhelming woes,
Thy joy, Prometheus, and thy victory
Were sweetened most by thine Adversity!

Our gallant ship will yonder by and by
Safe and serene from storm at anchor lie,
Tho' now through mountain seas she's heav'd and
toss'd,
Still pressing onward toward the friendly coast.

Sternly she battles 'gainst the billow's crest,
Ere she reposes on the harbour's breast.
And so, on life's disturb'd and troubled sea,
Storm-bound and toss'd, we meet Adversity;
But the firm soul who bravely struggles on,
Sees dark and danger met and duty done,
Who patient bears calamity and grief,
Who founders not upon temptation's reef,
Time's voyage o'er, with a serene delight
Rests on the bosom of the Infinite!

S. S. "Lake Champlain,"
June 18, 1911.

THE CATARACT OF LODORE.

A Satire.

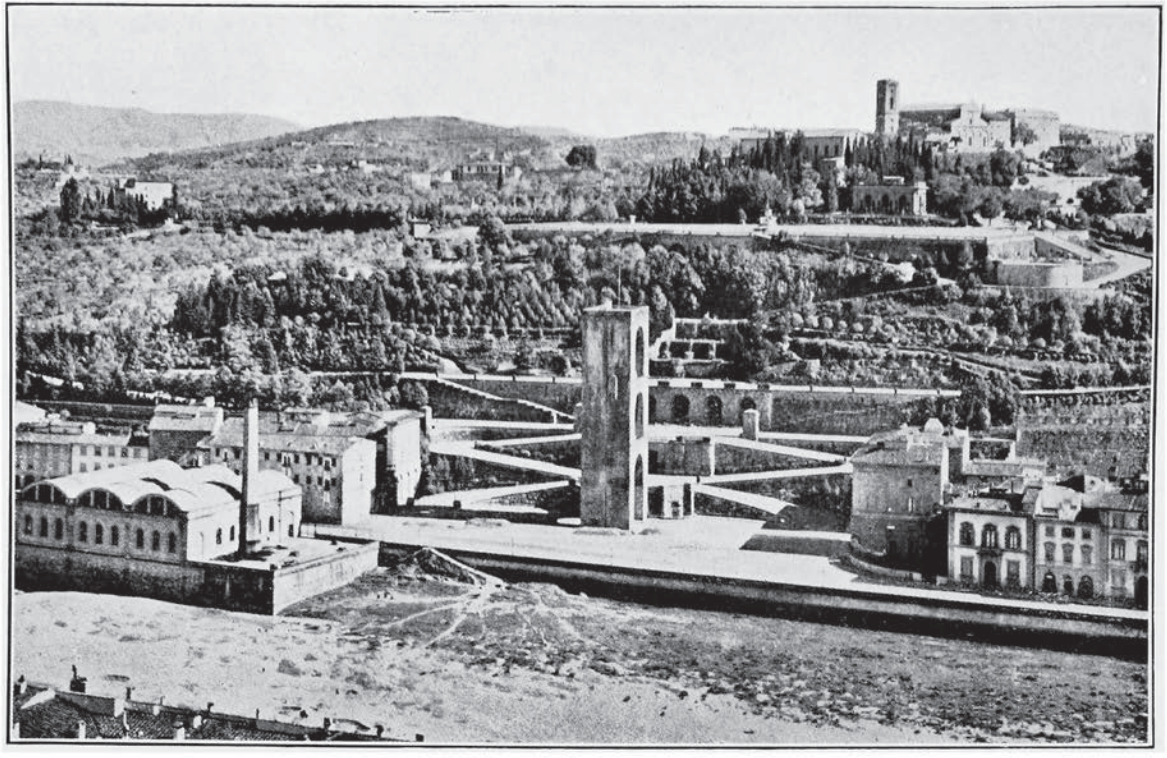
'Tis told that once from distant lands there came
To Windermere a visitor, whose name
I need not tell, but so the story ran,
He was a well-to-do Canadian
Who, having means and leisure, wish'd to see
Whatever things of interest there might be
Beyond the seas, and in those far-off climes
He'd heard and read of oft in tales and rhymes,
And, 'mong the rest, our traveller had been told
To visit Wordsworth's land—wild, rugged, bold,—
Its mountain peaks, its lovely tarns and rills,
Its mirror'd lakelets, gorges, fells and ghylls,
And so we're not surprised to find him here,
Gazing on all these charms round Windermere.

In youth our hero'd learn'd to improve his mind
In his spare moments with the arts refin'd,
And spite of many cares by business press'd,
Had chosen books and authors of the best;

Not only in the field of prose was he
A stroller, but in that of poetry.
And who, a student of the noble muse,
Could for one moment Southey's haunts refuse
To visit gladly or his poems read
And of the sights therein described take heed?
There's little cause for wonder then that he,
Fill'd with the sight-seer's curiosity,
Scanning the guidebooks of the district o'er,
Should ask the way to the far-famed Lodore.

Oft had our traveller in rapture stood
Above Niagara's stupendous flood,
Watched Yellowstone's majestic torrent leap
Down its abysmal heights to cavern deep;
In California's clime admiring he
Had heard the thunders of Yosemite;
Once on Superior's northern shores he saw
The cataract of Kaministiquia;
Entranced he'd gazed on iridescent ray
Of shining sun o'er Montmorenci's spray,
Seen all these glorious Western visions, free,
Uncheck'd by tolls, uncurs'd by any fee,
So, when at Lodore, block'd by toll-gate stand,
High were his hopes of sight sublimely grand.

The entrance paid, th' unsightly toll-gate pass'd,
To right, to left, in front, his eyes he cast—



"And on San Miniato's lofty height."

(See page 147.)

THE CATARACT OF LODORE

No sight nor sound of water falling still,
The searcher thought he'd climb a rocky hill,
Perchance the falls were on the other side,
Where to the eastward Derwent's slopes divide.
This height attained, he sat him down to rest,
And think which pathway now would be the best.
While pond'ring thus, he saw a boy appear,
Coming his way, and when the youth was near
Enough to hail, he to him eager calls:
" Pray, tell me, lad, the way to Lodore Falls!"
How think you, reader, felt our wanderer
At this reply: " You're sitting on them, Sir!"

Windermere, Aug. 1, 1911.

LIVE CLIMBING.

To a promising youth on attaining his majority.

Young man! you open on this day the page
Of life which calls you up to manhood's age,
And leave with pleasant memories on the mind
The scenes and joys of childhood all behind;
Your Father's hopes, your Mother's prayers and tears,
Which watched and followed you through bygone years,
Are answered, when in you they fondly see
On this the day of your majority
Signs that give promise, like a well-tilled field,
Of fruits that only noble lives can yield;
Virtue and honor, learning, rectitude,
Low habits shunned, uplifting things pursued,
A kindly heart, a nature all refined,
A gentle manner and a cultured mind.

See that these gifts so excellent, so rare,
Are nurtured, cultivated, reared with care,

LIVE CLIMBING

Be diligent in all things, bear in mind
The best, if careless, sometimes fall behind;
And he with lesser gifts but steadier pace
Oft overtakes the brilliant in life's race.
Strive faithfully no daily task to shirk,
For the night cometh when no man can work.
Avoid the pitfalls in life's pathway found,
Which lie before you scattered all around;
The Spendthrift's folly and the Miser's greed,
The Slanderer's tongue, the base, ignoble deed,
The Atheist, who reason defies,
And God and future state alike denies.

'Neath one of Alpine peaks remote and vast
The traveller stops ere he the spot hath passed,
To gaze upon an unpretentious stone,
Standing as sentry in the pass alone;
He pauses thus, in pensive mood to read
The record there of an heroic deed.
How Youth, who, more ambitious than the rest
To reach the highest point of mountain's crest,
Venturing too far on treacherous ice and snow,
Met death in fathomless abyss below;
But what impressed the traveller the most,
Was not the epitaph of the Youth lost,
Or dissertation on his virtues rare,
But the words " He Died Climbing " graven there.

'Twas glorious thus in mounting up to die,
Striving to reach the peak which pierced the sky,
And while time lasts th' engraving on that spar
Will charm the traveller from lands afar;
But if 'twas grand and noble to die so,
O Youth, take this thought to thyself, and know
That living, more than dying, you should climb,
And strive in all things for the heights sublime;
Make life one grand continuous ascent,
Let " He Lived Climbing " mark your monument;
And then, tho' highest place be not attained,
No mean nor poor position you'll have gained,
But looking back at set of evening sun,
Can contemplate a life of great things done.

Winnipeg, April 3, 1911.

"The home of Dante and of Angelo!"

(See page 229.)

FLORENCE.

City of Flowers! where the Arno winds
  Bejewel'd 'mong the Apennines, thou art
  Of all fair cities dearest to the heart
Of him who 'mid the world's confusion minds
Life's higher things. In thee the seeker finds
  The deeds of masters of an early age,
  And those whose genius lit a later page.
What never-ending streams of many kinds
  Of knowledge fill the soul with ecstasy,
And make poor human hearts diviner grow
  In that old capital of Tuscany!
Surely the thoughts of after-life shall glow
  Brighter with happy memories of thee,
The home of Dante and of Angelo!

Florence, March 26, 1912.

THE CANADIAN THERMOPYLÆ

(1660.)

"In 1660 the Iroquois menaced with a fatal blow the very existence of the Colony of French Canada. Twelve hundred plumed and painted warriors were on the way to attack successively the three military posts of Montreal, Three Rivers and Quebec. Behind their loopholed palisades the trembling inhabitants gathered, their hearts failing them for fear. The Colony was saved from extermination by an act of valor and devotion as heroic as any recorded on the page of history. Daulac des Ormeaux, a youth of twenty-five, with sixteen others, youthful like himself—all of Montreal—resolved to save their country, though they perished in the act. They made their wills, confessed, received the sacrament, and bade a solemn farewell to their friends, like men about to march to death. And so they were. Not one returned alive. They took their stand at the Long Sault, near Carillon, on the Ottawa. Soon the savage host appeared. For five long days and nights they swarmed around the frail redoubt erected by the French, repulsed again and again by its brave defenders, who, though worn by hunger, thirst and want of sleep, fought and prayed and watched in turns. Iroquois reinforcements arrived; and for three days longer seven hundred ferocious savages beleaguered the crumbling redoubt, and only with the death of the last Frenchman was the dear-bought victory won. But the colony was saved. The pass of the Long Sault was the Thermopylæ of Canada."—Extract from Withrow and Adams' History of Canada, page 32.

The Indian hordes were closing round;
  Dark clouds of gloom hung o'er the land,
Security could scarce be found
  For priest or mission band:

THE CANADIAN THERMOPYLÆ

In forest paths, on river streams,
At night weird sounds disturbed men's dreams;
The Iroquois appeared,
And scalped and slaughtered one and all
On well-tilled field, at convent wall;
Their presence fell like awful pall;
Even the bravest feared.

And now they circle Ville Marie,
Fair embryo city of New France,
And men fear-stricken, hear and see
The war-whoop and the dance.
And on Quebec's grey mantled walls,
At set of sun there also falls
The hideous war-chief's yell.
Belts filled with scalps—this ghastly sight
Oft met the children in their flight,
To escape the savage ere the night
To hide the slaughter fell.

"Who shall our loved ones help and save?
Who can our homes and hearths defend?
Who is there bold enough and brave
To ward off such an end?"
As nearer crept the red man dread,
This was the prayer the people said,
With cry and piteous groan.

" Twelve hundred warriors on their way,
Painted and plumed in war's array,
To scalp, to torture and to slay,
And we are left alone!"

While brave men feared and cowered low;
While those entrusted to command,
Dreading the deadly Indian blow,
In terror left the land,
Braver than all stood forth to view,
Gallant Daulac des Ormeaux,
Of France's noble blood.
" Tho' we be numbered with the dead
Who will go up with me," he said,
" And face the tomahawk and lead,
And stem the savage flood?

" Who will go up?" This was his call.
" Our homes to save, our lives to give;
Tho' every one of us shall fall,
We'll die that ours shall live."
And sixteen youths as brave as he,
The flower and pride of Ville Marie,
Hearkened to Daulac's voice
And bidding dear ones sad adieu,
They with a friendly Huron few
Set forth for that which each one knew
Left death their only choice.

THE CANADIAN THERMOPYLÆ

Up broad St. Lawrence's wooded shores,
  Across Two Mountains' widening lake,
Where Ottawa's swift current roars
  At Long Sault halt they make.
Behind tree trunks tossed up before
By Indians of a former war,
    Concealed from view they stand.
Resolved that none shall pass them by,
Prepared to hold their ground or die,
The Indian warriors to defy,
    And all their murderous band.

They came, the mighty Indian foe,
  And fought and stormed till Daulac saw
Piled up around, above, below,
  Dead heaps of Iroquois.
But one by one these brave youths fell,
Till only five remained to tell
    The tale of carnage red.
Then Indians, climbing o'er their slain,
At length the rude enclosure gain
With maddening fury in their train,
    And torture in their tread.

Daulac was slain and his brave men;
  But peace for Ville Marie was won,
And old Quebec saw rest again,
  And calm at set of sun.

The savage tribes a lesson learned;
Courage and bravery had turned
Their hatred to respect.
Hundreds had fallen to a few;
Back to their forest homes they drew,
No wish the conflict to renew,
Their warlike ardor checked.

While poets sing of Abraham's Plain;
Of Brock who met a hero's doom;
While history tells of Lundy's Lane,
And lauds the patriot's tomb.
You chose the deathless martyr's part,
And nurtured deep in country's heart,
Daulac of noble name,
Who hunger, death and torture braved
For homes and wives and children saved,
Your name shines ever bright, engraved
High on the scroll of fame.

Winnipeg, July, 1910.

TWO NAMES AT ETON.

In scanning o'er the list of names,
  Carved on old Eton's walls,
There two who everlasting fame's
  Proud honor roll recalls.

I saw great Pitt engraven there
  By embryo statesman's hand,
Small and ill-cut the letters were,
  And poor, and rudely planned.

Then Shelley's name high up was cut,
  In letters broad and large,
Above the rest his own he'd put,
  Upon the oaken marge.

And thus I pondered as I read,
  Did these illustrious men,
As o'er the oak their blades they led,
  Foresee their future then?

Did Pitt, the boy at Eton school,
  As moved his keen-edged knife,
Feel that a nation he'd control
  'Mid continental strife?

Or with prophetic vision see,
  Standing with blade in hand,
His name cut deep in destiny
  An Empire to command?

Did Shelley, tracing broad and deep
  His yet unspoken name,
Know that he'd climb by sudden leap
  To poet's deathless fame?

Or that, inscribed on Britain's scroll,
  His name should honor'd be,
Ere wave engulf'd his warbling soul
  On far Italian sea?

O British lad! in life's career
  You may not be a Pitt
Or Shelley, but your character!
  How are you forming it?

You're carving with each act of youth
  For honor or disgrace;
Engrave it deep in right and truth
  That time may not efface.

Eton College, Bucks,
October 3, 1911.

ON THE DEATH OF LABOUCHERE.

Henry Labouchere, Born 1831. Died at Florence, January 16th, 1912.

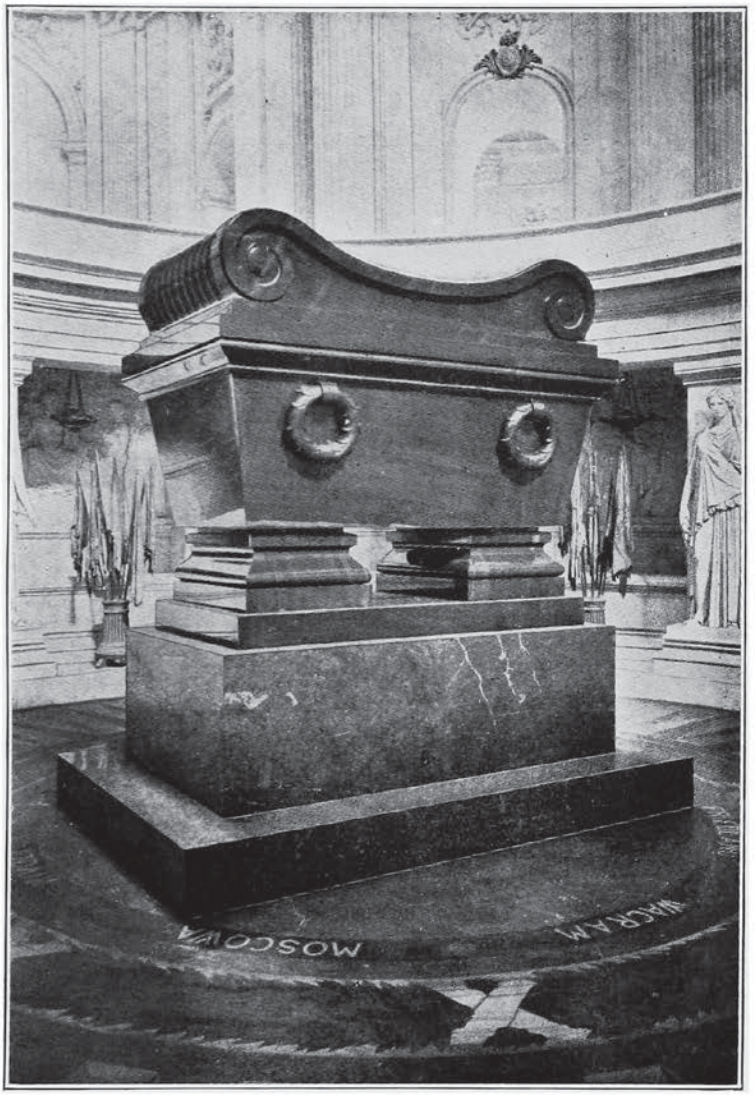
One of the gifts of heaven—a green old age
Was granted thee, and now, a Florentine,
Thou hast drunk there the last of life's sweet wine,
Far from that land where thro' thy flouting page
Thou hadst encountered venom, scorn and rage.
Far from those scenes where 'neath thy firm control
"Truth" was the mirror of thy jeering soul,
The mouthpiece of thy mocking persiflage.
O English journalist and tribune great!
Critic, Stage Manager and Diplomat!
In birth tho' not in life aristocrat.
A cleaner Britain we may owe to thee,
Altho' in thy last years expatriate
Thou mad'st thy home 'neath skies of Italy.

Hyères, France, January 20, 1912.

NAPOLEON'S TOMB.

In shadow'd Dome of a Parisian pile,
The spandrel'd Invalides, I saw beneath
A Tomb encircled by a laurel wreath
Worked in mosaic. From Helena's isle
Had come the dust of him who for a while
Had ruled the nations, whose commanding breath
Had sent forth pillage, devastation, death.
But he had died a poor, forlorn exile:
O Peerless Corsican! Thy rise, thy fall,
Thy genius ruling for a space the world,
Thine end—a prisoner on a foreign strand,
All point a moral to the great, the small:
Who climbs too high to lowest depth is hurl'd,
Unchecked Ambition rests on shifting sand.

Paris, Dec. 1, 1911.



". . . . . I saw beneath
A tomb encircled by a laurel wreath,
Worked in mosaic . . . . . ."

(See page 238.)

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

When worldy pleasure satiates, and palls
  The noise and turmoil of the outer life,
  The din of commerce, and the sound of strife,
Thy solemn grandeur draws me to thy walls,
Thy wond'rous history inspiring calls.
  Here I may contemplative learn to trace
  The by-gone splendor of our glorious race;
As gently o'er each marble bust there falls
Thine ancient windows' soft illuminings,
  Whose time is o'er, but all that fame can give
  Is theirs—tho' dead thou makest them to live.
The consecration of thy cloister brings
A sweeter rest to heroes, bards, and kings.
  Time's conqueror! and fame's restorative!

London, Eng., Sept. 20, 1911.

THE WATER LILY.

I saw a water lily in her waxen dress
Of virgin white unsullied loveliness,
Serenely floating near a river bank.
Beneath were sedge and ooze decay'd and dank,
And tangled mass of rush and root and weed,
Where slimy reptiles live and creep and feed.
Alas! I thought, in what ill-fitting place
Doth the fair lily waste such queenly grace,
As, circled by her leaves of green and brown
She threw the mirror'd shadow of her many-petal'd
crown.

But thus the gentle spirit, on life's marge serene
Mayhap unknown, and oft, perchance, unseen,
Long fettered by base hindrances like these
Blooms out above the world's impurities.
From weeds of self, from tangles of desire,
From brackish waters and the loathsome mire,
Where nature rooted it, and once 'tis freed
From mire and tangle and the reptile greed
Around and 'neath, where'er its graces shine
It casts the perfect shadow of an influence divine.

Washago, Aug. 18, 1912.

SOCIAL AMBITION.

Why, O luring candle bright,
Strive we for thy false delight,
Straining heart and brain and soul
To attain thy glittering goal?

In a night, or in a day,
All thy charm will pass away,
Like a leaf upon the stream,
Like some poet's fleeting dream.

Let us aim at something higher,
To some nobler thought aspire;
Something real that will last,
When thou, transient joy, art past.

All around our visions greet
Lives beclouded, wearied feet
Waiting for the mists to clear,
Longing for the word to cheer.

Let us soothe some stricken heart,
To some burdened one impart
Courage on life's thorny way;
These shall conquer Time's decay.

Winnipeg, June 3, 1912.

HUMILITY.

Who are the truly great?
Is he the greatest who from field afar
Hath come a conqueror in despoiling war?
He who in gain his fellows hath outclass'd,
And gold his only thought, hath wealth amass'd,
Or he whom hand of genius, guiding, kind,
To all else but the lust of power blind
Hath ruled a party or controll'd a state?

Oh, no! far greater he,
Where'er his feet have led, whate'er his lot,
If fame or fortune smiled, hath not forgot
How small the greatest are, and taken heed
Of this life's little things; whose every deed
Hath shed some brightness o'er the path he trod;
Who, taught by Nature, and by Nature's God,
Hath learned the lesson of Humility.

Hyères, Jan. 8, 1912.

CHARITY.

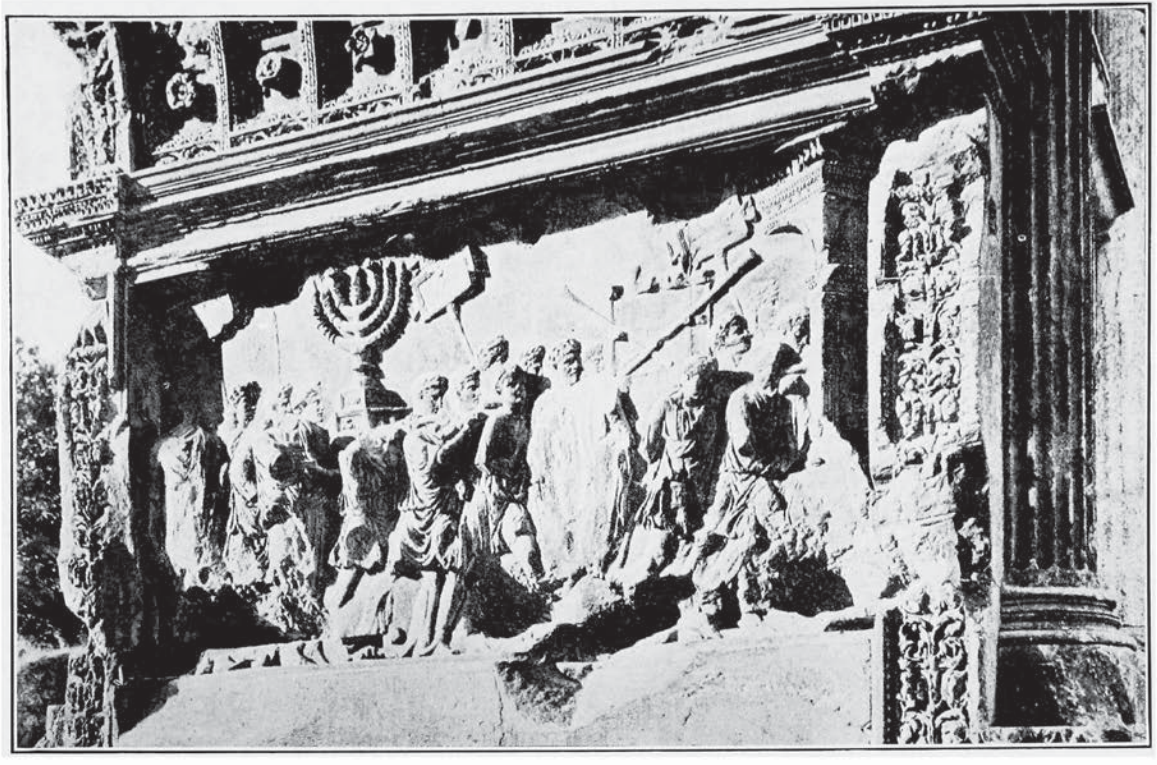
The silver trumpet tongues of men
  And of the angels fair,
Are naught to me if Charity
  Be not enkindled there.
Like tinkling cymbals' echo,
  Like din of sounding brass,
The loveless deeds of empty creeds
  Shall wither as the grass.

And what tho' I be rich endow'd
  With the prophetic gift,
And such supply of faith that I
  Could the vast mountains lift.
All mystery and knowledge
  Be subject to my will,
And yet do move devoid of love,
  Then am I nothing still.

And tho' I lavish all I have
To give the needy food,
And tho' my frame by conquering flame
To ashes be subdued.
It profiteth me nothing
Unless I fully find
That priceless thing long suffering,
Unenvying and kind.

That is not puffèd up with pride
Nor prone to idle vaunt,
That seeketh not her own, begot
Of no unseemly flaunt.
Not easily provoked to wrath,
That maketh truth her choice,
That thinks no sin, that doth not in
Iniquity rejoice.

Bearing, believing, hoping all,
Enduring everything,
She never fails, no drought assails
Her pure perennial spring.
Tho' prophecies and tongues shall cease
And knowledge fade away,
Her kindly light glows ever bright
Shining to perfect day.



"Bearing from Zion's holy place the chief
Of Jewish vessels . . . . . "

(See page 153.)

CHARITY

And when that which is perfect comes,
The part shall be dispersed
Of knowledge and of prophecy,
For we are children first;
Spoke, understood, and thought as such,
But, grown to man's estate,
All childish things on fleeting wings
Fade and disintegrate.

Now, darkly, thro' a glass we see,
And mists our view displace,
Then poor mankind, no longer blind,
Shall behold face to face.
Now knowledge only doth unroll
In part her golden zone,
Then high and low each one shall know
Even as they are known.

While firm the cross of Faith abides,
While Hope's strong anchor holds,
And each to man its glorious plan
Of saving grace unfolds;
Yet far the greatest and the best
Of these fair graces three,
That fount of love drawn from above
The heart of Charity!

Ancaster, August, 1912.

THE CHILD AND THE MOTOR.

On hearing that a child had been killed by a motor in a country lane in Buckinghamshire.

A little life crushed out,
  A happy family wrecked,
The country-side is stirred!
The funeral dirge is heard.
A quiet home is wrapped in gloom
  That wealth may go unchecked
In riot and in rout.

Seven short unclouded years
  Were all vouchsafed to thee,
And then the fates deny
That thou shouldst peaceful die,
A rumbling sound, a mortal wound,
  And then the agony
Of mother's scalding tears.

THE CHILD AND THE MOTOR

Thy life-blood ebbs away
  Dear little child! and you
Yield up your gentle soul,
And death's sad knell must toll
In order that the plutocrat
  May ruthlessly pursue
His lordly holiday!

O England, tell me! ought
  Thy vaunted equal laws
'Tween man and man, ordain
That shady country lane
Where children play, be given away
  To sate the greedy maws
Of modern Juggernaut?

Bletchley, Bucks,
July 12, 1911.

THE POETS' CORNER.

In Westminster Abbey.

O hallow'd place! Here are our bards at rest;
And, as my feet wind 'mong thy pedestals,
A thought surpassing sweet the spot recalls.
Not England's sons alone, we of the West
Are too by thy divine aroma blest,
And share th' influence shrined within thy walls;
These lives, these tombs, these carv'd memorials,
By us are honor'd, worshipp'd, and caress'd
And every brow-encircl'd laureate
Whose mortal clay hath mingled with thy dead,
From Chaucer, glorious and of ancient date,
To Tennyson, so well belov'd and read:
O'er the whole world doth each disseminate
The fragrance with which thou'rt environèd.

London, Eng., Oct. 15, 1911.

HENRY LABOUCHERE.

Great Commoner! how many gifts were thine!
  Thy part well played in days gone by. Time was
  When many eyes were fixed on thee because
Though nobly founded thine ancestral line*
Thou wert the foe of jingoed discipline;
  Preferring rather to uphold the cause
  Which did not win thy countrymen's applause,
The one against the ninety and the nine.
And yet how oft Northampton's trusty men
  Made thee their choice. How often didst thou dare
The fraud, the usurer, and the swindler's den,
  In thy relentless page expose and bare.
But now this far-off tomb Tuscanian
  Is made thy resting-place, O Labouchere!

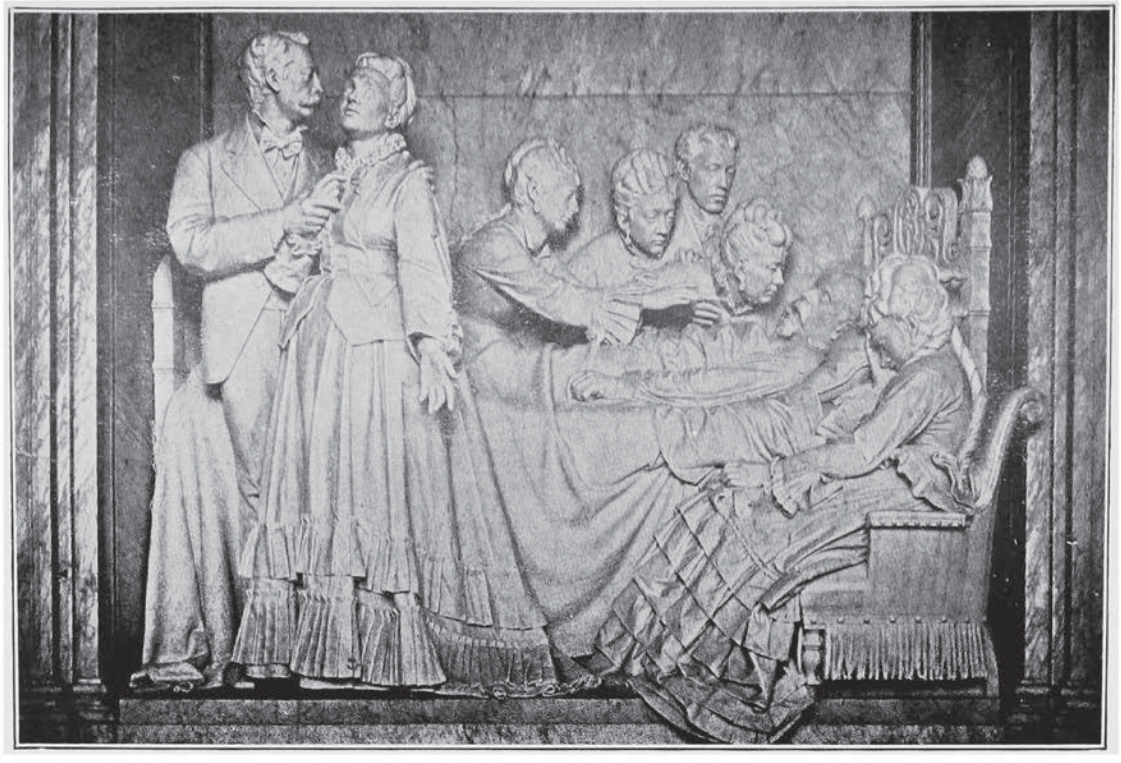
Florence, March, 1912.

* The head of the Labouchere family is Baron Taunton.

HARDSHIP.

Thou school in which the greatest minds are taught,
  Those pupils of the master, Circumstance,
  Offsprings of Destiny and of favoring Chance,
Say! in our lives is anything for naught?
Rather is not the path to greatness fraught
  With suffering from thy all-pervading glance?
  And Triumph! maid so dilatory, askance
Is she, forsooth, not through thy channels brought?
Did not those bars which Bunyan's frame confined
  Refine, and make his soul a greater soul,
    To help men's hopes up to a loftier height?
Did Lincoln not in cabin, low outlined,
  Learn well the rugged task of self-control,
    And how to conquer ills, and grasp the infinite?

Winnipeg, June 1, 1912.



"And carves the look of grief and even the mourners' sigh."

(See page 134.)

CHATTERTON.

Thomas Chatterton, England's child poet, was born at Bristol (posthumously) in 1752, of humble parentage, and early gave evidence of great precocity of mind. The production, at twelve years of age, of the mediæval Rowley poems (now admitted to have been composed by himself), his intimate knowledge of the long-passed romantic period in English verse, and the intensity of his imaginative power, have always been regarded as the most remarkable display of early genius in England's literary annals. Overwhelmed by accusations of forgery, and in destitution, obscurity and despair, this gifted youth ended his life by poison in London, in August, 1770.

I.

Unhappy boy! thy ruthless fate
Did more than amply expiate
  Thy but imputed crime!
What pangs of disappointed hope
Made thee a morbid misanthrope
  In youth's bright morning time?

II.

Only when death, ere manhood's years
Had granted thee surcease from tears,
  Were found, alas! too late,
Thy budding talent, mock'd, despised,
Thy genius all unrecognized,
  Hope crushed 'neath sorrow's weight!

III.

Why wert thou left to pine and brood
And walk in mental solitude,
  When some befriending hand
Had helped thee in thy sore distress,
Had taught thee, lone, companionless,
  The ills of life to stand?

IV.

Where else hath childhood deeper wrought?
Who hath evolved more mellow'd thought
  Than that which sprang from thee?
And tho' the gathering floods of scorn
Early o'erwhelmed thee, thou wert born,
  To immortality!

Bristol, Sept. 13, 1911.