

# LYRICS AND SONNETS

By *LILIAN LEVERIDGE*





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#### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Born near the village of Hockering in Norfolk, England, the author, at the age of four, came with her family to Canada where she received her education and Normal School training, the latter in Winnipeg. After teaching school for seven years in Manitoba and Ontario, Miss Lilian Leveridge took up office work of varied nature in Toronto. Ill health forced her to retire to Carrying Place where she now spends her time gardening and writing the short stories, articles and poems which have drawn so much upon her wide interests and rich experiences since childhood.

During the years Miss Leveridge has been writing, she has been a member of the Canadian Literature Club, the Canadian Women's Press Club, and the Canadian Authors' Association. She has contributed widely to the periodicals of Canada, and has had her work appear in several important United States publications. Numerous anthologies contain representative selections of her verse.

Other books by Miss Leveridge are: *Over the Hills of Home*, *A Breath of the Woods*, *Hero Songs of Canada*, *The Blossom Trail*, and *Still Waters*.



# LYRICS and SONNETS

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## *Forest Magic*

OUR wood-path led to warm, sequestered peace—  
 An open glade amid the evergreens  
 That seemed, all wooingly, to bid us pause  
 To look and listen, here where time was not,  
 And hurried, anxious toil a thing remote.

How very sweet it was and quiet there!  
 The light wind sighed and whispered overhead,  
 Swaying the balsam boughs with gentle breath.  
 Full-throated frogs in near-by bogs and pools  
 Unweariedly their symphonies intoned.  
 Kinglets and warblers twittered all about.  
 A flicker, softly golden in the sun,  
 And lit with one red flame, made mirth for all.  
 Amid the cedar shadows, dimly green,  
 A pair of bluejays spread their azure wings,  
 Like lustrous pearl and sapphire set in jade;  
 For colour harmonies were fitly blent  
 With sound and perfume, stirring every sense.

Southward a pheasant called his brooding mate,  
 And plaintively a mourning-dove made moan.  
 Then clear, but faint and very far away,  
 An Elfland echo floated on the wind—  
 The whitethroat's exquisite, immortal song.

Long, long we stood there, breathing not a word.  
 I could not guess her thoughts, nor speak my own.  
 The deep blue sky, the sunny evergreens,  
 With wind and song of birds in waving boughs,  
 A lovely, dear illusion made for me  
 Of distant forests, wide and wonderful.  
 Some mystical enchantment bore me far  
 On strong, swift wings into the wild's deep heart,  
 The magic Far Away and Long Ago.

The sad, the sweet—how tenderly they twine!  
 Old fragrances, fair scenes, rare melodies,  
 Bring ever to the inward eyes of love  
 Vivid, unfading, precious memories.  
 Goodness, truth, beauty—these can never die;  
 They live for ever in the heart of God.



## *April and Hepaticas*

APRIL and hepaticas!  
With sunshine's filtered gold  
To coax a thousand thousand flowers  
From out the warm, rich mould—  
And just a week ago the world  
Was chill and grey and old;

No bow of promise in the cloud,  
No music in the rain,  
No vision in the shadowed heart  
Whose prayers seemed all in vain—  
Now April and hepaticas  
Have made it glad again.

April and hepaticas,  
Above the lovely lake,  
Whose long green waves come rolling in  
With curling crests that break  
In creamy foam upon the shore  
And rhythmic music make!

No faintest murmur ever comes  
To this remote retreat,  
Of commerce rushing up and down  
The throbbing city street.  
Here with the woodland folk to dwell  
How blest it were and sweet!

April and hepaticas!  
First flowers of the Spring,  
How delicate your dainty robes!  
What perfumes round you cling—  
Ambrosial airs of youth and dream  
And every sweetest thing!

Ye lift your lovely faces up  
To be by sunbeams kissed;  
To every breeze that comes to woo  
With happy hearts ye list;  
Ye learn the secrets of the hills  
Soft-veiled in amethyst.



April and hepaticas!  
The wild birds love you well.  
I hear the meadow-lark's clear notes  
Come floating through the dell,  
While song-sparrows their tale of love  
In warbled measures tell.

With you I sing my April song,  
Love-tuned to bear my part—  
For blossoms spring and anthems ring  
'Mid thronging street and mart,  
Where April and hepaticas  
Are blooming in the heart.

## *Haunts of Beauty*

I AM not wise in men's philosophies,  
Nor have I learned the art of getting gold;  
But oh! I know where Spring's first snowdrop is,  
Where crocuses and scillas brave the cold.

I know where lilac fragrance fills the air,  
Where tulips flame, and white syringa swells,  
Where valley lilies ring their chimes, and where  
Forsythia hangs out its golden bells.

I know the shady nooks where bloodroot blooms,  
Where frail spring beauty's fairy feet abide,  
Where snowy elder lights the forest glooms,  
And cuckoo flowers and painted trilliums hide.

The rare wild orchid's secret haunts I know,  
And ferny glens where phlox and star-flowers shine,  
Where willow-herb's tall, rosy candles glow,  
Where clematis and twin-flowers trail and twine.

I share the mirth of daisies where they sway  
In rhythmic dance beside the rippling stream;  
With violets in the scented dusk I pray;  
With bluebell, rose and wind-flower love and dream.

Along the blossom trail I find content,  
And ecstasy may meet me anywhere—  
A breathless, leaf-light word of wonderment:  
Tread softly, reverently, for God is here!



## *When the Birds Come Back*

IN the early, early morning  
When the sky is flushed with rose,  
You may hear the robins' carol  
In the dreaming garden-close,  
And the honk of wild geese winging  
O'er their blue, ethereal track.  
Oh, the waking hours bring gladness  
When the singing birds come back.

There's a nook I know where snowdrops  
In their robes of angel white,  
Nun-like, veil their saintly faces  
From the glory of the light.  
All in vain the winds come wooing—  
Yet for loves they shall not lack.  
Blushing blossoms crowd in thousands  
When the mating birds come back.

When the redwing flutes a measure  
By the waters, willow-lined,  
When the meadow-lark's clear piping  
Comes a-floating on the wind,  
Then my happy spirit follows  
On that vast and viewless track.  
Winged with song, it knows no limit  
When the nesting birds come back.

Far beyond the city's tumult—  
Blue horizons circling wide,  
Birds and scented winds for comrades—  
Let me go and there abide:  
For my thoughts are wingèd sandals,  
And my spirit knows the track.  
Every pulse-beat is a wing-song  
When the homing birds come back.



## *Birds of Canada*

I HAVE not heard the nightingale that sings beyond the sea  
His mellow-mournful theme of love in dusky evening dell.  
Nor skylark worshipping at dawn with hymns of ecstasy:  
In storyland, in poetry alone these live for me.  
But oh! the birds of Canada, dear Canada, my Canada,  
I know them, know them well.

When winging, swinging down the wind, the migrant host  
returns,  
"O happy day!" the bluebirds say, "It's home, home, home  
once more!"  
The robin seeks the orchard tree for which her warm breast  
years.  
The swallow underneath the eaves his masonry discerns;  
The whitethroat sings of Canada, sweet Canada, dear Canada,  
The country we adore.

The tanager, a scarlet flame, the goldfinch and towhee,  
The kinglet and the vireo, the seagull, silver white,  
The whip-poor-will that wakes all night, the plaintive wood  
pewee,  
The wren, a bubbling fount of joy, the friendly chickadee,  
Grosbeak with roses in his coat, the hummingbird with jewelled  
throat—  
What beauty! What delight!

The oriole in cloth of gold lights up the darkest day.  
"See here, my dear!" you hear him call; "How well our cradle  
rocks!"  
The catbird finds the fruited vines, but never fails to pay  
In merry-hearted friendliness and frolic roundelay.  
While bobolink and meadow-lark are carolling from dawn till  
dark,  
Their minstrelsy he mocks.

"Where is my love?" the mourning-dove incessantly complains,  
Wandering in the willow shade and on the hazel hill.  
The warblers whisper, "Hush! O hush!" As westering  
sunlight wanes,  
A piper pipes along the sand a melody of fairyland . . .  
And all the world is still.



Did shining seraphim inspire the hermit thrush to sing  
At eve his aria exquisite, so holy, high and fine?  
In leafy summer solitudes the matchless measures ring,  
While charm-held forest folk, entranced, their silent homage  
bring.  
In Paradise alone they hear music more sweet, serene and clear,  
More raptured, more divine.

I never saw an albatross, nor heard the bulbul sing;  
I never glimpsed the rosy strand where wild flamingoes dwell:  
But I have seen the iris sheen on many a shining wing,  
And heard the strong, glad notes prolong in gladsome carolling.  
For oh! the birds of Canada, dear Canada, my Canada,  
I love them, love them well.

## *The Whitethroat*

I HEARD enchanting melody along the river reaches—  
A glad song, a mad song, a song of June's delight.  
The minstrel's form was veiled from sight by tamaracks and  
beeches,  
But he called my ardent spirit up to join his airy flight:  
Sweet . . . Sweet . . . Sweet!  
Follow me, follow me, follow me!

I followed, borne on wings of song above the leafy shadows—  
A clear song, a dear song, a song of ecstasy—  
By swaying cedar, birch and pine, across the flowery meadows  
That passed the witching word along with laughter fairy-free:  
Spring . . . Sweet . . . Spring!  
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!

The greenwood rang with little songs, of warbler, redwing,  
veery;  
But finer, diviner, the whitethroat's all excelled.  
A symphony of timeless things, of joys that never weary,  
Of light that knows no dark eclipse, from his full heart out-  
welled:  
Love . . . Sweet . . . Love!  
Heavenly, heavenly, heavenly!



And listening to the strain that thrilled the hills and valleys  
    vernal—  
A mad song, a glad song of never-failing springs—  
My spirit heard a lovely word of blessedness eternal,  
A wonder-word of prophecy of undiscovered things:  
    Life . . . Sweet . . . Life!  
    Infinite, infinite, infinite!

## *Wild Flowers*

**T**HE flowers that grow in far-off lands  
Are regal in their glory.  
On cloud-topped heights, by misty strands,  
Is told their glowing story.  
Rich blooms are massed in dazzling ranks,  
And crowd the city mart . . .  
But the wild, shy flowers of Canada  
They blossom in my heart.

Your prize exotics I have seen,  
So fine, so rare and splendid;  
As proud and stately as a queen  
By all her court attended,  
Each perfect bloom. I gaze, entranced,  
By wonder-spell beguiled . . .  
Yet even these on other shores,  
In other days, were wild.

To me the trillium is as dear,  
Bellwort, and ladies' tresses.  
Each offspring of the verdant year  
My soul with beauty blesses.  
I love the laurel on the hills,  
And iris in the vale;  
Viburnum, spikenard, bergamot,  
Twin-flower and speedwell pale.

Mallow I love, and meadow rue,  
Cornel and prince's pine;  
And dainty harebell, white and blue,  
And flaming columbine.  
These are my country's and my own,  
The friends of childhood fleet,  
And hence, of all the flowers of earth  
Most beautiful, most sweet.



## *The Hermit Thrush*

THE long, long day is ending;  
Its hours like petals close,  
While wisps of wind are blending  
The scents of mint and rose.

We seek a dim, green pathway  
Beyond the garden gate  
Where, hushed and still, aware, athrill,  
The expectant woodlands wait.

The poplar leaves, aquiver,  
Have passed the word along;  
Dark pines beside the river  
Stand listening for the song.

And then—in drops of sweetness  
That fall like blessed rains  
On lips athirst, outflow, outburst  
Those holy, heavenly strains.

Oh, never lark up-soaring  
By distant dawn-lit seas,  
Or nightingale out-pouring  
His moon-rapt melodies,

Made music so enraptured,  
So pure, serene and true.  
Were gates of light ajar to-night  
To let an angel through?

O magic-hearted Ariel!  
My dreams have never heard  
A star-song so ethereal  
As yours, immortal bird.

You voice the soul's deep longing,  
But dimly understood,  
For good unstained yet unattained,  
Blest prophet of the wood.



## *Thistle Bloom*

COLOUR and charm of old romance  
In thistle bloom I see.  
Its perfume bears a full flood tide  
Of fragrant memory.

When warm across the meadow lands  
The summer breezes blow,  
I'm borne on spirit wings away  
To fields of long ago.

Dear vanished faces smile on me;  
Glad laughter ripples clear,  
And love glows roseate through the mists  
Of many a distant year.

No bitter memories remain  
Of old, unhappy things;  
But sweetness, beauty, mirth outflow  
From ever-living springs.

The thorns that pierced my tender feet  
Have left no scar, no pain;  
And childish tears the kindly years  
Have wiped without a stain.

But light as fell the soft caress  
Of blossom-scented air,  
It sank into my secret heart  
And still it lingers there.

And so I know that life abides  
In lovely things and pure.  
Evil is mortal; good alone  
Shall deathlessly endure.



## *The Lost Forest*

A LOVELY forest once I knew.  
Its shadows green and deep,  
Its tangled paths and flowery glades  
In memory still I keep.  
I knew and loved its noble trees;  
The hemlock, birch and pine,  
The maple, tamarack, elm and oak,  
They all were friends of mine.  
The blithe and gentle forest folk  
They all were friends of mine.

The songs that through those green aisles rang,  
How wild they were and free!  
They woke within my own wild heart  
A kindred ecstasy.  
The robin, whitethroat, vireo,  
The bluebird, wren and thrush,  
All joined in happy minstrelsy  
From dawn till twilight's hush,  
Sang gladsomely in bush and tree  
From dawn till twilight's hush.

Gone are the fragrant solitudes  
The dove and hermit knew,  
And Fortune's glittering toys are found  
Where once the orchid grew.  
But minted gold nor costly gems  
Could never buy for me  
The raptured hours that once I knew  
Beneath the greenwood tree,  
The rare, lost loveliness I knew  
Beneath the greenwood tree.



## Morning

GLAD morning breaks in music on the hills  
And verdant valleys, shining after showers,  
Where evanescent diamonds gem the flowers  
And rare perfume upon the wind distils.  
My spirit, too, with glad, high purpose thrills  
To spend in gracious ways my utmost powers,  
And thread with priceless pearls the golden hours.  
My soul, dawn-winged, shall reach the height it wills!

Hills of desire seem not so far away  
In this clear, vital atmosphere of morn  
As in the toil and heat of yesterday.  
A myriad ardent impulses are born.  
In hands of prayer I lift life's empty cup,  
Believing Joy but waits to fill it up.

## Night

IN the calm light of stars that, one by one,  
Like flowers of silver in a field of blue,  
Bloom out and earth's lost loveliness renew,  
I glance along the way my feet have run  
Since first the golden fingers of the sun  
Beckoned me on to hills whereon, I knew,  
All intertwined the rose and myrtle grew.  
Have I won nearer, now the day is done?

Where are the pearls I thought at morn to thread?  
And where Joy's vintage in my cup of life?  
A fading daisy chain I hold instead—  
The little, common things of toil and strife.  
Chastened, I pray to-night: Though Love denies,  
Grant that I may be worthy of the prize!



## *Crows*

**T**HROUGH long bleak months the bitter tempests blow  
About the northland hills that Sabbath keep,  
Their bloom and verdure wrapt in dreamful sleep  
Beneath a shrouding sheet of drifted snow.  
But when is heard the first returning crow—  
Hoarse herald of the songful hosts that sweep  
From southern lands—about our senses creep  
Warm rivulets of gladness; for we know

That Winter's iron reign will soon be past.  
Already smiling Spring is on the way,  
With fleeting showers, and bright skies blue and vast,  
And singing birds, and blossoms sweet and gay.  
Oh, welcome, welcome, old black crows, to you!  
Always your happy prophecies come true.

## *Spring Flowers*

**A**MONG our memories of precious hours  
That with their benison of beauty bless,  
What is more dear than that of springtime flowers,  
First glimpsed in all their fragile loveliness  
In some lone dell beside a purling stream,  
Or on a sunny hillside in the wood?  
How pure and bright their innocent faces gleam  
Across the brooding mists of solitude!

Tinted arbutus, violets blue and white;  
Rosy spring beauties, trilliums full of light;  
Delicate bloodroot, falling at a breath,  
Yet seeming placidly to smile at death.  
Oh, never, never may our hearts outlive  
The ecstasy a woodland flower can give!



## *The Poet's Demesne*

**M**EN call him poor—they know not what they say  
Who gauge with gold the poet's meed of bliss.  
A heritage of boundless wealth is his.  
He holds a magic key: at will he may  
Unlock the wonder-gates of golden day,  
Or midnight's silver-sealèd mysteries,  
Where Silence greets him with a spirit kiss  
And leads him happy-hearted on his way.

A beauty-breathing spirit; eyes that see  
With vision clear life's iridescent hues;  
A heart love-tuned to music's harmony—  
Each gift his secret soul with grace endues;  
And though his lowly ways no pride evince,  
In his own world of thought he walks—a prince.

## *Tensed Strings*

**S**LENDER and young, and lovely as a flower  
In Alpine vale where glacial snows begin,  
She faced the audience. From her violin  
Wild melodies of love's awakening power,  
Laughter, and dreams, and light, in lyric shower  
She drew—clear, birdlike notes that well might win  
Envy from wind harp, silver-cadenced linn,  
Or fluting thrush in fragrant twilight hour.

And one whose wistful eyes were dim with tears  
For ghosts of joys that died in vanished years  
Thus reasoned: Those clear notes of pure delight  
Were played on slender strings, constrained and tight.  
Perchance on human heart-strings, tensed to pain,  
The hand of Love may play as sweet a strain.



## *The Strange Land*

SOMEWHERE there lies a strange, uncharted land.  
No human soul but often wanders there,  
Yet none may trace its form, nor may declare  
Its star-flung limits, its illusive strand.  
Tempestuous now, and now serene and bland,  
Its phantom landscapes merge and melt in air.  
Weird dramas haunt its shadows everywhere—  
Raptures and terrors, dirge and saraband.

The pathway winds, through valleys lost in gloom,  
To citted steeps with fragrant-fruited trees,  
Where, wonder-led, we tread the Maze of Dreams.  
What is this pageant? On what magic loom  
Are woven all these glamorous tapestries,  
This witchery that is or only *seems*?

## *The World is Full of Wonder*

THE world is full of wonder. Every day  
A myriad new-born marvels greet the light;  
And through the seeming silences of night,  
On ether waves that flow from far away,  
Are wafted strains that unseen fingers play.  
Sunset and dawn, glad birds and blossoms bright,  
All living things of beauty and delight,  
What is their source and impulse, who can say?

The winds, the thunders voice His name divine;  
The hills and valleys sing; sea calls to sea:  
"Love, the Life-Giver! His the bright design  
Of all that thrills the soul to ecstasy.  
His glories, aeons-old, still burn and shine  
Across the blue gulfs of infinity."



## *The Labourer Comes Home*

THE hours of toil are ended; night is nigh;  
Day's last pale embers fade above the hill.  
The violet dusk drops down, and all is still,  
Save for a murmuring stream that glimmers by,  
Rustle of fallen leaves, a night bird's cry,  
And footfalls on the path beside the rill.  
The labourer pauses on his own door sill  
And enters with a deep, contented sigh.

A whiff of fragrance, tinkling cups, the glow  
Of firelight interfused with loving looks;  
Two easy chairs before the library hearth—  
Now let the world, its gold, its plaudits go!  
Enriched with home, and love, and cherished books,  
He envies none upon the whole wide earth.

## *The Book*

A THOUSAND thousand books have passed away.  
Though venerated in an earlier age,  
No trace remains of one illumined page,  
No word, no message for our hearts to-day.  
One ancient Book is proof against decay,  
And fire, and flood, and man's insensate rage—  
The world's most precious, priceless heritage,  
Of youth and hoary age alike the stay.

O Word of God! In many a diverse tongue  
Read, learned, and loved, than life itself more dear,  
Of light and immortality the key:  
In every continent, in isles far-flung,  
Thy truths unfold with each revolving year,  
And point mankind to life's high destiny.



## Midnight Stars

### I.

WAKEFUL and restless, yesternight I rose  
To gaze awhile into the blue abyss.  
Glories of day enfold us warm and close,  
But night unveils sublimer mysteries.  
There gleamed the Pole Star; there the Dipper swung;  
The Eagle westward dipped his glittering wings;  
Vega on Lyra's harp a jewel hung;  
Golden Capella dreamed of long-gone springs.

With joy I saw the lovely Pleiades rise,  
Richly adorning heaven's blue velvet robe—  
Our English poet's "swarm of fireflies,"  
"Sweet influence" of splendour-visions Job.  
O stars of God, age-old yet ever young!  
When shall your choral hymn's Amen be sung?

### II.

She whose clear truth has been my guiding star,  
Through whose dear love my breath of life was given,  
First showed me Pleiades' wonders shining far,  
And all the glorious galaxies of heaven;  
Showed me the Great Orion, with his belt  
And sparkling sword and golden-sandalled feet,  
Red Mars whose fires in brighter moonbeams melt,  
And Venus lighting paths where lovers meet.

Long silent now the lips that told their name  
To me, a dreamy, wonder-hearted child,  
And lit within my soul the living flame  
Of reverence for beauty undefiled.  
Silent, those lips? Nay! singing still, I know,  
Songs starry-glad—somewhere. She told me so.

### III.

O priceless legacy, my Mother's faith!  
A simple faith, unquestioning and bright.  
No timorous If or But of mist-born wraith  
Could stir its placid depth or cloud its light.  
Faith in the God who formed the myriad host,  
And gave each world its own appointed place,  
Who loves and guides all things He made, yet most  
The living, loving soul that seeks His face.



Thee may I seek and find, O mighty Lord,  
In all Thy works, and know Thee as my Friend.  
May days and years march on in glad accord,  
In starry pilgrimage to Journey's End.  
There one may whisper, "Child, I told you so:  
But oh! Love's loveliest half I did not know."

## *In the Library*

### I.

"THERE is so much to read," you say: and I,  
Viewing the long shelves of the Library,  
Where hosts of friends seem ever beckoning me,  
Echo the axiom with a wistful sigh.  
For duty-laden hours pass swiftly by,  
Their burdens leaving, all relentlessly—  
So much to do, to plan, to say, to see,  
While here, untouched, the alluring volumes lie!

Then are we glad Eternity is long.  
We dream that yonder waits a quiet nook,  
Away from rainbow throne and starry throng;  
A flowery bank beside a singing brook,  
Where we, grown weary of the glory song,  
Lost rapture may recapture in a book.

### II.

Stories, maybe, are truer than we deem.  
What hero-hearts have lived in old romance!  
With stately stride, or light and graceful dance,  
All down the printed page what myriads teem!  
Nobler, more splendid even than they seem,  
More warmly human and more dear, perchance.  
Though magic light their histories enhance,  
The real is surely better than the dream.

What bliss, some day, to meet them face to face!—  
The hero in fierce strife uncowed, untired;  
The heroine of fair and flowerlike grace;  
Each shadow-life by truth and love inspired.  
Oh to commune in some most happy place  
With all whom we have revered, loved, admired!



III.

“If leisure limitless were yours to-day  
What would you choose, Love? Where would you begin?”  
In Story Land rare pleasures I should win,  
And roam in far, fair, golden realms away,  
From Iceland lakes to jungles of Malay,  
By vale and mead, by mountain, loch and linn;  
Through open gates with gladness entering in  
To high adventure, laughter, love and play.  
But first of all, in pools of crystal dew,  
The springing fountains of poetic thought,  
My eager, questing soul I should immerse.  
See, safely gathered here for me and you,  
The loves, the joys, the larger life we’ve sought,  
In deep, sweet wells of pure, immortal verse.

IV.

Are they but words, those little rippling rhymes,  
Those haunting cadences that come and go?  
Those strains sublime whose deeper measures flow  
Like far-flung echoes of cathedral chimes?  
Are they but words? Oh, words from olden times,  
Dim centuries, dim ages, moving slow,  
Have passed in deathless power to us, we know,  
Have swept in mighty music to all climes.

Those unforgotten songs have mystic life.  
Who knows the spirit-breath that gave them birth?  
Who knows the ethereal pathway of their wings?  
Peace, and pure passion, strength for worthy strife,  
Star-dust that silvers sordid things of earth—  
These are the gifts of him who nobly sings.



## *Call the Children Home*

“ANNIE, go and call the children.  
What is keeping them so late?  
I have listened, listened, listened,  
Here for hours beside the gate;  
But I cannot hear them coming—  
Not a footfall, not a shout.  
Can it be that they are hiding  
In the garden hereabout?  
Oh, I cannot rest me, Annie,  
While the little ones are out.

“Was it noon, or was it morning,  
They went laughing down the lane?  
Oh, how long the hours, how lonely,  
Till the children come again!  
They’ll be tired and cold and hungry.  
Are you keeping something hot?  
Oh, I cannot rest me, Annie,  
Till I’ve tucked them in their cot,  
Heard them say their prayers, and blessed them . . .  
Is there—something—I forgot?”

“Mother dear, don’t you remember?  
It was twenty years ago  
That they heard the bugles calling—  
Johnnie, Alice, little Joe—  
Heard the pipers play, and followed  
Far across the ocean foam.  
There they fell asleep, our darlings,  
And they are not coming home—  
Deep asleep where poppies blossom . . .  
And they are not coming home.”



## *Byways*

**A**WAY from noisy highways  
That rush from town to town,  
Run quiet, leafy byways,  
Familiar, friendly byways,  
Up little hills and down.

They loiter and meander  
Beside a placid stream,  
Or through a woodland wander,  
And golden moments squander  
In music-haunted dream.

They pass by fields of clover  
All murmurous with bees,  
Where many a light-winged rover,  
With gladness brimming over,  
Spills out wild ecstasies;

By happy children playing  
In meadows bright with flowers;  
By shrines where men are praying;  
By moon-rapt lovers straying  
In dim, enchanted hours.

They lead to gardens dreaming  
Beneath the evening star,  
And lighted windows gleaming,  
Where peace beyond all seeming,  
And rest and stillness are.

I'm grateful for the highways,  
For oh! 'tis joy to roam,  
But love illumines the byways,  
The fragrant, leafy byways  
That lure the wanderer home.



## *The Song in the Night*

IT IS midnight here in my chamber,  
And my study lamp burns low.  
Mid the hush of the sleeping household  
My wearied pulse beats slow.  
"It is long since the morning glories  
Were ringing their fairy bells;  
The hour grows late for toiling,"  
The ticking timepiece tells.

It is midnight out in the garden,  
In the sweet world washed with dew,  
Where, drenched in a flood of moonlight,  
Stand the pansies, gold and blue;  
Where the roses, crimson and yellow,  
Their baby buds unfold,  
While a breath of wind-stirred clover  
Blows up from the waving wold.

It is midnight out in the orchard  
Where the brooding oriole swings.  
Does she dream of roses and clover?—  
Perchance of lovelier things.  
To-night is the whole world resting,  
Enfolded in dew-sealed sleep,  
While I, with the wakeful poets,  
A thoughtful vigil keep.

It is midnight down by the water,  
And the waves sing a sleepy song,  
Lap-lapping above the pebbles  
That glisten the shores along.  
The sails are asleep, and the breezes,  
And the lispings leaves on the tree;  
But the stars keep watch, and the poets,  
To bear me company.

It is midnight—Oh, hush! Oh, listen!  
A ripple of silver song  
Floats in through the open window.  
How sweet is the strain, and strong!  
O bird of the midnight music,  
Were you waked from your dream of bliss  
By the spirit-note of a poet,  
Or a white star's amorous kiss?



Did you learn in your moon-rapt visions  
A secret you would impart  
To me who claim as my brother  
The bird of the song-filled heart?  
It is midnight, and I was weary;  
I had thought that I watched alone:  
But the bird and the stars and the poets  
Have claimed me for their own.

## *The Idealists*

**T**HEIR toil was not for fame, our men of science  
Whom now the world so gratefully acclaim.  
Little they dreamed their native halls of learning  
Would echo and re-echo with their names.  
In lowly faith and patience long they wrought,  
That good, perchance, might blossom from their thought.

The good achieved is their reward—gold, plaudits,  
But overflow of Honour's brimming cup.  
To them that spend in service, larger bounty  
For larger service will be measured up.  
'Tis thus that man attains to angels' bliss.  
Has Heaven a greater blessedness than this?

Oh for a dream like theirs, a splendid vision  
To beckon through the change and chance of years!  
Oh for as large a faith, as true a courage,  
As bright a hope to triumph over fears!  
For thus are won the strongholds of desire,  
When star-led mortals mightily aspire.



## *Words*

**T**HERE are so many lovely words  
I'm fond of conning over,  
As musical as singing birds,  
Fragrant as wind-blown clover.  
They steal upon me unawares,  
Like troops of truant angels,  
And charm away my foolish cares  
With their serene evangels.

These errant angels tell their names  
And play around me lightly.  
What haunting songs! What elfin games,  
Airy, bewitching, sprightly!  
They lead down endless avenues  
And trails of exploration,  
Where I may wander and peruse  
The wonders of creation.

Rivers and mountains, forests, seas,  
Cities with all their treasures—  
On wings of words I fly to these,  
And taste their myriad pleasures.  
They take me to the splendid stars  
Whose beckoning beauties lure us  
To heavenly places—Venus, Mars,  
Vega, Altair, Arcturus.

They tell unutterable things,  
Too mystical, too holy  
For aught but voiceless whisperings—  
There dawns upon me slowly  
An inner light, a loveliness  
That blinds me with its glory—  
But none may breathe, and few can guess,  
That magical, sweet story.



## *The Hurdy-Gurdy*

A SILENCE reigns within the student's room—  
An attic room high up above the street,  
Where faintly floats across the deepening gloom  
The fitful echoing of passing feet.  
This, even, is unheard; the present hour  
Has melted in a mellowing mist of thought—  
The poet's heritage, a golden dower  
From far-off isles and long-gone ages brought.

Suddenly, thrillingly,  
Up from the street  
Gushes a melody  
Silverly sweet.  
Bell-like and beautiful  
Cadences flow  
Out of the mystical  
Long, long ago.

Gone are the hurrying  
Footsteps that fall,  
Houses, and pavements,  
And people and all.  
A dim, scented pine forest  
Rises instead;  
Moon-lighted pathways where  
True lovers tread.

List to their whispering,  
Soft as a sigh!  
What is the thrilling theme?—  
You, Love, and I.  
What was there ever more  
Lovely than this  
Mystical, magical,  
Passionate bliss?

Still shine the silver stars  
Up in the blue;  
Still are there lowly hearts,  
Loyal and true.  
Still the sweet cadences  
Dreamily flow—  
Love songs from Paradise,  
Long, long ago!



Silence again within the attic room;  
The hurdy-gurdy passes on its way:  
But oh, what radiances illumine the gloom!  
What haunting echoes through its shadows play!  
Faint fragrances down misty moonbeams drift—  
Ghosts of dead trees and unremembered flowers.  
This is love's legacy, a gracious gift  
From other lives and other days than ours.

## *The Rose of Yesterday*

I PLUCKED a blossom yesterday:  
Its petals rosy-rare  
Enfolded many a lovely dream  
Divinely chaste and fair.

Such fragrances enveloped me,  
My winter turned to spring,  
And life seemed exquisitely sweet,  
A happy, holy thing.

"Where are my golden dreams, and where  
My rose of yesterday?"  
I ask the wanton winds of life  
That bore them all away.

The winds reply: "Beyond the blue,  
Where all lost blossoms blow,  
Upon a silver star, your rose,  
Your dreams, are waiting now.

"Think not that love, that loveliness,  
Can ever cease to be!  
They bloom upon the Hills of God  
To all eternity."



## Moon Magic

BYOND a gate entangled  
In Rosemary and Rue,  
There is a secret garden,  
A joy to wander through  
If once the Warden, when you knock,  
Will lift the latch for you.

This Eden of enchantment  
Is loveliest at night,  
When in the clear blue heavens  
The moon and stars are bright,  
For all the flowers are very sweet,  
And all are purest white.

My spirit well remembers—  
For how should I forget?—  
The coolness of the Lilies  
With dewdrops jewel-set,  
The Myrtle fragrance interfused  
With Rose and Violet.

While silver star-dust sifted  
On Poppies drowsy-eyed,  
Wakeful Wisteria whispered  
And Moonflower replied.  
They spoke of white moon magic  
On the hills where dreams abide.

Beneath a Star Magnolia  
I leaned and listened well;  
But Summersweet bewitched me,  
And tinkling Silverbell.  
And what the white moon magic was,  
Alas! I cannot tell.

O Lover, little Lover,  
Some blue and silver night  
We'll find, to keep for ever,  
That rune of lost delight.  
The way is veiled and secret still,  
But love will make it bright.



## Rosemary and Rue

A YEAR ago, Dear Heart, a year ago,  
Such privilege was mine that I to-day  
Would, to regain it, give my life away.  
The pity of it—that I did not know!

I might have smiled into your tired face,  
And caught your kindling eyes' responsive light.  
Oh for one smile, one smile, Dear Heart, to-night,  
One glance of love from your far dwelling-place!

I might have eased the burdens of your hands—  
Dear, busy hands, so fain to toil and bless!  
Oh but to feel once more their warm caress!  
No moment now such happiness commands.

I might have smoothed the pathway for your feet.  
Too well I know their weariness and pain  
In striving life's steep uplands to attain,  
Through bleak winds blowing or in burning heat.

I might have blessed you in a thousand ways—  
I see them now who too, too long was blind.  
O piercing, poignant grief, too late to find  
The weed-grown avenues to joy and praise!

You would aver a blossoming in all.  
So slow you were to blame, so swift to see  
My smallest virtue! Your warm charity  
Covered my failures like a roseate pall.

I crave your presence, not your service, Sweet.  
My prayer is but to serve you lovingly,  
With lavish self-abandonment. (Ah me!  
Are angel hands more kind, more swift their feet?)

Not yet, not yet! I may but love and wait,  
With naught to give but rosemary and rue,  
Until, some golden eve, through starry blue  
I hasten Home, to find you at the Gate.



## *God Bless You*

**S**OFTLY as shadows drift across the grass,  
SLightly as midnight moonbeams gleam and pass,  
Mother, O Mother! still my spirit hears  
"Good-night. God bless you!" singing down the years.  
Gentle as dew-fall, silver-clear and low,  
Echoes come stealing from the long ago.

Never heart so weary,  
    Never eye so sad,  
Never day so dreary  
    But you made them glad.  
Come with touch caressing,  
    Still your vigil keep.  
Folded in your blessing  
    I would sink to sleep.

You who have passed to realms serene and fair  
Love can but follow on the wings of prayer.  
Singing I seek you. Through the shrouding veil  
Lean from the glory, help me lest I fail.  
When shadows gather, when the gloom grows deep,  
Whisper that old sweet word before I sleep.

What if courage fail me  
    On the upward way?  
What if doubts assail me  
    And I go astray?  
Come with touch caressing,  
    Take my trembling hand.  
Bring me with your blessing  
    Safe to Love's own Land.

## *Sacred Song*

**F**ROM far-off islands of the sea,  
From lands of palm and pine,  
From golden prairies vast and free,  
From forest, field and mine,  
From wave to wave, from shore to shore,  
There flows a tide of song,  
While airy echoes evermore  
The melodies prolong.



The Gloria of Galilee  
Is unforgotten still,  
And Olivet's low symphony  
Has power to touch and thrill.  
The Old, Old Story never tires.  
In realms below, above,  
The living theme that most inspires  
Is holy, heavenly love.

Blest ministry of sacred song!  
Tender, serene, sublime,  
Our hymns of prayer and praise belong  
To every age and clime.  
Oh, never shall our hearts forget,  
Though long and far we roam,  
Loved words, to old loved music set,  
That breathe of Heaven and Home.

## *"His Mercy Endureth"*

LORD, the earth is growing old:  
Since its earliest rapturous dawn  
Many thousand years have rolled,  
Long, slow ages come and gone;  
Yet Thy mercies still are new,  
Fresh and pure as morning dew.

This Thy world is very fair.  
If we have but eyes to see,  
Beauty meets us everywhere,  
Day and night proclaiming Thee.  
Countless gifts our path surround,  
Light and life and love abound.

Lord, with overflowing heart  
We would bless Thy bounteous grace.  
Strength to needier souls impart,  
Feed Thy lambs in every place.  
Help us, all our length of days,  
Thus to live a life of praise.



## *Wayside Churches*

UP and down along the land the netted highways run,  
And ceaselessly the tides of life go surging to and fro  
With swift and ever swifter pace, by moon or stars or sun;  
The urgent impulse of the hour is not to stay, but go.

There's loveliness on every hand for grateful eyes to see,  
And motion is a cordial cup we quaff with eager zest.  
The smiling of the fruitful land invites alluringly;  
And churches by the way diffuse an atmosphere of rest.

How silently, how graciously, the benison is given!—  
A spire uplifted to the blue, a soul-inspiring peace,  
A beckoning along the way that leads from earth to heaven,  
A wordless influence that breathes of stillness and release.

Dear sanctuaries of our God, that stand beside the ways,  
Serene and calm amid the clash of man's impassioned quest!  
Your hidden well-springs of delight, your founts of strength  
and praise,  
Outflow, that loving hearts may drink refreshment, and be  
blest.



## *Silence*

**H**OW tranquilly God's work is done!  
With neither shock nor sound,  
From darkness into light again,  
The wheeling worlds go round.

The dawn steals in; the golden hours  
Their glorious courses run,  
Laden with gifts of light and life,  
And beauty, every one.

In silence gentle dews distil,  
And leaves and buds unfold,  
Sweet fruits are ripened, vernal fields  
Are turned to harvest gold.

How softly falls the wreathing snow  
That wraps the earth for sleep!  
While Nature's children, folded safe,  
Their quiet Sabbath keep.

In silence over human hearts  
Unnumbered mercies flow,  
And silently by night and day  
The angels come and go.

"Be still and know that I am God."  
Lord, teach us to be still,  
To find Thee in the silences  
And learn Thy gracious will.



## *Communion*

**P**ALE in the east the primrose light is breaking.  
Let us arise and burst the bands of sleep;  
For, in this hour of dawn, so pure and tranquil,  
We have a sweet, a holy tryst to keep.

In the clear radiance of the morning splendour,  
Unseen, our Saviour meets us on the way,  
And walks with us to His own sanctuary,  
Where they that know and love Him kneel to pray.

He bids us, "Come." We taste His heavenly banquet;  
The Bread of Life, the Wine of Love we share,  
Tokens of pardon, earnest of His promise  
Of joys eternal in His Kingdom fair.

O blest Communion! Christ, be ever with us;  
Fairer than lilies, lovelier than the rose  
Thy veiled face above these earthly symbols,  
Whence grace divine and tender mercy flows.

Here peace is ours, and strength for every trial.  
Here let us rest awhile, dear Lord, with Thee.  
Then, walk with us and lead us onward, upward,  
Till we, at last, Thy undimmed glory see.







