

# **A Roadside Harp**

Louise Imogen Guiney



# Table of Contents

<b><u>A Roadside Harp</u></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<u>Louise Imogen Guiney</u> .....	2
<u>TO DORA AND HESTER SIGERSON</u> .....	4
<u>Peter Rugg the Bostonian</u> .....	5
<u>II</u> .....	7
<u>III</u> .....	9
<u>IV</u> .....	11
<u>V</u> .....	12
<u>A Ballad of Kenelm</u> .....	14
<u>Vergniaud in the Tumbrel</u> .....	16
<u>I</u> .....	17
<u>II</u> .....	18
<u>III</u> .....	19
<u>Winter Boughs</u> .....	20
<u>M.A. 1822–1888</u> .....	21
<u>W.H. 1778–1830</u> .....	22
<u>The Vigil—at—Arms</u> .....	23
<u>A Madonna of Domenico Ghirlandajo</u> .....	24
<u>Spring Nightfall</u> .....	25
<u>A Friend's Song for Simoisius</u> .....	26
<u>Athassel Abbey</u> .....	28
<u>Florentin</u> .....	29
<u>Friendship Broken</u> .....	30
<u>A Song of the Lilac</u> .....	31
<u>In a Ruin, after a Thunder—storm</u> .....	32
<u>The Cherry Bough</u> .....	33
<u>Two Irish Peasant Songs</u> .....	34
<u>I</u> .....	35
<u>II</u> .....	36
<u>The Japanese Anemone</u> .....	37
<u>Tryste Noel</u> .....	38
<u>A Talisman</u> .....	39
<u>Heathenesse</u> .....	40
<u>For Izaak Walton</u> .....	41
<u>Sherman: "An Horatian Ode"</u> .....	42
<u>When on the Marge of Evening</u> .....	45
<u>Rooks in New College Gardens</u> .....	46
<u>Open, Time</u> .....	47
<u>The Knight Errant (Donatello's Saint George)</u> .....	48
<u>To a Dog's Memory</u> .....	49
<u>A Seventeenth—Century Song</u> .....	50
<u>On the Pre—Reformation Churches about Oxford</u> .....	51
<u>The Still of the Year</u> .....	52
<u>A Footnote to a Famous Lyric</u> .....	53
<u>T.W.P. 1819–1892</u> .....	54
<u>Summum Bonum</u> .....	55
<u>Saint Florent—le—Vieil</u> .....	56
<u>Hylas</u> .....	57

# Table of Contents

## A Roadside Harp

<u>Nocturne</u> .....	58
<u>The Kings</u> .....	59
<u>ALEXANDRIANA</u> .....	61
<u>Alexandriana</u> .....	62
<u>I</u> .....	63
<u>II</u> .....	64
<u>III</u> .....	65
<u>IV</u> .....	66
<u>V</u> .....	67
<u>VI</u> .....	68
<u>VII</u> .....	69
<u>VIII</u> .....	70
<u>IX</u> .....	71
<u>X</u> .....	72
<u>XI</u> .....	73
<u>XII</u> .....	74
<u>XIII</u> .....	75
<u>LONDON: TWELVE SONNETS</u> .....	76
<u>On First Entering Westminster Abbey</u> .....	77
<u>Fog</u> .....	78
<u>St. Peter—ad—Vincula</u> .....	79
<u>Strikers in Hyde Park</u> .....	80
<u>Changes in the Temple</u> .....	81
<u>The Lights of London</u> .....	82
<u>Doves</u> .....	83
<u>In the Reading Room of the British Museum</u> .....	84
<u>Sunday Chimes in the City</u> .....	85
<u>A Porch in Belgravia</u> .....	86
<u>York Stairs</u> .....	87
<u>In the Docks</u> .....	88

# A Roadside Harp

## Louise Imogen Guiney

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- TO DORA AND HESTER SIGERSON
- Peter Rugg the Bostonian
- II
- III
- IV
- V
- A Ballad of Kenelm
- Vergniaud in the Tumbril
- I
- II
- III
- Winter Boughs
- M.A. 1822–1888
- W.H. 1778–1830
- The Vigil—at–Arms
- A Madonna of Domenico Ghirlandajo
- Spring Nightfall
- A Friend's Song for Simoisius
- Athassel Abbey
- Florentin
- Friendship Broken
- A Song of the Lilac
- In a Ruin, after a Thunder–storm
- The Cherry Bough
- Two Irish Peasant Songs
- I
- II
- The Japanese Anemone
- Tryste Noel
- A Talisman
- Heathenesse
- For Izaak Walton
- Sherman: "An Horatian Ode"
- When on the Marge of Evening
- Rooks in New College Gardens
- Open. Time
- The Knight Errant (Donatello's Saint George)
- To a Dog's Memory
- A Seventeenth–Century Song
- On the Pre–Reformation Churches about Oxford
- The Still of the Year
- A Footnote to a Famous Lyric
- T.W.P. 1819–1892
- Summum Bonum

## A Roadside Harp

- Saint Florent-le-Vieil
- Hylas
- Nocturne
- The Kings
- ALEXANDRIANA
- Alexandriana
- I
- II
- III
- IV
- V
- VI
- VII
- VIII
- IX
- X
- XI
- XII
- XIII
- LONDON: TWELVE SONNETS
- On First Entering Westminster Abbey
- Fog
- St. Peter-ad-Vincula
- Strikers in Hyde Park
- Changes in the Temple
- The Lights of London
- Doves
- In the Reading Room of the British Museum
- Sunday Chimes in the City
- A Porch in Belgravia
- York Stairs
- In the Docks

**TO DORA AND HESTER SIGERSON**

There in the Druid brake  
If the cuckoo be awake  
Again, O take my rhyme!  
And keep it long for the sake  
Of a bygone primrose-time;  
You of the star-bright head  
That twilight thoughts sequester,  
You to your native fountains led  
Like to a young Muse garlanded:  
Dora, and Hester. *March, 1893.*

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## Peter Rugg the Bostonian

I

**THE** mare is pawing by the oak,  
The chaise is cool and wide  
For Peter Rugg the Bostonian  
With his little son beside;  
The women loiter at the wheels  
In the pleasant summer-tide.

"And when wilt thou be home, Father?"  
"And when, good husband, say:  
The cloud hangs heavy on the house  
What time thou art away."  
He answers straight, he answers short,  
"At noon of the seventh day."

"Fail not to come, if God so will,  
And the weather be kind and clear."  
"Farewell, farewell! But who am I  
A blockhead rain to fear?  
God willing or God unwilling,  
I have said it, I will be here."

He gathers up the sunburnt boy  
And from the gate is sped;  
He shakes the spark from the stones below,  
The bloom from overhead,  
Till the last roofs of his own town  
Pass in the morning-red.

Upon a homely mission  
North unto York he goes,  
Through the long highway broidered thick  
With elder-blow and rose;  
And sleeps in sounds of breakers  
At every twilight's close.

Intense upon his heedless head  
Frowns Agamenticus,  
Knowing of Heaven's challenger  
The answer: even thus  
The Patience that is hid on high  
Doth stoop to master us.

## A Roadside Harp

## A Roadside Harp

### II

Full light are all his parting dreams;  
Desire is in his brain;  
He tightens at the tavern-post  
The fiery creature's rein:  
"Now eat thine apple, six years' child!  
We face for home again."

They had not gone a many mile  
With nimble heart and tongue,  
When the lone thrush grew silent  
The walnut woods among;  
And on the lulled horizon  
A premonition hung.

The babes at Hampton schoolhouse,  
The wife with lads at sea,  
Search with a level-lifted hand  
The distance bodingly;  
And farmer folk bid pilgrims in  
Under a safe roof-tree.

The mowers mark by Newbury  
How low the swallows fly,  
They glance across the southern roads  
All white and fever-dry,  
And the river, anxious at the bend,  
Beneath a thinking sky.

But there is one abroad was born  
To disbelieve and dare:  
Along the highway furiously  
He cuts the purple air.  
The wind leaps on the startled world  
As hounds upon a hare;

With brawl and glare and shudder ope  
The sluices of the storm;  
The woods break down, the sand upblows  
In blinding volleys warm;  
The yellow floods in frantic surge  
Familiar fields deform.

From evening until morning  
His skill will not avail,  
And as he cheers his youngest born,  
His cheek is spectre-pale;

## A Roadside Harp

For the bonnie mare from courses known  
Has drifted like a sail!

## A Roadside Harp



On some wild crag he sees the dawn  
Unsheathe her scimitar.  
"Oh, if it be my mother–earth,  
And not a foreign star,  
Tell me the way to Boston,  
And is it near or far?"

One watchman lifts his lamp and laughs:  
"Ye've many a league to wend."  
The next doth bless the sleeping boy  
From his mad father's end;  
A third upon a drawbridge growls:  
"Bear ye to larboard, friend."

Forward and backward, like a stone  
The tides have in their hold,  
He dashes east, and then distraught  
Darts west as he is told,  
(Peter Rugg the Bostonian,  
That knew the land of old!)

And journeying, and resting scarce  
A melancholy space,  
Turns to and fro, and round and round,  
The frenzy in his face,  
And ends alway in angrier mood,  
And in a stranger place,

Lost! lost in bayberry thickets  
Where Plymouth plovers run,  
And where the masts of Salem  
Look lordly in the sun;  
Lost in the Concord vale, and lost  
By rocky Wollaston!

Small thanks have they that guide him,  
Awed and aware of blight;  
To hear him shriek denial  
It sickens them with fright:  
"They lied to me a month ago  
With thy same lie to–night!"

To–night, to–night, as nights succeed,  
He swears at home to bide,  
Until, pursued with laughter  
Or fled as soon as spied,

## A Roadside Harp

The weather-drenched man is known  
Over the country side!

IV

The seventh noon's a memory,  
And autumn's closing in;  
The quince is fragrant on the bough,  
And barley chokes the bin.  
"O Boston, Boston, Boston!  
And O my kith and kin!"

The snow climbs o'er the pasture wall,  
It crackles 'neath the moon;  
And now the rustic sows the seed,  
Damp in his heavy shoon;  
And now the building jays are loud  
In canopies of June.

For season after season  
The three are whirled along,  
Mised by every instinct  
Of light, or scent, or song;  
Yea, put them on the surest trail,  
The trail is in the wrong.

Upon those wheels in any path  
The rain will follow loud,  
And he who meets that ghostly man  
Will meet a thunder-cloud,  
And whosoever speaks with him  
May next bespeak his shroud.

Tho' nigh two hundred years have gone,  
Doth Peter Rugg the more  
A gentle answer and a true  
Of living lips implore:  
"Oh, show me to my own town,  
And to my open door!"

## A Roadside Harp

### V

Where shall he see his own town  
Once dear unto his feet?  
The psalms, the tankard to the King,  
The beacon's cliffy seat,  
The gabled neighborhood, the stocks  
Set in the middle street?

How shall he know his own town  
If now he clatters thro'?  
Much men and cities change that have  
Another love to woo;  
And things occult, incredible,  
They find to think and do.

With such new wonders since he went  
A broader gossip copes,  
Across the crowded triple hills,  
And up the harbor slopes,  
Tradition's self for him no more  
Remembers, watches, hopes.

But ye, O unborn children!  
(For many a race must thrive  
And drip away like icicles  
Ere Peter Rugg arrive,)  
If of a sudden to your ears  
His plaint is blown alive;

If nigh the city, folding in  
A little lad that cries,  
A wet and weary traveller  
Shall fix you with his eyes,  
And from the crazy carriage lean  
To spend his heart in sighs:—

"That I may enter Boston,  
Oh, help it to befall!  
There would no fear encompass me,  
No evil craft appall;  
Ah, but to be in Boston,  
**GOD WILLING**, after all!"—

Ye children, tremble not, but go  
And lift his bridle brave  
In the one Name, the dread Name,  
That doth forgive and save,

## A Roadside Harp

And leads him home to Copp's Hill ground,  
And to his father's grave.

## A Ballad of Kenelm

"In Clent cow-batch, Kenelm King born  
Lieth under a thorn."

**IT** was a goodly child,  
Sweet as the gusty May;  
It was a knight that broke  
On his play,  
A fair and coaxing knight:  
"O little liege!" said he,  
"Thy sister bids thee come  
After me.

"A pasture rolling west  
Lies open to the sun,  
Bright-shod with primroses  
Doth it run;  
And forty oaks be nigh,  
Apart, and face to face,  
And cow-bells all the morn  
In the space.

"And there the sloethorn bush  
Beside the water grows,  
And hides her mocking head  
Under snows;  
Black stalks afoam with bloom,  
And never a leaf hath she:  
Thou crystal of the realm,  
Follow me!"

Uplooked the undefiled:  
"All things, ere I was born  
My sister found; now find  
Me the thorn."  
They travelled down the lane,  
An hour's dust they made:  
The belted breast of one  
Bore a blade.

The primroses were out,  
The aisleèd oaks were green,  
The cow-bells pleasantly  
Tinked between;  
The brook was beaded gold,  
The thorn was burgeoning,  
Where evil Ascobert

## A Roadside Harp

Slew the King.

He hid him in the ground,  
Nor washed away the dyes,  
Nor smoothed the falled curls  
From his eyes.  
No father had the babe  
To bless his bed forlorn;  
No mother now to weep  
By the thorn.

There fell upon that place  
A shaft of heavenly light;  
The thorn in Mercia spake  
Ere the night:  
"Beyond, a sister sees  
Her crownèd period,  
But at my root a lamb  
Seeth God."

Unto each, even so.  
As dew before the cloud,  
The guilty glory passed  
Of the proud.  
Boy Kenelm has the song,  
Saint Kenelm has the bower;  
His thorn a thousand years  
Is in flower!

A Roadside Harp

## **Vergniaud in the Tumbril**

## A Roadside Harp

### I

**THE** wheels are silent, the cords are slack,  
The terrible faces are surging back.  
France, they too love thee! bid that keep plain;

The wrath and carnage I stayed afar  
Colleagues of my white conscience are:  
Accept my slayers, accept me slain!

Shed for days, in its olden guise  
The quiet delicate snake-skin lies  
To cheat a boy on his woodland stroll:

What if he crush it? Others see  
Beauty's miracle under a tree  
Supple in mail, and adroit, and whole;

The sharper rid of a shape, and thence  
(Growth of an outgrown excellence),  
Mounted with infinite might and speed,

Freed like a soul to the heaven it dreamed;  
Over life that was, and death that seemed  
A victory and a revenge indeed!

As the serpent moves to the open spring,  
The while a mock, a delusive thing  
Sole in sight of the crowd may be,

So ye, my martyrs, arise, advance!  
For what is left at the feet of France  
It is our failure, it is not we.

## A Roadside Harp

### II

Not to ourselves our strength we brought:  
Inexpiable the Hand that wrought  
In us the ruin of no redress,

The storm, the effort, the pang, the fire,  
The premonition, the vast desire,  
The primal passion of righteousness!

Scarce by the pitiful thwarted plan,  
The haste, or the studious fears of man  
Drawing a discord from best delight,

The measure is meted of God most wise;  
Nor the future, with her adjusted eyes,  
Shall speak us false in our dying fight.

But e'en to me now some use is clear  
In the builded truth down-beaten here  
For any along the way to spurn,

Since ever our broken task may stand  
Disaster's college in one saved land,  
Whence many a stripling state shall learn.

Out of the human shoots the divine:  
Be the Republic our only sign,  
For whose life's glory our lives have been

Ambassadors on a noble way  
Tempest-driven, and sent astray  
The first and final good between.

Close to the vision undestroyed,  
The hope not compassed and yet not void,  
We perish so; but the world shall mark

On the hilltop of our work we died,  
With joy of the groom before the bride,  
With a dawn-cry thro' the battle's dark.

A Roadside Harp



O last save me on the scaffold's round!  
Take heart, that after a thirst profound  
The cup of delicious death is near,

And whoso hold it, or whence it flow,  
O drink it to France, to France! and know  
For the gift thou givest, thou hast her tear.

True seed thou wert of the sunnier hour,  
Honorable, and burst to flower  
Late in a hell-pit poison-walled:

Farewell, mortality lopped and pale,  
Thou body that wast my friend! and Hail,  
Dear spirit already! . . . My name is called.

## Winter Boughs

**H**OW tender and how slow, in sunset's cheer,  
Far on the hill, our quiet treetops fade!  
A broidery of northern seaweed, laid  
Long in a book, were scarce more fine and clear.  
Frost, and sad light, and windless atmosphere  
Have breathed on them, and of their frailties made  
Beauty more sweet than summer's builded shade,  
Whose green domes fall, to bring this wonder here.  
O ye forgetting and outliving boughs,  
With not a plume, gay in the jousts before,  
Left for the Archer! so, in evening's eye,  
So stilled, so lifted, let your lover die,  
Set in the upper calm no voices rouse,  
Stript, meek, withdrawn, against the heavenly door.

**GOOD** oars, for Arnold's sake  
By Laleham lightly bound,  
And near the bank, O soft,  
Darling swan!  
Let not the o'erweary wake  
From this his natal ground,  
But where he slumbered oft,  
Slumber on.

**BETWEEN** the wet trees and the sorry steeple,  
Keep, Time, in dark Soho, what once was Hazlitt,  
Seeker of Truth, and finder oft of Beauty;

Beauty's a sinking light, ah, none too faithful;  
But Truth, who leaves so here her spent pursuer,  
Forgets not her great pawn: herself shall claim it.

Therefore sleep safe, thou dear and battling spirit,  
Safe also on our earth, begetting ever  
Some one love worth the ages and the nations!

Nothing falls under to thine eyes eternal.  
Sleep safe in dark Soho: the stars are shining,  
Titian and Wordsworth live; the People marches.

## The Vigil-at-Arms

**KEEP** holy watch with silence, prayer, and fasting  
Till morning break, and all the bugles play;  
Unto the One aware from everlasting  
Dear are the winners: thou art more than they.

Forth from this peace on manhood's way thou goest,  
Flushed with resolve, and radiant in mail;  
Blessing supreme for men unborn thou sowest,  
O knight elect! O soul ordained to fail!

## A Madonna of Domenico Ghirlandajo

**LET** thoughts go hence as from a mountain spring,  
Of the great dust of battle clean and whole,  
And the wild birds that have no nest nor goal  
Fold in a young man's breast their tranced wing;  
For thou art made of purest Light, a thing  
Art gave, beyond her own devout control;  
And Light upon thy seeing, suffering soul  
Hath wrought a sign for many journeying;  
Our sign. As up a wayside, after rain,  
When the blown beeches purple all the height  
And clouds sink to the sea-marge, suddenly  
The autumn sun (how soft, how solemn-bright!)  
Moves to the vacant dial, so is lain  
God's meaning Hand, thou chosen, upon thee.

## Spring Nightfall

**APRIL** is sad, as if the end she knew.  
The maple's misty red, the willow's gold  
Face—deep in nimble water, seem to hold  
In hope's own weather their autumnal hue.  
There is no wind, no star, no sense of dew,  
But the thin vapors gird the mountain old,  
And the moon, risen before the west is cold,  
Pale with compassion slopes into the blue.  
Under the shining dark the day hath passed  
Shining; so even of thee was home bereaved,  
Thou dear and pensive spirit! overcast  
Hardly at all, but drawn from light to light,  
Who in the doubtful hour, and unperceived,  
Rebuked adoring hearts with change and flight.

## A Friend's Song for Simoisius

**THE** breath of dew, and twilight's grace,  
Be on the lonely battle-place;  
And to so young, so kind a face,  
The long, protecting grasses cling!  
(Alas, alas,  
The one inexorable thing!)

In rocky hollows cool and deep,  
The bees our boyhood hunted sleep;  
The early moon from Ida's steep  
Comes to the empty wrestling-ring.  
(Alas, alas,  
The one inexorable thing!)

Upon the widowed wind recede  
No echoes of the shepherd's reed,  
And children without laughter lead  
The war-horse to the watering.  
(Alas, alas,  
The one inexorable thing!)

Thou stranger Ajax Telamon!  
What to the loveliest hast thou done,  
That ne'er with him a maid may run  
Across the marigolds in spring?  
(Alas, alas,  
The one inexorable thing!)

With footstep separate and slow  
The father and the mother go,  
Not now upon an urn they know  
To mingle tears for comforting.  
(Alas, alas,  
The one inexorable thing!)

The world to me has nothing dear  
Beyond the namesake river here:  
O Simois is wild and clear!  
And to his brink my heart I bring;  
(Alas, alas,  
The one inexorable thing!)

My heart no more, if that might be  
Would stay his waters from the sea,  
To cover Troy, to cover me,  
To save us from the perishing.

## A Roadside Harp

(Alas, alas,  
The one inexorable thing!)

## Athassel Abbey

**FOLLY** and Time have fashioned  
Of thee a songless reed;  
O not-of-earth-impassioned!  
Thy music's mute indeed.

Red from the chantry crannies  
The orchids burn and swing,  
And where the arch began is  
Rest for a raven's wing;

And up the bossy column  
Quick tails of squirrels wave,  
And black, prodigious, solemn,  
A forest fills the nave.

Still faithfuller, still faster,  
To ruin give thy heart:  
Perfect before the Master  
Aye as thou wert, thou art.

But I am wind that passes  
In ignorant wild tears,  
Uplifted from the grasses,  
Blown to the void of years,

Blown to the void, yet sighing  
In thee to merge and cease,  
Last breath of beauty's dying,  
Of sanctity, of peace!

Tho' use nor place forever  
Unto my soul befall,  
By no beloved river  
Set in a saintly wall,

Do thou by builders given  
Speech of the dumb to be,  
Beneath thine open heaven,  
Athassel! pray for me.

A Roadside Harp

**Florentin**

**HEART** all full of heavenly haste, too like the bubble bright  
On loud little water floating half of an April night,  
Fled from the ear in music, fled from the eye in light,  
Dear and stainless heart of a boy! No sweeter thing can be  
Drawn to the quiet centre of God who is our sea;  
Whither, thro' troubled valleys, we also follow thee.

## Friendship Broken

### I

WE chose the faint chill morning, friend and friend,  
Pacing the twilight out beneath an oak,  
Soul calling soul to judgement; and we spoke  
Strange things and deep as any poet penned,  
Such truth as never truth again can mend,  
Whatever arts we win, what gods invoke;  
It was not wrath, it made nor strife nor smoke:  
Be what it may, it had a solemn end.  
Farewell, in peace. We of the selfsame throne  
Are foeman vassals; pale astrologers,  
Each a wise sceptic of the other's star.  
Silently, as we went our ways alone,  
The steadfast sun, whom no poor prayer deters.  
Drew high between us his majestic bar.

### II

Mine was the mood that shows the dearest face  
Thro' a long avenue, and voices kind  
Idle, and indeterminate, and blind  
As rumors from a very distant place;  
Yet, even so, it gathered the first chace  
Of the first swallows where the lane's inclined,  
An ebb of wavy wings to serve my mind  
For round Spring's vision. Ah, some equal grace  
(The calm sense of seen beauty without sight)  
Befell thee, honorable heart! no less  
In patient stupor walking from the dawn;  
Albeit thou too wert loser of life's light,  
Like fallen Adam in the wilderness,  
Aware of naught but of the thing withdrawn.

## A Song of the Lilac

**ABOVE** the wall that's broken,  
And from the coppice thinned,  
So sacred and so sweet  
The lilac in the wind!  
And when by night the May wind blows  
The lilac—blooms apart,  
The memory of his first love  
Is shaken on his heart.

In tears it long was buried,  
And trances wrapt it round;  
O how they wake it now,  
The fragrance and the sound!  
For when by night the May wind blows  
The lilac—blooms apart,  
The memory of his first love  
Is shaken on his heart.

**In a Ruin, after a Thunder–storm**

**KEEP** of the Norman, old to flood and cloud!  
Thou dost reproach me with thy sunset look,  
That in our common menace, I forsook  
Hope, the last fear, and stood impartial proud:  
Almost, almost, while ether spake aloud,  
Death from the smoking stones my spirit shook  
Into thy hollow as leaves into a brook,  
No more than they by heaven's assassins cowed.

But now thy thousand–scarrèd steep is flecked  
With the calm kisses of the light delayed,  
Breathe on me better valor: to subject  
My soul to greed of life, and grow afraid  
Lest, ere her fight's full term, the Architect  
See downfall of the stronghold that He made.

## The Cherry Bough

**I**N a new poet's and a new friend's honor,  
Forth from the scornèd town and her gold-getting,  
Come men with lutes and bowls, and find a welcome  
Here in my garden,

Find bowers and deep shade and windy grasses,  
And by the south wall, wet and forward-jutting,  
One early branch fire-tipped with Roman cherries.  
O naught is absent,

O naught but you, kind head that far in prison  
Sunk on a weary arm, feels no god's pity  
Stroking and sighing where the kingly laurels  
Were once so plenty,

Nor dreams, from revels and strange faces turning,  
How on the strength of my fair tree that knew you,  
I lean to-day, when most my heart is laden  
With your rich verses!

Since, long ago, in other gentler weather  
Ere wrath and exile were, you lay beneath it,  
(Your symbol then, your innocent wild brother,  
Glad with your gladness,)

What has befallen in the world of wonder,  
That still it puts forth bubbles of sweet color,  
And you, and you that burst our eyes with beauty,  
Are sapped and rotten?

Alas! When my young guests have done with singing,  
I break it, leaf and fruit, my garden's glory,  
And hold it high among them, and say after:  
"O my poor Ovid,

"Years pass, and loves pass too; and yet remember  
For the clear time when we were boys together,  
These tears at home are shed; and with you also  
Your bough is dying."

A Roadside Harp

## **Two Irish Peasant Songs**

## A Roadside Harp

I

**I KNEAD** and I spin, but my life is low the while,  
Oh, I long to be alone, and walk abroad a mile,  
Yet if I walk alone, and think of naught at all,  
Why from me that's young should the wild tears fall?

The shower-stricken earth, the earth-colored streams,  
They breathe on me awake, and moan to me in dreams,  
And yonder ivy fondling the broke castle-wall,  
It pulls upon my heart till the wild tears fall.

The cabin-door looks down a furze-lighted hill,  
And far as Leighlin Cross the fields are green and still;  
But once I hear the blackbird in Leighlin hedges call,  
The foolishness is on me, and the wild tears fall!

## A Roadside Harp

### II

'Tis the time o' the year, if the quicken-bough be staunch,  
The green, like a breaker, rolls steady up the branch,  
And surges in the spaces, and floods the trunk, and heaves  
In little angry spray that is the under-white of leaves;  
And from the thorn in companies the foamy petals fall,  
And waves of jolly ivy wink along a windy wall.

'Tis the time o' the year the marsh is full of sound,  
And good and glorious it is to smell the living ground.  
The crimson-headed catkin shakes above the pasture-bars,  
The daisy takes the middle field and spangles it with stars,  
And down the bank into the lane the primroses do crowd,  
All colored like the twilight moon, and spreading like a cloud!

'Tis the time o' the year, in early light and glad,  
The lark has a music to drive a lover mad;  
The downs are dripping nightly, the breathèd damps arise,  
Deliciously the freshets cool the grayling's golden eyes,  
And lying in a row against the chilly north, the sheep  
Inclose a place without a wind for tender lambs to sleep.

'Tis the time o' the year I turn upon the height  
To watch from my harrow the dance of going light;  
And if before the sun be hid, come slowly up the vale  
Honora with her dimpled throat, Honora with her pail,  
Hey, but there's many a March for me, and many and many a lass!  
I fall to work and song again, and let Honora pass.

## The Japanese Anemone

**ALL** summer the breath of the roses around  
Exhales with a delicate, passionate sound;  
And when from a trellis, in holiday places,  
They croon and cajole, with their slumberous faces,  
A lad in the lane must slacken his paces.

Fragrance of these is a voice in a bower:  
But low by the wall is my odorless flower,  
So pure, so controlled, not a fume is above her,  
That poet or bee should delay there and hover;  
For she is a silence, and therefore I love her.

And never a mortal by morn or midnight  
Is called to her hid little house of delight;  
And she keeps from the wind, on his pillages olden,  
Upon a true stalk in rough weather upholden,  
Her winter–white gourd with the hollow moon–golden.

While ardors of roses contend and increase,  
Methinks she had found how noble is peace,  
Like a spirit besought from the world to dis sever,  
Not absent to men, tho' resumed by the Giver,  
And dead long ago, being lovely for ever.

## Tryste Noel

**THE** Ox he openeth wide the Doore  
And from the Snowe he calls her inne,  
And he hath seen her Smile therefore,  
Our Ladye without Sinne.  
Now soone from Sleepe  
A Starre shall leap,  
And soon arrive both King and Hinde;  
**Amen, Amen:**  
But O, the place co'd I but finde!

The Ox hath husht his voyce and bent  
Trew eyes of Pitty ore the Mow,  
And on his lovelie Neck, forspent,  
The Blessed lays her Bowe.  
Around her feet  
Full Warne and Sweete  
His bowerie Breath doth meeklie dwell;  
**Amen, Amen:**  
But sore am I with Vaine Travèl!

The Ox is host to Juda's stall,  
And Host of more than onelie one,  
For close she gathereth withal  
Our Lorde her littel Sonne.  
Glad Hinde and King  
Their Gyfte may bring  
But wo'd to-night my Teares were there,  
**Amen, Amen:**  
Between her Bosom and His hayre!

## A Talisman

**TAKE** Temperance to thy breast,  
While yet is the hour of choosing,  
As arbitress exquisite  
Of all that shall thee betide;  
For better than fortune's best  
Is mastery in the using,  
And sweeter than anything sweet  
The art to lay it aside!

## Heathenesse

**NO** round boy–satyr, racing from the mere,  
Shakes on the mountain–lawn his dripping head  
This many a May, your sister being dead,  
Ye Christian folk! your sister great and dear.  
To breathe her name, to think how sad–sincere  
Was all her searching, straying, dreaming, dread,  
How of her natural night was Plato bred,  
A star to keep the ways of honor clear,  
Who will not sigh for her? who can forget  
Not only unto campèd Israel,  
Nor martyr–maids that as a bridegroom met  
The Roman lion's roar, salvation fell?  
To Him be most of praise that He is yet  
Your God thro' gods not inaccessible.

**For Izaak Walton**

**WHAT** trout shall coax the rod of yore  
In Itchen stream to dip?  
What lover of her banks restore  
That sweet Socratic lip?  
Old fishing and wishing  
Are over many a year.  
O hush thee, O hush thee! heart innocent and dear.

Again the foamy shallows fill,  
The quiet clouds amass,  
And soft as bees by Catherine Hill  
At dawn the anglers pass,  
And follow the hollow,  
In boughs to disappear.  
O hush thee, O hush thee! heart innocent and dear.

Nay, rise not now, nor with them take  
One silver-freckled fool!  
Thy sons to-day bring each an ache  
For ancient arts to cool.  
But, father, lie rather  
Unhurt and idle near;  
O hush thee, O hush thee! heart innocent and dear.

While thought of thee to men is yet  
A sylvan playfellow,  
Ne'er by thy marble they forget  
In pious cheer to go.  
As air falls, the prayer falls  
O'er kingly Winchester:  
O hush thee, O hush thee! heart innocent and dear.

## Sherman: "An Horatian Ode"

**THIS** was the truest man of men,  
The early-armed citizen,  
Who had, with most of sight,  
Most passion for the right;

Who first forecasting treason's scope  
Able to sap the Founders' hope,  
First to the laic arm  
Cried ultimate alarm;

Who bent upon his guns the while  
A misconceived and aching smile,  
And felt, thro' havoc's part,  
A torment of the heart,

Sure, when he cut the moated South  
From Shiloh to Savannah's mouth,  
Braved grandly to the end,  
To conquer like a friend;

In whom the Commonwealth withstood  
Again the Carolinian blood,  
The beautiful proud line  
Beneath an evil sign,

And taught his foes and doubters still  
How fatal is a good man's will,  
That like a sun or sod  
Thinks not itself, but God!

Many the captains of our wrath  
Sought thus the pious civic path,  
Knowing in what a land  
Their destiny was planned,

And after, with a forward sense,  
A simple Roman excellence,  
Pledge in their spirit bore  
That war should be no more.

Thrice Roman he, who saw the shock  
(Calm as a weather-wrinkled rock,)  
Roll in the Georgian fen;  
And steadfast aye as then

In plentitude of old control

## A Roadside Harp

That asked, secure of his own soul,  
No pardon and no aid,  
If clear his way were made,

Would have nor seat nor bays, not bring  
The Cæsar in him to be king,  
But with abstracted ear  
Rode pleased without a cheer.

Now he declines from peace and age,  
And home, his triple heritage,  
The last and dearest head  
Of all our perfect dead,

O what if sorrow cannot reach  
Far in the shallow fords of speech,  
But leads us silent round  
The sad Missouri ground,

Where on her hero Freedom lays  
The scroll and blazon of her praise,  
And bids to him belong  
Arms trailing, and a song,

And broken flags with ruined dyes  
(Bright once in young and dying eyes),  
Against the morn to shake  
For love's familiar sake?

The blessèd broken flags unfurled  
Above a healed and happier world!  
There let them droop, and be  
His tent of victory;

There, in each year's august light,  
Lean in, and loose their red and white,  
Like apple-blossoms strewn  
Upon his burial-stone.

For nothing more, the ages thro',  
Can nature or the nation do  
For him who helped retrieve  
Our life, as we believe,

Save that we also, trooping by  
In sound yet of his battle-cry,  
Safeguard with general mind  
Our pact as brothers kind,

And, ever nearer to our star,  
Adore indeed not what we are,

Sherman: "An Horatian Ode"

## A Roadside Harp

But wise reprovings hold  
Thankworthier than gold;

And bear in faith and rapture such  
As can eternal issues touch,  
Whole from the final field,  
Our father Sherman's shield.

## When on the Marge of Evening

**WHEN** on the marge of evening the last blue light is broken,  
And winds of dreamy odor are loosened from afar,  
Or when my lattice opens, before the lark has spoken,  
On dim laburnum–blossoms, and morning's dying star,

I think of thee, (O mine the more if other eyes be sleeping!)  
Whose great and noonday splendor the many share and see,  
While sacred and forever, some perfect law is keeping  
The late and early twilight alone and sweet for me.

## Rooks in New College Gardens

**THRO'** rosy cloud, and over thorny towers,  
Their wings with all the autumn distance filled,  
From Isis' valley border hundred-hilled,  
The rooks are crowding home as evening lowers:  
Not for men only and their musing hours,  
By battled walls did gracious Wykeham build  
These dewy spaces early sown and stilled,  
These dearest inland melancholy bowers.

Blest birds! A book held open on the knee  
Below, is all they know of Adam's blight:  
With surer art the while, and simpler rite,  
They follow Truth in some monastic tree,  
Where breathe against their innocent breasts by night  
The scholar's star, the star of sanctity.

## Open, Time

**OPEN**, Time, and let him pass  
Shortly where his feet would be!  
Like a leaf at Michaelmas  
Swooning from the tree,

Ere its hour the manly mind  
Trembles in a sure decrease,  
Nor the body now can find  
Any hold on peace.

Take him, weak and overworn;  
Fold about his dying dream  
Boyhood, and the April morn,  
And the rolling stream:

Weather on a sunny ridge,  
Showery weather, far from here;  
Under some deep-ivied bridge,  
Water rushing clear:

Water quick to cross and part,  
(Golden light on silver sound),  
Weather that was next his heart  
All the world around!

Soon upon his vision break  
These, in their remembered blue;  
He shall toil no more, but wake  
Young, in air he knew.

He has done with roofs and men.  
Open, Time, and let him pass,  
Vague and innocent again,  
Into country grass.

## The Knight Errant (Donatello's Saint George)

**SPIRITS** of old that bore me,  
And set me, meek of mind,  
Between great dreams before me,  
And deeds as great behind,  
Knowing humanity my star  
As first abroad I ride,  
Shall help me wear, with every scar,  
Honor at eventide.

Let claws of lightning clutch me  
From summer's groaning cloud,  
Or ever malice touch me,  
And glory make me proud.  
O give my youth, my faith, my sword,  
Choice of the heart's desire:  
A short life in the saddle, Lord!  
Not long life by the fire.

Forethought and recollection  
Rivet mine armor gay!  
The passion for perfection  
Redeem my failing way!  
The arrows of the tragic time  
From sudden ambush cast,  
With calm angelic touches ope  
My Paradise at last!

I fear no breathing bowman,  
But only, east and west,  
The awful other foeman  
Impowered in my breast.  
The outer fray in the sun shall be,  
The inner beneath the moon;  
And may Our Lady lend to me  
Sight of the Dragon soon!

## To a Dog's Memory

**THE** gusty morns are here,  
When all the reeds ride low with level spear;  
And on such nights as lured us far of yore,  
Down rocky alleys yet, and thro' the pine,  
The Hound–star and the pagan Hunter shine:  
But I and thou, ah, field–fellow of mine,  
Together roam no more.

Soft showers go laden now  
With odors of the sappy orchard–bough,  
And brooks begin to brawl along the march;  
The late frost steams from hollow sedges high;  
The finch is come, the flame–blue dragon–fly,  
The cowslip's common gold that children spy,  
The plume upon the larch.

There is a music fills  
The oaks of Belmont and the Wayland hills  
Southward to Dewing's little bubbly stream,  
The heavenly weather's call! Oh, who alive  
Hastes not to start, delays not to arrive,  
Having free feet that never felt a gyve  
Weigh, even in a dream?

But thou, instead, hast found  
The sunless April uplands underground,  
And still, wherever thou art, I must be.  
My beautiful! arise in might and mirth,  
For we were tameless travellers from our birth;  
Arise against thy narrow door of earth,  
And keep the watch for me.

## A Seventeenth-Century Song

**SHE** alone of Shepherdesses  
With her blue disdayning eyes,  
Wo'd not hark a Kyng that dresses  
All his lute in sighes:  
Yet to winne  
Katheryn,  
I elect for mine Emprise.

None is like her, none above her,  
Who so lifts my youth in me,  
That a littel more to love her  
Were to leave her free!  
But to winne  
Katheryn,  
Is mine utmost love's degree.

Distaunce, cold, delay, and danger,  
Build the four walles of her bower;  
She's noe Sweete for any stranger,  
She's noe valley flower:  
And to winne  
Katheryn,  
To her height my heart can Tower!

Uppe to Beautie's promontory  
I will climb, not loudlie call  
Perfect and escaping glory  
Folly, if I fall:  
Well to winne  
Katheryn!  
To be worth her is my all.

## On the Pre-Reformation Churches about Oxford

### I

**IMPERIAL** Iffley, Cumnor bowered in green,  
And Templar Sandford in the boatman's call,  
And sweet-belled Appleton, and Wytham wall  
That doth upon adoring ivies lean;  
Meek Binsey; Dorchester where streams convene  
Bidding on graves her solemn shadow fall;  
Clear Cassington that soars perpetual;  
Holton and Hampton, and ye towers between:  
If one of all in your sad courts that come,  
Belovèd and departed! be your own,  
Kin to the souls ye had, while time endures,  
Known to each exiled, each estrangèd stone  
Home in the quarries of old Christendom,—  
Ah, mark him: he will lay his cheek to yours.

### II

Is this the end? is this the pilgrim's day  
For dread, for dereliction, and for tears?  
Rather, from grass and air and many spheres  
In prophecy his spirit sinks away;  
And under English eaves, more still than they,  
Far-off, incoming, wonderful, he hears  
The long-arrested and believing years  
Carry the sea-wall! Shall he, sighing, say,  
"Farewell to Faith, for she is dead at best  
Who had such beauty"? or with kisses lain  
For witness on her darkened doors, go by  
With a new psalm: "O banished light so nigh!  
Of them was I who bore thee and who blest;  
Even here remember me when thou shalt reign."

## The Still of the Year

**UP** from the willow–root  
Subduing agonies leap;  
The squirrel and the purple moth  
Turn over amid their sleep;  
The icicled rocks aloft  
Burn saffron and blue away,  
And trickling and tinkling  
The snows of the drift decay.  
O mine is the head must hang  
And share the immortal pang!  
Winter or spring is fair;  
Thaw's hard to bear.  
Heigho! My heart's sick.

Sweet is cherry–time, sweet  
A shower, a bobolink,  
And the little trillium–blossom  
Tucked under her leaf to think;  
But here in the vast unborn  
Is the bitterest place to be,  
Till striving and longing  
Shall quicken the earth and me.  
What change inscrutable  
Is nigh us, we know not well;  
Gone is the strength to sigh  
Either to live or die.  
Heigho! My heart's sick.

## A Footnote to a Famous Lyric

**TRUE** love's own talisman, which here  
Shakespeare and Sidney failed to teach,  
A steel-and-velvet Cavalier  
Gave to our Saxon speech:

Chief miracle of theme and touch  
That upstart enviers adore:  
I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Loved I not Honour more.

No critic born since Charles was king  
But sighed in smiling, as he read:  
"Here's theft of the supremest thing  
A poet might have said!"

Young knight and wit and beau, who won  
Mid war's adventure, ladies' praise,  
Was't well of you, ere you had done,  
To blight our modern bays?

O yet to you, whose random hand  
Struck from the dark whole gems like these,  
Archaic beauty, never planned  
Nor reared by wan degrees,

Which leaves an artist poor, and art  
An earldom richer all her years;  
To you, dead on your shield apart,  
Be "Ave!" passed in tears.

How shall this singing era spurn  
Her master, and in lauds be loath?  
Your worth, your work, bid us discern  
Light exquisite in both.

'Twas virtue's breath inflamed your lyre,  
Heroic from the heart it ran;  
Nor for the shedding of such fire  
Lives since a manlier man.

And till your strophe sweet and bold  
So lovely aye, so lonely long,  
Love's self outdo, dear Lovelace! hold  
The pinnacles of song.

**FRIEND** who hast gone, and dost enrich to-day  
New England brightly building far away,  
And crown her liberal walk  
With company more choice, and sweeter talk,

Look not on Fame, but Peace; and in a bower  
Receive at last her fulness and her power:  
Nor wholly, pure of heart!  
Forget thy few, who would be where thou art.

## Summum Bonum

**WAITING** on Him who knows us and our need,  
Most need have we to dare not, nor desire,  
But as He giveth, softly to suspire  
Against His gift, with no inglorious greed,  
For this is joy, tho' still our joys recede;  
And, as in octaves of a noble lyre,  
To move our minds with His, and clearer, higher,  
Sound forth our fate; for this is strength indeed.

Thanks to His love let earth and man dispense  
In smoke of worship when the heart is stillest,  
A praying more than prayer: "Great good have I,  
Till it be greater good to lay it by;  
Nor can I lose peace, power, permanence,  
For these smile on me from the thing Thou willest!"

## Saint Florent-le-Vieil

**THE** spacious open vale, the vale of doom,  
Is full of autumn sunset; blue and strong  
The semicirque of water sweeps among  
Her lofty acres, each a martyr's tomb;  
And slowly, slowly, melt into the gloom  
Two little idling clouds, that look for long  
Like roseleaf bodies of two babes in song  
Correggio left to flush a convent room.

Dear hill deflowered in the frantic war!  
In my day, rather, have I seen thee blest  
With pastoral roofs to break the darker crest  
Of apple-woods by many-islèd Loire,  
And fires that still suffuse the lower west,  
Blanching the beauty of thine evening star.

## Hylas

**JAR** in arm, they bade him rove  
Thro' the alder's long alcove,  
Where the hid spring musically  
Gushes to the ample valley.  
(There's a bird on the under bough  
Fluting evermore and now:  
"Keep—young!" but who knows how?)

Down the woodland corridor,  
Odors deepened more and more;  
Blossomed dogwood, in the briers,  
Struck her faint delicious fires;  
Miles of April passed between  
Crevices of closing green,  
And the moth, the violet-lover,  
By the wellside saw him hover.

Ah, the slippery sylvan dark!  
Never after shall he mark  
Noisy ploughman drinking, drinking,  
On his drownèd cheek down-sinking;  
Quit of serving is that wild,  
Absent, and bewitchèd child,  
Unto action, age, and danger,  
Thrice a thousand years a stranger.

Fathoms low, the naiads sing  
In a birthday welcoming;  
Water-white their breasts, and o'er him,  
Water-gray, their eyes adore him.  
(There's a bird on the under bough  
Fluting evermore and now:  
"Keep—young!" but who knows how?)

## Nocturne

**THE** sun that hurt his lovers from on high  
Is fallen; she more merciful is nigh,  
The blessèd one whose beauty's even glow  
Gave never wound to any shepherd's eye.  
Above our pausing boat in shallows drifted,  
Alone her plaintive form ascends the sky.

O sing! the water-golds are deepening now,  
A hush is come upon the beechen bough;  
She shines the while on thee, as saint to saint  
Sweet interchanged adorings may allow:  
Sing, dearest, with that lily throat uplifted;  
They are so like, the holy Moon and thou!

## The Kings

A **MAN** said unto his angel:  
"My spirits are fallen thro',  
And I cannot carry this battle;  
O brother! what shall I do?"

"The terrible Kings are on me,  
With spears that are deadly bright,  
Against me so from the cradle  
Do fate and my fathers fight."

Then said to the man his angel:  
"Thou wavering, foolish soul,  
Back to the ranks! What matter  
To win or to lose the whole,

"As judged by the little judges  
Who hearken not well, nor see?  
Not thus, by the outer issue,  
The Wise shall interpret thee.

"Thy will is the very, the only,  
The solemn event of things;  
The weakest of hearts defying  
Is stronger than all these Kings.

"Tho' out of the past they gather,  
Mind's Doubt and Bodily Pain,  
And pallid Thirst of the Spirit  
That is kin to the other twain,

"And Grief, in a cloud of banners,  
And ringletted Vain Desires,  
And Vice, with the spoils upon him  
Of thee and they beaten sires,

"While Kings of eternal evil  
Yet darken the hills about,  
Thy part is with broken sabre  
To rise on the last redoubt;

"To fear not sensible failure,  
Nor covet the game at all,  
But fighting, fighting, fighting,  
Die, driven against the wall!"

## A Roadside Harp

A Roadside Harp

# ALEXANDRIANA

A Roadside Harp

## **Alexandriana**

## A Roadside Harp

I

**I LAID** the strewings, sweetest, on thine urn;  
I lowered the torch, I poured the cup to Dis.  
Now hushaby, my little child, and learn  
Long sleep how good it is.

In vain thy mother prays, wayfaring hence,  
Peace to her heart, where only heartaches dwell;  
But thou more blest, O wild intelligence!  
Forget her, and Farewell.

## A Roadside Harp

II

Gentle Grecian passing by,  
Father of thy peace am I:  
Wouldst thou now, in memory,  
Give a soldier's flower to me,  
Choose the flag I named of yore  
Beautiful Worth-dying-for,  
That shall wither not, but wave  
All the year above my grave.

## A Roadside Harp



Light thou hast of the moon,  
Shade of the dammar–pine,  
Here on thy hillside bed;  
Fair befall thee, O fair  
Lily of womanhood,  
Patient long, and at last  
Here on thy hillside bed,  
Happier: ah, Blæsilla!

**IV**

Two white heads the grasses cover:  
Dorcas, and her lifelong lover.  
While they graced their country closes  
Simply as the brooks and roses,  
Where was lot so poor, so trodden,  
But they cheered it of a sudden?  
Fifty years at home together,  
Hand in hand, they went elsewhither,  
Then first leaving hearts behind  
Comfortless. Be thou as kind.

## A Roadside Harp

### V

Upon thy level tomb, till windy winter dawn,  
The fallen leaves delay;  
But plain and pure their trace is, when themselves are torn  
From delicate frost away.

As here to transient frost the absent leaf is, such  
Thou wert and art to me:  
So on my passing life is thy long-passèd touch,  
O dear Alcithoë!

A Roadside Harp

**VI**

Hail, and be of comfort, thou pious Xeno,  
Lute the urn of many a kinsman wreathing;  
On thine own shall even the stranger offer  
Plentiful myrtle.

**VII**

Here lies one in the earth who scarce of the earth was moulded,  
Wise Æthalides' son, himself no lover of study,  
Cnopus, asleep, indoors: the young invincible runner.  
They from the cliff footpath that see on the grave we made him,  
Tameless, slant in the wind, the bare and beautiful iris,  
Stop short, full of delight, and shout forth: "See, it is Cnopus  
Runs, with white throat forward, over the sands to Chalcis!"

**VIII**

Ere the Ferryman from the coast of spirits  
Turn the diligent oar that brought thee thither,  
Soul, remember: and leave a kiss upon it  
For thy desolate father, for thy sister,  
Whichsoever be first to cross hereafter.

**IX**

Jaffa ended, Cos begun  
Thee, Aristeus. Thou wert one  
Fit to trample out the sun:  
Who shall think thine ardors are  
But a cinder in a jar?

A Roadside Harp

**X**

Me, deep-tressèd meadows, take to your loyal keeping,  
Hard by the swish of sickles ever in Aulon sleeping,  
Philophon, old and tired, and glad to be done with reaping!

**XI**

As wind that wasteth the unmarried rose,  
And mars the golden breakers in the bay,  
Hurtful and sweet from heaven forever blows  
Sad thought that roughens all our quiet day;

And elder poets envy while they weep  
Ion, whom first the goods to covert brought,  
Here under inland olives laid asleep,  
Most wise, most happy, having done with thought.

**XII**

Cows in the narrowing August marshes,  
Cows in a stretch of water  
Motionless,  
Neck on neck overlapped and drooping;

These in their troubled and dumb communion,  
Thou on the steep bank yonder,  
Pastora!  
No more ever to lead and love them,

No more ever. Thine innocent mourners  
Pass thy tree in the evening  
Heavily,  
Hearing another herd-girl calling.

**XIII**

Praise thou the Mighty Mother for what is wrought, not me,  
A nameless nothing-caring head asleep against her knee.

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A Roadside Harp

**LONDON: TWELVE SONNETS**

## On First Entering Westminster Abbey

**THABOR** of England! since my light is short  
And faint, O rather by the sun anew  
Of timeless passion set my dial true,  
That with thy saints and thee I may consort,  
And wafted in the calm Chaucerian port  
Of poets, seem a little sail long due,  
And be as one the call of memory drew  
Unto the saddle void since Agincourt!

Not now for secular love's unquiet lease  
Receive my soul, who rapt in thee erewhile  
Hath broken tryst with transitory things;  
But seal with her a marriage and a peace  
Eternal, on thine Edward's holy isle,  
Above the stormy sea of ending kings.

**Fog**

**LIKE** bodiless water passing in a sigh,  
Thro' palsied streets the fatal shadows flow,  
And in their sharp disastrous undertow  
Suck in the morning sun, and all the sky.  
The towery vista sinks upon the eye,  
As if it heard the Hebrew bugles blow,  
Black and dissolved; nor could the founders know  
How what was built so bright should daily die.

Thy mood with man's is broken and blent in,  
City of Stains! and ache of thought doth drown  
The primitive light in which thy life began;  
Great as thy dole is, smirchèd with his sin,  
Greater and elder yet the love of man  
Full in thy look, tho' the dark visor's down.

**St. Peter–ad–Vincula**

**TOO** well I know, pacing the place of awe,  
Three queens, young save in trouble, moulder by;  
More in his halo, Monmouth's mocking eye,  
The eagle Essex in a harpy's claw;  
Seymour and Dudley, and stout heads that saw  
Sundown of Scotland: how with treasons lie  
White martyrdoms; rank in a company  
Breaker and builder of the eternal law.

Oft as I come, the hateful garden–row  
Of ruined roses hanging from the stem,  
Where winds of old defeat yet batter them,  
Infects me: suddenly must I depart,  
Ere thought of men's injustice then and now  
Add to these aisles one other broken heart.

## Strikers in Hyde Park

A **WOOF** reversed the fatal shuttles weave,  
How slow! but never once they slip the thread  
Hither, upon the Georgian idlers' tread,  
Up spacious ways the lindens interleave,  
Clouding the royal air since yester-eve,  
Come men bereft of time and scant of bread,  
Loud, who were dumb, immortal, who were dead,  
Thro' the cowed world their kingdom to retrieve.

What ails thee, England? Altar, mart, and grange  
Dream of the knife by night; not so, not so  
The clear Republic waits the general throe,  
Along her noonday mountains' open range.  
Gods be with both! for one is young to know  
The other's rote of evil and of change.

## Changes in the Temple

**THE** cry is at thy gates, thou darling ground,  
Again; for oft ere now thy children went  
Beggared and wroth, and parting greeting sent  
Some red old alley with a dial crowned;  
Some house of honor, in a glory bound  
With lives and deaths of spirits excellent;  
Some tree rude-taken from his kingly tent  
Hard by a little fountain's friendly sound.

O for Virginius' hand, if only that  
Maintain the whole, and spoil these spoilings soon!  
Better the scowling Strand should lose, alas,  
Her peopled oasis, and where it was  
All mournful in the cleared quadrangle sat  
Echo, and ivy, and the loitering moon.

## The Lights of London

**THE** evenfall, so slow on hills, hath shot  
Far down into the valley's cold extreme,  
Untimely midnight; spire and roof and stream  
Like fleeing spectres, shudder and are not.  
The Hampstead hollies, from their sylvan plot  
Yet cloudless, lean to watch as in a dream,  
From chaos climb with many a sudden gleam,  
London, one moment fallen and forgot.

Her booths begin to flare; and gases bright  
Prick door and window; all her streets obscure  
Sparkle and swarm with nothing true nor sure,  
Full as a marsh of mist and winking light;  
Heaven thickens over, Heaven that cannot cure  
Her tear by day, her fevered smile by night.

**Doves**

**AH**, if man's boast and man's advance be vain,  
And yonder bells of Bow, loud-echoing home,  
And the lone Tree foreknow it, and the Dome,  
The monstrous island of the middle main;  
If each inheritor must sink again  
Under his sires, as falleth where it clomb  
Back on the gone wave the disheartened foam? —  
I crossed Cheapside, and this was in my brain.

What folly lies in forecasts and in fears!  
Like a wide laughter sweet and opportune,  
Wet from the fount, three hundred doves of Paul's  
Shook their warm wings, drizzling the golden noon,  
And in their rain-cloud vanished up the walls.  
"God keeps," I said, "our little flock of years."

## In the Reading Room of the British Museum

**PRAISED** be the moon of books! that doth above  
A world of men, the fallen Past behold,  
And fill the spaces else so void and cold  
To make a very heaven again thereof;  
As when the sun is set behind a grove,  
And faintly unto nether ether rolled,  
All night his whiter image and his mould  
Grows beautiful with looking on her love.

Thou therefore, moon of so divine a ray,  
Lend to our steps both fortitude and light!  
Feebly along a venerable way  
They climb the infinite, or perish quite;  
Nothing are days and deeds to such as they,  
While in this liberal house thy face is bright.

## Sunday Chimes in the City

**ACROSS** the bridge, where in the morning blow  
The wrinkled tide turns homeward, and is fain  
Homeward to drag the black sea-goer's chain,  
And the long yards by Dowgate dipping low;  
Across dispeopled ways, patient and slow,  
Saint Magnus and Saint Dunstan call in vain:  
From Wren's forgotten belfries, in the rain,  
Down the blank wharves the dropping octaves go.

Forbid not these! Tho' no man heed, they shower  
A subtle beauty on the empty hour,  
From all their dark throats aching and out-blown;  
Aye in the prayerless places welcome most,  
Like the last gull that up a naked coast  
Deploys her white and steady wing, alone.

## A Porch in Belgravia

**WHEN**, after dawn, the lordly houses hide  
Till you fall foul of it, some piteous guest,  
Some girl the damp stones gather to their breast,  
Her gold hair rough, her rebel garment wide,  
Who sleeps, with all that luck and life denied  
Camped round, and dreams how seaward and southwest  
Blue over Devon farms the smoke-rings rest,  
And sheep and lambs ascend the lit hillside,

Dear, of your charity, speak low, step soft,  
Pray for a sinner. Planet-like and still,  
Best hearts of all are sometimes set aloft  
Only to see and pass, nor yet deplore  
Even Wrong itself, crowned Wrong inscrutable,  
Which cannot not have been for evermore.

## York Stairs

**MANY** a musing eye returns to thee,  
Against the lurid street disconsolate,  
Who kept in green domains thy bridal state,  
With young tide-waters leaping at thy knee;  
And lest the ravening smoke, and enmity,  
Corrode thee quite, thy lover sighs, and straight  
Desires thee safe afar, too graceful gate!  
Throned on a terrace of the Boboli.

Nay, nay, thy use is here. Stand queenly thus  
Till the next fury; teach the time and us  
Leisure and will to draw a serious breath:  
Not wholly where thou art the soul is cowed,  
Nor the fooled capital proclaims aloud  
Barter is god, while Beauty perisheth.

**In the Docks**

**WHERE** the bales thunder till the day is done,  
And the wild sounds with wilder odors cope;  
Where over crouching sail and coiling rope,  
Lascar and Moor along the gangway run;  
Where stifled Thames spreads in the pallid sun,  
A hive of anarchy from slope to slope;  
Flag of my birth, my liberty, my hope,  
I see thee at the masthead, joyous one!

O thou good guest! So oft as, young and warm,  
To the home-wind thy hoisted colors bound,  
Away, away from this too thoughtful ground,  
Sated with human trespass and despair,  
Thee only, from the desert, from the storm,  
A sick mind follows into Eden air.