



# **POETRY**

**JOHN CLARE**

**Global Grey ebooks**

**POETRY**

**BY  
JOHN CLARE**

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*Poetry By John Clare.*

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## WHAT IS LIFE?

AND what is Life?—An hour-glass on the run,  
 A mist retreating from the morning sun,  
 A busy, bustling, still repeated dream.—  
 Its length?—A minute's pause, a moment's thought.  
 And happiness?—A bubble on the stream,  
 That in the act of seizing shrinks to nought.

What is vain Hope?—The puffing gale of morn,  
 That robs each flow'ret of its gem,—and dies;  
 A cobweb hiding disappointment's thorn,  
 Which stings more keenly through the thin disguise.

—And thou, O Trouble?—nothing can suppose  
 (And sure the Power of Wisdom only knows),  
 What need requireth thee:  
 So free and liberal as thy bounty flows,  
 Some necessary cause must surely be.  
 But disappointments, pains, and every woe  
 Devoted wretches feel,  
 The universal plagues of life below,  
 Are mysteries still 'neath Fate's unbroken seal.

And what is Death? is still the cause unfound?  
 That dark, mysterious name of horrid sound?—  
 A long and lingering sleep, the weary crave.  
 And Peace? where can its happiness abound?—  
 No where at all, save heaven, and the grave.

Then what is Life?—When stripp'd of its disguise,  
 A thing to be desir'd it cannot be;  
 Since every thing that meets our foolish eyes  
 Gives proof sufficient of its vanity.  
 'Tis but a trial all must undergo;  
 To teach unthankful mortals how to prize  
 That happiness vain man's denied to know,  
 Until he's call'd to claim it in the skies.

## ADDRESS TO PLENTY

### IN WINTER

O THOU Bliss! to riches known,  
 Stranger to the poor alone;  
 Giving most where none's requir'd,  
 Leaving none where most's desir'd;  
 Who, sworn friend to miser, keeps  
 Adding to his useless heaps  
 Gifts on gifts, profusely stor'd,  
 Till thousands swell the mouldy hoard:  
 While poor, shatter'd Poverty,  
 To advantage seen in me,  
 With his rags, his wants, and pain,  
 Waking pity but in vain,  
 Bowing, cringing at thy side,  
 Begg his mite, and is denied.  
 O, thou blessing! let not me  
 Tell, as vain, my wants to thee;  
 Thou, by name of Plenty stil'd  
 Fortune's heir, her favourite child.  
 'Tis a maxim—hunger feed,  
 Give the needy when they need;  
 He, whom all profess to serve,  
 The same maxim did observe:  
 Their obedience here, how well,  
 Modern times will plainly tell.  
 Hear my wants, nor deem me bold,  
 Not without occasion told:  
 Hear one wish; nor fail to give;  
 Use me well, and bid me live.

'Tis not great, what I solicit:  
 Was it more, thou couldst not miss it:  
 Now the cutting Winter's come,  
 'Tis but just to find a home,  
 In some shelter, dry and warm,  
 That will shield me from the storm.  
 Toiling in the naked fields,  
 Where no bush a shelter yields,  
 Needy Labour dithering stands,  
 Beats and blows his numbing hands;  
 And upon the crumping snows

Stamps, in vain, to warm his toes.  
 Leaves are fled, that once had power  
 To resist a summer shower;  
 And the wind so piercing blows,  
 Winnowing small the drifting snows,  
 The summer shade of loaded bough  
 Would vainly boast a shelter now:  
 Piercing snows so searching fall,  
 They sift a passage through them all.  
 Though all's vain to keep him warm,  
 Poverty must brave the storm.  
 Friendship none, its aid to lend:  
 Health alone his only friend;  
 Granting leave to live in pain,  
 Giving strength to toil in vain;  
 To be, while winter's horrors last,  
 The sport of every pelting blast.

Oh, sad sons of Poverty!  
 Victims doom'd to misery;  
 Who can paint what pain prevails  
 O'er that heart which Want assails?  
 Modest Shame the pain conceals:  
 No one knows, but he who feels.  
 O thou charm which Plenty crowns:  
 Fortune! smile, now Winter frowns:  
 Cast around a pitying eye!  
 Feed the hungry, ere they die.  
 Think, oh! think upon the poor,  
 Nor against them shut thy door:  
 Freely let thy bounty flow,  
 On the sons of Want and Woe.

Hills and dales no more are seen  
 In their dress of pleasing green;  
 Summer's robes are all thrown by,  
 For the clothing of the sky;  
 Snows on snows in heaps combine,  
 Hillocks, rais'd as mountains, shine,  
 And at distance rising proud,  
 Each appears a fleecy cloud.  
 Plenty! now thy gifts bestow;  
 Exit bid to every woe:  
 Take me in, shut out the blast,

Make the doors and windows fast;  
 Place me in some corner, where,  
 Lolling in an elbow chair,  
 Happy, blest to my desire,  
 I may find a rousing fire;  
 While in chimney-corner nigh,  
 Coal or wood, a fresh supply,  
 Ready stands for laying on,  
 Soon as t'other's burnt and gone.  
 Now and then, as taste decreed  
 In a book a page I'd read;  
 And, inquiry to amuse,  
 Peep at something in the news;  
 See who's married, and who's dead,  
 And who, through bankrupt, beg their bread:  
 While on hob, or table nigh,  
 Just to drink before I'm dry,  
 A pitcher at my side should stand,  
 With the barrel nigh at hand,  
 Always ready as I will'd,  
 When 'twas empty, to be fill'd;  
 And, to be possess'd of all,  
 A corner cupboard in the wall,  
 With store of victuals lin'd complete,  
 That when hungry I might eat.  
 Then would I, in Plenty's lap,  
 For the first time take a nap;  
 Falling back in easy lair,  
 Sweetly slumbering in my chair;  
 With no reflective thoughts to wake  
 Pains that cause my heart to ache,  
 Of contracted debts, long made,  
 In no prospect to be paid;  
 And, to Want, sad news severe,  
 Of provisions getting dear:  
 While the Winter, shocking sight,  
 Constant freezes day and night,  
 Deep and deeper falls the snow,  
 Labour's slack, and wages low.  
 These, and more, the poor can tell,  
 Known, alas, by them too well,  
 Plenty! oh, if blest by thee,  
 Never more should trouble me.  
 Hours and weeks will sweetly glide,

Soft and smooth as flows the tide,  
 Where no stones or choaking grass  
 Force a curve ere it can pass:  
 And as happy, and as blest,  
 As beasts drop them down to rest,  
 When in pastures, at their will,  
 They have roam'd and eat their fill;  
 Soft as nights in summer creep,  
 So should I then fall asleep;  
 While sweet visions of delight,  
 So enchanting to the sight,  
 Sweetly swimming o'er my eyes,  
 Would sink me into extacies.  
 Nor would pleasure's dream once more,  
 As they oft have done before,  
 Cause be to create a pain,  
 When I woke, to find them vain:  
 Bitter past, the present sweet,  
 Would my happiness complete.  
 Oh; how easy should I lie,  
 With the fire up-blazing high,  
 (Summer's artificial bloom,)

That like an oven keeps the room,  
 Or lovely May, as mild and warm:  
 While, without, the raging storm  
 Is roaring in the chimney-top,  
 In no likelihood to drop;  
 And the witchen-branches nigh,  
 O'er my snug box towering high,  
 That sweet shelter'd stands beneath,  
 In convulsive eddies wreath.

Then while, tyrant-like, the storm  
 Takes delight in doing harm.  
 Down before him crushing all,  
 Till his weapons useless fall;  
 And as in oppression proud  
 Peal his howlings long and loud,  
 While the clouds, with horrid sweep,  
 Give (as suits a tyrant's trade)  
 The sun a minute's leave to peep,  
 To smile upon the ruin's made;  
 And to make complete the blast,  
 While the hail comes hard and fast,  
 Rattling loud against the glass;



And the snowy sleets, that pass,  
 Driving up in heaps remain  
 Close adhering to the pane,  
 Stop the light and spread a gloom,  
 Suiting sleep, around the room:—  
 Oh, how blest 'mid these alarms,  
 I should bask in Fortune's arms,  
 Who, defying every frown,  
 Hugs me on her drowny breast,  
 Bids my head lie easy down,  
 And on Winter's ruins rest.  
 So upon the troubled sea,  
 Emblematic simile,  
 Birds are known to sit secure,  
 While the billows roar and rave,  
 Slumbering in their safety sure,  
 Rock'd to sleep upon the wave.  
 So would I still slumber on,  
 Till hour-telling clocks had gone,  
 And, from the contracted day,  
 One or more had click'd away.  
 Then with sitting wearied out,  
 I for change's sake, no doubt,  
 Just might wish to leave my seat,  
 And, to exercise my feet,  
 Make a journey to the door,  
 Put my nose out, but no more:  
 There to village taste agree;  
 Mark how times are like to be;  
 How the weather's getting on;  
 Peep in ruts where carts have gone;  
 Or, by stones, a sturdy stroke,  
 View the hole the boys have broke,  
 Crizzling, still inclin'd to freeze;—  
 And the rime upon the trees.  
 Then to pause on ills to come,  
 Just look upward on the gloom;  
 See fresh storms approaching fast,  
 View them busy in the air,  
 Boiling up the brewing blast,  
 Still fresh horrors scheming there.  
 Black and dismal, rising high,  
 From the north they fright the eye:  
 Pregnant with a thousand storms,

Huddled in their icy arms,  
 Heavy hovering as they come,  
 Some as mountains seem—and some  
 Jagg'd as craggy rocks appear  
 Dismally advancing near:  
 Fancy, at the cumbrous sight,  
 Chills and shudders with affright,  
 Fearing lest the air, in vain,  
 Strive her station to maintain,  
 And wearied, yeilding to the skies,  
 The world beneath in ruin lies.  
 So may Fancy think and feign;  
 Fancy oft imagines vain:  
 Nature's laws, by wisdom penn'd,  
 Mortals cannot comprehend;  
 Power almighty Being gave,  
 Endless Mercy stoops to save;  
 Causes, hid from mortals' sight,  
 Prove "whatever is, is right."

Then to look again below,  
 Labour's former life I'd view,  
 Who, still beating through the snow,  
 Spite of storms their toils pursue,  
 Forc'd out by sad Necessity  
 That sad fiend that forces me.  
 Troubles, then no more my own,  
 Which I but too long had known,  
 Might create a care, a pain;  
 Then I'd seek my joys again:  
 Pile the fire up, fetch a drink,  
 Then sit down again and think;  
 Pause on all my sorrows past,  
 Think how many a bitter blast,  
 When it snow'd, and hail'd, and blew,  
 I have toil'd and batter'd through.  
 Then to ease reflective pain,  
 To my sports I'd fall again,  
 Till the clock had counted ten;  
 When I'd seek my downy bed,  
 Easy, happy, and well fed.

Then might peep the morn, in vain,  
 Through the rimy misted pane;

Then might bawl the restless cock,  
And the loud-tongued village clock;  
And the flail might lump away,  
Waking soon the dreary day:  
They should never waken me,  
Independent, blest, and free;  
Nor, as usual, make me start,  
Yawning sigh with heavy heart,  
Loth to ope my sleepy eyes,  
Weary still, in pain to rise,  
With aching bones and heavy head,  
Worse than when I went to bed.  
With nothing then to raise a sigh,  
Oh, how happy should I lie  
Till the clock was eight, or more,  
Then proceed as heretofore.  
Best of blessings! sweetest charm!  
Boon these wishes while they're warm;  
My fairy visions ne'er despise;  
As reason thinks, thou realize:  
Depress'd with want and poverty  
I sink, I fall, denied by thee.

## NOON

ALL how silent and how still;  
 Nothing heard but yonder mill:  
 While the dazzled eye surveys  
 All around a liquid blaze;  
 And amid the scorching gleams,  
 If we earnest look, it seems  
 As if crooked bits of glass  
 Seem'd repeatedly to pass.  
 Oh, for a puffing breeze to blow!  
 But breezes are all strangers now;  
 Not a twig is seen to shake,  
 Nor the smallest bent to quake;  
 From the river's muddy side  
 Not a curve is seen to glide;  
 And no longer on the stream  
 Watching lies the silver bream,  
 Forcing, from repeated springs,  
 "Verges in successive rings."  
 Bees are faint, and cease to hum;  
 Birds are overpower'd and dumb.  
 Rural voices all are mute,  
 Tuneless lie the pipe and flute:  
 Shepherds, with their panting sheep,  
 In the swaliest corner creep;  
 And from the tormenting heat  
 All are wishing to retreat.  
 Huddled up in grass and flowers,  
 Mowers wait for cooler hours;  
 And the cow-boy seeks the sedge,  
 Ramping in the woodland hedge,  
 While his cattle o'er the vales  
 Scamper, with uplifted tails;  
 Others not so wild and mad,  
 That can better bear the gad,  
 Underneath the hedge-row lunge,  
 Or, if nigh, in waters plunge.  
 Oh! to see how flowers are took,  
 How it grieves me when I look:  
 Ragged-robins, once so pink,

Now are turn'd as black as ink,  
And the leaves, being scorch'd so much,  
Even crumble at the touch;  
Drowking lies the meadow-sweet,  
Flopping down beneath one's feet  
While to all the flowers that blow,  
If in open air they grow,  
Th' injurious deed alike is done  
By the hot relentless sun.  
E'en the dew is parched up  
From the teasel's jointed cup:  
O poor birds! where must ye fly,  
Now your water-pots are dry?  
If ye stay upon the heath,  
Ye'll be choak'd and clamm'd to death:  
Therefore leave the shadeless goss,  
Seek the spring-head lin'd with moss;  
There your little feet may stand,  
Safely printing on the sand;  
While, in full possession, where  
Purling eddies ripple clear,  
You with ease and plenty blest,  
Sip the coolest and the best.  
Then away! and wet your throats;  
Cheer me with your warbling notes:  
T'will hot noon the more revive;  
While I wander to contrive  
For myself a place as good,  
In the middle of a wood:  
There aside some mossy bank,  
Where the grass in bunches rank  
Lifts its down on spindles high,  
Shall be where I'll choose to lie;  
Fearless of the things that creep,  
There I'll think, and there I'll sleep;  
Caring not to stir at all,  
Till the dew begins to fall.

## THE UNIVERSAL EPITAPH

NO flattering praises daub my stone,  
My frailties and my faults to hide;  
My faults and failings all are known—  
I liv'd in sin—in sin I died.

And oh! condemn me not, I pray,  
You who my sad confession view;  
But ask your soul, if it can say,  
That I'm a viler man than you.

## THE HARVEST MORNING

COCKS wake the early morn with many a crow;  
 Loud-striking village clock has counted four;  
 The labouring rustic hears his restless foe,  
 And weary, of his pains complaining sore,  
 Hobbles to fetch his horses from the moor:  
 Some busy 'gin to teem the loaded corn,  
 Which night throng'd round the barn's becrowded door;  
 Such plenteous scenes the farmer's yard adorn,  
 Such noisy, busy toils now mark the Harvest Morn.

The bird-boy's pealing horn is loudly blow'd;  
 The waggons jostle on with rattling sound;  
 And hogs and geese now throng the dusty road,  
 Grunting, and gabbling, in contention, round  
 The barley ears that litter on the ground.  
 What printing traces mark the waggon's way;  
 What busy bustling wakens echo round;  
 How drive the sun's warm beams the mist away;  
 How labour sweats and toils, and dreads the sultry day!

His scythe the mower o'er his shoulder leans,  
 And whetting, jars with sharp and tinkling sound;  
 Then sweeps again 'mong corn and crackling beans,  
 And swath by swath flops lengthening o'er the ground;  
 While 'neath some friendly heap, snug shelter'd round  
 From spoiling sun, lies hid the heart's delight;  
 And hearty soaks off hand the bottle round,  
 Their toils pursuing with redoubled might—  
 Great praise to him is due that brought its birth to light.

Upon the waggon now, with eager bound,  
 The lusty picker whirls the rustling sheaves;  
 Or, resting ponderous creaking fork aground,  
 Boastful at once whole shocks of barley heaves:  
 The loading boy revengeful inly grieves  
 To find his unmatch'd strength and power decay;  
 The barley horn his garments interweaves;  
 Smarting and sweating 'neath the sultry day,  
 With muttering curses stung, he mauls the heaps away.

A motley group the clearing field surround;  
 Sons of Humanity, oh ne'er deny  
 The humble gleaner entrance in your ground;  
 Winter's sad cold, and Poverty are nigh.  
 Grudge not from Providence the scant supply:  
 You'll never miss it from your ample store.  
 Who gives denial—harden'd, hungry hound,—  
 May never blessings crowd his hated door!  
 But he shall never lack, that giveth to the poor.

Ah, lovely Emma! mingling with the rest,  
 Thy beauties blooming in low life unseen,  
 Thy rosy cheeks, thy sweetly swelling breast;  
 But ill it suits thee in the stubs to glean.  
 O Poverty! how basely you demean  
 The imprison'd worth your rigid fates confine:  
 Not fancied charms of an Arcadian queen  
 So sweet as Emma's real beauties shine:  
 Had Fortune blest, sweet girl, this lot had ne'er been thine.

The sun's increasing heat now mounted high,  
 Refreshment must recruit exhausted power;  
 The waggon stops, the busy tool's thrown by,  
 And 'neath a shock's enjoy'd the bevering hour.  
 The bashful maid, sweet health's engaging flower  
 Lingered behind, o'er rake still blushing bends;  
 And when to take the horn fond swains implore,  
 With feign'd excuses its dislike pretends.  
 So pass the bevering hours, so Harvest Morning ends.

O Rural Life! what charms thy meanness hide;  
 What sweet descriptions bards disdain to sing;  
 What loves, what graces on thy plains abide:  
 Oh, could I soar me on the Muse's wing,  
 What rifled charms should my researches bring!  
 Pleas'd would I wander where these charms reside;  
 Of rural sports and beauties would I sing;  
 Those beauties, Wealth, which you in vain deride,  
 Beauties of richest bloom, superior to your pride.



## ON AN INFANT'S GRAVE

BENEATH the sod where smiling creep  
The daisies into view,  
The ashes of an Infant sleep,  
Whose soul's as smiling too;  
Ah! doubly happy, doubly blest,  
(Had I so happy been!)  
Recall'd to heaven's eternal rest,  
Ere it knew how to sin.

Thrice happy Infant! great the bliss  
Alone reserv'd for thee;  
Such joy 'twas my sad fate to miss,  
And thy good luck to see;  
For oh! when all must rise again,  
And sentence then shall have,  
What crowds will wish with me, in vain,  
They'd fill'd an infant's grave.

## TO AN APRIL DAISY

WELCOME, old Comrade! peeping once again;  
Our meeting 'minds me of a pleasant hour:  
Spring's pencil pinks thee in that blushy stain,  
And Summer glistens in thy tinty flower.

Hail, Beauty's Gem! disdaining time nor place;  
Carelessly creeping on the dunghill's side;  
Demeanour's softness in thy crimped face  
Decks thee in beauties unattain'd by pride.

Hail, 'Venturer! once again that fearless here  
Encampeth on the hoar hill's sunny side;  
Spring's early messenger! thou'rt doubly dear;  
And winter's frost by thee is well supplied.

Now winter's frowns shall cease their pelting rage,  
But winter's woes I need not tell to thee;  
Far better luck thy visits well presage,  
And be it thine and mine that luck to see.

Ah, may thy smiles confirm the hopes they tell  
To see thee frost-bit I'd be griev'd at heart;  
I meet thee happy, and I wish thee well,  
Till ripening summer summons us to part.

Then like old mates, or two who've neighbours been,  
We'll part, in hopes to meet another year;  
And o'er thy exit from this changing scene  
We'll mix our wishes in a tokening tear.

## SUMMER EVENING

THE sinking sun is taking leave,  
 And sweetly gilds the edge of Eve,  
 While huddling clouds of purple dye  
 Gloomy hang the western sky.  
 Crows crowd croaking over-head,  
 Hastening to the woods to bed.  
 Cooing sits the lonely dove,  
 Calling home her absent love.  
 With "Kirchup! kirchup!" 'mong the wheats,  
 Partridge distant partridge greets;  
 Beckoning hints to those that roam,  
 That guide the squander'd covey home.  
 Swallows check their winding flight,  
 And twittering on the chimney light.  
 Round the pond the martins flirt,  
 Their snowy breasts bedaub'd with dirt,  
 While the mason, 'neath the slates,  
 Each mortar-bearing bird awaits:  
 By art untaught, each labouring spouse  
 Curious daubs his hanging house.  
 Bats flit by in hood and cowl;  
 Through the barn-hole pops the owl;  
 From the hedge, in drowsy hum,  
 Heedless buzzing beetles bum,  
 Haunting every bushy place,  
 Flopping in the labourer's face.  
 Now the snail hath made his ring;  
 And the moth with snowy wing  
 Circles round in winding whirls,  
 Through sweet evening's sprinkled pearls  
 On each nodding rush besprent;  
 Dancing on from bent to bent:  
 Now to downy grasses clung,  
 Resting for a while he's hung;  
 Strong to ferry o'er the stream,  
 Vanishing as flies a dream:  
 Playful still his hours to keep,  
 Till his time has come to sleep;  
 In tall grass, by fountain-head,

Weary then he drops to bed.  
 From the hay-cock's moisten'd heaps  
 Startled frogs take vaunting leaps;  
 And along the shaven mead,  
 Jumping travellers, they proceed:  
 Quick the dewy grass divides,  
 Moistening sweet their speckled sides;  
 From the grass or flowret's cup,  
 Quick the dew-drop bounces up.  
 Now the blue fog creeps along,  
 And the bird's forgot his song:  
 Flowers now sleep within their hoods;  
 Daisies button into buds;  
 From soiling dew the butter-cup  
 Shuts his golden jewels up;  
 And the rose and woodbine they  
 Wait again the smiles of day.  
 'Neath the willow's wavy boughs,  
 Dolly, singing, milks hers cows;  
 While the brook, as bubbling by,  
 Joins in murmuring melody.  
 Dick and Dob, with jostling joll,  
 Homeward drag the rumbling roll;  
 Whilom Ralph, for Doll to wait,  
 Lolls him o'er the pasture gate.  
 Swains to fold their sheep begin;  
 Dogs loud barking drive them in.  
 Hedgers now along the road  
 Homeward bend beneath their load;  
 And from the long furrow'd seams,  
 Ploughmen loose their weary teams:  
 Ball, with urging lashes weal'd.  
 Still so slow to drive a-field,  
 Eager blundering from the plough,  
 Wants no whip to drive him now;  
 At the stable-door he stands,  
 Looking round for friendly hands  
 To loose the door its fast'ning pin,  
 And let him with his corn begin.  
 Round the yard, a thousand ways  
 Beasts in expectation gaze,  
 Catching at the loads of hay  
 Passing fodd'ers tug away.  
 Hogs with grumbling, deaf'ning noise

Bother round the server boys;  
 And, far and near, the motley group  
 Anxious claim their suppering-up.  
 From the rest, a blest release,  
 Gabbling home, the quarrelling geese  
 Seek their warm straw-litter'd shed,  
 And, waddling, prate away to bed.  
 'Nighted by unseen delay,  
 Poking hens, that lose their way,  
 On the hovel's rafters rise,  
 Slumbering there, the fox's prize.  
 Now the cat has ta'en her seat,  
 With her tail curl'd round her feet;  
 Patiently she sits to watch  
 Sparrows fighting on the thatch.  
 Now Doll brings th' expected pails.  
 And dogs begin to wag their tails;  
 With strokes and pats they're welcom'd in  
 And they with looking wants begin:  
 Slove in the milk-pail brimming o'er,  
 She pops their dish behind the door.  
 Prone to mischief boys are met,  
 'Neath the eaves the ladder's set,  
 Sly they climb in softest tread,  
 To catch the sparrow on his bed,  
 Massacred, O cruel pride!  
 Dash against the ladder's side.  
 Curst barbarians! pass me by:  
 Come not, Turks, my cottage nigh;  
 Sure my sparrow's are my own,  
 Let ye then my birds alone.  
 Come poor birds! from foes severe  
 Fearless come, you're welcome here;  
 My heart yearns at fate like yours,  
 A sparrow's life's as sweet as ours.  
 Hardy clowns! grudge not the wheat  
 Which hunger forces birds to eat:  
 Your blinded eyes, worst foes to you,  
 Can't see the good which sparrows do.  
 Did not poor birds with watching rounds  
 Pick up the insects from your grounds,  
 Did they not tend your rising grain,  
 You might then sow to reap in vain.  
 Thus Providence, right understood,

Whose end and aim is doing good,  
 Sends nothing here without its use;  
 Though ignorance loads it with abuse;  
 And fools despise the blessing sent,  
 And mock the Giver's good intent—  
 O God! let me what's good pursue,  
 Let me the same to others do  
 As I'd have others do to me,  
 And learn at least humanity.

Dark and darker glooms the sky;  
 Sleep 'gins close the labourer's eye:  
 Dobson leaves his greensward seat,  
 Neighbours where they neighbours meet  
 Crops to praise and work in hand,  
 And battles tell from foreign land.  
 While his pipe is puffing out,  
 Sue he's putting to the rout,  
 Gossiping, who takes delight  
 To shool her knitting out at night,  
 And back-bite neighbours 'bout the town—  
 Who's got new caps, and who a gown,  
 And many a thing, her evil eye  
 Can see they don't come honest by.  
 Chattering at a neighbour's house,  
 She hears call out her frowning spouse  
 Prepar'd to start, she soodles home,  
 Her knitting twirling o'er her thumb,  
 As, loth to leave, afraid to stay,  
 She bawls her story all the way:  
 The tale so fraught with 'ticing charms.  
 Her apron folded o'er her arms,  
 She leaves the unfinished tale, in pain,  
 To end as evening comes again;  
 And in the cottage gangs with dread  
 To meet old Dobson's timely frown,  
 Who grumbling sits, prepar'd for bed,  
 While she stands chelping 'bout the town.

The night-wind now, with sooty wings,  
 In the cotter's chimney sings;  
 Now, as stretching o'er the bed,  
 Soft I raise my drowsy head,  
 Listening to the ushering charms

That shake the elm tree's mossy arms;  
Till sweet slumbers stronger creep,  
Deeper darkness stealing round,  
Then, as rock'd, I sink to sleep,  
'Mid the wild wind's lulling sound.

## PATTY

YE swampy falls of pasture ground,  
 And rushy spreading greens;  
 Ye rising swells in brambles bound,  
 And freedom's wilder'd scenes;  
 I've trod ye oft, and love ye dear,  
 And kind was fate to let me;  
 On you I found my all, for here  
 'Twas first my Patty met me.

Flow on, thou gently plashing stream,  
 O'er weed-beds wild and rank;  
 Delighted I've enjoy'd my dream  
 Upon thy mossy bank:  
 Bemoistening many a weedy stem,  
 I've watched thee wind so clearly;  
 And on thy bank I found the gem  
 That makes me love thee dearly.

Thou wilderness, so rudely gay;  
 Oft as I seek thy plain,  
 Oft as I wend my steps away,  
 And meet my joys again,  
 And brush the weaving branches by  
 Of briars and thorns so matty;  
 So oft Reflection warms a sigh,—  
 Here first I meet my Patty.



## PATTY OF THE VALE

WHERE lonesome woodlands close surrounding  
 Mark the spot a solitude,  
 And nature's uncheck'd scenes abounding  
 Form a prospect wild and rude,  
 A cottage cheers the spot so glooming,  
 Hid in the hollow of the dale,  
 Where, in youth and beauty blooming  
 Lives sweet Patty of the Vale.

Gay as the lambs her cot surrounding,  
 Sporting wild the shades among,  
 O'er the hills and bushes bounding,  
 Artless, innocent, and young,  
 Fresh, as blush of morning roses  
 Ere the mid-day suns prevail,  
 Fair as lily-bud uncloses,  
 Blooms sweet Patty of the Vale.

Low and humble though her station,  
 Dress though mean she's doom'd to wear,  
 Few superiors in the nation  
 With her beauty can compare.  
 What are riches?—not worth naming,  
 Though with some they may prevail;  
 Their's be choice of wealth proclaiming,  
 Mine is Patty of the Vale.

Fools may fancy wealth and fortune  
 Join to make a happy pair,  
 And for such the god importune,  
 With full many a fruitless prayer:  
 I, their pride and wealth disdaining  
 Should my humble hopes prevail,  
 Happy then, would cease complaining,  
 Blest with Patty of the Vale.

## MY LOVE, THOU ART A NOSEGAY SWEET

MY love, thou art a nosegay sweet,  
My sweetest flower I prove thee;  
And pleas'd I pin thee to my breast,  
And dearly do I love thee.

And when, my nosegay, thou shalt fade,  
As sweet a flower thou'lt prove thee;  
And as thou witherest on my breast,  
For beauty past I'll love thee.

And when, my nosegay, thou shalt die,  
And heaven's flower shalt prove thee;  
My hopes shall follow to the sky,  
And everlasting love thee.

## THE MEETING

HERE we meet, too soon to part,  
Here to leave will raise a smart,  
Here I'll press thee to my heart,  
Where none have place above thee:  
Here I vow to love thee well,  
And could words unseal the spell,  
Had but language strength to tell,  
I'd say how much I love thee.

Here, the rose that decks thy door,  
Here, the thorn that spreads thy bow'r,  
Here, the willow on the moor,  
The birds at rest above thee,  
Had they light of life to see,  
Sense of soul like thee and me,  
Soon might each a witness be  
How doatingly I love thee.

By the night-sky's purple ether,  
And by even's sweetest weather,  
That oft has blest us both together,—  
The moon that shines above thee,  
And shews thy beauteous cheek so blooming,  
And by pale age's winter coming,  
The charms, and casualties of woman,  
I will for ever love thee.

## EFFUSION

AH, little did I think in time that's past,  
 By summer burnt, or numb'd by winter's blast,  
 Delving the ditch a livelihood to earn,  
 Or lumping corn out in a dusty barn;  
 With aching bones returning home at night,  
 And sitting down with weary hand to write;  
 Ah, little did I think, as then unknown,  
 Those artless rhymes I even blush'd to own  
 Would be one day applauded and approv'd,  
 By learning notic'd, and by genius lov'd.  
 God knows, my hopes were many, but my pain  
 Damp'd all the prospects which I hop'd to gain;  
 I hardly dar'd to hope.—Thou corner-chair,  
 In which I've oft slung back in deep despair,  
 Hadst thou expression, thou couldst easy tell  
 The pains and all that I have known too well:  
 'Twould be but sorrow's tale, yet still 'twould be  
 A tale of truth, and passing sweet to me.  
 How oft upon my hand I've laid my head,  
 And thought how poverty deform'd our shed;  
 Look'd on each parent's face I fain had cheer'd  
 Where sorrow triumph'd, and pale want appear'd;  
 And sigh'd, and hop'd, and wish'd some day would come,  
 When I might bring a blessing to their home,—  
 That toil and merit comforts had in store,  
 To bid the tear defile their cheeks no more.  
 Who that has feelings would not wish to be  
 A friend to parents, such as mine to me,  
 Who in distress broke their last crust in twain,  
 And though want pinch'd, the remnant broke again,  
 And still, if craving of their scanty bread,  
 Gave their last mouthful that I might be fed?  
 Nor for their own wants tear-drops follow'd free,  
 Worse anguish stung—they had no more for me,  
 And now hope's sun is looking brighter out,  
 And spreading thin the clouds of fear and doubt,  
 That long in gloomy sad suspense to me  
 Hid the long-awaited smiles I wish'd to see.  
 And now, my parents, helping you is sweet,—

The rudest havoc fortune could complete;  
A piteous couple, little blest with friends,  
Where pain and poverty have had their ends.  
I'll be thy crutch, my father, lean on me;  
Weakness knits stubborn while its bearing thee;  
And hard shall fall the shock of fortune's frown  
To eke thy sorrows, ere it breaks me down.  
My mother, too, thy kindness shall be met,  
And ere I'm able will I pay the debt;  
For what thou'st done, and what gone through for me,  
My last-earn'd sixpence will I break with thee:  
And when my dwindled sum won't more divide,  
Then take it all—to fate I'll leave the rest;  
In helping thee I'll always feel a pride,  
Nor think I'm happy till ye both are blest.

## BALLAD

A WEEDLING wild, on lonely lea,  
My evening rambles chanc'd to see;  
And much the weedling tempted me  
To crop its tender flower:  
Expos'd to wind and heavy rain,  
Its head bow'd lowly on the plain;  
And silently it seem'd in pain  
Of life's endanger'd hour.

"And wilt thou bid my bloom decay,  
And crop my flower, and me betray?  
And cast my injur'd sweets away,"—  
Its silence seemly sigh'd—  
"A moment's idol of thy mind?  
And is a stranger so unkind,  
To leave a shameful root behind,  
Bereft of all its pride?"

And so it seemly did complain;  
And beating fell the heavy rain;  
And how it droop'd upon the plain,  
To fate resign'd to fall:  
My heart did melt at its decline,  
And "Come," said I, "thou gem divine,  
My fate shall stand the storm with thine."  
So took the root and all.

## THE GIPSY'S CAMP

HOW oft on Sundays, when I'd time to tramp,  
 My rambles led me to a gipsy's camp,  
 Where the real effigy of midnight hags,  
 With tawny smoked flesh and tatter'd rags,  
 Uncouth-brimm'd hat, and weather-beaten cloak,  
 'Neath the wild shelter of a knotty oak,  
 Along the greensward uniforming pricks  
 Her pliant bending hazel's arching sticks;  
 While round-topt bush or briar-entangled hedge,  
 Where flag-leaves spring beneath, or ramping sedge,  
 Keep off the bothering bustle of the wind,  
 And give the best retreat she hopes to find.  
 How oft I've bent me o'er her fire and smoke,  
 To hear her gibberish tale so quaintly spoke,  
 While the old Sybil forg'd her boding clack,  
 Twin imps the meanwhile bawling at her back;  
 Oft on my hand her magic coin's been struck,  
 And hoping chink, she talk'd of morts of luck:  
 And still, as boyish hopes did first agree,  
 Mingled with fears to drop the fortune's fee,  
 I never fail'd to gain the honours sought,  
 And Squire and Lord were purchas'd with a groat.  
 But as man's unbelieving taste came round,  
 She furious stamp'd her shoeless foot aground,  
 Wip'd bye her soot-black hair with clenching fist,  
 While through her yellow teeth the spittle hist,  
 Swearing by all her lucky powers of fate,  
 Which like as footboys on her actions wait,  
 That fortune's scale should to my sorrow turn  
 And I one day the rash neglect should mourn;  
 That good to bad should change, and I should be  
 Lost to this world and all eternity;  
 That poor as Job I should remain unblest;—  
 (Alas, for fourpence how my die is cast!)  
 Of not a hoarded farthing be possest,  
 And when all's done, be shov'd to hell at last!

## TO THE CLOUDS

O PAINTED clouds! sweet beauties of the sky,  
How have I view'd your motion and your rest  
When like fleet hunters ye have left mine eye,  
In your thin gauze of woolly-fleecing drest;  
Or in your threaten'd thunder's grave black vest,  
Like black deep waters slowly moving by,  
Awfully striking the spectator's breast  
With your Creator's dread sublimity,  
As admiration mutely views your storms.  
And I do love to see you idly lie,  
Painted by heav'n as various as your forms,  
Pausing upon the eastern mountain high,  
As morn awakes with spring's wood-harmony;  
And sweeter still, when in your slumbers sooth  
You hang the western arch o'er day's proud eye:  
Still as the even-pool, uncurv'd and smooth,  
My gazing soul has look'd most placidly;  
And higher still devoutly wish'd to strain,  
To wipe your shrouds and sky's blue blinders by,  
With all the warmness of a moon-struck brain,—  
To catch a glimpse of Him who bids you reign,  
And view the dwelling of all majesty.



## THE WOODMAN

### DEDICATED TO THE REV. J. KNOWLES HOLLAND.

THE beating snow-clad bell, with sounding dead,  
 Hath clanked four—the woodman's wak'd again;  
 And, as he leaves his comfortable bed,  
 Dithers to view the rimy feather'd pane,  
 And shrugs, and wishes—but 'tis all in vain:  
 The bed's warm comforts he most now forego;  
 His family that oft till eight hath lain,  
 Without his labour's wage could not do so.  
 And glad to make them blest he shuffles through the snow.

The early winter's morn is dark as pitch,  
 The wary wife from tinder brought at night  
 With flint and steel, and may a sturdy twitch,  
 Sits up in bed to strike her man a light;  
 And as the candle shows the rapturous sight,  
 Aside his wife his rosy sleeping boy,  
 He smacks his lips with exquisite delight,  
 With all a father's feelings, father's joy,  
 Then bids his wife good-bye, and hies to his employ.  
 His breakfast water-porridge, humble food;  
 A barley-crust he in his wallet flings;  
 On this he toils and labours in the wood,  
 And chops his faggot, twists his band, and sings,  
 As happily as princes and as kings  
 With all their luxury:—and blest is he,  
 Can but the little which his labour brings  
 Make both ends meet, and from long debts keep free,  
 And neat and clean preserve his numerous family.

Far o'er the dreary fields the woodland lies,  
 Rough is the journey which he daily goes;  
 The woolly clouds, that hang the frowning skies,  
 Keep winnowing down their drifting sleet and snows,  
 And thro' his doublet keen the north wind blows;  
 While hard as iron the cemented ground,  
 And smooth as glass the glibbed pool is froze;  
 His nailed boots with clenching tread rebound,  
 And dithering echo starts and mocks the clamping sound.

The woods how gloomy in a winter's morn!  
 The crows and ravens even cease to croak,  
 The little birds sit chattering on the thorn,  
 The pies scarce chatter when they leave the oak,  
 Startled from slumber by the woodman's stroke;  
 The milk-maid's song is drown'd in gloomy care,  
 And while the village chimneys curl their smoke,  
 She milks, and blows, and hastens to be there;  
 And nature all seems sad, and dying in despair.

The quirking rabbit scarcely leaves her hole,  
 But rolls in torpid slumbers all the day;  
 The fox is loth to 'gin a long patrol,  
 And scouts the woods, content with meaner prey;  
 The hare so frisking, timid once and gay,  
 'Hind the dead thistle hunkles from the view,  
 Nor scarce is scar'd though in the traveller's way,  
 Though waffling curs and shepherd-dogs pursue:  
 So winter's ragged power affects all nature through.

What different changes winter's frowns supply:  
 The clown no more a loitering hour beguiles,  
 Nor gaping tracks the clouds along the sky,  
 As when buds blossom, and the warm sun smiles,  
 And "Lawrence wages bids" on hills and stiles;  
 Banks, stiles, and flowers, and skies, no longer charm;  
 Deep drifting snow each summer-seat defiles;  
 With hasty blundering step and folded arm  
 He glad the stable seeks, his frost-nip nose to warm.  
 The shepherd haunts no more his spreading oak,  
 Nor on the sloping pond-head lies at lair;  
 The arbour he once wattled up is broke,  
 And left unworthy of his future care;  
 The ragged plundering stickers have been there,  
 And pilfer'd it away; he passes by  
 His summer dwelling, desolate and bare,  
 And ne'er so much as turns a conscious eye,  
 But gladly seeks his fire, and shuns th' inclement sky.

The scene is cloth'd in snow from morn till night,  
 The woodman's loth his chilly tools to seize;  
 The crows unroosting as he comes in sight  
 Shake down the feathery burden from the trees;  
 To look at things around he's fit to freeze:  
 Scar'd from her perch the fluttering pheasant flies:

His hat and doublet whiten by degrees,  
 He quakes, looks round, and pats his hands and sighs,  
 And wishes to himself that the warm sun would rise.

The robin, tamest of the feather'd race,  
 Soon as he hears the woodman's sounding chops,  
 With ruddy bosom and a simple face  
 Around his old companion fearless hops,  
 And there for hours in pleas'd attention stops:  
 The woodman's heart is tender and humane  
 And at his meals he many a crumble drops.  
 Thanks to thy generous feelings, gentle swain;  
 And what thy pity gives, shall not be given in vain.

The woodman gladly views the closing day,  
 To see the sun drop down behind the wood,  
 Sinking in clouds deep blue or misty grey,  
 Round as a football and as red as blood:  
 The pleasing prospect does his heart much good,  
 Though 'tis not his such beauties to admire;  
 He hastes to fill his bags with billet-wood,  
 Well-pleas'd from the chill prospect to retire,  
 To seek his corner chair, and warm snug cottage fire.

And soon as dusky even hovers round,  
 And the white frost 'gins crizzle pond and brook,  
 The little family are glimpsing round,  
 And from the door dart many a wistful look;  
 The supper's ready stewing on the hook:  
 And every foot that clampers down the street  
 Is for the coming father's step mistook;  
 O'erjoy'd are they when he their eyes doth meet,  
 Bent 'neath his load, snow-clad, as white as any sheet.

I think I see him seated in his chair,  
 Taking the bellows up the fire to blow;  
 I think I hear him joke and chatter there,  
 Telling his children news they wish to know;  
 With leather leggings on, that stopt the snow,  
 And broad-brimm'd hat uncouthly shapen round:  
 Nor would he, I'll be bound, if it were so,  
 Give twopence for the chance, could it be found,  
 At that same hour to be the king of England crown'd.

The woodman smokes, the brats in mirth and glee,  
 And artless prattle, even's hour beguile,  
 While love's last pledge runs scrambling up his knee,  
 The nightly comfort from his weary toil,  
 His chuff cheeks dimpling in a fondling smile;  
 He claims his kiss, and says his scraps of prayer;  
 Begging his daddy's pretty song the while,  
 Playing with his jacket-buttons and his hair;—  
 And thus in wedlock's joys the labourer drowns his care.

And as most labourers knowingly pretend  
 By certain signs to judge the weather right,  
 As oft from "Noah's ark" great floods descend,  
 And "buried moons" foretell great storms at night,  
 In such-like things the woodman took delight;  
 And ere he went to bed would always ken  
 Whether the sky was gloom'd or stars shone bright,  
 Then went to comfort's arms till morn, and then  
 As cheery as the sun resum'd his toils agen.

And ere he slept he always breath'd a prayer,  
 "I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou to-day didst give  
 Sufficient strength to toil; and blest Thy care,  
 And thank Thee still for what I may receive:  
 And, O Almighty God! while I still live,  
 Ere my eyes open on the last day's sun,  
 Prepare Thou me this wicked world to leave,  
 And fit my passage ere my race is run;  
 'Tis all I beg, O Lord! Thy heavenly will be done."

Holland; to thee this humble ballad's sent,  
 Who for the poor man's welfare oft hast pray'd;  
 Whose tongue did ne'er belie its good intent,  
 Preacher, as well in practice, as in trade—  
 Alas, too often money's business made!  
 O may the wretch, that's still in darkness living,  
 The Bible's comforts hear by thee display'd;  
 And many a woodman's family, forgiven,  
 Have cause for blessing thee that led their way to heaven.

## RURAL EVENING

THE sun now sinks behind the woodland green,  
 And twittering spangles glow the leaves between,  
 So bright and dazzling on the eye it plays  
 As if noon's heat had kindled to a blaze,  
 But soon it dims in red and heavier hues,  
 And shows wild fancy cheated in her views.  
 A mist-like moisture rises from the ground,  
 And deeper blueness stains the distant round.  
 The eye each moment, as it gazes o'er,  
 Still loses objects which it mark'd before;  
 The woods at distance changing like to clouds,  
 And spire-points croodling under evening's shrouds;  
 Till forms of things, and hues of leaf and flower,  
 In deeper shadows, as by magic power,  
 With light and all, in scarce-perceiv'd decay,  
 Put on mild evening's sober garb of grey.

Now in the sleepy gloom that blackens round  
 Dies many a lulling hum of rural sound,  
 From cottage door, farm-yard and dusty lane,  
 Where home the cart-house tolters with the swain.  
 Or padded holm, where village boys resort,  
 Bawling enraptur'd o'er their evening sport,  
 Till night awakens superstition's dread  
 And drives them prisoners to a restless bed.  
 Thrice happy eve of days no more to me!  
 Whoever thought such change belong'd to thee?  
 When, like to boys whom now thy gloom surrounds,  
 I chas'd the stag, or play'd at fox-and-hounds,  
 Or wander'd down the lane with many a mate  
 To play at see-saw on the pasture-gate,  
 Or on the threshold of some cottage sat  
 To watch the flittings of the shrieking bat,  
 Who, seemly pleas'd to mock our treacherous view,  
 Would even swoop and touch us as he flew,  
 And vainly still our hopes to entertain  
 Would stint his route, and circle us again,—  
 Till, wearied out with many a coaxing call  
 Which boyish superstition loves to bawl,  
 His shrill song shrieking he betook to flight,

And left us puzzled in short-sighted night.  
 Those days have fled me, as from them they steal:  
 And I've felt losses they must shortly feel;  
 But sure such ends make every bosom sore,  
 To think of pleasures we must meet no more.

Now from the pasture milking-maidens come,  
 With each a swain to bear the burden home,  
 Who often coax them on their pleasant way  
 To soodle longer out in love's delay;  
 While on a mole-hill, or a resting stile,  
 The simple rustics try their arts the while  
 With glegging smiles, and hopes and fears between,  
 Snatching a kiss to open what they mean:  
 And all the utmost that their tongues can do,  
 The honey'd words which nature learns to woo,  
 The wild-flower sweets of language, "love" and "dear,"  
 With warmest utterings meet each maiden's ear;  
 Who as by magic smit, she knows not why,  
 From the warm look that waits a wish'd reply  
 Droops fearful down in love's delightful swoon  
 As slinks the blossom from the suns of noon;  
 While sighs half-smother'd from the throbbing breast,  
 And broken words sweet trembling o'er the rest,  
 And cheeks, in blushes burning, turn'd aside,  
 Betray the plainer what she strives to hide.  
 The amorous swain sees through the feign'd disguise,  
 Discerns the fondness she at first denies,  
 And with all passions love and truth can move  
 Urges more strong the simpering maid to love;  
 More freely using toying ways to win—  
 Tokens that echo from the soul within—  
 Her soft hand nipping, that with ardour burns,  
 And, timid, gentlier presses its returns;  
 Then stealing pins with innocent deceit,  
 To loose the 'kerchief from its envied seat;  
 Then unawares her bonnet he'll untie,  
 Her dark-brown ringlets wiping gently by,  
 To steal a kiss in seemly feign'd disguise,  
 As love yields kinder taken by surprise:  
 While nearly conquer'd she less disapproves,  
 And owns at last, mid tears and sighs, she loves.  
 With sweetest feelings that this world bestows  
 Now each to each their inmost souls disclose,

Vow to be true; and to be truly ta'en,  
 Repeat their loves, and vow it o'er again;  
 And pause at loss of language to proclaim  
 Those purest pleasures, yet without a name:  
 And while, in highest ecstasy of bliss  
 The shepherd holds her yielding hand in his  
 He turns to heaven to witness what he feels,  
 And silent shows what want of words conceals;  
 Then ere the parting moments hustle nigh,  
 And night in deeper dye his curtain dips,  
 Till next day's evening glads the anxious eye,  
 He swears his truth, and seals it on her lips.

At even's hour, the truce of toil, 'tis sweet  
 The sons of labour at their ease to meet,  
 On piled bench, beside the cottage door,  
 Made up of mud and stones and sodded o'er;  
 Where rustic taste at leisure trimly weaves  
 The rose and straggling woodbine to the eaves,—  
 And on the crowded spot that pales enclose  
 The white and scarlet daisy rears in rows,—  
 Training the trailing peas in bunches neat,  
 Perfuming evening with a luscious sweet,—  
 And sun-flowers planting for their gilded show,  
 That scale the window's lattice ere they blow,  
 Then sweet to habitants within the sheds,  
 Peep through the diamond pane their golden heads:  
 Or at the shop where ploughs and harrows lie,  
 Well-known to every child that passes by  
 From shining fragments littering on the floor;  
 And branded letter burnt upon the door,  
 Where meddling boys, the torment of the street,  
 In hard-burnt cinders ready weapons meet,  
 To pelt the martins 'neath the eaves at rest  
 That oft are wak'd to mourn a ruin'd nest;  
 Or sparrows, that delight their nests to leave,  
 In dust to flutter at the cool of eve.  
 For such-like scenes the gossip leaves her home,  
 And sons of labour light their pipes, and come  
 To talk of wages, whether high or low,  
 And mumble news that still as secrets go;  
 When, heedless then to all the rest may say,  
 The beckoning lover nods the maid away,  
 And at a distance many an hour they seem

In jealous whisperings o'er their pleasing theme;  
 While children round them teasing sports prolong,  
 To twirl the top, or bounce the hoop along,  
 Or shout across the street their "one catch all,"  
 Or prog the hous'd bee from the cotter's wall.

Now at the parish cottage wall'd with dirt,  
 Where all the cumber-grounds of life resort,  
 From the low door that bows two props between,  
 Some feeble tottering dame surveys the scene;  
 By them reminded of the long-lost day  
 When she herself was young, and went to play;  
 And, turning to the painful scenes again,  
 The mournful changes she has meet since then,  
 Her aching heart, the contrast moves so keen,  
 E'en sighs a wish that life had never been.  
 Still vainly sinning, while she strives to pray,  
 Half-smother'd discontent pursues its way  
 In whispering Providence, how blest she'd been  
 If life's last troubles she'd escap'd unseen;  
 If, ere want sneak'd for grudg'd support from pride,  
 She had but shar'd of childhood's joys, and died.  
 And as to talk some passing neighbours stand,  
 And shove their box within her tottering hand,  
 She turns from echoes of her younger years,  
 And nips the portion of her snuff with tears.



## RUSTIC FISHING

ON Sunday mornings, freed from hard employ,  
 How oft I mark the mischievous young boy  
 With anxious haste his pole and lines provide,  
 For make-shifts oft crook'd pins to thread were tied;  
 And delve his knife with wishes ever warm  
 In rotten dunghills for the grub and worm,  
 The harmless treachery of his hooks to bait;  
 Tracking the dewy grass with many a mate,  
 To seek the brook that down the meadows glides,  
 Where the grey willow shadows by its sides,  
 Where flag and reed in wild disorder spread,  
 And bending bulrush bows its taper head;  
 And, just above the surface of the floods,  
 Where water-lilies mount their snowy buds,  
 On whose broad swimming leaves of glossy green  
 The shining dragon-fly is often seen:  
 Where hanging thorns, with roots wash'd bare, appear,  
 That shield the moor-hen's nest from year to year;  
 While crowding osiers mingling wild among  
 Prove snug asylums to her brood when young,  
 Who, when surpris'd by foes approaching near,  
 Plunge 'neath the weeping boughs and disappear.  
 There far from terrors that the parson brings,  
 Or church bell hearing when its summons rings,  
 Half hid in meadow-sweet and keck's high flowers,  
 In lonely sport they spend the Sunday hours.  
 Though ill supplied for fishing seem the brook,  
 That breaks the mead in many a stinted crook,  
 Oft choak'd in weeds, and foil'd to find a road,  
 The choice retirement of the snake and toad,  
 Then lost in shallows dimpling restlessly,  
 In fluttering struggles murmuring to be free,—  
 O'er gravel stones its depth can scarcely hide  
 It runs remnant of its broken tide,  
 Till, seemly weary of each choak'd control,  
 It rests collected in some gulled hole  
 Scoop'd by the sudden floods when winter's snow  
 Melts in confusion by a hasty thaw;  
 There bent in hopeful musings on the brink

They watch their floating corks that seldom sink,  
 Save when a wary roach or silver bream  
 Nibbles the worm as passing up the stream,  
 Just urging expectation's hopes to stay  
 To view the dodging cork, then slink away;  
 Still hopes keep burning with untir'd delight,  
 Still wobbling curves keep wavering like a bite:  
 If but the breezy wind their floats should spring,  
 And move the water with a troubling ring,  
 A captive fish still fills the anxious eyes  
 And willow-wicks lie ready for the prize;  
 Till evening gales awaken damp and chill,  
 And nip the hopes that morning suns instil;  
 And resting flies have tired their gauzy wing,  
 Nor longer tempt the watching fish to spring,  
 Who at the worm no nibbles more repeat,  
 But lunge from night in sheltering flag-retreat.  
 Then disappointed in their day's employ,  
 They seek amusement in a feebler joy.  
 Short is the sigh for fancies prov'd untrue:  
 With humbler hopes still pleasure they pursue  
 Where the rude oak-bridge scales the narrow pass  
 Half hid in rustling reeds and scrambling grass,  
 Or stepping stones stride o'er the narrow sloughs  
 Which maidens daily cross to milk their cows;  
 There they in artless glee for minnows run,  
 And wade and dabble past the setting sun;  
 Chasing the struttle o'er the shallow tide,  
 And flat stones turning up where gudgeons hide.  
 All former hopes their ill success delay'd,  
 In this new change they fancy well repaid.  
 And thus they wade, and chatter o'er their joys  
 Till night, unlook'd-for, young success destroys,  
 Drives home the sons of solitude and streams,  
 And stops uncloy'd hope's ever-fresh'ning dreams.  
 They then, like school-boys that at truant play,  
 In gloomy fear lounge on their homeward way,  
 And inly tremble, as they gain the town,  
 Where chastisement awaits with many a frown,  
 And hazel twigs, in readiness prepar'd,  
 For their long absence brings a meet reward.

## JUNE

NOW Summer is in flower, and Nature's hum  
 Is never silent round her bounteous bloom;  
 Insects, as small as dust, have never done  
 With glitt'ring dance, and reeling in the sun;  
 And green wood-fly, and blossom-haunting bee,  
 Are never weary of their melody.  
 Round field and hedge, flowers in full glory twine,  
 Large bind-weed bells, wild hop, and streak'd woodbine,  
 That lift athirst their slender throated flowers,  
 Agape for dew-fall, and for honey showers;  
 These o'er each bush in sweet disorder run,  
 And spread their wild hues to the sultry sun.  
 The mottled spider, at eve's leisure, weaves  
 His webs of silken lace on twigs and leaves,  
 Which ev'ry morning meet the poet's eye,  
 Like fairies' dew-wet dresses hung to dry.  
 The wheat swells into ear, and hides below  
 The May-month wild flowers and their gaudy show,  
 Leaving, a school-boy's height, in snugger rest,  
 The leveret's seat, and lark, and partridge nest.  
 The mowers now bend o'er the beaded grass,  
 Where oft the gipsy's hungry journeying ass  
 Will turn his wishes from the meadow paths,  
 List'ning the rustle of the falling swaths.  
 The ploughman sweats along the fallow vales  
 And down the sun-crack'd furrow slowly trails;  
 Oft seeking, when athirst, the brook's supply,  
 Where, brushing eagerly the bushes by  
 For coolest water, he disturbs the rest  
 Of ring-dove, brooding o'er its idle nest.  
 The shepherd's leisure hours are over now;  
 No more he loiters 'neath the hedge-row bough,  
 On shadow-pillowed banks and lolling stile;  
 The wilds must lose their summer friend awhile.  
 With whistle, barking dogs, and chiding scold,  
 He drives the bleating sheep from fallow fold  
 To wash-pools, where the willow shadows lean,  
 Dashing them in, their stained coats to clean,  
 Then, on the sunny sward, when dry again,

He brings them homeward to the clipping pen,  
 Of hurdles, form'd where elm or sycamore  
 Shut out the sun—or to some threshing-floor.  
 There with the scraps of songs, and laugh, and tale,  
 He lightens annual toil, while merry ale  
 Goes round, and glads some old man's heart to praise  
 The threadbare customs of his early days:  
 How the high bowl was in the middle set  
 At breakfast time, when clippers yearly met,  
 Fill'd full of furrnety, where dainty swum  
 The streaking sugar and the spotting plum.  
 The maids could never to the table bring  
 The bowl, without one rising from the ring  
 To lend a hand; who, if 'twere ta'en amiss,  
 Would sell his kindness for a stolen kiss.  
 The large stone pitcher in its homely trim  
 And clouded pint-horn with its copper rim,  
 Were there; from which were drunk, with spirits high  
 Healths of the best the cellar could supply;  
 While sung the ancient swains, in uncouth rhymes,  
 Songs that were pictures of the good old times.  
 Thus will the old man ancient ways bewail,  
 Till toiling shears gain ground upon the tale,  
 And break it off,—for now the timid sheep,  
 His fleece shorn off, starts with a fearful leap,  
 Shaking his naked skin with wond'ring joys,  
 While others are brought in by sturdy boys.  
 Though fashion's haughty frown hath thrown aside  
 Half the old forms simplicity supplied,  
 Yet there are some pride's winter deigns to spare,  
 Left like green ivy when the trees are bare.  
 And now, when shearing of the flocks is done  
 Some ancient customs, mix'd with harmless fun,  
 Crown the swain's merry toils. The timid maid,  
 Pleased to be praised, and yet of praise afraid,  
 Seeks the best flowers; not those of woods and fields,  
 But such as every farmer's garden yields—  
 Fine cabbage-roses, painted like her face;  
 The shining pansy, trimm'd with golden lace;  
 The tall topp'd larkheels, feather'd thick with flowers;  
 The woodbine, climbing o'er the door in bowers;  
 The London tufts, of many a mottled hue;  
 The pale pink pea, and monkshood darkly blue;  
 The white and purple gilliflowers, that stay

Ling'ring, in blossom, summer half away;  
 The single blood-walls, of a luscious smell,  
 Old-fashion'd flowers which housewives love so well;  
 The columbine, stone-blue, or deep night-brown,  
 Their honeycomb-like blossoms hanging down,  
 Each cottage-garden's fond adopted child,  
 Though heaths still claim them, where they yet grow wild;  
 With marjoram knots, sweet-brier, and ribbon-grass,  
 And lavender, the choice of ev'ry lass,  
 And sprigs of lad's-love—all familiar names,  
 Which every garden through the village claims.  
 These the maid gathers with a coy delight,  
 And ties them up, in readiness for night;  
 Then gives to ev'ry swain, 'tween love and shame,  
 Her "clipping-posies" as his yearly claim.  
 He rises, to obtain the custom'd kiss:—  
 With stifled smiles, half hankering after bliss,  
 She shrinks away, and blushing, calls it rude;  
 Yet turns to smile, and hopes to be pursued;  
 While one, to whom the hint may be applied,  
 Follows to gain it, and is not denied.  
 The rest the loud laugh raise, to make it known,—  
 She blushes silent, and will not disown!  
 Thus ale, and song, and healths, and merry ways,  
 Keep up a shadow still of former days;  
 But the old beechen bowl, that once supplied  
 The feast of furrnety, is thrown aside;  
 And the old freedom that was living then,  
 When masters made them merry with their men;  
 When all their coats alike were russet brown,  
 And his rude speech was vulgar as their own—  
 All this is past, and soon will pass away  
 The time-torn remnant of the holiday.

## DECEMBER

GLAD Christmas comes, and every hearth  
 Makes room to give him welcome now,  
 E'en want will dry its tears in mirth,  
 And crown him with a holly bough;  
 Though tramping 'neath a winter sky,  
 O'er snowy paths and rimy stiles,  
 The housewife sets her spinning by  
 To bid him welcome with her smiles.

Each house is swept the day before,  
 And windows stuck with evergreens,  
 The snow is besom'd from the door,  
 And comfort crowns the cottage scenes.  
 Gilt holly, with its thorny pricks,  
 And yew and box, with berries small,  
 These deck the unused candlesticks,  
 And pictures hanging by the wall.

Neighbours resume their annual cheer,  
 Wishing, with smiles and spirits high,  
 Glad Christmas and a happy year,  
 To every morning passer-by;  
 Milkmaids their Christmas journeys go,  
 Accompanied with favour'd swain;  
 And children pace the crumping snow  
 To taste their granny's cake again.

The shepherd, now no more afraid,  
 Since custom doth the chance bestow,  
 Starts up to kiss the giggling maid  
 Beneath the branch of mistletoe  
 That 'neath each cottage beam is seen,  
 With pearl-like berries shining gay;  
 The shadow still of what hath been,  
 Which fashion yearly fades away.

The singing wates, a merry throng,  
 At early morn, with simple skill,  
 Yet imitate the angel's song,  
 And chant their Christmas ditty still;  
 And 'mid the storm that dies and swells

By fits—in hummings softly steals  
 The music of the village bells,  
 Ringing round their merry peals.

When this is past, a merry crew,  
 Bedeck'd in masks and ribbons gay,  
 The "Morris-dance," their sports renew,  
 And act their winter evening play.  
 The clown turn'd king, for penny-praise,  
 Storms with the actor's strut and swell;  
 And Harlequin, a laugh to raise,  
 Wears his hunch-back and tinkling bell.

And oft for pence and spicy ale,  
 With winter nosegays pinn'd before,  
 The wassail-singer tells her tale,  
 And draws her Christmas carols o'er.  
 While 'prentice boy, with ruddy face,  
 And rime-bepowder'd, dancing locks,  
 From door to door with happy pace,  
 Runs round to claim his "Christmas box."

The block upon the fire is put,  
 To sanction custom's old desires;  
 And many a fagot's bands are cut,  
 For the old farmers' Christmas fires;  
 Where loud-tongued Gladness joins the throng,  
 And Winter meets the warmth of May,  
 Till feeling soon the heat too strong,  
 He rubs his shins, and draws away.

While snows the window-panes bedim,  
 The fire curls up a sunny charm,  
 Where, creaming o'er the pitcher's rim,  
 The flowering ale is set to warm;  
 Mirth, full of joy as summer bees,  
 Sits there, its pleasures to impart  
 And children, 'tween their parent's knees,  
 Sing scraps of carols o'er by heart.

And some, to view the winter weathers,  
 Climb up the window-seat with glee.  
 Likening the snow to falling feathers,  
 In Fancy's infant ecstasy;  
 Laughing, with superstitious love,

O'er visions wild that youth supplies,  
Of people pulling geese above,  
And keeping Christmas in the skies.

As tho' the homestead trees were drest,  
In lieu of snow, with dancing leaves;  
As tho' the sun-dried martin's nest,  
Instead of i'cles hung the eaves;  
The children hail the happy day—  
As if the snow were April's grass,  
And pleas'd, as 'neath the warmth of May,  
Sport o'er the water froze to glass.

Thou day of happy sound and mirth,  
That long with childish memory stays,  
How blest around the cottage hearth  
I met thee in my younger days!  
Harping, with rapture's dreaming joys,  
On presents which thy coming found,  
The welcome sight of little toys,  
The Christmas gifts of cousins round.

The wooden horse with arching head,  
Drawn upon wheels around the room;  
The gilded coach of gingerbread,  
And many-colour'd sugar plum;  
Gilt cover'd books for pictures sought,  
Or stories childhood loves to tell,  
With many an urgent promise bought,  
To get to-morrow's lesson well.

And many a thing, a minute's sport,  
Left broken on the sanded floor,  
When we would leave our play, and court  
Our parent's promises for more.  
Tho' manhood bids such raptures die,  
And throws such toys aside as vain,  
Yet memory loves to turn her eye,  
And count past pleasures o'er again.

Around the glowing hearth at night,  
The harmless laugh and winter tale  
Go round, while parting friends delight  
To toast each other o'er their ale;  
The cotter oft with quiet zeal



Will musing o'er his Bible lean;  
While in the dark the lovers steal  
To kiss and toy behind the screen.

Old customs! Oh! I love the sound:  
However simple they may be:  
Whate'er with time have sanction found,  
Is welcome, and is dear to me.  
Pride grows above simplicity,  
And spurns them from her haughty mind,  
And soon the poet's song will be  
The only refuge they can find.

## THE APPROACH OF SPRING

NOW once again, thou lovely Spring,  
Thy sight the day beguiles;  
For fresher greens the fairy ring,  
The daisy brighter smiles:  
The winds, that late with chiding voice  
Would fain thy stay prolong,  
Relent, while little birds rejoice,  
And mingle into song.

Undaunted maiden, thou shalt find  
Thy home in gleaming woods,  
Thy mantle in the southern wind,  
Thy wreath in swelling buds:  
And may thy mantle wrap thee round,  
And hopes still warm and thrive,  
And dews with every morn be found  
To keep thy wreath alive.

May coming suns, that tempt thy flowers,  
Smile on as they begin;  
And gentle be succeeding hours  
As those that bring thee in;  
Full lovely are thy dappled skies,  
Pearl'd round with promised showers,  
And sweet thy blossoms round thee rise  
To meet the sunny hours.

The primrose bud, thy early pledge,  
Sprouts 'neath each woodland tree,  
And violets under every hedge  
Prepare a seat for thee:  
As maids just meeting woman's bloom  
Feel love's delicious strife,  
So Nature warms to find thee come,  
And kindles into life.

Through hedge-row leaves, in drifted heaps  
Left by the stormy blast,  
The little hopeful blossom peeps,  
And tells of winter past:  
A few leaves flutter from the woods,

That hung the season through,  
 Leaving their place for swelling buds  
 To spread their leaves anew.

'Mong withered grass upon the plain,  
 That lent the blast a voice,  
 The tender green appears again,  
 And creeping things rejoice;  
 Each warm bank shines with early flowers,  
 Where oft a lonely bee  
 Drones, venturing on in sunny hours,  
 Its humming song to thee.

The birds are busy on the wing,  
 The fish play in the stream;  
 And many a hasty curdled ring  
 Crimps round the leaping bream;  
 The buds unfold to leaves apace,  
 Along the hedge-row bowers,  
 And many a child with rosy face  
 Is seeking after flowers.

The soft wind fans the violet blue,  
 Its opening sweets to share,  
 And infant breezes, waked anew,  
 Play in the maidens' hair—  
 Maidens that freshen with thy flowers,  
 To charm the gentle swain,  
 And dally, in their milking hours,  
 With lovers' vows again.

Bright dews illumine the grassy plain,  
 Sweet messengers of morn,  
 And drops hang glistening after rain  
 Like gems on every thorn;  
 What though the grass is moist and rank  
 Where dews fall from the tree,  
 The creeping sun smiles on the bank  
 And warms a seat for thee.

The eager morning earlier wakes  
 To glad thy fond desires,  
 And oft its rosy bed forsakes  
 Ere night's pale moon retires;  
 Sweet shalt thou feel the morning sun

To warm thy dewy breast,  
And chase the chill mist's purple dun  
That lingers in the west.

Her dresses Nature gladly trims,  
To hail thee as her queen,  
And soon shall fold thy lovely limbs  
In modest garb of green:  
Each day shall like a lover come  
Some gifts with thee to share,  
And swarms of flowers shall quickly bloom  
To dress thy golden hair.

All life and beauty warm and smile  
Thy lovely face to see,  
And many a hopeful hour beguile  
In seeking joys with thee;  
The sweetest hours that ever come  
Are those which thou dost bring,  
And sure the fairest flowers that bloom  
Are partners of the Spring.

I've met the Winter's biting breath  
In nature's wild retreat,  
When Silence listens as in death,  
And thought its wildness sweet;  
And I have loved the Winter's calm  
When frost has left the plain,  
When suns that morning waken'd warm  
Left eve to freeze again.

I've heard in Autumn's early reign  
Her first, her gentlest song;  
I've mark'd her change o'er wood and plain,  
And wish'd her reign were long;  
Till winds like armies, gather'd round,  
And stripp'd her colour'd woods,  
And storms urged on, with thunder-sound  
Their desolating floods.

And Summer's endless stretch of green,  
Spread over plain and tree,  
Sweet solace to my eyes has been,  
As it to all must be;  
Long I have stood his burning heat,

And breathed the sultry day,  
And walk'd and toil'd with weary feet,  
Nor wish'd his pride away.

But oft I've watch'd the greening buds  
Brush'd by the linnet's wing,  
When, like a child, the gladden'd woods  
First lisp the voice of Spring;  
When flowers, like dreams, peep every day,  
Reminding what they bring;  
I've watch'd them, and am warn'd to pay  
A preference to Spring.

## TO THE RURAL MUSE

MUSE of the Fields! oft have I said farewell  
 To thee, my boon companion, loved so long,  
 And hung thy sweet harp in the bushy dell,  
 For abler hands to wake an abler song.  
 Much did I fear my homage did thee wrong:  
 Yet, loth to leave, as oft I turned again;  
 And to its wires mine idle hands would cling,  
 Torturing it into song. It may be vain;  
 Yet still I try, ere Fancy droops her wing,  
 And hopeless Silence comes to numb its ev'ry string.

Muse of the Pasture Brooks! on thy calm sea  
 Of poesy I've sailed; and though the will  
 To speed were greater than my prowess be,  
 I've ventur'd with much fear of usage ill,  
 Yet more of joy. Though timid be my skill,  
 As not to dare the depths of mightier streams;  
 Yet rocks abide in shallow ways, and I  
 Have much of fear to mingle with my dreams.  
 Yet, lovely Muse, I still believe thee by,  
 And think I see thee smile, and so forget I sigh.

Muse of the Cottage Hearth! oft did I tell  
 My hopes to thee, nor feared to plead in vain;  
 But felt around my heart thy witching spell,  
 That bade me as thy worshipper remain:  
 I did so, and still worship. Oh! again  
 Smile on my offerings, and so keep them green!  
 Bedeck my fancies like the clouds of even,  
 Mingling all hues which thou from heaven dost glean!  
 To me a portion of thy power be given,  
 If theme so mean as mine may merit aught of heaven.

For thee in youth I culled the simple flower,  
 That on thy bosom gained a sweeter hue,  
 And took thy hand along life's sunny hour,  
 Meeting the sweetest joys that ever grew:  
 More friends were needless, and my foes were few.  
 Though freedom then be deemed as rudeness now.  
 And what once won thy praise now meets disdain,  
 Yet the last wreath I braided for thy brow,

Thy smiles did so commend, it made me vain  
To weave another one, and hope for praise again.

With thee the spirit of departed years  
Wakes that sweet voice which time hath rendered dumb;  
And freshens, like to spring, loves, hopes, and fears,  
That in my bosom found an early home,  
Wooing the heart to ecstasy.—I come  
To thee, when sick of care, of joy bereft,  
Seeking the pleasures that are found in bloom.  
O happy hopes, that Time hath only left  
Around the haunts where thou didst erst sojourn!  
Then smile, sweet Muse, again, and welcome my return.

With thee the raptures of life's early day  
Appear, and all that pleased me when a boy.  
Though pains and cares have torn the best away,  
And winter creeps between us to destroy,  
Do thou commend, the recompence is joy:  
The tempest of the heart shall soon be calm.  
Though sterner Truth against my dreams rebel,  
Hope feels success; and all my spirits warm,  
To strike with happier mood thy simple shell,  
And seize thy mantle's hem—O! say not fare-thee-well.

Still, sweet Enchantress! youth's strong feelings move,  
That from thy presence their existence took:—  
The innocent idolatry and love,  
Paying thee worship in each secret nook,  
That fancied friends in tree, and flower, and brook,  
Shaped clouds to angels and beheld them smile,  
And heard commending tongues in ev'ry wind.  
Life's grosser fancies did these dreams defile,  
Yet not entirely root them from the mind;  
I think I hear them still, and often look behind.

Aye, I have heard thee in the summer wind,  
As if commending what I sung to thee;  
Aye, I have seen thee on a cloud reclined,  
Kindling my fancies into poesy;  
I saw thee smile, and took the praise to me.  
In beauties, past all beauty, thou wert drest;  
I thought the very clouds around thee knelt:  
I saw the sun to linger in the west,

Paying thee worship; and as eve did melt  
In dews, they seemed thy tears for sorrows I had felt.

Sweeter than flowers on beauty's bosom hung,  
Sweeter than dreams of happiness above,  
Sweeter than themes by lips of beauty sung,  
Are the young fancies of a poet's love.  
When round his thoughts thy trancing visions move.  
In floating melody no notes may sound,  
The world is all forgot and past his care,  
While on thy harp thy fingers lightly bound,  
As winning him its melody to share;  
And heaven itself, with him, where is it then but there?

E'en now my heart leaps out from grief, and all  
The gloom thrown round by Care's o'ershading wing;  
E'en now those sunny visions to recall,  
Like to a bird I quit dull earth and sing:  
Life's tempest swoon to calms on every string.  
Ah! sweet Enchantress, if I do but dream,  
If earthly visions have been only mine,  
My weakness in thy service woos esteem,  
And proves my truth as almost worthy thine:  
Surely true worship makes the meanest theme divine.

And still, warm courage, calming many a fear,  
Heartens my hand once more thy harp to try  
To join the anthem of the minstrel year:  
For summer's music in thy praise is high;  
The very winds about thy mantle sigh  
Love-melodies; thy minstrel bards to be,  
Insects and birds, exerting all their skill,  
Float in continued song for mastery,  
While in thy haunts loud leaps the little rill,  
To kiss thy mantle's hem; and how can I be still?

There still I see thee fold thy mantle grey,  
To trace the dewy lawn at morn and night;  
And there I see thee, in the sunny day,  
Withdraw thy veil and shine confest in light;  
Burning my fancies with a wild delight,  
To win a portion of thy blushing fame.  
Though haughty Fancy treat thy power as small,  
And Fashion thy simplicity disclaim,



Should but a portion of thy mantle fall  
O'er him who woos thy love, 'tis recompense for all.

Not with the mighty to thy shrine I come,  
In anxious sighs, or self applauding mirth,  
On Mount Parnassus as thine heir to roam:  
I dare not credit that immortal birth;  
But mingling with the lesser ones on earth—  
Like as the little lark from off its nest,  
Beside the mossy hill awakes in glee,  
To seek the morning's throne a merry guest—  
So do I seek thy shrine, if that may be,  
To win by new attempts another smile from thee.

If without thee 'neath storms, and clouds, and wind,  
I've roam'd the wood, and field, and meadow lea;  
And found no flowers but what the vulgar find,  
Nor met one breath of living poesy,  
Among such charms where inspirations be;  
The fault is mine—and I must bear the lot  
Of missing praise to merit thy disdain.  
To feel each idle plea though urged, forgot;  
I can but sigh—though foolish to complain  
O'er hopes so fair begun, to find them end so vain.

Then will it prove presumption thus to dare  
To add fresh failings to each faulty song,  
Urging thy blessings on an idle prayer,  
To sanction silly themes: it will be wrong  
For one so lowly to be heard so long.  
Yet, sweet Enchantress, yet a little while  
Forego impatience, and from frowns refrain;  
The strong are ne'er debarr'd thy cheering smile,  
Why should the weak, who need them most, complain  
Alone, in solitude, soliciting in vain?

But if my efforts on thy harp prove true,  
Which bashful youth at first so feared to try;  
If aught of nature be in sounds I drew  
From hope's young dreams, and doubt's uncertainty,  
To these late offerings, not without their sigh;  
Then on thine altar shall these themes be laid,  
And past the deeds of graven brass remain,  
Filling a space in time that shall not fade;

And if it be not so—avert disdain,  
Till dust shall feel no sting, nor know it toil'd in vain.

## SUMMER IMAGES

NOW swarthy Summer, by rude health embrowned,  
 Precedence takes of rosy fingered Spring;  
 And laughing Joy, with wild flowers prank'd, and crown'd,  
 A wild and giddy thing,  
 And Health robust, from every care unbound,  
 Come on the zephyr's wing,  
 And cheer the toiling clown.

Happy as holiday-enjoying face,  
 Loud tongued, and "merry as a marriage bell,"  
 Thy lightsome step sheds joy in every place;  
 And where the troubled dwell,  
 Thy witching charms wean them of half their cares:  
 And from thy sunny spell,  
 They greet joy unawares.

Then with thy sultry locks all loose and rude,  
 And mantle laced with gems of garish light,  
 Come as of wont; for I would fain intrude,  
 And in the world's despite,  
 Share the rude wealth that thy own heart beguiles;  
 If haply so I might  
 Win pleasure from thy smiles.

Me not the noise of brawling pleasure cheers,  
 In nightly revels or in city streets;  
 But joys which soothe, and not distract the ears,  
 That one at leisure meets  
 In the green woods, and meadows summer-shorn,  
 Or fields, where bee-fly greets  
 The ear with mellow horn.

The green-swathed grasshopper, on treble pipe,  
 Sings there, and dances, in mad-hearted pranks;  
 The bees go courting every flower that's ripe,  
 On baulks and sunny banks;  
 And droning dragon-fly, on rude bassoon,  
 Attempts to give God thanks  
 In no discordant tune.

The speckled thrush, by self-delight embued,  
 There sings unto himself for joy's amends,  
 And drinks the honey dew of solitude.  
 There Happiness attends  
 With inbred Joy until the heart o'erflow,  
 Of which the world's rude friends.  
 Nought heeding, nothing know.

There the gay river, laughing as it goes,  
 Plashes with easy wave its flaggy sides,  
 And to the calm of heart, in calmness shows  
 What pleasure there abides,  
 To trace its sedgy banks, from trouble free:  
 Spots, Solitude provides  
 To muse, and happy be.

There ruminating 'neath some pleasant bush,  
 On sweet silk grass I stretch me at mine ease,  
 Where I can pillow on the yielding rush;  
 And, acting as I please,  
 Drop into pleasant dreams; or musing lie,  
 Mark the wind-shaken trees,  
 And cloud-betravelled sky.

There think me how some barter joy for care,  
 And waste life's summer-health in riot rude,  
 Of nature, nor of nature's sweets aware.  
 When passions vain intrude,  
 These, by calm musings, softened are and still;  
 And the heart's better mood  
 Feels sick of doing ill.

There I can live, and at my leisure seek  
 Joys far from cold restraints—not fearing pride  
 Free as the winds, that breathe upon my cheek  
 Rude health, so long denied.  
 Here poor Integrity can sit at ease,  
 And list self-satisfied  
 The song of honey bees;

The green lane now I traverse, where it goes  
 Nought guessing, till some sudden turn espies  
 Rude batter'd finger post, that stooping shows  
 Where the snug mystery lies;  
 And then a mossy spire, with ivy crown,

Cheers up the short surprise,  
And shows a peeping town.

I see the wild flowers, in their summer morn  
Of beauty, feeding on joy's luscious hours;  
The gay convolvulus, wreathing round the thorn,  
Agape for honey showers;  
And slender kingcup, burnished with the dew  
Of morning's early hours,  
Like gold minted new.

And mark by rustic bridge, o'er shallow stream,  
Cow-tending boy, to toil unreconciled,  
Absorbed as in some vagrant summer dream;  
Who now, in gestures wild,  
Starts dancing to his shadow on the wall,  
Feeling self-gratified,  
Nor fearing human thrall.

Or thread the sunny valley laced with streams,  
Or forests rude, and the o'ershadow'd brims  
Of simple pond, where idle shepherd dreams,  
Stretching his listless limbs;  
Or trace hay-scented meadows, smooth and long  
Where joy's wild impulse swims  
In one continued song.

I love at early morn, from new mown swath,  
To see the startled frog his route pursue;  
To mark while, leaping o'er the dripping path,  
His bright sides scatter dew,  
The early lark that, from its bustle flies,  
To hail his matin new;  
And watch him to the skies.

To note on hedgerow baulks, in moisture sprent,  
The jetty snail creep from the mossy thorn,  
With earnest heed, and tremulous intent,  
Frail brother of the morn,  
That from the tiny bent's dew-misted leaves  
Withdraws his timid horn,  
And fearful vision weaves.

Or swallow heed on smoke-tanned chimney top,  
Wont to be first unsealing Morning's eye,  
Ere yet the bee hath gleaned one wayward drop

Of honey on his thigh;  
 To see him seek morn's airy couch to sing,  
 Until the golden sky  
 Bepaint his russet wing.

Or sauntering boy by tanning corn to spy,  
 With clapping noise to startle birds away,  
 And hear him bawl to every passer by  
 To know the hour of day;  
 While the uncradled breezes, fresh and strong,  
 With waking blossoms play,  
 And breathe Æolian song.

I love the south-west wind, or low or loud,  
 And not the less when sudden drops of rain  
 Moisten my glowing cheek from ebon cloud,  
 Threatening soft showers again,  
 That over lands new ploughed and meadow grounds,  
 Summer's sweet breath unchain,  
 And wake harmonious sounds.

Rich music breathes in Summer's every sound;  
 And in her harmony of varied greens,  
 Woods, meadows, hedge-rows, corn-fields, all around  
 Much beauty intervenes;  
 Filling with harmony the ear and eye;  
 While o'er the mingling scenes  
 Far spreads the laughing sky.

See, how the wind-enamoured aspin leaves  
 Turn up their silver lining to the sun!  
 And hark! the rustling noise, that oft deceives  
 And makes the sheep-boy run;  
 The sound so mimics fast-approaching showers,  
 He thinks the rain's begun,  
 And hastes to sheltering bowers.

But now the evening curdles dank and grey,  
 Changing her watchet hue for sombre weed;  
 And moping owls, to close the lids of day,  
 On drowsy wing proceed;  
 While chickering crickets, tremulous and long,  
 Light's farewell inly heed,  
 And give it parting song.

The pranking bat its flighty circlet makes;  
 The glow-worm burnishes its lamp anew;  
 O'er meadows dew-besprent, the beetle wakes  
 Inquiries ever new,  
 Teazing each passing ear with murmurs vain,  
 As wanting to pursue  
 His homeward path again.

Hark! 'tis the melody of distant bells  
 That on the wind with pleasing hum rebounds  
 By fitful starts, then musically swells  
 O'er the dim stilly grounds;  
 While on the meadow-bridge the pausing boy  
 Listens the mellow sounds,  
 And hums in vacant joy.

Now homeward-bound, the hedger bundles round  
 His evening faggot, and with every stride  
 His leathern doublet leaves a rustling sound,  
 Till silly sheep beside  
 His path start tremulous, and once again  
 Look back dissatisfied,  
 And scour the dewy plain.

How sweet the soothing calmness that distills  
 O'er the heart's every sense its opiate dews,  
 In meek-eyed moods and ever balmy trills!  
 That softens and subdues,  
 With gentle Quiet's bland and sober train,  
 Which dreamy eve renews  
 In many a mellow strain!

I love to walk the fields, they are to me  
 A legacy no evil can destroy;  
 They, like a spell, set every rapture free  
 That cheer'd me when a boy.  
 Play—pastime—all Time's blotting pen conceal'd,  
 Comes like a new-born joy,  
 To greet me in the field.

For Nature's objects ever harmonize  
 With emulous Taste, that vulgar deed annoys;  
 Which loves in pensive moods to sympathize,  
 And meet vibrating joys  
 O'er Nature's pleasing things; nor slighting, deems

Pastimes, the Muse employs,  
Vain and obtrusive themes.



## AUTUMN

SYREN of sullen moods and fading hues,  
 Yet haply not incapable of joy,  
 Sweet Autumn! I thee hail  
 With welcome all unfeigned;

And oft as morning from her lattice peeps  
 To beckon up the sun, I seek with thee  
 To drink the dewy breath  
 Of fields left fragrant then,

In solitudes, where no frequented paths  
 But what thy own foot makes betray thine home,  
 Stealing obtrusive there  
 To meditate thy end:

By overshadowed ponds, in woody nooks,  
 With ramping mallards lined, and crowding sedge,  
 Which woo the winds to play,  
 And with them dance for joy;

And meadow pools, torn wide by lawless floods,  
 Where water-lilies spread their oily leaves,  
 On which, as wont, the fly  
 Oft battens in the sun;

Where leans the mossy willow half way o'er,  
 On which the shepherd crawls astride to throw  
 His angle, clear of weeds  
 That crowd the water's brim;

Or crispy hills, and hollows scant of sward,  
 Where, step by step, the patient lonely boy  
 Hath cut rude flights of stairs  
 To climb their steepy sides;

Then track along their feet, grown hoarse with noise,  
 The crawling brook, that ekes its weary speed,  
 And struggles through the weeds  
 With faint and sullen brawl.—

These haunts I long have favoured, more as now  
 With thee thus wandering, moralizing on;

Stealing glad thoughts from grief,  
And happy, though I sigh.

Sweet Vision, with the wild dishevelled hair,  
And raiment shadowy of each wind's embrace,  
Fain would I win thine harp  
To one accordant theme.

Now not inaptly craved, communing thus,  
Beneath the curdled arms of this stunt oak,  
While pillowed on the grass,  
We fondly ruminate

O'er the disordered scenes of woods and fields,  
Ploughed lands, thin travelled with half-hungry sheep,  
Pastures tracked deep with cows,  
Where small birds seek for seed:

Marking the cow-boy that so merry trills  
His frequent, unpremeditated song,  
Wooing the winds to pause,  
Till echo brawls again;

As on with plashy step, and clouted shoon,  
He roves, half indolent and self-employed,  
To rob the little birds  
Of hips and pendant haws,

And sloes, dim covered as with dewy veils,  
And rambling bramble-berries, pulpy and sweet,  
Arching their prickly trails  
Half o'er the narrow lane:

Noting the hedger front with stubborn face  
The dank bleak wind, that whistles thinly by  
His leathern garb, thorn proof,  
And cheek red hot with toil;

While o'er the pleachy lands of mellow brown,  
The mower's stubbling scythe clogs to his foot  
The ever ekeing whisp,  
With sharp and sudden jerk,

Till into formal rows the russet shocks  
Crowd the blank field to thatch time-weather'd barns,  
And hovels rude repair,  
Stript by disturbing winds.

See! from the rustling scythe the haunted hare  
 Scampers circuitous, with startled ears  
 Prickt up, then squat, as by  
 She brushes to the woods,

Where reeded grass, breast-high and undisturbed,  
 Forms pleasant clumps, through which the soothing winds  
 Soften her rigid fears,  
 And lull to calm repose.

Wild Sorceress! me thy restless mood delights,  
 More than the stir of summer's crowded scenes,  
 Where, jostled in the din,  
 Joy palled my ear with song;

Heart-sickening for the silence, that is here  
 Not broken inharmoniously, as now  
 That lone and vagrant bee  
 Booms faint with weary chime.

Now filtering winds thin winnow through the woods  
 In tremulous noise, that bids, at every breath,  
 Some sickly cankered leaf  
 Let go its hold, and die.

And now the bickering storm, with sudden start,  
 In flirting fits of anger carps aloud,  
 Thee urging to thine end,  
 Sore wept by troubled skies.

And yet, sublime in grief! thy thoughts delight  
 To show me visions of most gorgeous dyes,  
 Haply forgetting now  
 They but prepare thy shroud;

Thy pencil dashing its excess of shades,  
 Improvident of waste, till every bough  
 Burns with thy mellow touch  
 Disorderly divine.

Soon must I view thee as a pleasant dream  
 Droop faintly, and so reckon for thine end,  
 As sad the winds sink low  
 In dirges for their queen;

While in the moment of their weary pause,  
 To cheer thy bankrupt pomp, the willing lark

Starts from his shielding clod,  
Snatching sweet scraps of song.

Thy life is waning now, and Silence tries  
To mourn, but meets no sympathy in sounds,  
As stooping low she bends,  
Forming with leaves thy grave;

To sleep inglorious there mid tangled woods,  
Till parched-lipped Summer pines in drought away  
Then from thine ivy'd trance  
Awake to glories new.

## THE VANITIES OF LIFE

WHAT are life's joys and gains,  
 What pleasures crowd its ways,  
 That man should take such pains  
 To seek them all his days?  
 Sift this untoward strife  
 On which thy mind is bent—  
 See if this chaff of life  
 Be worth the trouble spent.

Is pride thy heart's desire?  
 Is power thy climbing aim?  
 Is love thy folly's fire?  
 Is wealth thy restless game?—  
 Pride, power, love, wealth, and all,  
 Time's touchstone shall destroy;  
 And, like base coin, prove all  
 Vain substitutes for joy.

Dost think thy pride exalts  
 Thyself in others' eyes,  
 And hides thy folly's faults,  
 Which reason will despise?  
 Dost strut, and turn, and stride,  
 Like walking weathercocks?  
 The shadow, by thy side,  
 Becomes thy ape, and mocks.

Dost think that power's disguise  
 Can make thee mighty seem?  
 It may in folly's eyes,  
 But not in worth's esteem.  
 When all that thou canst ask,  
 And all that she can give,  
 Is but a paltry mask,  
 Which tyrants wear and live.

Go, let thy fancies range,  
 And ramble where they may  
 View power in every change,  
 And what is its display?—  
 The country magistrate,

The lowest shade in power,  
 To rulers of the state?—  
 The meteors of an hour.

View all, and mark the end  
 Of every proud extreme,  
 Where flattery turns a friend,  
 And counterfeits esteem;  
 Where worth is aped in show,  
 That doth her name purloin—  
 As toys of golden glow,  
 Are sold for copper coin.

Ambition's haughty nod  
 With fancies may deceive—  
 Nay, tell thee thou'rt a god;  
 And wilt thou such believe?  
 Go, bid the seas be dry;  
 Go, hold earth like a ball;  
 Or throw thy fancies by,  
 For God can do it all.

Dost thou possess the dower  
 Of laws, to spare or kill?  
 Call it not heavenly power,  
 When but a tyrant's will.  
 Know what a god will do,  
 And know thyself a fool;  
 Nor tyrant-like pursue,  
 Where he alone should rule.

O put away thy pride,  
 Or be ashamed of power  
 That cannot turn aside  
 The breeze that waves a flower;  
 Or bid the clouds be still—  
 Though shadows, they can brave  
 Thy poor power-mocking will,  
 Then make not man a slave.

Dost think, when wealth is won,  
 Thy heart has its desire?  
 Hold ice up to the sun,  
 And wax before the fire;  
 Nor triumph o'er the reign

Which they so soon resign,  
In this world's ways they gain  
Insurance safe as thine.

Dost think life's peace secure  
In houses and in land?  
Go, read the fairy lure—  
To twist a cord of sand,  
Lodge stones upon the sky,  
Hold water in a sieve;  
Nor give such tales the lie,  
And still thine own believe.

Whoso with riches deals,  
And thinks peace bought and sold,  
Will find them slippery eels,  
That slide the firmest hold;  
Though sweet as sleep with health  
Thy lulling luck may be,  
Pride may o'erstride thy wealth,  
And check prosperity.

Dost think that beauty's power  
Life's sweetest pleasure gives?  
Go, pluck the summer flower,  
And see how long it lives:  
Behold the rays glide on  
Along the summer plain,  
'Ere thou canst say, "They're gone!"  
And measure beauty's reign.

Look on the brightest eye,  
Nor teach it to be proud,  
But view the clearest sky,  
And thou shalt find a cloud;  
Nor call each face you meet  
An angel's, 'cause it's fair,  
But look beneath your feet,  
And think of what they are.

Who thinks that love doth live  
In beauty's tempting show,  
Shall find his hopes misgive,  
And melt in reason's thaw;  
Who thinks that pleasure lies

In every fairy bower,  
 Shall oft, to his surprise,  
 Find poison in the flower.

Dost lawless passions grasp?—  
 Judge not thou deal'st in joy;  
 Its flowers but hide the asp,  
 Thy revels to destroy.  
 Who trusts a harlot's smile,  
 And by her wiles is led,  
 Plays with a sword the while,  
 Hung dropping o'er his head.

Dost doubt my warning song?—  
 Then doubt the sun gives light;  
 Doubt truth to teach the wrong,  
 And wrong alone as right;  
 And live as lives the knave,  
 Intrigue's deceiving guest;  
 Be tyrant or be slave,  
 As suits thy ends the best.

Or pause amid thy toils  
 For visions won and lost,  
 And count the fancied spoils,  
 If 'ere they quit the cost;  
 And if they still possess,  
 Thy mind as worthy things;  
 Plat straws with bedlam Bess,  
 And call them diamond rings.

Thy folly's past advice,  
 Thy heart's already won,  
 Thy fall's above all price,  
 So go and be undone:  
 For all who thus prefer  
 The seeming great for small,  
 Shall make wine vinegar,  
 And sweetest honey gall.

Would'st heed the truths I sing,  
 To profit wherewithal?  
 Clip Folly's wanton wing,  
 And keep her within call.  
 I've little else to give,



What thou canst easy try;  
The lesson how to live,  
Is but to learn to die.

## THOUGHTS IN A CHURCH-YARD

AH! happy spot, how still it seems  
 Where crowds of buried memories sleep;  
 How quiet Nature o'er them dreams,  
 'Tis but our troubled thoughts that weep.  
 Life's book shuts here—its page is lost  
 With them, and all its busy claims,  
 The poor are from its memory crost,  
 The rich leave nothing but their names.

There rest the weary from their toil;  
 There lie the troubled, free from care;  
 Who through the strife of life's turmoil  
 Sought rest, and only found it there.  
 With none to fear his scornful brow,  
 There sleeps the master with the slave;  
 And heedless of all titles now,  
 Repose the honoured and the brave.

There rest the miser and the heir,  
 Both careless who their wealth shall reap;  
 E'en love finds cure for heart-aches here,  
 And none enjoy a sounder sleep.  
 The fair one far from folly's freaks,  
 As quiet as her neighbour seems,  
 Unconscious now of rosy cheeks,  
 Without a rival in her dreams.

Strangers alike to joy and strife,  
 Heedless of all its past affairs.  
 They're blotted from the list of life,  
 And absent from its teasing cares.  
 Grief, joy, hope, fear, and all their crew  
 That haunt the memory's living mind,  
 Ceased, when they could no more pursue,  
 And left a painless blank behind.

Life's *ignis fatuus* light is gone,  
 No more to lead their hopes astray;  
 Care's poisoned cup is drain'd and done,  
 And all its follies past away.  
 The bill's made out, the reck'ning paid,

The book is cross'd, the business done;  
On them the last demand is made,  
And heaven's eternal peace is won.

## THE NIGHTINGALE'S NEST

UP this green woodland-ride let's softly rove,  
 And list the nightingale—she dwells just here.  
 Hush! let the wood-gate softly clap, for fear  
 The noise might drive her from her home of love;  
 For here I've heard her many a merry year—  
 At morn, at eve, nay, all the live-long day,  
 As though she lived on song. This very spot,  
 Just where that old-man's-beard all wildly trails  
 Rude arbours o'er the road, and stops the way—  
 And where that child its blue-bell flowers hath got,  
 Laughing and creeping through the mossy rails—  
 There have I hunted like a very boy,  
 Creeping on hands and knees through matted thorn  
 To find her nest, and see her feed her young.  
 And vainly did I many hours employ:  
 All seemed as hidden as a thought unborn.  
 And where those crimping fern-leaves ramp among  
 The hazel's under boughs, I've nestled down,  
 And watched her while she sung; and her renown  
 Hath made me marvel that so famed a bird  
 Should have no better dress than russet brown.  
 Her wings would tremble in her ecstasy,  
 And feathers stand on end, as 'twere with joy,  
 And mouth wide open to release her heart  
 Of its out-sobbing songs. The happiest part  
 Of summer's fame she shared, for so to me  
 Did happy fancies shapen her employ;  
 But if I touched a bush, or scarcely stirred,  
 All in a moment stopt. I watched in vain;  
 The timid bird had left the hazel bush,  
 And at a distance hid to sing again.  
 Lost in a wilderness of listening leaves,  
 Rich Ecstasy would pour its luscious strain,  
 Till envy spurred the emulating thrush  
 To start less wild and scarce inferior songs;  
 For while of half the year Care him bereaves,  
 To damp the ardour of his speckled breast;  
 The nightingale to summer's life belongs,  
 And naked trees, and winter's nipping wrongs,

Are strangers to her music and her rest.  
 Her joys are evergreen, her world is wide—  
 Hark! there she is as usual—let's be hush—  
 For in this black-thorn clump, if rightly guest,  
 Her curious house is hidden. Part aside  
 These hazel branches in a gentle way,  
 And stoop right cautious 'neath the rustling boughs,  
 For we will have another search to-day,  
 And hunt this fern-strewn thorn-clump round and round;  
 And where this reeded wood-grass idly bows,  
 We'll wade right through, it is a likely nook:  
 In such like spots, and often on the ground,  
 They'll build, where rude boys never think to look—  
 Aye, as I live! her secret nest is here,  
 Upon this white-thorn stump! I've searched about  
 For hours in vain. There! put that bramble by—  
 Nay, trample on its branches and get near.  
 How subtle is the bird! she started out,  
 And raised a plaintive note of danger nigh,  
 Ere we were past the brambles; and now, near  
 Her nest, she sudden stops—as choking fear,  
 That might betray her home. So even now  
 We'll leave it as we found it; safety's guard  
 Of pathless solitude shall keep it still.  
 See there; she's sitting on the old oak bough,  
 Mute in her fears; our presence doth retard  
 Her joys, and doubt turns every rapture chill.  
 Sing on, sweet bird! may no worse hap befall  
 Thy visions, than the fear that now deceives.  
 We will not plunder music of its dower,  
 Nor turn this spot of happiness to thrall;  
 For melody seems hid in every flower,  
 That blossoms near thy home. These harebells all  
 Seem bowing with the beautiful in song;  
 And gaping cuckoo-flowers, with spotted leaves,  
 Seems blushing of the singing it has heard.  
 How curious is the nest; no other bird  
 Uses such loose materials, or weaves  
 Its dwelling in such spots: dead open leaves  
 Are placed without, and velvet moss within,  
 And little scraps of grass, and, scant and spare,  
 What scarcely seem materials, down and hair;  
 For from men's haunts she nothing seems to win.  
 Yet Nature is the builder, and contrives

Homes for her children's comfort, even here;  
Where Solitude's disciples spend their lives  
Unseen, save when a wanderer passes near  
That loves such pleasant places. Deep adown,  
The nest is made a hermit's mossy cell.  
Snug lie her curious eggs in number five,  
Of deadened green, or rather olive brown;  
And the old prickly thorn-bush guards them well.  
So here we'll leave them, still unknown to wrong,  
As the old woodland's legacy of song.

## To P\*\*\*\*

FAIR was thy bloom, when first I met  
 Thy summer's maiden-blossom;  
 And thou art fair and lovely yet,  
 And dearer to my bosom.  
 O thou wert once a wilding flower,  
 All garden flowers excelling,  
 And still I bless the happy hour  
 That led me to thy dwelling.

Though nursed by field, and brook, and wood,  
 And wild in every feature,  
 Spring ne'er unsealed a fairer bud,  
 Nor found a blossom sweeter.  
 Of all the flowers the Spring hath met,  
 And it has met with many,  
 Thou art to me the fairest yet,  
 And loveliest, of any.

Though ripening summers round thee bring  
 Buds to thy swelling bosom,  
 That wait the cheering smiles of spring  
 To ripen into blossom;  
 These buds shall added blessings be,  
 To make our loves sincerer:  
 For as their flowers resemble thee,  
 They'll make thy memory dearer.

And though thy bloom shall pass away,  
 By winter overtaken,  
 Thoughts of the past will charms display,  
 And many joys awaken.  
 When time shall every sweet remove,  
 And blight thee on my bosom—  
 Let beauty fade—to me, my love,  
 Thou'lt ne'er be out of blossom!

## A WORLD FOR LOVE

OH, the world is all too rude for thee, with much ado and care;  
Oh, this world is but a rude world, and hurts a thing so fair;  
Was there a nook in which the world had never been to sear,  
That place would prove a paradise when thou and Love were near.

And there to pluck the blackberry, and there to reach the sloe,  
How joyously and happily would Love thy partner go;  
Then rest when weary on a bank, where not a grassy blade  
Had e'er been bent by Trouble's feet, and Love thy pillow made.

For Summer would be ever green, though sloes were in their prime,  
And Winter smile his frowns to Spring, in beauty's happy clime;  
And months would come, and months would go, and all in sunny mood,  
And everything inspired by thee grow beautifully good.

And there to make a cot unknown to any care and pain,  
And there to shut the door alone on singing wind and rain—  
Far, far away from all the world, more rude than rain or wind,  
Oh who could wish a sweeter home, or better place to find?

Than thus to love and live with thee, thou beautiful delight!  
Than thus to live and love with thee the summer day and night!  
The Earth itself, where thou hadst rest, would surely smile to see  
Herself grow Eden once again, possess of Love and thee.



## SONG

O THE voice of woman's love!  
What a bosom-stirring word!  
Was a sweeter ever uttered,  
Was a dearer ever heard,  
Than woman's love?

How it melts upon the ear,  
How it nourishes the heart!  
Cold, ah! cold, must his appear,  
Who hath never shared a part  
Of woman's love.

'Tis pleasure to the mourner,  
'Tis freedom to the thrall;  
The pilgrimage of many,  
And resting place of all,  
Is woman's love.

'Tis the gem of beauty's birth,  
It competes with joys above;  
What were angels upon earth,  
If without a woman's love—  
A woman's love?

## LOVE

LOVE, though it is not chill and cold,  
 But burning like eternal fire,  
 Is yet not of approaches bold,  
 Which gay dramatic tastes admire.  
 Oh! timid love, more fond than free,  
 In daring song is ill pourtrayed,  
 Where, as in war, the devotee  
 By valour wins each captive maid;—

Where hearts are prest to hearts in glee,  
 As they could tell each other's mind;  
 Where ruby lips are kissed as free,  
 As flowers are by the summer wind.  
 No! gentle love, that timid dream,  
 With hopes and fears at foil and play,  
 Works like a skiff against the stream,  
 And thinking most finds least to say.

It lives in blushes and in sighs,  
 In hopes for which no words are found;  
 Thoughts dare not speak but in the eyes,  
 The tongue is left without a sound.  
 The pert and forward things that dare  
 Their talk in every maiden's ear,  
 Feel no more than their shadows there—  
 Mere things of form, with nought of fear.

True passion, that so burns to plead,  
 Is timid as the dove's disguise;  
 'Tis for the murder-aiming gleed  
 To dart at every thing that flies.  
 True love, it is no daring bird,  
 But like the little timid wren,  
 That in the new-leaved thorns of spring  
 Shrinks farther from the sight of men.

The idol of his musing mind,  
 The worship of his lonely hour,  
 Love woos her in the summer wind,  
 And tells her name to every flower;  
 But in her sight, no open word

Escapes, his fondness to declare;  
The sighs, by beauty's magic stirred,  
Are all that speak his passion there.

## DECAY

O POESY is on the wane,  
 For Fancy's visions all unfitting;  
 I hardly knew her face again,  
 Nature herself seems on the flitting.  
 The fields grow old and common things,  
 The grass, the sky, the winds a-blowing;  
 And spots, where still a beauty clings,  
 Are sighing "going! all a-going!"  
 O Poesy in on the wane,  
 I hardly know her face again.

The bank with brambles overspread,  
 And little molehills round about it,  
 Was more to me than laurel shades,  
 With paths of gravel finely clouted;  
 And streaking here and streaking there,  
 Through shaven grass and many a border,  
 With rutty lanes had no compare,  
 And heaths were in a richer order.  
 But Poesy is on the wane,  
 I hardly know her face again.

I sat beside the pasture stream,  
 When Beauty's self was sitting by  
 The fields did more than Eden seem,  
 Nor could I tell the reason why.  
 I often drank when not a-dry,  
 To pledge her health in draughts divine;  
 Smiles made it nectar from the sky,  
 Love turned e'en water into wine.  
 O Poesy is on the wane,  
 I cannot find her face again.

The sun those mornings used to find,  
 Its clouds were other-country mountains,  
 And heaven looked downward on the mind,  
 Like groves, and rocks, and mottled fountains.  
 Those heavens are gone, the mountains grey  
 Turned mist—the sun, a homeless ranger,  
 Pursues alone his naked way,  
 Unnoticed like a very stranger.

O Poesy is on the wane,  
Nor love nor joy is mine again.

Love's sun went down without a frown,  
For very joy it used to grieve us;  
I often think the West is gone,  
Ah, cruel Time, to undeceive us.  
The stream it is a common stream,  
Where we on Sundays used to ramble,  
The sky hangs o'er a broken dream,  
The bramble's dwindled to a bramble!  
O Poesy is on the wane,  
I cannot find her haunts again.

Mere withered stalks and fading trees,  
And pastures spread with hills and rushes,  
Are all my fading vision sees;  
Gone, gone are rapture's flooding gushes!  
When mushrooms they were fairy bowers,  
Their marble pillars over-swelling,  
And Danger paused to pluck the flowers,  
That in their swarthy rings were dwelling.  
Yes, Poesy is on the wane,  
Nor joy, nor fear is mine again.

Aye, Poesy hath passed away,  
And Fancy's visions undeceive us;  
The night hath ta'en the place of day,  
And why should passing shadows grieve us?  
I thought the flowers upon the hill  
Were flowers from Adam's open gardens;  
But I have had my summer thrills,  
And I have had my heart's rewardings.  
So Poesy is on the wane,  
I hardly know her face again.

And Friendship it hath burned away,  
Like to a very ember cooling,  
A make-believe on April day,  
That sent the simple heart a fooling;  
Mere jesting in an earnest way,  
Deceiving on and still deceiving;  
And Hope is but a fancy-play,  
And Joy the art of true believing;

For Poesy is on the wane,  
O could I feel her faith again!

## PASTORAL FANCIES

SWEET pastime here my mind so entertains,  
 Abiding pleasaunce, and heart-feeding joys,  
 To meet this blithsome day these painted plains,  
 These singing maids, and chubby laughing boys,  
 Which hay-time and the summer here employs,—  
 My rod and line doth all neglected lie;  
 A higher joy my former sport destroys:  
 Nature this day doth bait the hook, and I  
 The glad fish am, that's to be caught thereby.

This silken grass, these pleasant flowers in bloom,  
 Among these tasty molehills that do lie  
 Like summer cushions, for all guests that come;  
 Those little feathered folk, that sing and fly  
 Above these trees, in that so gentle sky,  
 Where not a cloud dares soil its heavenly light;  
 And this smooth river softly grieving bye—  
 All fill mine eyes with so divine a sight,  
 As makes me sigh that it should e'er be night.

In sooth, methinks the choice I most should prize  
 Were in these meadows of delight to dwell,  
 To share the joyaunce heaven elsewhere denies,  
 The calmness that doth relish passing well,  
 The quiet conscience, that aye bears the bell,  
 And happy musing Nature would supply,  
 Leaving no room for troubles to rebel:  
 Here would I think all day, at night would lie,  
 The hay my bed, my coverlid the sky.

So would I live, as nature might command,  
 Taking with Providence my wholesome meals;  
 Plucking the savory peascod from the land,  
 Where rustic lad oft dainty dinner steals.  
 For drink, I'd his me where the moss conceals  
 The little spring so chary from the sun,  
 Then lie, and listen to the merry peals  
 Of distant bells—all other noises shun;  
 Then court the Muses till the day be done.

Here would high joys my lowly choice requite;  
 For garden plot, I'd choose this flow'ry lea;  
 Here I in culling nosegays would delight,  
 The lambtoe tuft, the paler culverkey:  
 The cricket's mirth were talk enough for me,  
 When talk I needed; and when warmed to pray,  
 The little birds my choristers should be,  
 Who wear one suit for worship and for play,  
 And make the whole year long one sabbath-day.

A thymy hill should be my cushioned seat;  
 An aged thorn, with wild hops intertwined,  
 My bower, where I from noontide might retreat;  
 A hollow oak would shield me from the wind,  
 Or, as might hap, I better shed might find  
 In gentle spot, where fewer paths intrude,  
 The hut of shepherd swain, with rushes lined:  
 There would I tenant be to Solitude,  
 Seeking life's gentlest joys, to shun the rude.

Bidding a long farewell to every trouble,  
 The envy and the hate of evil men;  
 Feeling cares lessen, happiness redouble,  
 And all I lost as if 'twere found again.  
 Vain life unseen; the past alone known then:  
 No worldly intercourse my mind should have  
 To lure me backward to its crowded den;  
 Here would I live and die, and only crave  
 The home I chose might also be my grave.



## THE AUTUMN ROBIN

SWEET little bird in russet coat,  
 The livery of the closing year!  
 I love thy lonely plaintive note,  
 And tiny whispering song to hear.  
 While on the stile or garden seat,  
 I sit to watch the falling leaves,  
 The song thy little joys repeat,  
 My loneliness relieves.

And many are the lonely minds  
 That hear, and welcome thee anew;  
 Not Taste alone, but humble hinds,  
 Delight to praise, and love thee too.  
 The veriest clown, beside his cart,  
 Turns from his song with many a smile,  
 To see thee from the hedgerow start,  
 To sing upon the stile.

The shepherd on the fallen tree  
 Drops down to listen to thy lay,  
 And chides his dog beside his knee,  
 Who barks, and frightens thee away.  
 The hedger pauses, ere he knocks  
 The stake down in the meadow-gap—  
 The boy, who every songster mocks,  
 Forbears the gate to clap.

When in the hedge that hides the post  
 Thy ruddy bosom he surveys,—  
 Pleased with thy song, in transport lost,  
 He pausing mutters scraps of praise.  
 The maiden marks, at day's decline,  
 Thee in the yard, on broken plough,  
 And stops her song, to listen thine,  
 Milking the brindled cow.

Thy simple faith in man's esteem,  
 From every heart hath favour won;  
 Dangers to thee no dangers seem—  
 Thou seemest to court them more than shun.  
 The clown in winter takes his gun,

The barn-door flocking birds to slay,  
 Yet should'st thou in the danger run  
 He turns the tube away.

The gipsy boy, who seeks in glee  
 Blackberries for a dainty meal,  
 Laughs loud on first beholding thee,  
 When called, so near his presence steal.  
 He surely thinks thou know'st the call;  
 And though his hunger ill can spare  
 The fruit, he will not pluck it all,  
 But leaves some to thy share.

Upon the ditcher's spade thou'lt hop,  
 For grubs and wreathing worms to search;  
 Where woodmen in the forest chop,  
 Thou'lt fearless on their faggots perch;  
 Nay, by the gipsies' camp I stop,  
 And mark thee dwell a moment there,  
 To prune thy wing awhile, then drop,  
 The littered crumbs to share.

Domestic bird! thy pleasant face  
 Doth well thy common suit commend;  
 To meet thee in a stranger-place  
 Is meeting with an ancient friend.  
 I track the thicket's glooms around,  
 And there, as loth to leave, again  
 Thou comest, as if thou knew the sound  
 And loved the sight of men.

The loneliest wood that man can trace  
 To thee a pleasant dwelling gives;  
 In every town and crowded place  
 The sweet domestic robin lives.  
 Go where one will, in every spot  
 Thy little welcome mates appear;  
 And, like the daisy's common lot,  
 Thou'rt met with every where.

The swallow in the chimney tier,  
 Or twittering martin in the eaves,  
 With half of love and half of fear  
 His mortared dwelling shily weaves;  
 The sparrows in the thatch will shield;

Yet they, as well as e'er they can,  
 Contrive with doubtful faith to build  
 Beyond the reach of man.

But thou'rt less timid than the wren,  
 Domestic and confiding bird!  
 And spots, the nearest haunts of men,  
 Are oftenest for thy home preferred.  
 In garden-walls thou'lt build so low,  
 Close where the bunch of fennel stands,  
 That e'en a child just taught to go  
 May reach with tiny hands.

Sweet favoured bird! thy under-notes  
 In summer's music grow unknown,  
 The concert from a thousand throats  
 Leaves thee as if to pipe alone;  
 No listening ear the shepherd lends,  
 The simple ploughman marks thee not,  
 And then by all thy autumn friends  
 Thou'rt missing and forgot.

The far-famed nightingale, that shares  
 Cold public praise from every tongue,  
 The popular voice of music heirs,  
 And injures much thy under-song:  
 Yet then my walks thy theme salutes;  
 I find thee autumn's favoured guest,  
 Gay piping on the hazel-roots  
 Above thy mossy nest.

'Tis wrong that thou shouldst be despised,  
 When these gay fickle birds appear;  
 They sing when summer flowers are prized—  
 Thou at the dull and dying year.  
 Well! let the heedless and the gay  
 Bepraise the voice of louder lays,  
 The joy thou steal'st from Sorrow's day  
 Is more to thee than praise.

And could my notes win aught from thine,  
 My words but imitate thy lay,  
 Time could not then his charge resign,  
 Nor throw the meanest verse away,  
 But ever at this mellow time,

He should thy autumn praise prolong,  
As they would share the happy prime  
Of thy eternal song.

## A SPRING MORNING

THE Spring comes in with all her hues and smells,  
In freshness breathing over hills and dells;  
O'er woods where May her gorgeous drapery flings,  
And meads washed fragrant by their laughing springs.  
Fresh are new opened flowers, untouched and free  
From the bold rifling of the amorous bee.  
The happy time of singing birds is come,  
And Love's lone pilgrimage now finds a home;  
Among the mossy oaks now coos the dove,  
And the hoarse crow finds softer notes for love.  
The foxes play around their dens, and bark  
In joy's excess, 'mid woodland shadows dark.  
The flowers join lips below; the leaves above;  
And every sound that meets the ear is Love.

## THE CRAB-TREE

SPRING comes anew, and brings each little pledge  
That still, as wont, my childish heart deceives;  
I stoop again for violets in the hedge,  
Among the ivy and old withered leaves;  
And often mark, amid the clumps of sedge,  
The pooty-shells I gathered when a boy:  
But cares have claimed me many an evil day,  
And chilled the relish which I had for joy.  
Yet when Crab-blossoms blush among the May,  
As erst in years gone by, I scramble now  
Up 'mid the bramble for my old esteems,  
Filling my hands with many a blooming bough;  
Till the heart-stirring past as present seems,  
Save the bright sunshine of those fairy dreams.

## WINTER

OLD January, clad in crispy rime,  
Comes limping on, and often makes a stand;  
The hasty snow-storm ne'er disturbs his time,  
He mends no pace, but beats his dithering hand.  
And February, like a timid maid,  
Smiling and sorrowing follows in his train;  
Huddled in cloak, of miry roads afraid,  
She hastens on to meet her home again.  
Then March, the prophetess, by storms inspired,  
Gazes in rapture on the troubled sky,  
And now in headlong fury madly fired,  
She bids the hail-storm boil and hurry by.  
Yet 'neath the blackest cloud, a Sunbeam flings  
Its cheering promise of returning Springs.

## OLD POESY

SWEET is the poesy of the olden time,  
In the unsullied infancy of rhyme,  
When Nature reigned omnipotent to teach,  
And Truth and Feeling owned the powers of speech.  
Rich is the music of each early theme,  
And sweet as sunshine in a summer dream,  
Giving to stocks and stones, in rapture's strife,  
A soul of utterance and a tongue of life.  
Sweet are these wild flowers in their disarray,  
Which Art and Fashion fling as weeds away,  
To sport with shadows of inferior kind,  
Mere magic-lanterns of the shifting mind,  
Automatons of wonder-working powers,  
Shadows of life, and artificial flowers.



## 'TIS SPRING, MY LOVE, 'TIS SPRING

'TIS Spring, my love, 'tis Spring,  
And the birds begin to sing:  
If 't was Winter, left alone with you,  
Your bonny form and face,  
Would make a Summer place,  
And be the finest flower that ever grew.

Tis Spring, my love, 'tis Spring,  
And the hazel catkins hing,  
While the snowdrop has its little blebs of dew;  
But that's not so white within  
As your bosom's hidden skin—  
That sweetest of all flowers that ever grew.

The sun arose from bed,  
All strewn with roses red,  
But the brightest and the loveliest crimson place  
Is not so fresh and fair,  
Or so sweet beyond compare,  
As thy blushing, ever smiling, happy face.

I love Spring's early flowers,  
And their bloom in its first hours,  
But they never half so bright or lovely seem  
As the blithe and happy grace  
Of my darling's blushing face,  
And the happiness of loves young dream.

## GRAVES OF INFANTS

INFANTS' gravemounds are steps of angels, where  
Earth's brightest gems of innocence repose.  
God is their parent, so they need no tear;  
He takes them to his bosom from earth's woes,  
A bud their lifetime and a flower their close.  
Their spirits are the Iris of the skies,  
Needing no prayers; a sunset's happy close.  
Gone are the bright rays of their soft blue eyes;  
Flowers weep in dew-drops o'er them, and the gale gently sighs.

Their lives were nothing but a sunny shower,  
Melting on flowers as tears melt from the eye.  
Each death \* \* \*  
Was tolled on flowers as Summer gales went by.  
They bowed and trembled, yet they heaved no sigh,  
And the sun smiled to show the end was well.  
Infants have nought to weep for ere they die;  
All prayers are needless, beads they need not tell,  
White flowers their mourners are, Nature their passing bell.

## HOME YEARNINGS

O FOR that sweet, untroubled rest,  
That poets oft have sung!—  
The babe upon its mother's breast,  
The bird upon its young,  
The heart asleep without a pain—  
When shall I know that sleep again?

When shall I be as I have been  
Upon my mother's breast—  
Sweet Nature's garb of verdant green  
To woo to perfect rest—  
Love in the meadow, field, and glen,  
And in my native wilds again?

The sheep within the fallow field,  
The herd upon the green,  
The larks that in the thistle shield,  
And pipe from morn to e'en—  
O for the pasture, fields, and fen,  
When shall I see such rest again?

I love the weeds along the fen,  
More sweet than garden flowers,  
For freedom haunts the humble glen  
That blest my happiest hours.  
Here prison injures health and me:  
I love sweet freedom and the free.

The crows upon the swelling hills,  
The cows upon the lea,  
Sheep feeding by the pasture rills,  
Are ever dear to me,  
Because sweet freedom is their mate,  
While I am lone and desolate.

I loved the winds when I was young,  
When life was dear to me;  
I loved the song which Nature sung,  
Endearing liberty;  
I loved the wood, the vale, the stream,  
For there my boyhood used to dream.

There even toil itself was play;  
'Twas pleasure e'en to weep;  
'Twas joy to think of dreams by day,  
The beautiful of sleep.  
When shall I see the wood and plain,  
And dream those happy dreams again?

## LOVE LIVES BEYOND THE TOMB

LOVE lives beyond the tomb,  
And earth, which fades like dew!  
I love the fond,  
The faithful, and the true.

Love lives in sleep;  
'Tis happiness of healthy dreams;  
Eve's dews may weep,  
But love delightful seems.

'Tis seen in flowers,  
And in the morning's pearly dew;  
In earth's green hours,  
And in the heaven's eternal blue.

'Tis heard in Spring,  
When light and sunbeams, warm and kind,  
On angel's wings  
Bring love and music to the mind.

And where's the voice,  
So young, so beautiful, and sweet  
As Nature's choice,  
Where Spring and lovers meet?

Love lives beyond the tomb,  
And earth, which fades like dew!  
I love the fond,  
The faithful, and the true.

## MY EARLY HOME

HERE sparrows build upon the trees,  
And stockdove hides her nest;  
The leaves are winnowed by the breeze  
Into a calmer rest;  
The black-cap's song was very sweet,  
That used the rose to kiss;  
It made the Paradise complete:  
My early home was this.

The redbreast from the sweetbriar bush  
Dropt down to pick the worm;  
On the horse-chesnut sang the thrush,  
O'er the house where I was born;  
The moonlight, like a shower of pearls,  
Fell o'er this "bower of bliss,"  
And on the bench sat boys and girls:  
My early home was this.

The old house stooped just like a cave,  
Thatched o'er with mosses green;  
Winter around the walls would rave,  
But all was calm within;  
The trees are here all green agen,  
Here bees the flowers still kiss,  
But flowers and trees seemed sweeter then:  
My early home was this.

## THE TELL-TALE FLOWERS

AND has the Spring's all-glorious eye  
No lesson to the mind?  
The birds that cleave the golden sky—  
Things to the earth resigned—  
Wild flowers that dance to every wind—  
Do they no memory leave behind?

Aye, flowers! The very name of flowers,  
That bloom in wood and glen,  
Brings Spring to me in Winter's hours,  
And childhood's dreams again.  
The primrose on the woodland lea  
Was more than gold and lands to me.

The violets by the woodland side  
Are thick as they could thrive;  
I've talked to them with childish pride  
As things that were alive:  
I find them now in my distress—  
They seem as sweet, yet valueless.

The cowslips on the meadow lea,  
How have I run for them!  
I looked with wild and childish glee  
Upon each golden gem:  
And when they bowed their heads so shy  
I laughed, and thought they danced for joy.

And when a man, in early years,  
How sweet they used to come,  
And give me tales of smiles and tears,  
And thoughts more dear than home:  
Secrets which words would then reprove—  
They told the names of early love.

The primrose turned a babbling flower  
Within its sweet recess:  
I blushed to see its secret bower,  
And turned her name to bless.  
The violets said the eyes were blue:  
I loved, and did they tell me true?

The cowslips, blooming everywhere,  
 My heart's own thoughts could steal:  
 I nip't them that they should not hear:  
 They smiled, and would reveal;  
 And o'er each meadow, right or wrong,  
 They sing the name I've worshipped long.

The brook that mirrored clear the sky—  
 Full well I know the spot;  
 The mouse-ear looked with bright blue eye,  
 And said "Forget-me-not."  
 And from the brook I turned away,  
 But heard it many an after day.

The king-cup on its slender stalk,  
 Within the pasture dell,  
 Would picture there a pleasant walk  
 With one I loved so well.  
 It said "How sweet at eventide  
 'Twould be, with true love at thy side."

And on the pasture's woody knoll  
 I saw the wild bluebell,  
 On Sundays, where I used to stroll  
 With her I loved so well:  
 She culled the flowers the year before;  
 These bowed, and told the story o'er.

And every flower that had a name  
 Would tell me who was fair;  
 But those without, as strangers, came  
 And blossomed silent there:  
 I stood to hear, but all alone:  
 They bloomed and kept their thoughts unknown.

But seasons now have nought to say,  
 The flowers no news to bring:  
 Alone I live from day to day—  
 Flowers deck the bier of Spring;  
 And birds upon the bush or tree  
 All sing a different tale to me.



## TO JOHN MILTON

POET of mighty power, I fain  
 Would court the muse that honoured thee,  
 And, like Elisha's spirit, gain  
 A part of thy intensity;  
 And share the mantle which she flung  
 Around thee, when thy lyre was strung.

Though faction's scorn at first did shun,  
 With coldness, thy inspired song,  
 Though clouds of malice pass'd thy sun,  
 They could not hide it long;  
 Its brightness soon exhaled away  
 Dark night, and gained eternal day.

The critics' wrath did darkly frown  
 Upon thy muse's mighty lay;  
 But blasts that break the blossom down  
 Do only stir the bay;  
 And thine shall flourish, green and long,  
 In the eternity of song.

Thy genius saw, in quiet mood,  
 Gilt fashion's follies pass thee by,  
 And, like the monarch of the wood,  
 Tower'd o'er it to the sky;  
 Where thou could'st sing of other spheres,  
 And feel the fame of future years.

Though bitter sneers and stinging scorns  
 Did throng the Muse's dangerous way,  
 Thy powers were past such little thorns,  
 They gave thee no dismay;  
 The scoffer's insult pass'd thee by,  
 Thou smild'st and mad'st him no reply.

Envy will gnaw its heart away  
 To see thy genius gather root;  
 And as its flowers their sweets display,  
 Scorn's malice shall be mute;  
 Hornets that summer warmed to fly,  
 Shall at the death of summer die.

Though friendly praise hath but its hour,  
 And little praise with thee hath been;  
 The bay may lose its summer flower,  
 But still its leaves are green;  
 And thine, whose buds are on the shoot,  
 Shall only fade to change to fruit.

Fame lives not in the breath of words,  
 In public praises' hue and cry;  
 The music of these summer birds  
 Is silent in a winter sky,  
 When thine shall live and flourish on,  
 O'er wrecks where crowds of fames are gone.

The ivy shuns the city wall,  
 When busy-clamorous crowds intrude,  
 And climbs the desolated hall  
 In silent solitude;  
 The time-worn arch, the fallen dome,  
 Are roots for its eternal home.

The bard his glory ne'er receives  
 Where summer's common flowers are seen,  
 But winter finds it when she leaves  
 The laurel only green;  
 And time, from that eternal tree,  
 Shall weave a wreath to honour thee.

Nought but thy ashes shall expire;  
 Thy genius, at thy obsequies,  
 Shall kindle up its living fire  
 And light the Muse's skies;  
 Ay, it shall rise, and shine, and be  
 A sun in song's posterity.

## I AM! YET WHAT I AM

I AM! yet what I am who cares, or knows?  
My friends forsake me like a memory lost.  
I am the self-consumer of my woes,  
They rise and vanish, an oblivious host,  
Shadows of life, whose very soul is lost.  
And yet I am—I live—though I am toss'd

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,  
Into the living sea of waking dream,  
Where there is neither sense of life, nor joys,  
But the huge shipwreck of my own esteem  
And all that's dear. Even those I loved the best  
Are strange—nay, they are stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man has never trod,  
For scenes where woman never smiled or wept;  
There to abide with my Creator, God,  
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept  
Full of high thoughts, unborn. So let me lie,  
The grass below; above the vaulted sky.

## BALLAD

A faithless shepherd courted me,  
He stole away my liberty.  
When my poor heart was strange to men,  
He came and smiled and stole it then.

When my apron would hang low,  
Me he sought through frost and snow.  
When it puckered up with shame,  
And I sought him, he never came.

When summer brought no fears to fright,  
He came to guard me every night.  
When winter nights did darkly prove,  
None came to guard me or to love.

I wish, I wish, but all in vain,  
I wish I was a maid again.  
A maid again I cannot be,  
O when will green grass cover me?

## SONG

Mary, leave thy lowly cot  
When thy thickest jobs are done;  
When thy friends will miss thee not,  
Mary, to the pastures run.  
Where we met the other night  
Neath the bush upon the plain,  
Be it dark or be it light,  
Ye may guess we'll meet again.

Should ye go or should ye not,  
Never shilly-shally, dear.  
Leave your work and leave your cot,  
Nothing need ye doubt or fear:  
Fools may tell ye lies in spite,  
Calling me a roving swain;  
Think what passed the other night—  
I'll be bound ye'll meet again.

## THE MAID OF OCRAM OR, LORD GREGORY

Gay was the Maid of Ocram  
 As lady eer might be  
 Ere she did venture past a maid  
 To love Lord Gregory.  
 Fair was the Maid of Ocram  
 And shining like the sun  
 Ere her bower key was turned on two  
 Where bride bed lay for none.

And late at night she sought her love—  
 The snow slept on her skin—  
 Get up, she cried, thou false young man,  
 And let thy true love in.  
 And fain would he have loosed the key  
 All for his true love's sake,  
 But Lord Gregory then was fast asleep,  
 His mother wide awake.

And up she threw the window sash,  
 And out her head put she:  
 And who is that which knocks so late  
 And taunts so loud to me?  
 It is the Maid of Ocram,  
 Your own heart's next akin;  
 For so you've sworn, Lord Gregory,  
 To come and let me in.

O pause not thus, you know me well,  
 Haste down my way to win.  
 The wind disturbs my yellow locks,  
 The snow sleeps on my skin.—  
 If you be the Maid of Ocram,  
 As much I doubt you be,  
 Then tell me of three tokens  
 That passed with you and me.—

O talk not now of tokens  
 Which you do wish to break;  
 Chilled are those lips you've kissed so warm,  
 And all too numbed to speak.  
 You know when in my father's bower

You left your cloak for mine,  
 Though yours was nought but silver twist  
 And mine the golden twine.—

If you're the lass of Ocrum,  
 As I take you not to be,  
 The second token you must tell  
 Which past with you and me.—  
 O know you not, O know you not  
 Twas in my father's park,  
 You led me out a mile too far  
 And courted in the dark?

When you did change your ring for mine  
 My yielding heart to win,  
 Though mine was of the beaten gold  
 Yours but of burnished tin,  
 Though mine was all true love without,  
 Yours but false love within?

O ask me no more tokens  
 For fast the snow doth fall.  
 Tis sad to strive and speak in vain,  
 You mean to break them all.—  
 If you are the Maid of Ocrum,  
 As I take you not to be,  
 You must mention the third token  
 That passed with you and me.—

Twas when you stole my maidenhead;  
 That grieves me worst of all.—  
 Begone, you lying creature, then  
 This instant from my hall,  
 Or you and your vile baby  
 Shall in the deep sea fall;  
 For I have none on earth as yet  
 That may me father call.—

O must none close my dying feet,  
 And must none close my hands,  
 And may none bind my yellow locks  
 As death for all demands?  
 You need not use no force at all,  
 Your hard heart breaks the vow;

You've had your wish against my will  
And you shall have it now.

And must none close my dying feet,  
And must none close my hands,  
And will none do the last kind deeds  
That death for all demands?—  
Your sister, she may close your feet,  
Your brother close your hands,  
Your mother, she may wrap your waist  
In death's fit wedding bands;  
Your father, he may tie your locks  
And lay you in the sands.—

My sister, she will weep in vain,  
My brother ride and run,  
My mother, she will break her heart;  
And ere the rising sun  
My father will be looking out—  
But find me they will none.  
I go to lay my woes to rest,  
None shall know where I'm gone.  
God must be friend and father both,  
Lord Gregory will be none.—

Lord Gregory started up from sleep  
And thought he heard a voice  
That screamed full dreadful in his ear,  
And once and twice and thrice.  
Lord Gregory to his mother called:  
O mother dear, said he,  
I've dreamt the Maid of Ocrum  
Was floating on the sea.

Lie still, my son, the mother said,  
Tis but a little space  
And half an hour has scarcely passed  
Since she did pass this place.—  
O cruel, cruel mother,  
When she did pass so nigh  
How could you let me sleep so sound  
Or let her wander bye?  
Now if she's lost my heart must break—  
I'll seek her till I die.



He sought her east, he sought her west,  
 He sought through park and plain;  
 He sought her where she might have been  
 But found her not again.

I cannot curse thee, mother,  
 Though thine's the blame, said he  
 I cannot curse thee, mother,  
 Though thou'st done worse to me.  
 Yet do I curse thy pride that aye  
 So tauntingly aspires;  
 For my love was a gay knight's heir,  
 And my father was a squire's.

And I will sell my park and hall;  
 And if ye wed again  
 Ye shall not wed for titles twice  
 That made ye once so vain.  
 So if ye will wed, wed for love,  
 As I was fain to do;  
 Ye've gave to me a broken heart,  
 And I'll give nought to you.

Your pride has wronged your own heart's blood;  
 For she was mine by grace,  
 And now my lady love is gone  
 None else shall take her place.  
 I'll sell my park and sell my hall  
 And sink my titles too.  
 Your pride's done wrong enough as now  
 To leave it more to do.

She owneth none that owned them all  
 And would have graced them well;  
 None else shall take the right she missed  
 Nor in my bosom dwell.—  
 And then he took and burnt his will  
 Before his mother's face,  
 And tore his patents all in two,  
 While tears fell down apace—  
 But in his mother's haughty look  
 Ye nought but frowns might trace.

And then he sat him down to grieve,  
 But could not sit for pain.

And then he laid him on the bed  
And ne'er got up again.

## IMPROMPTU

"Where art thou wandering, little child?"

I said to one I met to-day.—

She pushed her bonnet up and smiled,

"I'm going upon the green to play:

Folks tell me that the May's in flower,

That cowslip-peeps are fit to pull,

And I've got leave to spend an hour

To get this little basket full."

—And thou'st got leave to spend an hour!

My heart repeated.—She was gone;

—And thou hast heard the thorn's in flower,

And childhood's bliss is urging on:

Ah, happy child! thou mak'st me sigh,

This once as happy heart of mine,

Would nature with the boon comply,

How gladly would I change for thine.

## THE WOOD-CUTTER'S NIGHT SONG

Welcome, red and roundy sun,  
Dropping lowly in the west;  
Now my hard day's work is done,  
I'm as happy as the best.

Joyful are the thoughts of home,  
Now I'm ready for my chair,  
So, till morrow-morning's come,  
Bill and mittens, lie ye there!

Though to leave your pretty song,  
Little birds, it gives me pain,  
Yet to-morrow is not long,  
Then I'm with you all again.

If I stop, and stand about,  
Well I know how things will be,  
Judy will be looking out  
Every now-and-then for me.

So fare ye well! and hold your tongues,  
Sing no more until I come;  
They're not worthy of your songs  
That never care to drop a crumb.

All day long I love the oaks,  
But, at nights, yon little cot,  
Where I see the chimney smokes,  
Is by far the prettiest spot.

Wife and children all are there,  
To revive with pleasant looks,  
Table ready set, and chair,  
Supper hanging on the hooks.

Soon as ever I get in,  
When my faggot down I fling,  
Little prattlers they begin  
Teasing me to talk and sing.

Welcome, red and roundy sun,  
Dropping lowly in the west;

Now my hard day's work is done,  
I'm as happy as the best.

Joyful are the thoughts of home,  
Now I'm ready for my chair,  
So, till morrow-morning's come,  
Bill and mittens, lie ye there!

## RURAL MORNING

Soon as the twilight through the distant mist  
 In silver hemmings skirts the purple east,  
 Ere yet the sun unveils his smiles to view  
 And dries the morning's chilly robes of dew,  
 Young Hodge the horse-boy, with a soodly gait,  
 Slow climbs the stile, or opes the creaky gate,  
 With willow switch and halter by his side  
 Prepared for Dobbin, whom he means to ride;  
 The only tune he knows still whistling oer,  
 And humming scraps his father sung before,  
 As "Wantley Dragon," and the "Magic Rose,"  
 The whole of music that his village knows,  
 Which wild remembrance, in each little town,  
 From mouth to mouth through ages handles down.  
 Onward he jolls, nor can the minstrel-throngs  
 Entice him once to listen to their songs;  
 Nor marks he once a blossom on his way;  
 A senseless lump of animated clay—  
 With weather-beaten hat of rusty brown,  
 Stranger to brinks, and often to a crown;  
 With slop-frock suiting to the ploughman's taste,  
 Its greasy skirtings twisted round his waist;  
 And hardened high-lows clenched with nails around,  
 Clamping defiance oer the stoney ground,  
 The deadly foes to many a blossomed sprout  
 That luckless meets him in his morning's rout.  
 In hobbling speed he roams the pasture round,  
 Till hunted Dobbin and the rest are found;  
 Where some, from frequent meddlings of his whip,  
 Well know their foe, and often try to slip;  
 While Dobbin, tamed by age and labour, stands  
 To meet all trouble from his brutish hands,  
 And patient goes to gate or knowly brake,  
 The teasing burden of his foe to take;  
 Who, soon as mounted, with his switching weals,  
 Puts Dob's best swiftness in his heavy heels,  
 The toltering bustle of a blundering trot  
 Which whips and cudgels neer increased a jot,

Though better speed was urged by the clown—  
And thus he snorts and jostles to the town.

And now, when toil and summer's in its prime,  
In every vill, at morning's earliest time,  
To early-risers many a Hodge is seen,  
And many a Dob's heard clattering oer the green.

Now straying beams from day's unclosing eye  
In copper-coloured patches flush the sky,  
And from night's prison strugglingly encroach,  
To bring the summons of warm day's approach,  
Till, slowly mounting oer the ridge of clouds  
That yet half shows his face, and half enshrouds,  
The unfettered sun takes his unbounded reign  
And wakes all life to noise and toil again:  
And while his opening mellows oer the scenes  
Of wood and field their many mingling greens,  
Industry's bustling din once more devours  
The soothing peace of morning's early hours:  
The grunt of hogs freed from their nightly dens  
And constant cacklings of new-laying hens,  
And ducks and geese that clamorous joys repeat  
The splashing comforts of the pond to meet,  
And chirping sparrows dropping from the eaves  
For offal kernels that the poultry leaves,  
Oft signal-calls of danger chittering high  
At skulking cats and dogs approaching nigh.  
And lowing steers that hollow echoes wake  
Around the yard, their nightly fast to break,  
As from each barn the lumping flail rebounds  
In mingling concert with the rural sounds;  
While oer the distant fields more faintly creep  
The murmuring bleatings of unfolding sheep,  
And ploughman's callings that more hoarse proceed  
Where industry still urges labour's speed,  
The bellowing of cows with udders full  
That wait the welcome halloo of "come mull,"  
And rumbling waggons deafening again,  
Rousing the dust along the narrow lane,  
And cracking whips, and shepherd's hooting cries,  
From woodland echoes urging sharp replies.  
Hodge, in his waggon, marks the wondrous tongue,  
And talks with echo as he drives along;

Still cracks his whip, bawls every horse's name,  
 And echo still as ready bawls the same:  
 The puzzling mystery he would gladly cheat,  
 And fain would utter what it can't repeat,  
 Till speedless trials prove the doubted elf  
 As skilled in noise and sounds as Hodge himself;  
 And, quite convinced with the proofs it gives,  
 The boy drives on and fancies echo lives,  
 Like some wood-fiend that frights benighted men,  
 The troubling spirit of a robber's den.

And now the blossom of the village view,  
 With airy hat of straw, and apron blue,  
 And short-sleeved gown, that half to guess reveals  
 By fine-turned arms what beauty it conceals;  
 Whose cheeks health flushes with as sweet a red  
 As that which stripes the woodbine o'er her head;  
 Deeply she blushes on her morn's employ,  
 To prove the fondness of some passing boy,  
 Who, with a smile that thrills her soul to view,  
 Holds the gate open till she passes through,  
 While turning nods beck thanks for kindness done,  
 And looks—if looks could speak-proclaim her won.  
 With well-scoured buckets on proceeds the maid,  
 And drives her cows to milk beneath the shade,  
 Where scarce a sunbeam to molest her steals—  
 Sweet as the thyme that blossoms where she kneels;  
 And there oft scares the cooing amorous dove  
 With her own favoured melodies of love.  
 Snugly retired in yet dew-laden bowers,  
 This sweetest specimen of rural flowers  
 Displays, red glowing in the morning wind,  
 The powers of health and nature when combined.

Last on the road the cowboy careless swings,  
 Leading tamed cattle in their tending strings,  
 With shining tin to keep his dinner warm  
 Swung at his back, or tucked beneath his arm;  
 Whose sun-burnt skin, and cheeks chuffed out with fat,  
 Are dyed as rusty as his napless hat.  
 And others, driving loose their herds at will,  
 Are now heard whooping up the pasture-hill;  
 Peeled sticks they bear of hazel or of ash,  
 The rib-marked hides of restless cows to thrash.



In sloven garb appears each bawling boy,  
 As fit and suiting to his rude employ;  
 His shoes, worn down by many blundering treads,  
 Oft show the tenants needing safer sheds:  
 The pithy bunch of unripe nuts to seek,  
 And crabs sun-reddened with a tempting cheek,  
 From pasture hedges, daily puts to rack  
 His tattered clothes, that scarcely screen the back,—  
 Daubed all about as if besmeared with blood,  
 Stained with the berries of the brambly wood  
 That stud the straggling briars as black as jet,  
 Which, when his cattle lair, he runs to get;  
 Or smaller kinds, as if beglossed with dew  
 Shining dim-powdered with a downy blue,  
 That on weak tendrils lowly creeping grow  
 Where, choaked in flags and sedges, wandering slow,  
 The brook purls simmering its declining tide  
 Down the crooked boundings of the pasture-side.  
 There they to hunt the luscious fruit delight,  
 And dabbling keep within their charges' sight;  
 Oft catching prickly struttles on their rout,  
 And miller-thumbs and gudgeons driving out,  
 Hid near the arched brig under many a stone  
 That from its wall rude passing clowns have thrown.  
 And while in peace cows eat, and chew their cuds,  
 Moozing cool sheltered neath the skirting woods,  
 To double uses they the hours convert,  
 Turning the toils of labour into sport;  
 Till morn's long streaking shadows lose their tails,  
 And cooling winds swoon into faltering gales;  
 And searching sunbeams warm and sultry creep,  
 Waking the teasing insects from their sleep;  
 And dreaded gadflies with their drowsy hum  
 On the burnt wings of mid-day zephyrs come,—  
 Urging each lown to leave his sports in fear,  
 To stop his starting cows that dread the fly;  
 Droning unwelcome tidings on his ear,  
 That the sweet peace of rural morn's gone by.

## SONG

One gloomy eve I roamed about  
Neath Oxey's hazel bowers,  
While timid hares were darting out,  
To crop the dewy flowers;  
And soothing was the scene to me,  
Right pleased was my soul,  
My breast was calm as summer's sea  
When waves forget to roll.

But short was even's placid smile,  
My startled soul to charm,  
When Nelly lightly skipt the stile,  
With milk-pail on her arm:  
One careless look on me she flung,  
As bright as parting day;  
And like a hawk from covert sprung,  
It pounced my peace away.

## THE CROSS ROADS; OR, THE HAYMAKER'S STORY

Stopt by the storm, that long in sullen black  
 From the south-west stained its encroaching track,  
 Haymakers, hustling from the rain to hide,  
 Sought the grey willows by the pasture-side;  
 And there, while big drops bow the grassy stems,  
 And bleb the withering hay with pearly gems,  
 Dimple the brook, and patter in the leaves,  
 The song or tale an hour's restraint relieves.  
 And while the old dames gossip at their ease,  
 And pinch the snuff-box empty by degrees,  
 The young ones join in love's delightful themes,  
 Truths told by gipsies, and expounded dreams;  
 And mutter things kept secrets from the rest,  
 As sweethearts' names, and whom they love the best;  
 And dazzling ribbons they delight to show,  
 And last new favours of some veigling beau,  
 Who with such treachery tries their hearts to move,  
 And, like the highest, bribes the maidens' love.  
 The old dames, jealous of their whispered praise,  
 Throw in their hints of man's deluding ways;  
 And one, to give her counsels more effect,  
 And by example illustrate the fact  
 Of innocence overcome by flattering man,  
 Thrice tapped her box, and pinched, and thus began.

"Now wenches listen, and let lovers lie,  
 Ye'll hear a story ye may profit by;  
 I'm your age treble, with some oddments to't,  
 And right from wrong can tell, if ye'll but do't:  
 Ye need not giggle underneath your hat,  
 Mine's no joke-matter, let me tell you that;  
 So keep ye quiet till my story's told,  
 And don't despise your betters cause they're old.

"That grave ye've heard of, where the four roads meet,  
 Where walks the spirit in a winding-sheet,  
 Oft seen at night, by strangers passing late,  
 And tarrying neighbours that at market wait,  
 Stalking along as white as driven snow,  
 And long as one's shadow when the sun is low;

The girl that's buried there I knew her well,  
 And her whole history, if ye'll hark, can tell.  
 Her name was Jane, and neighbour's children we,  
 And old companions once, as ye may be;  
 And like to you, on Sundays often strolled  
 To gipsies' camps to have our fortunes told;  
 And oft, God rest her, in the fortune-book  
 Which we at hay-time in our pockets took,  
 Our pins at blindfold on the wheel we stuck,  
 When hers would always prick the worst of luck;  
 For try, poor thing, as often as she might,  
 Her point would always on the blank alight;  
 Which plainly shows the fortune one's to have,  
 As such like go unwedded to the grave,—  
 And so it proved.—The next succeeding May,  
 We both to service went from sports and play,  
 Though in the village still; as friends and kin  
 Thought neighbour's service better to begin.  
 So out we went:—Jane's place was reckoned good,  
 Though she bout life but little understood,  
 And had a master wild as wild can be,  
 And far unfit for such a child as she;  
 And soon the whisper went about the town,  
 That Jane's good looks procured her many a gown  
 From him, whose promise was to every one,  
 But whose intention was to wive with none.  
 Twas nought to wonder, though begun by guess;  
 For Jane was lovely in her Sunday dress,  
 And all expected such a rosy face  
 Would be her ruin—as was just the case.  
 The while the change was easily perceived,  
 Some months went by, ere I the tales believed;  
 For there are people nowadays, Lord knows,  
 Will sooner hatch up lies than mend their clothes;  
 And when with such-like tattle they begin,  
 Don't mind whose character they spoil a pin:  
 But passing neighbours often marked them smile,  
 And watched him take her milkpail oer a stile;  
 And many a time, as wandering closer by,  
 From Jenny's bosom met a heavy sigh;  
 And often marked her, as discoursing deep,  
 When doubts might rise to give just cause to weep,  
 Smothering their notice, by a wished disguise  
 To slive her apron corner to her eyes.

Such signs were mournful and alarming things,  
 And far more weighty than conjecture brings;  
 Though foes made double what they heard of all,  
 Swore lies as proofs, and prophesied her fall.  
 Poor thoughtless wench! it seems but Sunday past  
 Since we went out together for the last,  
 And plain enough indeed it was to find  
 She'd something more than common on her mind;  
 For she was always fond and full of chat,  
 In passing harmless jokes bout beaus and that,  
 But nothing then was scarcely talked about,  
 And what there was, I even forced it out.  
 A gloomy wanness spoiled her rosy cheek,  
 And doubts hung there it was not mine to seek;  
 She neer so much as mentioned things to come,  
 But sighed oer pleasures ere she left her home;  
 And now and then a mournful smile would raise  
 At freaks repeated of our younger days,  
 Which I brought up, while passing spots of ground  
 Where we, when children, "hurly-burlied" round,  
 Or "blindman-buffed" some morts of hours away—  
 Two games, poor thing, Jane dearly loved to play.  
 She smiled at these, but shook her head and sighed  
 When eer she thought my look was turned aside;  
 Nor turned she round, as was her former way,  
 To praise the thorn, white over then with May;  
 Nor stooped once, though thousands round her grew,  
 To pull a cowslip as she used to do:  
 For Jane in flowers delighted from a child—  
 I like the garden, but she loved the wild—  
 And oft on Sundays young men's gifts declined,  
 Posies from gardens of the sweetest kind,  
 And eager scrambled the dog-rose to get,  
 And woodbine-flowers at every bush she met.  
 The cowslip blossom, with its ruddy streak,  
 Would tempt her furlongs from the path to seek;  
 And gay long purple, with its tufty spike,  
 She'd wade oer shoes to reach it in the dyke;  
 And oft, while scratching through the briary woods  
 For tempting cuckoo-flowers and violet buds,  
 Poor Jane, I've known her crying sneak to town,  
 Fearing her mother, when she'd torn her gown.  
 Ah, these were days her conscience viewed with pain,  
 Which all are loth to lose, as well as Jane.

And, what I took more odd than all the rest,  
 Was, that same night she neer a wish exprest  
 To see the gipsies, so beloved before,  
 That lay a stone's throw from us on the moor:  
 I hinted it; she just replied again—  
 She once believed them, but had doubts since then.  
 And when we sought our cows, I called, "Come mull!"  
 But she stood silent, for her heart was full.  
 She loved dumb things: and ere she had begun  
 To milk, caressed them more than eer she'd done;  
 But though her tears stood watering in her eye,  
 I little took it as her last good-bye;  
 For she was tender, and I've often known  
 Her mourn when beetles have been trampled on:  
 So I neer dreamed from this, what soon befell,  
 Till the next morning rang her passing-bell.  
 My story's long, but time's in plenty yet,  
 Since the black clouds betoken nought but wet;  
 And I'll een snatch a minute's breath or two,  
 And take another pinch, to help me through.

"So, as I said, next morn I heard the bell,  
 And passing neighbours crossed the street, to tell  
 That my poor partner Jenny had been found  
 In the old flag-pool, on the pasture, drowned.  
 God knows my heart! I twittered like a leaf,  
 And found too late the cause of Sunday's grief;  
 For every tongue was loosed to gabble oer  
 The slanderous things that secret passed before:  
 With truth or lies they need not then be strict,  
 The one they railed at could not contradict.  
 Twas now no secret of her being beguiled,  
 For every mouth knew Jenny died with child;  
 And though more cautious with a living name,  
 Each more than guessed her master bore the blame.  
 That very morning, it affects me still,  
 Ye know the foot-path sidles down the hill,  
 Ignorant as babe unborn I passed the pond  
 To milk as usual in our close beyond,  
 And cows were drinking at the water's edge,  
 And horses browsed among the flags and sedge,  
 And gnats and midges danced the water oer,  
 Just as I've marked them scores of times before,  
 And birds sat singing, as in mornings gone,—

While I as unconcerned went soodling on,  
 But little dreaming, as the wakening wind  
 Flapped the broad ash-leaves oer the pond reclin'd,  
 And oer the water crinked the curdled wave,  
 That Jane was sleeping in her watery grave.  
 The neatherd boy that used to tend the cows,  
 While getting whip-sticks from the dangling boughs  
 Of osiers drooping by the water-side,  
 Her bonnet floating on the top espied;  
 He knew it well, and hastened fearful down  
 To take the terror of his fears to town,—

A melancholy story, far too true;  
 And soon the village to the pasture flew,  
 Where, from the deepest hole the pond about,  
 They dragged poor Jenny's lifeless body out,  
 And took her home, where scarce an hour gone by  
 She had been living like to you and I.  
 I went with more, and kissed her for the last,  
 And thought with tears on pleasures that were past;  
 And, the last kindness left me then to do,  
 I went, at milking, where the blossoms grew,  
 And handfuls got of rose and lambtoe sweet,  
 And put them with her in her winding-sheet.  
 A wilful murder, jury made the crime;  
 Nor parson 'lowed to pray, nor bell to chime;  
 On the cross roads, far from her friends and kin,  
 The usual law for their ungodly sin  
 Who violent hands upon themselves have laid,  
 Poor Jane's last bed unchristian-like was made;  
 And there, like all whose last thoughts turn to heaven,  
 She sleeps, and doubtless hoped to be forgiven.  
 But, though I say't, for maids thus veigled in  
 I think the wicked men deserve the sin;  
 And sure enough we all at last shall see  
 The treachery punished as it ought to be.  
 For ere his wickedness pretended love,  
 Jane, I'll be bound, was spotless as the dove,  
 And's good a servant, still old folks allow,  
 As ever scoured a pail or milked a cow;  
 And ere he led her into ruin's way,  
 As gay and buxom as a summer's day:  
 The birds that ranted in the hedge-row boughs,  
 As night and morning we have sought our cows,

With yokes and buckets as she bounced along,  
Were often deafed to silence with her song.

But now she's gone:—girls, shun deceitful men,  
The worst of stumbles ye can fall agen;  
Be deaf to them, and then, as twere, ye'll see  
Your pleasures safe as under lock and key.  
Throw not my words away, as many do;  
They're gold in value, though they're cheap to you.  
And husseys hearken, and be warned from this,  
If ye love mothers, never do amiss:  
Jane might love hers, but she forsook the plan  
To make her happy, when she thought of man.  
Poor tottering dame, it was too plainly known,  
Her daughter's dying hastened on her own,  
For from the day the tidings reached her door  
She took to bed and looked up no more,  
And, ere again another year came round,  
She, well as Jane, was laid within the ground;  
And all were grieved poor Goody's end to see:  
No better neighbour entered house than she,  
A harmless soul, with no abusive tongue,  
Trig as new pins, and tight's the day was long;  
And go the week about, nine times in ten  
Ye'd find her house as cleanly as her sen.  
But, Lord protect us! time such change does bring,  
We cannot dream what oer our heads may hing;  
The very house she lived in, stick and stone,  
Since Goody died, has tumbled down and gone:  
And where the marjoram once, and sage, and rue,  
And balm, and mint, with curled-leaf parsley grew,  
And double marygolds, and silver thyme,  
And pumpkins neath the window used to climb;  
And where I often when a child for hours  
Tried through the pales to get the tempting flowers,  
As lady's laces, everlasting peas,  
True-love-lies-bleeding, with the hearts-at-ease,  
And golden rods, and tansy running high  
That oer the pale-tops smiled on passers-by,  
Flowers in my time that every one would praise,  
Though thrown like weeds from gardens nowadays;  
Where these all grew, now henbane stinks and spreads,  
And docks and thistles shake their seedy heads,  
And yearly keep with nettles smothering oer;—



The house, the dame, the garden known no more:  
 While, neighbouring nigh, one lonely elder-tree  
 Is all that's left of what had used to be,  
 Marking the place, and bringing up with tears  
 The recollections of one's younger years.  
 And now I've done, ye're each at once as free  
 To take your trundle as ye used to be;  
 To take right ways, as Jenny should have ta'en,  
 Or headlong run, and be a second Jane;  
 For by one thoughtless girl that's acted ill  
 A thousand may be guided if they will:  
 As oft mong folks to labour bustling on,  
 We mark the foremost kick against a stone,  
 Or stumble oer a stile he meant to climb,  
 While hind ones see and shun the fall in time.  
 But ye, I will be bound, like far the best  
 Love's tickling nick-nacks and the laughing jest,  
 And ten times sooner than be warned by me,  
 Would each be sitting on some fellow's knee,  
 Sooner believe the lies wild chaps will tell  
 Than old dames' cautions, who would wish ye well:  
 So have your wills."—She pinched her box again,  
 And ceased her tale, and listened to the rain,  
 Which still as usual pattered fast around,  
 And bowed the bent-head loaded to the ground;  
 While larks, their naked nest by force forsook,  
 Pruned their wet wings in bushes by the brook.

The maids, impatient now old Goody ceased,  
 As restless children from the school released,  
 Right gladly proving, what she'd just foretold,  
 That young ones' stories were preferred to old,  
 Turn to the whisperings of their former joy,  
 That oft deceive, but very rarely cloy.

## IN HILLY-WOOD

How sweet to be thus nestling deep in boughs,  
Upon an ashen stoven pillowing me;  
Faintly are heard the ploughmen at their ploughs,  
But not an eye can find its way to see.  
The sunbeams scarce molest me with a smile,  
So thickly the leafy armies gather round;  
And where they do, the breeze blows cool the while,  
Their leafy shadows dancing on the ground.  
Full many a flower, too, wishing to be seen,  
Perks up its head the hiding grass between,—  
In mid-wood silence, thus, how sweet to be;  
Where all the noises, that on peace intrude,  
Come from the chittering cricket, bird, and bee,  
Whose songs have charms to sweeten solitude.

## THE ANTS

What wonder strikes the curious, while he views  
The black ant's city, by a rotten tree,  
Or woodland bank! In ignorance we muse:  
Pausing, annoyed,—we know not what we see,  
Such government and thought there seem to be;  
Some looking on, and urging some to toil,  
Dragging their loads of bent-stalks slavishly:  
And what's more wonderful, when big loads foil  
One ant or two to carry, quickly then  
A swarm flock round to help their fellow-men.  
Surely they speak a language whisperingly,  
Too fine for us to hear; and sure their ways  
Prove they have kings and laws, and that they be  
Deformed remnants of the Fairy-days.

## TO ANNA THREE YEARS OLD

My Anna, summer laughs in mirth,  
And we will of the party be,  
And leave the crickets in the hearth  
For green fields' merry minstrelsy.

I see thee now with little hand  
Catch at each object passing bye,  
The happiest thing in all the land  
Except the bee and butterfly.

\* \* \* \* \*

And limpid brook that leaps along,  
Gilt with the summer's burnished gleam,  
Will stop thy little tale or song  
To gaze upon its crimping stream.

Thou'lt leave my hand with eager speed  
The new discovered things to see—  
The old pond with its water weed  
And danger-daring willow tree,  
Who leans an ancient invalid  
Oer spots where deepest waters be.

In sudden shout and wild surprise  
I hear thy simple wonderment,  
As new things meet thy childish eyes  
And wake some innocent intent;

As bird or bee or butterfly  
Bounds through the crowd of merry leaves  
And starts the rapture of thine eye  
To run for what it neer achieves.

But thou art on the bed of pain,  
So tells each poor forsaken toy.  
Ah, could I see that happy hour  
When these shall be thy heart's employ,  
And see thee toddle oer the plain,  
And stoop for flowers, and shout for joy.

## FROM "THE PARISH: A SATIRE"

### I

In politics and politicians' lies  
 The modern farmer waxes wondrous wise;  
 Opinionates with wisdom all compact,  
 And een could tell a nation how to act;  
 Throws light on darkness with excessive skill,  
 Knows who acts well and whose designs are ill,  
 Proves half the members nought but bribery's tools,  
 And calls the past a dull dark age of fools.

As wise as Solomon they read the news,  
 Not with their blind forefathers' simple views,  
 Who read of wars, and wished that wars would cease,  
 And blessed the King, and wished his country peace;  
 Who marked the weight of each fat sheep and ox,  
 The price of grain and rise and fall of stocks;  
 Who thought it learning how to buy and sell,  
 And him a wise man who could manage well.  
 No, not with such old-fashioned, idle views  
 Do these newsmongers traffic with the news.  
 They read of politics and not of grain,  
 And speechify and comment and explain,  
 And know so much of Parliament and state  
 You'd think they're members when you heard them prate;  
 And know so little of their farms the while  
 They can but urge a wiser man to smile.

### II

A thing all consequence here takes the lead,  
 Reigning knight-errant oer this dirty breed—  
 A bailiff he, and who so great to brag  
 Of law and all its terrors as Bumtagg;  
 Fawning a puppy at his master's side  
 And frowning like a wolf on all beside;  
 Who fattens best where sorrow worst appears  
 And feeds on sad misfortune's bitterest tears?  
 Such is Bumtagg the bailiff to a hair,  
 The worshipper and demon of despair,  
 Who waits and hopes and wishes for success

At every nod and signal of distress,  
Happy at heart, when storms begin to boil,  
To seek the shipwreck and to share the spoil.  
Brave is this Bumtagg, match him if you can;  
For there's none like him living—save his man.

As every animal assists his kind  
Just so are these in blood and business joined;  
Yet both in different colours hide their art,  
And each as suits his ends transacts his part.  
One keeps the heart-bred villain full in sight,  
The other cants and acts the hypocrite,  
Smoothing the deed where law sharks set their gin  
Like a coy dog to draw misfortune in.  
But both will chuckle oer their prisoners' sighs  
And are as blest as spiders over flies.  
Such is Bumtagg, whose history I resign,  
As other knaves wait room to stink and shine;  
And, as the meanest knave a dog can brag,  
Such is the lurcher that assists Bumtagg.

## NOBODY COMETH TO WOO

On Martinmas eve the dogs did bark,  
 And I opened the window to see,  
 When every maiden went by with her spark  
 But neer a one came to me.  
 And O dear what will become of me?  
 And O dear what shall I do,  
 When nobody whispers to marry me—  
 Nobody cometh to woo?

None's born for such troubles as I be:  
 If the sun wakens first in the morn  
 "Lazy hussy" my parents both call me,  
 And I must abide by their scorn,  
 For nobody cometh to marry me,  
 Nobody cometh to woo,  
 So here in distress must I tarry me—  
 What can a poor maiden do?

If I sigh through the window when Jerry  
 The ploughman goes by, I grow bold;  
 And if I'm disposed to be merry,  
 My parents do nothing but scold;  
 And Jerry the clown, and no other,  
 Eer cometh to marry or woo;  
 They think me the moral of mother  
 And judge me a terrible shrew.

For mother she hateth all fellows,  
 And spinning's my father's desire,  
 While the old cat growls bass with the bellows  
 If eer I hitch up to the fire.  
 I make the whole house out of humour,  
 I wish nothing else but to please,  
 Would fortune but bring a new comer  
 To marry, and make me at ease!

When I've nothing my leisure to hinder  
 I scarce get as far as the eaves;  
 Her head's instant out of the window  
 Calling out like a press after thieves.  
 The young men all fall to remarking,

And laugh till they're weary to see't,  
While the dogs at the noise begin barking,  
And I slink in with shame from the street.

My mother's aye jealous of loving,  
My father's aye jealous of play,  
So what with them both there's no moving,  
I'm in durance for life and a day.  
O who shall I get for to marry me?  
Who will have pity to woo?  
Tis death any longer to tarry me,  
And what shall a poor maiden do?



## DISTANT HILLS

What is there in those distant hills  
 My fancy longs to see,  
 That many a mood of joy instils?  
 Say what can fancy be?

Do old oaks thicken all the woods,  
 With weeds and brakes as here?  
 Does common water make the floods,  
 That's common everywhere?

Is grass the green that clothes the ground?  
 Are springs the common springs?  
 Daisies and cowslips dropping round,  
 Are such the flowers she brings?

\* \* \* \* \*

Are cottages of mud and stone,  
 By valley wood and glen,  
 And their calm dwellers little known  
 Men, and but common men,

That drive afield with carts and ploughs?  
 Such men are common here,  
 And pastoral maidens milking cows  
 Are dwelling everywhere.

If so my fancy idly clings  
 To notions far away,  
 And longs to roam for common things  
 All round her every day,

Right idle would the journey be  
 To leave one's home so far,  
 And see the moon I now can see  
 And every little star.

And have they there a night and day,  
 And common counted hours?  
 And do they see so far away  
 This very moon of ours?

\* \* \* \* \*

I mark him climb above the trees  
With one small [comrade] star,  
And think me in my reveries—  
He cannot shine so far.

\* \* \* \* \*

The poets in the tales they tell  
And with their happy powers  
Have made lands where their fancies dwell  
Seem better lands than ours.

Why need I sigh far hills to see  
If grass is their array,  
While here the little paths go through  
The greenest every day?

Such fancies fill the restless mind,  
At once to cheat and cheer  
With thought and semblance undefined,  
Nowhere and everywhere.

## THE STRANGER

When trouble haunts me, need I sigh?  
 No, rather smile away despair;  
 For those have been more sad than I,  
 With burthens more than I could bear;  
 Aye, gone rejoicing under care  
 Where I had sunk in black despair.

When pain disturbs my peace and rest,  
 Am I a hopeless grief to keep,  
 When some have slept on torture's breast  
 And smiled as in the sweetest sleep,  
 Aye, peace on thorns, in faith forgiven,  
 And pillowed on the hope of heaven?

Though low and poor and broken down,  
 Am I to think myself distress?  
 No, rather laugh where others frown  
 And think my being truly blest;  
 For others I can daily see  
 More worthy riches worse than me.

Aye, once a stranger blest the earth  
 Who never caused a heart to mourn,  
 Whose very voice gave sorrow mirth—  
 And how did earth his worth return?  
 It spurned him from its lowliest lot,  
 The meanest station owned him not;

An outcast thrown in sorrow's way,  
 A fugitive that knew no sin,  
 Yet in lone places forced to stray—  
 Men would not take the stranger in.  
 Yet peace, though much himself he mourned,  
 Was all to others he returned.

\* \* \* \* \*

His presence was a peace to all,  
 He bade the sorrowful rejoice.  
 Pain turned to pleasure at his call,  
 Health lived and issued from his voice.

He healed the sick and sent abroad  
The dumb rejoicing in the Lord.

The blind met daylight in his eye,  
The joys of everlasting day;  
The sick found health in his reply;  
The cripple threw his crutch away.  
Yet he with troubles did remain  
And suffered poverty and pain.

Yet none could say of wrong he did,  
And scorn was ever standing by;  
Accusers by their conscience chid,  
When proof was sought, made no reply.  
Yet without sin he suffered more  
Than ever sinners did before.

## SONG'S ETERNITY

What is song's eternity?  
 Come and see.  
 Can it noise and bustle be?  
 Come and see.  
 Praises sung or praises said  
 Can it be?  
 Wait awhile and these are dead—  
 Sigh, sigh;  
 Be they high or lowly bred They die.

What is song's eternity?  
 Come and see.  
 Melodies of earth and sky,  
 Here they be.  
 Song once sung to Adam's ears  
 Can it be?  
 Ballads of six thousand years  
 Thrive, thrive;  
 Songs awaken with the spheres  
 Alive.

Mighty songs that miss decay,  
 What are they?  
 Crowds and cities pass away  
 Like a day.  
 Books are out and books are read;  
 What are they?  
 Years will lay them with the dead—  
 Sigh, sigh;  
 Trifles unto nothing wed,  
 They die.

Dreamers, mark the honey bee;  
 Mark the tree  
 Where the blue cap "*tootle tee*"  
 Sings a glee  
 Sung to Adam and to Eve  
 Here they be.  
 When floods covered every bough,  
 Noah's ark

Heard that ballad singing now;  
Hark, hark,

*"Tootle tootle tootle tee"—*

Can it be  
Pride and fame must shadows be?  
Come and see—  
Every season own her own;  
Bird and bee  
Sing creation's music on;  
Nature's glee  
Is in every mood and tone  
Eternity.

## THE OLD COTTAGERS

The little cottage stood alone, the pride  
 Of solitude surrounded every side.  
 Bean fields in blossom almost reached the wall;  
 A garden with its hawthorn hedge was all  
 The space between.—Green light did pass  
 Through one small window, where a looking-glass  
 Placed in the parlour, richly there revealed  
 A spacious landscape and a blooming field.  
 The pasture cows that herded on the moor  
 Printed their footsteps to the very door,  
 Where little summer flowers with seasons blow  
 And scarcely gave the eldern leave to grow.  
 The cuckoo that one listens far away  
 Sung in the orchard trees for half the day;  
 And where the robin lives, the village guest,  
 In the old weedy hedge the leafy nest  
 Of the coy nightingale was yearly found,  
 Safe from all eyes as in the loneliest ground;  
 And little chats that in bean stalks will lie  
 A nest with cobwebs there will build, and fly  
 Upon the kidney bean that twines and towers  
 Up little poles in wreaths of scarlet flowers.

There a lone couple lived, secluded there  
 From all the world considers joy or care,  
 Lived to themselves, a long lone journey trod,  
 And through their Bible talked aloud to God;  
 While one small close and cow their wants maintained,  
 But little needing, and but little gained.  
 Their neighbour's name was peace, with her they went,  
 With tottering age, and dignified content,  
 Through a rich length of years and quiet days,  
 And filled the neighbouring village with their praise.

## YOUNG LAMBS

The spring is coming by a many signs;  
The trays are up, the hedges broken down,  
That fenced the haystack, and the remnant shines  
Like some old antique fragment weathered brown.  
And where suns peep, in every sheltered place,  
The little early buttercups unfold  
A glittering star or two—till many trace  
The edges of the blackthorn clumps in gold.  
And then a little lamb bolts up behind  
The hill and wags his tail to meet the yoe,  
And then another, sheltered from the wind,  
Lies all his length as dead—and lets me go  
Close by and never stirs but baking lies,  
With legs stretched out as though he could not rise.



## EARLY NIGHTINGALE

When first we hear the shy-come nightingales,  
They seem to mutter oer their songs in fear,  
And, climb we eer so soft the spinney rails,  
All stops as if no bird was anywhere.  
The kindled bushes with the young leaves thin  
Let curious eyes to search a long way in,  
Until impatience cannot see or hear  
The hidden music; gets but little way  
Upon the path—when up the songs begin,  
Full loud a moment and then low again.  
But when a day or two confirms her stay  
Boldly she sings and loud for half the day;  
And soon the village brings the woodman's tale  
Of having heard the newcome nightingale.

## WINTER WALK

The holly bush, a sober lump of green,  
Shines through the leafless shrubs all brown and grey,  
And smiles at winter be it eer so keen  
With all the leafy luxury of May.  
And O it is delicious, when the day  
In winter's loaded garment keenly blows  
And turns her back on sudden falling snows,  
To go where gravel pathways creep between  
Arches of evergreen that scarce let through  
A single feather of the driving storm;  
And in the bitterest day that ever blew  
The walk will find some places still and warm  
Where dead leaves rustle sweet and give alarm  
To little birds that flirt and start away.

## THE SOLDIER

Home furthest off grows dearer from the way;  
And when the army in the Indias lay  
Friends' letters coming from his native place  
Were like old neighbours with their country face.  
And every opportunity that came  
Opened the sheet to gaze upon the name  
Of that loved village where he left his sheep  
For more contented peaceful folk to keep;  
And friendly faces absent many a year  
Would from such letters in his mind appear.  
And when his pockets, chafing through the case,  
Wore it quite out ere others took the place,  
Right loath to be of company bereft  
He kept the fragments while a bit was left.

## PLOUGHMAN SINGING

Here morning in the ploughman's songs is met  
Ere yet one footstep shows in all the sky,  
And twilight in the east, a doubt as yet,  
Shows not her sleeve of grey to know her bye.  
Woke early, I arose and thought that first  
In winter time of all the world was I.  
The old owls might have hallooed if they durst,  
But joy just then was up and whistled bye  
A merry tune which I had known full long,  
But could not to my memory wake it back,  
Until the ploughman changed it to the song.  
O happiness, how simple is thy track.  
—Tinged like the willow shoots, the east's young brow  
Glowes red and finds thee singing at the plough.

## SPRING'S MESSENGERS

Where slanting banks are always with the sun  
The daisy is in blossom even now;  
And where warm patches by the hedges run  
The cottager when coming home from plough  
Brings home a cowslip root in flower to set.  
Thus ere the Christmas goes the spring is met  
Setting up little tents about the fields  
In sheltered spots.—Primroses when they get  
Behind the wood's old roots, where ivy shields  
Their crimped, curdled leaves, will shine and hide.  
Cart ruts and horses' footings scarcely yield  
A slur for boys, just crizzled and that's all.  
Frost shoots his needles by the small dyke side,  
And snow in scarce a feather's seen to fall.

## LETTER IN VERSE

Like boys that run behind the loaded wain  
For the mere joy of riding back again,  
When summer from the meadow carts the hay  
And school hours leave them half a day to play;  
So I with leisure on three sides a sheet  
Of foolscap dance with poesy's measured feet,  
Just to ride post upon the wings of time  
And kill a care, to friendship turned in rhyme.  
The muse's gallop hurries me in sport  
With much to read and little to divert,  
And I, amused, with less of wit than will,  
Run till I tire.—And so to cheat her still.  
Like children running races who shall be  
First in to touch the orchard wall or tree,  
The last half way behind, by distance vext,  
Turns short, determined to be first the next;  
So now the muse has run me hard and long—  
I'll leave at once her races and her song;  
And, turning round, laugh at the letter's close  
And beat her out by ending it in prose.

## SNOW STORM

What a night! The wind howls, hisses, and but stops  
To howl more loud, while the snow volley keeps  
Incessant batter at the window pane,  
Making our comfort feel as sweet again;  
And in the morning, when the tempest drops,  
At every cottage door mountainous heaps  
Of snow lie drifted, that all entrance stops  
Untill the beesom and the shovel gain  
The path, and leave a wall on either side.  
The shepherd rambling valleys white and wide  
With new sensations his old memory fills,  
When hedges left at night, no more descried,  
Are turned to one white sweep of curving hills,  
And trees turned bushes half their bodies hide.

The boy that goes to fodder with surprise  
Walks oer the gate he opened yesternight.  
The hedges all have vanished from his eyes;  
Een some tree tops the sheep could reach to bite.  
The novel scene emboldens new delight,  
And, though with cautious steps his sports begin,  
He bolder shuffles the huge hills of snow,  
Till down he drops and plunges to the chin,  
And struggles much and oft escape to win—  
Then turns and laughs but dare not further go;  
For deep the grass and bushes lie below,  
Where little birds that soon at eve went in  
With heads tucked in their wings now pine for day  
And little feel boys oer their heads can stray.

## FIRWOOD

The fir trees taper into twigs and wear  
The rich blue green of summer all the year,  
Softening the roughest tempest almost calm  
And offering shelter ever still and warm  
To the small path that towels underneath,  
Where loudest winds—almost as summer's breath—  
Scarce fan the weed that lingers green below  
When others out of doors are lost in frost and snow.  
And sweet the music trembles on the ear  
As the wind suthers through each tiny spear,  
Makeshifts for leaves; and yet, so rich they show,  
Winter is almost summer where they grow.



## GRASSHOPPERS

Grasshoppers go in many a thumming spring  
And now to stalks of tasseled sow-grass cling,  
That shakes and swees awhile, but still keeps straight;  
While arching oxeye doubles with his weight.  
Next on the cat-tail-grass with farther bound  
He springs, that bends until they touch the ground.

## FIELD PATH

The beams in blossom with their spots of jet  
Smelt sweet as gardens wheresoever met;  
The level meadow grass was in the swath;  
The hedge briar rose hung right across the path,  
White over with its flowers—the grass that lay  
Bleaching beneath the twittering heat to hay  
Smelt so deliciously, the puzzled bee  
Went wondering where the honey sweets could be;  
And passer-bye along the level rows  
Stoopt down and whipt a bit beneath his nose.

## COUNTRY LETTER

Dear brother robin this comes from us all  
With our kind love and could Gip write and all  
Though but a dog he'd have his love to spare  
For still he knows and by your corner chair  
The moment he comes in he lyes him down and seems to fancy you are in the town.  
This leaves us well in health thank God for that  
For old acquaintance Sue has kept your hat  
Which mother brushes ere she lays it bye and every sunday goes upstairs to cry  
Jane still is yours till you come back agen and neer so much as dances with the men  
and ned the woodman every week comes in and asks about you kindly as our kin  
and he with this and goody Thompson sends  
Remembrances with those of all our friends  
Father with us sends love untill he hears and mother she has nothing but her tears  
Yet wishes you like us in health the same and longs to see a letter with your name  
So loving brother don't forget to write  
Old Gip lies on the hearth stone every night  
Mother can't bear to turn him out of doors and never noises now of dirty floors  
Father will laugh but lets her have her way and  
Gip for kindness get a double pay  
So Robin write and let us quickly see  
You don't forget old friends no more than we  
Nor let my mother have so much to blame  
To go three journeys ere your letter came.

## FROM "JANUARY"

Supper removed, the mother sits,  
 And tells her tales by starts and fits.  
 Not willing to lose time or toil,  
 She knits or sews, and talks the while  
 Something, that may be warnings found  
 To the young listeners gaping round—  
 Of boys who in her early day  
 Strolled to the meadow-lake to play,  
 Where willows, oer the bank inclined  
 Sheltered the water from the wind,  
 And left it scarcely crizzled oer—  
 When one sank in, to rise no more!  
 And how, upon a market-night,  
 When not a star bestowed its light,  
 A farmer's shepherd, oer his glass,  
 Forgot that he had woods to pass:  
 And having sold his master's sheep,  
 Was overta'en by darkness deep.  
 How, coming with his startled horse,  
 To where two roads a hollow cross;  
 Where, lone guide when a stranger strays,  
 A white post points four different ways,  
 Beside the woodride's lonely gate  
 A murdering robber lay in wait.  
 The frightened horse, with broken rein,  
 Stood at the stable-door again;  
 But none came home to fill his rack,  
 Or take the saddle from his back;  
 The saddle—it was all he bore—  
 The man was seen alive no more!—  
 In her young days, beside the wood,  
 The gibbet in its terror stood:  
 Though now decayed, tis not forgot,  
 But dreaded as a haunted spot.—

She from her memory oft repeats  
 Witches' dread powers and fairy feats:  
 How one has oft been known to prance  
 In cowcribs, like a coach, to France,  
 And ride on sheep-trays from the fold

A race-horse speed to Burton-hold;  
 To join the midnight mystery's rout,  
 Where witches meet the yews about:  
 And how, when met with unawares,  
 They turn at once to cats or hares,  
 And race along with hellish flight,  
 Now here, now there, now out of sight!—  
 And how the other tiny things  
 Will leave their moonlight meadow-rings,  
 And, unperceived, through key-holes creep,  
 When all around have sunk to sleep,  
 To feast on what the cotter leaves,—  
 Mice are not reckoned greater thieves.  
 They take away, as well as eat,  
 And still the housewife's eye they cheat,  
 In spite of all the folks that swarm  
 In cottage small and larger farm;  
 They through each key-hole pop and pop,  
 Like wasps into a grocer's shop,  
 With all the things that they can win  
 From chance to put their plunder in;—  
 As shells of walnuts, split in two  
 By crows, who with the kernels flew;  
 Or acorn-cups, by stock-doves plucked,  
 Or egg-shells by a cuckoo sucked;  
 With broad leaves of the sycamore  
 They clothe their stolen dainties oer:  
 And when in cellar they regale,  
 Bring hazel-nuts to hold their ale;  
 With bung-holes bored by squirrels well,  
 To get the kernel from the shell;  
 Or maggots a way out to win,  
 When all is gone that grew within;  
 And be the key-holes eer so high,  
 Rush poles a ladder's help supply.  
 Where soft the climbers fearless tread,  
 On spindles made of spiders' thread.  
 And foul, or fair, or dark the night,  
 Their wild-fire lamps are burning bright:  
 For which full many a daring crime  
 Is acted in the summer-time;—  
 When glow-worm found in lanes remote  
 Is murdered for its shining coat,  
 And put in flowers, that nature weaves

With hollow shapes and silken leaves,  
 Such as the Canterbury bell,  
 Serving for lamp or lantern well;  
 Or, following with unwearied watch  
 The flight of one they cannot match,  
 As silence sliveth upon sleep,  
 Or thieves by dozing watch-dogs creep,  
 They steal from Jack-a-Lantern's tails  
 A light, whose guidance never fails  
 To aid them in the darkest night  
 And guide their plundering steps aright.  
 Rattling away in printless tracks,  
 Some, housed on beetles' glossy backs,  
 Go whisking on—and others hie  
 As fast as loaded moths can fly:  
 Some urge, the morning cock to shun,  
 The hardest gallop mice can run,  
 In chariots, lolling at their ease,  
 Made of whateer their fancies please;—  
 Things that in childhood's memory dwell—  
 Scooped crow-pot-stone, or cockle-shell,  
 With wheels at hand of mallow seeds,  
 Where childish sport was stringing beads;  
 And thus equipped, they softly pass  
 Like shadows on the summer-grass,  
 And glide away in troops together  
 Just as the Spring-wind drives a feather.  
 As light as happy dreams they creep,  
 Nor break the feeblest link of sleep:  
 A midge, if in their road a-bed,  
 Feels not the wheels run oer his head,  
 But sleeps till sunrise calls him up,  
 Unconscious of the passing troop,—

Thus dame the winter-night regales  
 With wonder's never-ceasing tales;  
 While in a corner, ill at ease,  
 Or crushing tween their father's knees,  
 The children—silent all the while—  
 And een repressed the laugh or smile—  
 Quake with the ague chills of fear,  
 And tremble though they love to hear;  
 Starting, while they the tales recall,  
 At their own shadows on the wall:

Till the old clock, that strikes unseen  
Behind the picture-pasted screen  
Where Eve and Adam still agree  
To rob Life's fatal apple-tree,  
Counts over bed-time's hour of rest,  
And bids each be sleep's fearful guest.  
She then her half-told tales will leave  
To finish on to-morrow's eve;—  
The children steal away to bed,  
And up the ladder softly tread;  
Scarce daring—from their fearful joys—  
To look behind or make a noise;  
Nor speak a word! but still as sleep  
They secret to their pillows creep,  
And whisper o'er, in terror's way,  
The prayers they dare no louder say;  
Then hide their heads beneath the clothes,  
And try in vain to seek repose:  
While yet, to fancy's sleepless eye,  
Witches on sheep-trays gallop by,  
And fairies, like a rising spark,  
Swarm twittering round them in the dark;  
Till sleep creeps nigh to ease their cares,  
And drops upon them unawares.

## NOVEMBER

The landscape sleeps in mist from morn till noon;  
 And, if the sun looks through, tis with a face  
 Beamless and pale and round, as if the moon,  
 When done the journey of her nightly race,  
 Had found him sleeping, and supplied his place.  
 For days the shepherds in the fields may be,  
 Nor mark a patch of sky—blindfold they trace,  
 The plains, that seem without a bush or tree,  
 Whistling aloud by guess, to flocks they cannot see.

The timid hare seems half its fears to lose,  
 Crouching and sleeping neath its grassy lair,  
 And scarcely startles, though the shepherd goes  
 Close by its home, and dogs are barking there;  
 The wild colt only turns around to stare  
 At passer by, then knaps his hide again;  
 And moody crows beside the road forbear  
 To fly, though pelted by the passing swain;  
 Thus day seems turned to night, and tries to wake in vain.

The owlet leaves her hiding-place at noon,  
 And flaps her grey wings in the doubling light;  
 The hoarse jay screams to see her out so soon,  
 And small birds chirp and startle with affright;  
 Much doth it scare the superstitious wight,  
 Who dreams of sorry luck, and sore dismay;  
 While cow-boys think the day a dream of night,  
 And oft grow fearful on their lonely way,  
 Fancying that ghosts may wake, and leave their graves by day.

Yet but awhile the slumbering weather flings  
 Its murky prison round—then winds wake loud;  
 With sudden stir the startled forest sings  
 Winter's returning song-cloud races cloud.  
 And the horizon throws away its shroud,  
 Sweeping a stretching circle from the eye;  
 Storms upon storms in quick succession crowd,  
 And oer the sameness of the purple sky  
 Heaven paints, with hurried hand, wild hues of every dye.



At length it comes among the forest oaks,  
 With sobbing ebbs, and uproar gathering high;  
 The scared, hoarse raven on its cradle croaks,  
 And stockdove-flocks in hurried terrors fly,  
 While the blue hawk hangs o'er them in the sky.—  
 The hedger hastens from the storm begun,  
 To seek a shelter that may keep him dry;  
 And foresters low bent, the wind to shun,  
 Scarce hear amid the strife the poacher's muttering gun.

The ploughman hears its humming rage begin,  
 And hies for shelter from his naked toil;  
 Buttoning his doublet closer to his chin,  
 He bends and scampers o'er the elting soil,  
 While clouds above him in wild fury boil,  
 And winds drive heavily the beating rain;  
 He turns his back to catch his breath awhile,  
 Then ekes his speed and faces it again,  
 To seek the shepherd's hut beside the rushy plain.

The boy, that scareth from the spiry wheat  
 The melancholy crow—in hurry weaves,  
 Beneath an ivied tree, his sheltering seat,  
 Of rushy flags and sedges tied in sheaves,  
 Or from the field a shock of stubble thieves.  
 There he doth dithering sit, and entertain  
 His eyes with marking the storm-driven leaves;  
 Oft spying nests where he spring eggs had ta'en,  
 And wishing in his heart twas summer-time again.

Thus wears the month along, in checkered moods,  
 Sunshine and shadows, tempests loud, and calms;  
 One hour dies silent o'er the sleepy woods,  
 The next wakes loud with unexpected storms;  
 A dreary nakedness the field deforms—  
 Yet many a rural sound, and rural sight,  
 Lives in the village still about the farms,  
 Where toil's rude uproar hums from morn till night  
 Noises, in which the ears of industry delight.

At length the stir of rural labour's still,  
 And industry her care awhile foregoes;  
 When winter comes in earnest to fulfil  
 His yearly task, at bleak November's close,  
 And stops the plough, and hides the field in snows;

When frost locks up the stream in chill delay  
And mellows on the hedge the jetty sloes,  
For little birds—then toil hath time for play,  
And nought but threshers' flails awake the dreary day.

## THE FENS

Wandering by the river's edge,  
 I love to rustle through the sedge  
 And through the woods of reed to tear  
 Almost as high as bushes are.  
 Yet, turning quick with shudder chill,  
 As danger ever does from ill,  
 Fear's moment ague quakes the blood,  
 While plop the snake coils in the flood  
 And, hissing with a forked tongue,  
 Across the river winds along.  
 In coat of orange, green, and blue  
 Now on a willow branch I view,  
 Grey waving to the sunny gleam,  
 Kingfishers watch the ripple stream  
 For little fish that nimble bye  
 And in the gravel shallows lie.

Eddies run before the boats,  
 Gurgling where the fisher floats,  
 Who takes advantage of the gale  
 And hoists his handkerchief for sail  
 On osier twigs that form a mast—  
 While idly lies, nor wanted more,  
 The spirit that pushed him on before.

There's not a hill in all the view,  
 Save that a forked cloud or two  
 Upon the verge of distance lies  
 And into mountains cheats the eyes.  
 And as to trees the willows wear  
 Lopped heads as high as bushes are;  
 Some taller things the distance shrouds  
 That may be trees or stacks or clouds  
 Or may be nothing; still they wear  
 A semblance where there's nought to spare.

Among the tawny tasselled reed  
 The ducks and ducklings float and feed.  
 With head oft dabbing in the flood  
 They fish all day the weedy mud,

And tumbler-like are bobbing there,  
Heels topsy turvy in the air.

The geese in troops come droving up,  
Nibble the weeds, and take a sup;  
And, closely puzzled to agree,  
Chatter like gossips over tea.  
The gander with his scarlet nose  
When strife's at height will interpose;  
And, stretching neck to that and this,  
With now a mutter, now a hiss,  
A nibble at the feathers too,  
A sort of "pray be quiet do,"  
And turning as the matter mends,  
He stills them into mutual friends;  
Then in a sort of triumph sings  
And throws the water oer his wings.

Ah, could I see a spinney nigh,  
A puddock riding in the sky  
Above the oaks with easy sail  
On stilly wings and forked tail,  
Or meet a heath of furze in flower,  
I might enjoy a quiet hour,  
Sit down at rest, and walk at ease,  
And find a many things to please.  
But here my fancy's moods admire  
The naked levels till they tire,  
Nor een a molehill cushion meet  
To rest on when I want a seat.

Here's little save the river scene  
And grounds of oats in rustling green  
And crowded growth of wheat and beans,  
That with the hope of plenty leans  
And cheers the farmer's gazing brow,  
Who lives and triumphs in the plough—  
One sometimes meets a pleasant sward  
Of swarthy grass; and quickly marred  
The plough soon turns it into brown,  
And, when again one rambles down  
The path, small hillocks burning lie  
And smoke beneath a burning sky.  
Green paddocks have but little charms  
With gain the merchandise of farms;

And, muse and marvel where we may,  
Gain mars the landscape every day—  
The meadow grass turned up and copt,  
The trees to stumpy dotterels lopt,  
The hearth with fuel to supply  
For rest to smoke and chatter bye;  
Giving the joy of home delights,  
The warmest mirth on coldest nights.  
And so for gain, that joy's repay,  
Change cheats the landscape every day,  
Nor trees nor bush about it grows  
That from the hatchet can repose,  
And the horizon stooping smiles  
Oer treeless fens of many miles.  
Spring comes and goes and comes again  
And all is nakedness and fen.

## SPEAR THISTLE

Where the broad sheepwalk bare and brown  
 [Yields] scant grass pining after showers,  
 And winds go fanning up and down  
 The little strawy bents and nodding flowers,  
 There the huge thistle, spurred with many thorns,  
 The suncrack't upland's russet swells adorns.

Not undevoid of beauty there they come,  
 Armed warriors, waiting neither suns nor showers,  
 Guarding the little clover plots to bloom  
 While sheep nor oxen dare not crop their flowers  
 Unsheathing their own knobs of tawny flowers  
 When summer cometh in her hottest hours.

The pewit, swopping up and down  
 And screaming round the passer bye,  
 Or running o'er the herbage brown  
 With copple crown uplifted high,  
 Loves in its clumps to make a home  
 Where danger seldom cares to come.

The yellowhammer, often prest  
 For spot to build and be unseen,  
 Will in its shelter trust her nest  
 When fields and meadows glow with green;  
 And larks, though paths go closely bye,  
 Will in its shade securely lie.

The partridge too, that scarce can trust  
 The open downs to be at rest,  
 Will in its clumps lie down, and dust  
 And prune its horseshoe-circled breast,  
 And oft in shining fields of green  
 Will lay and raise its brood unseen.

The sheep when hunger presses sore  
 May nip the clover round its nest;  
 But soon the thistle wounding sore  
 Relieves it from each brushing guest,  
 That leaves a bit of wool behind,  
 The yellowhammer loves to find.

The horse will set his foot and bite  
Close to the ground lark's guarded nest  
And snort to meet the prickly sight;  
He fans the feathers of her breast—  
Yet thistles prick so deep that he  
Turns back and leaves her dwelling free.

Its prickly knobs the dews of morn  
Doth bead with dressing rich to see,  
When threads doth hang from thorn to thorn  
Like the small spinner's tapestry;  
And from the flowers a sultry smell  
Comes that agrees with summer well.

The bee will make its bloom a bed,  
The humble bee in tawny brown;  
And one in jacket fringed with red  
Will rest upon its velvet down  
When overtaken in the rain,  
And wait till sunshine comes again.

And there are times when travel goes  
Along the sheep tracks' beaten ways,  
Then pleasure many a praise bestows  
Upon its blossoms' pointed rays,  
When other things are parched beside  
And hot day leaves it in its pride.

## IDLE FAME

I would not wish the burning blaze  
Of fame around a restless world,  
The thunder and the storm of praise  
In crowded tumults heard and hurled.  
I would not be a flower to stand  
The stare of every passer-bye;  
But in some nook of fairyland,  
Seen in the praise of beauty's eye.



## APPROACHING NIGHT

O take this world away from me;  
Its strife I cannot bear to see,  
Its very praises hurt me more  
Than e'en its coldness did before,  
Its hollow ways torment me now  
And start a cold sweat on my brow,  
Its noise I cannot bear to hear,  
Its joy is trouble to my ear,  
Its ways I cannot bear to see,  
Its crowds are solitudes to me.  
O, how I long to be agen  
That poor and independent man,  
With labour's lot from morn to night  
And books to read at candle light;  
That followed labour in the field  
From light to dark when toil could yield  
Real happiness with little gain,  
Rich thoughtless health unknown to pain:  
Though, leaning on my spade to rest,  
I've thought how richer folks were blest  
And knew not quiet was the best.

## SONG

Go with your tauntings, go;  
 Neer think to hurt me so;  
 I'll scoff at your disdain.  
 Cold though the winter blow,  
 When hills are free from snow  
 It will be spring again.

So go, and fare thee well,  
 Nor think ye'll have to tell  
 Of wounded hearts from me,  
 Locked up in your hearts cell.  
 Mine still at home doth dwell  
 In its first liberty.

Bees sip not at one flower,  
 Spring comes not with one shower,  
 Nor shines the sun alone  
 Upon one favoured hour,  
 But with unstinted power  
 Makes every day his own.

And for my freedom's sake  
 With such I'll pattern take,  
 And rove and revel on.  
 Your gall shall never make  
 Me honied paths forsake;  
 So prythee get thee gone.

And when my toil is blest  
 And I find a maid possest  
 Of truth that's not in thee,  
 Like bird that finds its nest  
 I'll stop and take my rest;  
 And love as she loves me.

## FAREWELL AND DEFIANCE TO LOVE

Love and thy vain employs, away  
 From this too oft deluded breast!  
 No longer will I court thy stay,  
 To be my bosom's teasing guest.  
 Thou treacherous medicine, reckoned pure,  
 Thou quackery of the harassed heart,  
 That kills what it pretends to cure,  
 Life's mountebank thou art.

With nostrums vain of boasted powers,  
 That, ta'en, a worse disorder leave;  
 An asp hid in a group of flowers,  
 That bites and stings when few perceive;  
 Thou mock-truce to the troubled mind,  
 Leading it more in sorrow's way,  
 Freedom, that leaves us more confined,  
 I bid thee hence away.

Dost taunt, and deem thy power beyond  
 The resolution reason gave?  
 Tut! Falsity hath snapt each bond,  
 That kept me once thy quiet slave,  
 And made thy snare a spider's thread,  
 Which e'en my breath can break in twain;  
 Nor will I be, like Sampson, led  
 To trust thy wiles again.

I took thee as my staff to guide  
 Me on the road I did pursue,  
 And when my weakness most relied  
 Upon its strength it broke in two.  
 I took thee as my friendly host  
 That counsel might in dangers show,  
 But when I needed thee the most  
 I found thou wert my foe.

Tempt me no more with rosy cheeks,  
 Nor daze my reason with bright eyes;  
 I'm wearied with thy painted freaks,  
 And sicken at such vanities:  
 Be roses fine as eer they will,

They, with the meanest, fade and die,  
 And eyes, though thronged with darts to kill,  
 Share like mortality.

Feed the young bard, that madly sips  
 His nectar-draughts from folly's flowers,  
 Bright eyes, fair cheeks, and ruby lips,  
 Till muses melt to honey showers;  
 Lure him to thrum thy empty lays,  
 While flattery listens to the chimes,  
 Till words themselves grow sick with praise  
 And stop for want of rhymes.

Let such be still thy paramours,  
 And chaunt love's old and idle tune,  
 Robbing the spring of all its flowers,  
 And heaven of all her stars and moon,  
 To gild with dazzling similes  
 Blind folly's vain and empty lay:  
 I'm sobered from such phantasies,  
 So get thee hence away.

Nor bid me sigh for mine own cost,  
 Nor count its loss, for mine annoy,  
 Nor say my stubbornness hath lost  
 A paradise of dainty joy:  
 I'll not believe thee, till I know  
 That sober reason turns an ape,  
 And acts the harlequin, to show  
 That cares in every shape,

Heart-achings, sighs, and grief-wrung tears,  
 Shame-blushes at betrayed distress,  
 Dissembled smiles, and jealous fears,  
 Are nought but real happiness:  
 Then will I mourn what now I brave,  
 And suffer Celia's quirks to be  
 (Like a poor fate-bewilder'd slave,)  
 The rulers of my destiny.

I'll weep and sigh whenever she wills  
 To frown, and when she deigns to smile  
 It shall be cure for all my ills,  
 And, foolish still, I'll laugh the while;  
 But till that comes, I'll bless the rules  
 Experience taught, and deem it wise

To hold thee as the game of fools,  
And all thy tricks despise.

## DEATH

Why should man's high aspiring mind  
 Burn in him with so proud a breath,  
 When all his haughty views can find  
 In this world yields to death?  
 The fair, the brave, the vain, the wise,  
 The rich, the poor, the great, and small,  
 Are each but worm's anatomies  
 To strew his quiet hall.

Power may make many earthly gods,  
 Where gold and bribery's guilt prevails,  
 But death's unwelcome, honest odds  
 Kick o'er the unequal scales.  
 The flattered great may clamours raise  
 Of power, and their own weakness hide,  
 But death shall find unlooked-for ways  
 To end the farce of pride,

An arrow hurtled eer so high,  
 From een a giant's sinewy strength,  
 In Time's untraced eternity  
 Goes but a pigmy length;  
 Nay, whirring from the tortured string,  
 With all its pomp of hurried flight,  
 Tis by the skylark's little wing  
 Outmeasured in its height.

Just so man's boasted strength and power  
 Shall fade before death's lightest stroke,  
 Laid lower than the meanest flower,  
 Whose pride oer-topt the oak;  
 And he who, like a blighting blast,  
 Dispeopled worlds with war's alarms  
 Shall be himself destroyed at last  
 By poor despised worms.

Tyrants in vain their powers secure,  
 And awe slaves' murmurs with a frown,  
 For unawed death at last is sure  
 To sap the babels down.  
 A stone thrown upward to the sky

Will quickly meet the ground agen;  
So men-gods of earth's vanity  
Shall drop at last to men;

And Power and Pomp their all resign,  
Blood-purchased thrones and banquet halls.  
Fate waits to sack Ambition's shrine  
As bare as prison walls,  
Where the poor suffering wretch bows down  
To laws a lawless power hath passed;  
And pride, and power, and king, and clown  
Shall be Death's slaves at last.

Time, the prime minister of Death!  
There's nought can bribe his honest will.  
He stops the richest tyrant's breath  
And lays his mischief still.  
Each wicked scheme for power all stops,  
With grandeurs false and mock display,  
As eve's shades from high mountain tops  
Fade with the rest away.

Death levels all things in his march;  
Nought can resist his mighty strength;  
The palace proud, triumphal arch,  
Shall mete its shadow's length.  
The rich, the poor, one common bed  
Shall find in the unhonoured grave,  
Where weeds shall crown alike the head  
Of tyrant and of slave.

## THE FALLEN ELM

Old elm, that murmured in our chimney top  
 The sweetest anthem autumn ever made  
 And into mellow whispering calms would drop  
 When showers fell on thy many coloured shade  
 And when dark tempests mimic thunder made—  
 While darkness came as it would strangle light  
 With the black tempest of a winter night  
 That rocked thee like a cradle in thy root—  
 How did I love to hear the winds upbraid  
 Thy strength without—while all within was mute.  
 It seasoned comfort to our hearts' desire,  
 We felt thy kind protection like a friend  
 And edged our chairs up closer to the fire,  
 Enjoying comfort that was never penned.  
 Old favourite tree, thou'st seen time's changes lower,  
 Though change till now did never injure thee;  
 For time beheld thee as her sacred dower  
 And nature claimed thee her domestic tree.  
 Storms came and shook thee many a weary hour,  
 Yet steadfast to thy home thy roots have been;  
 Summers of thirst parched round thy homely bower  
 Till earth grew iron—still thy leaves were green.  
 The children sought thee in thy summer shade  
 And made their playhouse rings of stick and stone;  
 The mavis sang and felt himself alone  
 While in thy leaves his early nest was made.  
 And I did feel his happiness mine own,  
 Nought heeding that our friendship was betrayed,  
 Friend not inanimate—though stocks and stones  
 There are, and many formed of flesh and bones.  
 Thou owned a language by which hearts are stirred  
 Deeper than by a feeling clothed in word,  
 And speakest now what's known of every tongue,  
 Language of pity and the force of wrong.  
 What cant assumes, what hypocrites will dare,  
 Speaks home to truth and shows it what they are.  
 I see a picture which thy fate displays  
 And learn a lesson from thy destiny;  
 Self-interest saw thee stand in freedom's ways—



So thy old shadow must a tyrant be.  
 Thou'st heard the knave, abusing those in power,  
 Bawl freedom loud and then oppress the free;  
 Thou'st sheltered hypocrites in many a shower,  
 That when in power would never shelter thee.  
 Thou'st heard the knave supply his canting powers  
 With wrong's illusions when he wanted friends;  
 That bawled for shelter when he lived in showers  
 And when clouds vanished made thy shade amends—  
 With axe at root he felled thee to the ground  
 And barked of freedom—O I hate the sound  
 Time hears its visions speak,—and age sublime  
 Hath made thee a disciple unto time.  
 —It grows the cant term of enslaving tools  
 To wrong another by the name of right;  
 Thus came enclosure—ruin was its guide,  
 But freedom's cottage soon was thrust aside  
 And workhouse prisons raised upon the site.  
 Een nature's dwellings far away from men,  
 The common heath, became the spoiler's prey;  
 The rabbit had not where to make his den  
 And labour's only cow was drove away.  
 No matter—wrong was right and right was wrong,  
 And freedom's bawl was sanction to the song.  
 —Such was thy ruin, music-making elm;  
 The right of freedom was to injure thine:  
 As thou wert served, so would they overwhelm  
 In freedom's name the little that is mine.  
 And there are knaves that brawl for better laws  
 And cant of tyranny in stronger power  
 Who glut their vile unsatiated maws  
 And freedom's birthright from the weak devour.

## SPORT IN THE MEADOWS

Maytime is to the meadows coming in,  
 And cowslip peeps have gotten eer so big,  
 And water blobs and all their golden kin  
 Crowd round the shallows by the striding brig.  
 Daisies and buttercups and ladysmocks  
 Are all abouten shining here and there,  
 Nodding about their gold and yellow locks  
 Like morts of folken flocking at a fair.  
 The sheep and cows are crowding for a share  
 And snatch the blossoms in such eager haste  
 That basket-bearing children running there  
 Do think within their hearts they'll get them all  
 And hoot and drive them from their graceless waste  
 As though there wa'n't a cowslip peep to spare.  
 —For they want some for tea and some for wine  
 And some to maken up a cuckaball  
 To throw across the garland's silken line  
 That reaches oer the street from wall to wall.  
 —Good gracious me, how merrily they fare:  
 One sees a fairer cowslip than the rest,  
 And off they shout—the foremost bidding fair  
 To get the prize—and earnest half and jest  
 The next one pops her down—and from her hand  
 Her basket falls and out her cowslips all  
 Tumble and litter there—the merry band  
 In laughing friendship round about her fall  
 To helpen gather up the littered flowers  
 That she no loss may mourn. And now the wind  
 In frolic mood among the merry hours  
 Wakens with sudden start and tosses off  
 Some untied bonnet on its dancing wings;  
 Away they follow with a scream and laugh,  
 And aye the youngest ever lags behind,  
 Till on the deep lake's very bank it hings.  
 They shout and catch it and then off they start  
 And chase for cowslips merry as before,  
 And each one seems so anxious at the heart  
 As they would even get them all and more.  
 One climbs a molehill for a bunch of may,

One stands on tiptoe for a linnet's nest  
And pricks her hand and throws her flowers away  
And runs for plantain leaves to have it drest.  
So do they run about all the day  
And tease the grass-hid larks from getting rest.  
—Scarce give they time in their unruly haste  
To tie a shoestring that the grass unties—  
And thus they run the meadows' bloom to waste,  
Till even comes and dulls their phantasies,  
When one finds losses out to stifle smiles  
Of silken bonnet-strings—and utters sigh  
O'er garments renten clambering over stiles.  
Yet in the morning fresh afield they hie,  
Bidding the last day's troubles all goodbye;  
When red pied cow again their coming hears,  
And ere they clap the gate she tosses up  
Her head and hastens from the sport she fears:  
The old yoe calls her lamb nor cares to stoop  
To crop a cowslip in their company.  
Thus merrily the little noisy troop  
Along the grass as rude marauders hie,  
For ever noisy and for ever gay  
While keeping in the meadows holiday.

## DEATH

The winds and waters are in his command,  
 Held as a courser in the rider's hand.  
 He lets them loose, they triumph at his will:  
 He checks their course and all is calm and still.  
 Life's hopes waste all to nothingness away  
 As showers at night wash out the steps of day.

\* \* \* \* \*

The tyrant, in his lawless power deterred,  
 Bows before death, tame as a broken sword.  
 One dyeth in his strength and, torn from ease,  
 Groans in death pangs like tempests in the trees.  
 Another from the bitterness of clay  
 Falls calm as storms drop on an autumn day,  
 With noiseless speed as swift as summer light  
 Death slays and keeps her weapons out of sight.

The tyrants that do act the God in clay  
 And for earth's glories throw the heavens away,  
 Whose breath in power did like to thunder sear,  
 When anger hurried on the heels of fear,  
 Whose rage planned hosts of murders at a breath—  
 Here in sound silence sheath their rage in death.

Their feet, that crushed down freedom to its grave  
 And felt the very earth they trod a slave,  
 How quiet here they lie in death's cold arms  
 Without the power to crush the feeble worms  
 Who spite of all the dreadful fears they made  
 Creep there to conquer and are not afraid.

## NATURE'S HYMN TO THE DEITY

All nature owns with one accord  
 The great and universal Lord:  
 The sun proclaims him through the day,  
 The moon when daylight drops away,  
 The very darkness smiles to wear  
 The stars that show us God is there,  
 On moonlight seas soft gleams the sky  
 And "God is with us" waves reply.

Winds breathe from God's abode "we come,"  
 Storms louder own God is their home,  
 And thunder yet with louder call,  
 Sounds "God is mightiest over all";  
 Till earth right loath the proof to miss  
 Echoes triumphantly "He is,"  
 And air and ocean makes reply,  
 God reigns on earth, in air and sky.

All nature owns with one accord  
 The great and universal Lord:  
 Insect and bird and tree and flower—  
 The witnesses of every hour—  
 Are pregnant with his prophesy  
 And "God is with us" all reply.  
 The first link in the mighty plan  
 Is still—and all upbraideth man.

## THE CELLAR DOOR

By the old tavern door on the causey there lay  
 A hogshead of stingo just rolled from a dray,  
 And there stood the blacksmith awaiting a drop  
 As dry as the cinders that lay in his shop;  
 And there stood the cobbler as dry as a bun,  
 Almost crackt like a bucket when left in the sun.  
 He'd whetted his knife upon pendil and hone  
 Till he'd not got a spittle to moisten the stone;  
 So ere he could work—though he'd lost the whole day—  
 He must wait the new broach and bemoisten his clay.

The cellar was empty, each barrel was drained  
 To its dregs—and Sir John like a rebel remained  
 In the street—for removal too powerful and large  
 For two or three topers to take into charge.  
 Odd zooks, said a gipsey, with bellows to mend,  
 Had I strength I would just be for helping a friend  
 To walk on his legs: but a child in the street  
 Had as much power as he to put John on his feet.  
 Then up came the blacksmith: Sir Barley, said he,  
 I should just like to storm your old tower for a spree;

And my strength for your strength and bar your renown  
 I'd soon try your spirit by cracking your crown.  
 And the cobbler he tuckt up his apron and spit  
 In his hands for a burster—but devil a bit  
 Would he move—so as yet they made nothing of land;  
 For there lay the knight like a whale in the sand.  
 Said the tinker: If I could but drink of his vein  
 I should just be as strong and as stubborn again.  
 Push along, said the toper, the cellar's adry:  
 There's nothing to moisten the mouth of a fly.

Says the host, We shall burn out with thirst, he's so big.  
 There's a cag of small swipes half as sour as a wig.  
 In such like extremes, why, extremes will come pat;  
 So let's go and wet all our whistles with that.  
 Says the gipsey, May I never bottom a chair  
 If I drink of small swipes while Sir John's lying there.  
 And the blacksmith he threw off his apron and swore  
 Small swipes should bemoisten his gullet no more:

Let it out on the floor for the dry cock-a-roach—  
And he held up his hammer with threatens to broach

Sir John in his castle without leave or law  
And suck out his blood with a reed or a straw  
Ere he'd soak at the swipes—and he turned him to start,  
Till the host for high treason came down a full quart.  
Just then passed the dandy and turned up his nose:  
They'd fain have him shove, but he looked at his clothes  
And nipt his nose closer and twirled his stick round  
And simpered, 'Tis nuisance to lie on the ground.  
But Bacchus, he laughed from the old tavern sign,  
Saying, Go on, thou shadow, and let the sun shine.

Then again they all tried, and the tinker he swore  
That the hogshead had grown twice as heavy or more.  
Nay nay, said the toper, and reeled as he spoke,  
We're all getting weak, that's the end of the joke.  
The ploughman came up and cut short his old tune,  
Hallooed "woi" to his horses and though it was June  
Said he'd help them an hour ere he'd keep them adry;  
Well done, said the blacksmith with hopes running high;  
He moves, and, by jingo, success to the plough!  
Aye aye, said the cobbler, we'll conquer him now.

The hogshead rolled forward, the toper fell back,  
And the host laughed aloud as his sides they would crack  
To see the old tinker's toil make such a gap  
In his coat as to rend it from collar to flap.  
But the tinker he grumbled and cried Fiddle-dee!  
This garment hath been an old tenant with me;  
And a needle and thread with a little good skill  
When I've leisure will make it stand more weathers still.  
Then crack went his breeks from the hip to the knee  
With his thrusting—no matter; for nothing cared he.

So long as Sir John rolled along to the door,  
He's a chip of our block, said the blacksmith, and swore;  
And as sure as I live to drive nails in a shoe  
He shall have at my cost a full pitcher or two.  
And the toper he hiccuped—which hindered an oath—  
So long as he'd credit, he'd pitcher them both.  
But the host stopt to hint when he'd ordered the dray  
Sir Barleycorn's order was purchase and pay.

And now the old knight is imprisoned and ta'en  
To waste in the tavern man's cellar again.

And now, said the blacksmith, let forfeits come first  
For the insult swipes offered, or his hoops I will burst.  
Here it is, my old hearties—Then drink your thirst full,  
Said the host, for the stingo is worth a strong pull.  
Never fear for your legs if they're broken to-day;  
Winds only blow straws, dust, and feathers away.  
But the cask that is full, like a giant he lies,  
And giants alone can his spirits capsize.  
If he lies in the path, though a king's coming bye,  
John Barleycorn's mighty and there he will lie.

Then the toper sat down with a hiccup and felt  
If he'd still an odd coin in his pocket to melt,  
And he made a wry face, for his pocket was bare.  
—But he laughed and danced up, What, old boy, are you there?  
When he felt that a stiver had got to his knee  
Through a hole in his fob, and right happy was he.  
Says the tinker, I've brawled till no breath I have got  
And not met with twopence to purchase a pot.  
Says the toper, I've powder to charge a long gun,  
And a stiver I've found when I thought I'd got none;

So helping a thirsty old friend in his need  
Is my duty—take heart, thou art welcome indeed.  
Then the smith with his tools in Sir John made a breach,  
And the toper he hiccuped and ended his speech;  
And pulled at the quart, till the snob he declared  
When he went to drink next that the bottom was bared.  
No matter for that, said the toper, and grinned;  
I had but a soak and neer rested for wind.  
That's the law, said the smith, with a look rather vexed,  
But the quart was a forfeit; so pay for the next.

Thus they talked of their skill and their labour till noon  
When the sober man's toil was exactly half done,  
And there the plough lay—people hardly could pass  
And the horses let loose polished up the short grass  
And browsed on the bottle of flags lying there,  
By the gipseys' old budget, for mending a chair.  
The miller's horse tied to the old smithy door  
Stood stamping his feet, by the flies bitten sore,



Awaiting the smith as he wanted a shoe;  
And he stamp't till another fell off and made two:

Till the miller, expecting that all would get loose,  
Went to seek him and cursed him outright for a goose;  
But he dipt his dry beak in the mug once or twice  
And forgot all his passion and toil in a trice.  
And the flybitten horse at the old smithy post  
Might stamp till his shoes and his legs they were lost.  
He sung his old songs and forgot his old mill—  
Blow winds high or low, she might rest her at will.  
And the cobbler, in spite of his bustle for pelf,  
Left the shop all the day to take care of itself.

And the toper who carried his house on his head,  
No wife to be teasing, no bairns to be fed,  
Would sit out the week or the month or the year  
Or a life-time so long as he'd credit for beer.  
The ploughman he talked of his skill as divine,  
How he could plough thurrows as straight as a line;  
And the blacksmith he swore, had he but the command,  
He could shoe the king's hunter the best in the land;  
And the cobbler declared, was his skill but once seen,  
He should soon get an order for shoes from the queen.

But the tinker he swore he could beat them all three,  
For gi' me a pair of old bellows, says he,  
And I'll make them roar out like the wind in a storm  
And make them blow fire out of coal hardly warm.  
The toper said nothing but wished the quart full  
And swore he could toss it all off at a pull.  
Have one, said the tinker; but wit was away,  
When the bet was to bind him he'd nothing to pay.  
And thus in the face of life's sun-and-shower weather  
They drank, bragged, and sung, and got merry together.

The sun he went down—the last gleam from his brow  
Flung a smile of repose on the holiday plough;  
The glooms they approached, and the dews like a rain  
Fell thick and hung pearls on the old sorrel mane  
Of the horse that the miller had brought to be shod,  
And the morning awoke, saw a sight rather odd—  
For a bit of the halter still hung at the door,  
Bit through by the horse now at feed on the moor;

And the old tinker's budget lay still in the weather,  
While all kept on singing and drinking together.

## THE FLITTING

I've left my own old home of homes,  
 Green fields and every pleasant place;  
 The summer like a stranger comes,  
 I pause and hardly know her face.  
 I miss the hazel's happy green,  
 The blue bell's quiet hanging blooms,  
 Where envy's sneer was never seen,  
 Where staring malice never comes.

I miss the heath, its yellow furze,  
 Molehills and rabbit tracks that lead  
 Through beesom, ling, and teasel burrs  
 That spread a wilderness indeed;  
 The woodland oaks and all below  
 That their white powdered branches shield,  
 The mossy paths: the very crow  
 Croaks music in my native field.

I sit me in my corner chair  
 That seems to feel itself from home,  
 And hear bird music here and there  
 From hawthorn hedge and orchard come;  
 I hear, but all is strange and new:  
 I sat on my old bench in June,  
 The sailing puddock's shrill "peelew"  
 On Royce Wood seemed a sweeter tune.

I walk adown the narrow lane,  
 The nightingale is singing now,  
 But like to me she seems at loss  
 For Royce Wood and its shielding bough.  
 I lean upon the window sill,  
 The trees and summer happy seem;  
 Green, sunny green they shine, but still  
 My heart goes far away to dream.

Of happiness, and thoughts arise  
 With home-bred pictures many a one,  
 Green lanes that shut out burning skies  
 And old crooked stiles to rest upon;  
 Above them hangs the maple tree,

Below grass swells a velvet hill,  
 And little footpaths sweet to see  
 Go seeking sweeter places still,

With bye and bye a brook to cross  
 Oer which a little arch is thrown:  
 No brook is here, I feel the loss  
 From home and friends and all alone.

—The stone pit with its shelvy sides  
 Seemed hanging rocks in my esteem;  
 I miss the prospect far and wide  
 From Langley Bush, and so I seem

Alone and in a stranger scene,  
 Far, far from spots my heart esteems,  
 The closen with their ancient green,  
 Heaths, woods, and pastures, sunny streams.  
 The hawthorns here were hung with may,  
 But still they seem in deader green,  
 The sun een seems to lose its way  
 Nor knows the quarter it is in.

I dwell in trifles like a child,  
 I feel as ill becomes a man,  
 And still my thoughts like weedlings wild  
 Grow up to blossom where they can.  
 They turn to places known so long  
 I feel that joy was dwelling there,  
 So home-fed pleasure fills the song  
 That has no present joys to hear.

I read in books for happiness,  
 But books are like the sea to joy,  
 They change—as well give age the glass  
 To hunt its visage when a boy.  
 For books they follow fashions new  
 And throw all old esteems away,  
 In crowded streets flowers never grew,  
 But many there hath died away.

Some sing the poms of chivalry  
 As legends of the ancient time,  
 Where gold and pearls and mystery  
 Are shadows painted for sublime;  
 But passions of sublimity

Belong to plain and simpler things,  
 And David underneath a tree  
 Sought when a shepherd Salem's springs,

Where moss did into cushions spring,  
 Forming a seat of velvet hue,  
 A small unnoticed trifling thing  
 To all but heaven's hailing dew.  
 And David's crown hath passed away,  
 Yet poesy breathes his shepherd-skill,  
 His palace lost—and to this day  
 The little moss is blossoming still.

Strange scenes mere shadows are to me,  
 Vague impersonifying things;  
 I love with my old haunts to be  
 By quiet woods and gravel springs,  
 Where little pebbles wear as smooth  
 As hermits' beads by gentle floods,  
 Whose noises do my spirits soothe  
 And warm them into singing moods.

Here every tree is strange to me,  
 All foreign things where eer I go,  
 There's none where boyhood made a swee  
 Or clambered up to rob a crow.  
 No hollow tree or woodland bower  
 Well known when joy was beating high,  
 Where beauty ran to shun a shower  
 And love took pains to keep her dry,

And laid the sheaf upon the ground  
 To keep her from the dripping grass,  
 And ran for stocks and set them round  
 Till scarce a drop of rain could pass  
 Through; where the maidens they reclined  
 And sung sweet ballads now forgot,  
 Which brought sweet memories to the mind,  
 But here no memory knows them not.

There have I sat by many a tree  
 And leaned oer many a rural stile,  
 And conned my thoughts as joys to me,  
 Nought heeding who might frown or smile.  
 Twas nature's beauty that inspired

My heart with rapture not its own,  
 And she's a fame that never tires;  
 How could I feel myself alone?

No, pasture molehills used to lie  
 And talk to me of sunny days,  
 And then the glad sheep resting bye  
 All still in ruminating praise  
 Of summer and the pleasant place  
 And every weed and blossom too  
 Was looking upward in my face  
 With friendship's welcome "how do ye do?"

All tenants of an ancient place  
 And heirs of noble heritage,  
 Coeval they with Adam's race  
 And blest with more substantial age.  
 For when the world first saw the sun  
 These little flowers beheld him too,  
 And when his love for earth begun  
 They were the first his smiles to woo.

There little lambtoe bunches springs  
 In red tinged and begolden dye  
 For ever, and like China kings  
 They come but never seem to die.  
 There may-bloom with its little threads  
 Still comes upon the thorny bowers  
 And neer forgets those prickly heads  
 Like fairy pins amid the flowers.

And still they bloom as on the day  
 They first crowned wilderness and rock,  
 When Abel haply wreathed with may  
 The firstlings of his little flock,  
 And Eve might from the matted thorn  
 To deck her lone and lovely brow  
 Reach that same rose that heedless scorn  
 Misnames as the dog rosey now.

Give me no high-flown fangled things,  
 No haughty pomp in marching chime,  
 Where muses play on golden strings  
 And splendour passes for sublime,  
 Where cities stretch as far as fame

And fancy's straining eye can go,  
 And piled until the sky for shame  
 Is stooping far away below.

I love the verse that mild and bland  
 Breathes of green fields and open sky,  
 I love the muse that in her hand  
 Bears flowers of native poesy;  
 Who walks nor skips the pasture brook  
 In scorn, but by the drinking horse  
 Leans oer its little brig to look  
 How far the sallows lean across,

And feels a rapture in her breast  
 Upon their root-fringed grains to mark  
 A hermit morehen's sedgy nest  
 Just like a naiad's summer bark.  
 She counts the eggs she cannot reach  
 Admires the spot and loves it well,  
 And yearns, so nature's lessons teach,  
 Amid such neighbourhoods to dwell.

I love the muse who sits her down  
 Upon the molehill's little lap,  
 Who feels no fear to stain her gown  
 And pauses by the hedgerow gap;  
 Not with that affectation, praise  
 Of song, to sing and never see  
 A field flower grown in all her days  
 Or een a forest's aged tree.

Een here my simple feelings nurse  
 A love for every simple weed,  
 And een this little shepherd's purse  
 Grieves me to cut it up; indeed  
 I feel at times a love and joy  
 For every weed and every thing,  
 A feeling kindred from a boy,  
 A feeling brought with every Spring.

And why? this shepherd's purse that grows  
 In this strange spot, in days gone bye  
 Grew in the little garden rows  
 Of my old home now left; and I  
 Feel what I never felt before,

This weed an ancient neighbour here,  
And though I own the spot no more  
Its every trifle makes it dear.

The ivy at the parlour end,  
The woodbine at the garden gate,  
Are all and each affection's friend  
That render parting desolate.  
But times will change and friends must part  
And nature still can make amends;  
Their memory lingers round the heart  
Like life whose essence is its friends.

Time looks on pomp with vengeful mood  
Or killing apathy's disdain;  
So where old marble cities stood  
Poor persecuted weeds remain.  
She feels a love for little things  
That very few can feel beside,  
And still the grass eternal springs  
Where castles stood and grandeur died.



## REMEMBRANCES

Summer's pleasures they are gone like to visions every one,  
 And the cloudy days of autumn and of winter cometh on.  
 I tried to call them back, but unbidden they are gone  
 Far away from heart and eye and forever far away.  
 Dear heart, and can it be that such raptures meet decay?  
 I thought them all eternal when by Langley Bush I lay,  
 I thought them joys eternal when I used to shout and play  
 On its bank at "clink and bandy," "chock" and "taw" and "ducking stone,"  
 Where silence sitteth now on the wild heath as her own  
 Like a ruin of the past all alone.

When I used to lie and sing by old Eastwell's boiling spring,  
 When I used to tie the willow boughs together for a swing,  
 And fish with crooked pins and thread and never catch a thing,  
 With heart just like a feather, now as heavy as a stone;  
 When beneath old Lea Close oak I the bottom branches broke  
 To make our harvest cart like so many working folk,  
 And then to cut a straw at the brook to have a soak.  
 O I never dreamed of parting or that trouble had a sting,  
 Or that pleasures like a flock of birds would ever take to wing,  
 Leaving nothing but a little naked spring.

When jumping time away on old Crossberry Way,  
 And eating awes like sugarplums ere they had lost the may,  
 And skipping like a leveret before the peep of day  
 On the roly poly up and downs of pleasant Swordy Well,  
 When in Round Oak's narrow lane as the south got black again  
 We sought the hollow ash that was shelter from the rain,  
 With our pockets full of peas we had stolen from the grain;  
 How delicious was the dinner time on such a showery day!  
 O words are poor receipts for what time hath stole away,  
 The ancient pulpit trees and the play.

When for school oer Little Field with its brook and wooden brig,  
 Where I swaggered like a man though I was not half so big,  
 While I held my little plough though twas but a willow twig,  
 And drove my team along made of nothing but a name,  
 "Gee hep" and "hoit" and "woi"—O I never call to mind  
 These pleasant names of places but I leave a sigh behind,  
 While I see little mouldiwarp hang sweeing to the wind  
 On the only aged willow that in all the field remains,

And nature hides her face while they're sweeing in their chains  
And in a silent murmuring complains.

Here was commons for their hills, where they seek for freedom still,  
Though every common's gone and though traps are set to kill  
The little homeless miners—O it turns my bosom chill  
When I think of old Sneap Green, Puddock's Nook and Hilly Snow,  
Where bramble bushes grew and the daisy gemmed in dew  
And the hills of silken grass like to cushions to the view,  
Where we threw the pismire crumbs when we'd nothing else to do,  
All levelled like a desert by the never weary plough,  
All banished like the sun where that cloud is passing now  
And settled here for ever on its brow.

O I never thought that joys would run away from boys,  
Or that boys would change their minds and forsake such summer joys;  
But alack I never dreamed that the world had other toys  
To petrify first feelings like the fable into stone,  
Till I found the pleasure past and a winter come at last,  
Then the fields were sudden bare and the sky got overcast  
And boyhood's pleasing haunt like a blossom in the blast  
Was shrivelled to a withered weed and trampled down and done,  
Till vanished was the morning spring and set the summer sun  
And winter fought her battle strife and won.

By Langley Bush I roam, but the bush hath left its hill,  
On Cowper Green I stray, tis a desert strange and chill,  
And the spreading Lea Close oak, ere decay had penned its will,  
To the axe of the spoiler and self-interest fell a prey,  
And Crossberry Way and old Round Oak's narrow lane  
With its hollow trees like pulpits I shall never see again,  
Enclosure like a Buonaparte let not a thing remain,  
It levelled every bush and tree and levelled every hill  
And hung the moles for traitors—though the brook is running still  
It runs a sicker brook, cold and chill.

O had I known as then joy had left the paths of men,  
I had watched her night and day, be sure, and never slept agen,  
And when she turned to go, O I'd caught her mantle then,  
And wooed her like a lover by my lonely side to stay;  
Ay, knelt and worshipped on, as love in beauty's bower,  
And clung upon her smiles as a bee upon a flower,  
And gave her heart my posies, all cropt in a sunny hour,  
As keepsakes and pledges all to never fade away;

But love never heeded to treasure up the may,  
So it went the common road to decay.

## THE COTTAGER

True as the church clock hand the hour pursues  
 He plods about his toils and reads the news,  
 And at the blacksmith's shop his hour will stand  
 To talk of "Lunun" as a foreign land.  
 For from his cottage door in peace or strife  
 He neer went fifty miles in all his life.  
 His knowledge with old notions still combined  
 Is twenty years behind the march of mind.  
 He views new knowledge with suspicious eyes  
 And thinks it blasphemy to be so wise.  
 On steam's almighty tales he wondering looks  
 As witchcraft gleaned from old blackletter books.  
 Life gave him comfort but denied him wealth,  
 He toils in quiet and enjoys his health,  
 He smokes a pipe at night and drinks his beer  
 And runs no scores on tavern screens to clear.  
 He goes to market all the year about  
 And keeps one hour and never stays it out.  
 Een at St. Thomas tide old Rover's bark  
 Hails Dapple's trot an hour before it's dark.  
 He is a simple-worded plain old man  
 Whose good intents take errors in their plan.  
 Oft sentimental and with saddened vein  
 He looks on trifles and bemoans their pain,  
 And thinks the angler mad, and loudly storms  
 With emphasis of speech oer murdered worms.  
 And hunters cruel—pleading with sad care  
 Pity's petition for the fox and hare,  
 Yet feels self-satisfaction in his woes  
 For war's crushed myriads of his slaughtered foes.  
 He is right scrupulous in one pretext  
 And wholesale errors swallows in the next.  
 He deems it sin to sing, yet not to say  
 A song—a mighty difference in his way.  
 And many a moving tale in antique rhymes  
 He has for Christmas and such merry times,  
 When "Chevy Chase," his masterpiece of song,  
 Is said so earnest none can think it long.  
 Twas the old vicar's way who should be right,

For the late vicar was his heart's delight,  
 And while at church he often shakes his head  
 To think what sermons the old vicar made,  
 Downright and orthodox that all the land  
 Who had their ears to hear might understand,  
 But now such mighty learning meets his ears  
 He thinks it Greek or Latin which he hears,  
 Yet church receives him every sabbath day  
 And rain or snow he never keeps away.  
 All words of reverence still his heart reveres,  
 Low bows his head when Jesus meets his ears,  
 And still he thinks it blasphemy as well  
 Such names without a capital to spell.  
 In an old corner cupboard by the wall  
 His books are laid, though good, in number small,  
 His Bible first in place; from worth and age  
 Whose grandsire's name adorns the title page,  
 And blank leaves once, now filled with kindred claims,  
 Display a world's epitome of names.  
 Parents and children and grandchildren all  
 Memory's affections in the lists recall.  
 And prayer-book next, much worn though strongly bound,  
 Proves him a churchman orthodox and sound.  
 The "Pilgrim's Progress" and the "Death of Abel"  
 Are seldom missing from his Sunday table,  
 And prime old Tusser in his homely trim,  
 The first of bards in all the world with him,  
 And only poet which his leisure knows;  
 Verse deals in fancy, so he sticks to prose.  
 These are the books he reads and reads again  
 And weekly hunts the almanacks for rain.  
 Here and no further learning's channels ran;  
 Still, neighbours prize him as the learned man.  
 His cottage is a humble place of rest  
 With one spare room to welcome every guest,  
 And that tall poplar pointing to the sky  
 His own hand planted when an idle boy,  
 It shades his chimney while the singing wind  
 Hums songs of shelter to his happy mind.  
 Within his cot the largest ears of corn  
 He ever found his picture frames adorn:  
 Brave Granby's head, De Grosse's grand defeat;  
 He rubs his hands and shows how Rodney beat.  
 And from the rafters upon strings depend

Beanstalks beset with pods from end to end,  
Whose numbers without counting may be seen  
Wrote on the almanack behind the screen.  
Around the corner up on worsted strung  
Pooties in wreaths above the cupboard hung.  
Memory at trifling incidents awakes  
And there he keeps them for his children's sakes,  
Who when as boys searched every sedgy lane,  
Traced every wood and shattered clothes again,  
Roaming about on rapture's easy wing  
To hunt those very pooty shells in spring.  
And thus he lives too happy to be poor  
While strife neer pauses at so mean a door.  
Low in the sheltered valley stands his cot,  
He hears the mountain storm and feels it not;  
Winter and spring, toil ceasing ere tis dark,  
Rests with the lamb and rises with the lark,  
Content his helpmate to the day's employ  
And care neer comes to steal a single joy.  
Time, scarcely noticed, turns his hair to grey,  
Yet leaves him happy as a child at play.

## INSECTS

These tiny loiterers on the barley's beard,  
And happy units of a numerous herd  
Of playfellows, the laughing Summer brings,  
Mocking the sunshine in their glittering wings,  
How merrily they creep, and run, and fly!  
No kin they bear to labour's drudgery,  
Smoothing the velvet of the pale hedge-rose;  
And where they fly for dinner no one knows—  
The dew-drops feed them not—they love the shine  
Of noon, whose sun may bring them golden wine.  
All day they're playing in their Sunday dress—  
Till night goes sleep, and they can do no less;  
Then, to the heath bell's silken hood they fly,  
And like to princes in their slumbers lie,  
Secure from night, and dropping dews, and all,  
In silken beds and roomy painted hall.  
So merrily they spend their summer day,  
Now in the cornfields, now the new-mown hay.  
One almost fancies that such happy things,  
With coloured hoods and richly burnished wings,  
Are fairy folk, in splendid masquerade  
Disguised, as if of mortal folk afraid,  
Keeping their merry pranks a mystery still,  
Lest glaring day should do their secrets ill.

## SUDDEN SHOWER

Black grows the southern sky, betokening rain,  
And humming hive-bees homeward hurry bye:  
They feel the change; so let us shun the grain,  
And take the broad road while our feet are dry.  
Ay, there some dropples moistened on my face,  
And pattered on my hat—tis coming nigh!  
Let's look about, and find a sheltering place.  
The little things around, like you and I,  
Are hurrying through the grass to shun the shower.  
Here stoops an ash-tree—hark! the wind gets high,  
But never mind; this ivy, for an hour,  
Rain as it may, will keep us dryly here:  
That little wren knows well his sheltering bower,  
Nor leaves his dry house though we come so near.



## EVENING PRIMROSE

When once the sun sinks in the west,  
And dew-drops pearl the evening's breast;  
Almost as pale as moonbeams are,  
Or its companionable star,  
The evening primrose opes anew  
Its delicate blossoms to the dew;  
And, shunning-hermit of the light,  
Wastes its fair bloom upon the night;  
Who, blindfold to its fond caresses,  
Knows not the beauty he possesses.  
Thus it blooms on till night is bye  
And day looks out with open eye,  
Abashed at the gaze it cannot shun,  
It faints and withers, and is done.

## THE SHEPHERD'S TREE

Huge elm, with rifted trunk all notched and scarred,  
Like to a warrior's destiny! I love  
To stretch me often on thy shadowed sward,  
And hear the laugh of summer leaves above;  
Or on thy buttressed roots to sit, and lean  
In careless attitude, and there reflect  
On times, and deeds, and darings that have been—  
Old castaways, now swallowed in neglect;  
While thou art towering in thy strength of heart,  
Stirring the soul to vain imaginings,  
In which life's sordid being hath no part.  
The wind of that eternal ditty sings,  
Humming of future things, that burn the mind  
To leave some fragment of itself behind.

## WILD BEES

These children of the sun which summer brings  
 As pastoral minstrels in her merry train  
 Pipe rustic ballads upon busy wings  
 And glad the cotters' quiet toils again.  
 The white-nosed bee that bores its little hole  
 In mortared walls and pipes its symphonies,  
 And never absent couzen, black as coal,  
 That Indian-like bepaints its little thighs,  
 With white and red bedight for holiday,  
 Right earlily a-morn do pipe and play  
 And with their legs stroke slumber from their eyes.  
 And aye so fond they of their singing seem  
 That in their holes abed at close of day  
 They still keep piping in their honey dreams,  
 And larger ones that thrum on ruder pipe  
 Round the sweet smelling closen and rich woods  
 Where tawny white and red flush clover buds  
 Shine bonnily and bean fields blossom ripe,  
 Shed dainty perfumes and give honey food  
 To these sweet poets of the summer fields;  
 Me much delighting as I stroll along  
 The narrow path that hay laid meadow yields,  
 Catching the windings of their wandering song.  
 The black and yellow bumble first on wing  
 To buzz among the sallow's early flowers,  
 Hiding its nest in holes from fickle spring  
 Who stints his rambles with her frequent showers;  
 And one that may for wiser piper pass,  
 In livery dress half sables and half red,  
 Who laps a moss ball in the meadow grass  
 And hoards her stores when April showers have fled;  
 And russet commoner who knows the face  
 Of every blossom that the meadow brings,  
 Starting the traveller to a quicker pace  
 By threatening round his head in many rings:  
 These sweeten summer in their happy glee  
 By giving for her honey melody.

## THE FIRETAIL'S NEST

"Tweet" pipes the robin as the cat creeps by  
Her nestling young that in the elderns lie,  
And then the bluecap tootles in its glee,  
Picking the flies from orchard apple tree,  
And "pink" the chaffinch cries its well-known strain,  
Urging its kind to utter "pink" again,  
While in a quiet mood hedgesparrows try  
An inward stir of shadowed melody.  
Around the rotten tree the firetail mourns  
As the old hedger to his toil returns,  
Chopping the grain to stop the gap close by  
The hole where her blue eggs in safety lie.  
Of everything that stirs she dreameth wrong  
And pipes her "tweet tut" fears the whole day long.

## THE FEAR OF FLOWERS

The nodding oxeye bends before the wind,  
The woodbine quakes lest boys their flowers should find,  
And prickly dogrose spite of its array  
Can't dare the blossom-seeking hand away,  
While thistles wear their heavy knobs of bloom  
Proud as a warhorse wears its haughty plume,  
And by the roadside danger's self defy;  
On commons where pined sheep and oxen lie  
In ruddy pomp and ever thronging mood  
It stands and spreads like danger in a wood,  
And in the village street where meanest weeds  
Can't stand untouched to fill their husks with seeds,  
The haughty thistle oer all danger towers,  
In every place the very wasp of flowers.

## SUMMER EVENING

The frog half fearful jumps across the path,  
And little mouse that leaves its hole at eve  
Nimbles with timid dread beneath the swath;  
My rustling steps awhile their joys deceive,  
Till past,—and then the cricket sings more strong,  
And grasshoppers in merry moods still wear  
The short night weary with their fretting song.  
Up from behind the molehill jumps the hare,  
Cheat of his chosen bed, and from the bank  
The yellowhammer flutters in short fears  
From off its nest hid in the grasses rank,  
And drops again when no more noise it hears.  
Thus nature's human link and endless thrall,  
Proud man, still seems the enemy of all.

## EMMONSAIL'S HEATH IN WINTER

I love to see the old heath's withered brake  
Mingle its crimped leaves with furze and ling,  
While the old heron from the lonely lake  
Starts slow and flaps his melancholy wing,  
And oddling crow in idle motions swing  
On the half rotten ashtree's topmost twig,  
Beside whose trunk the gipsy makes his bed.  
Up flies the bouncing woodcock from the brig  
Where a black quagmire quakes beneath the tread,  
The fieldfares chatter in the whistling thorn  
And for the awe round fields and closen rove,  
And coy bumbarrels twenty in a drove  
Flit down the hedgerows in the frozen plain  
And hang on little twigs and start again.

## PLEASURES OF FANCY

A path, old tree, goes by thee crooking on,  
And through this little gate that claps and bangs  
Against thy rifted trunk, what steps hath gone?  
Though but a lonely way, yet mystery hangs  
O'er crowds of pastoral scenes recordless here.  
The boy might climb the nest in thy young boughs  
That's slept half an eternity; in fear  
The herdsman may have left his startled cows  
For shelter when heaven's thunder voice was near;  
Here too the woodman on his wallet laid  
For pillow may have slept an hour away;  
And poet pastoral, lover of the shade,  
Here sat and mused half some long summer day  
While some old shepherd listened to the lay.



## TO NAPOLEON

The heroes of the present and the past  
Were puny, vague, and nothingness to thee:  
Thou didst a span grasp mighty to the last,  
And strain for glory when thy die was cast.  
That little island, on the Atlantic sea,  
Was but a dust-spot in a lake: thy mind  
Swept space as shoreless as eternity.  
Thy giant powers outstript this gaudy age  
Of heroes; and, as looking at the sun,  
So gazing on thy greatness, made men blind  
To merits, that had adoration won  
In olden times. The world was on thy page  
Of victories but a comma. Fame could find  
No parallel, thy greatness to presage.

## THE SKYLARK

Above the russet clods the corn is seen  
Sprouting its spiry points of tender green,  
Where squats the hare, to terrors wide awake,  
Like some brown clod the harrows failed to break.  
Opening their golden caskets to the sun,  
The buttercups make schoolboys eager run,  
To see who shall be first to pluck the prize—  
Up from their hurry see the Skylark flies,  
And oer her half-formed nest, with happy wings,  
Winnows the air till in the cloud she sings,  
Then hangs a dust spot in the sunny skies,  
And drops and drops till in her nest she lies,  
Which they unheeded passed—not dreaming then  
That birds, which flew so high, would drop again  
To nests upon the ground, which anything  
May come at to destroy. Had they the wing  
Like such a bird, themselves would be too proud  
And build on nothing but a passing cloud!  
As free from danger as the heavens are free  
From pain and toil, there would they build and be,  
And sail about the world to scenes unheard  
Of and unseen,—O were they but a bird!  
So think they, while they listen to its song,  
And smile and fancy and so pass along;  
While its low nest, moist with the dews of morn,  
Lies safely, with the leveret, in the corn.

## THE FLOOD

Waves trough, rebound, and furious boil again,  
Like plunging monsters rising underneath,  
Who at the top curl up a shaggy mane,  
A moment catching at a surer breath,  
Then plunging headlong down and down, and on  
Each following whirls the shadow of the last;  
And other monsters rise when those are gone,  
Crest their fringed waves, plunge onward and are past.  
The chill air comes around me oceanly,  
From bank to bank the waterstrife is spread;  
Strange birds like snowspots oer the whizzing sea  
Hang where the wild duck hurried past and fled.  
On roars the flood, all restless to be free,  
Like Trouble wandering to Eternity.

## THE THRUSH'S NEST

Within a thick and spreading hawthorn bush,  
That overhung a molehill large and round,  
I heard from morn to morn a merry thrush  
Sing hymns to sunrise, and I drank the sound  
With joy; and, often an intruding guest,  
I watched her secret toils from day to day—  
How true she warped the moss, to form a nest,  
And modelled it within with wood and clay;  
And by and by, like heath-bells gilt with dew,  
There lay her shining eggs, as bright as flowers,  
Ink-spotted-over shells of greeny blue;  
And there I witnessed in the sunny hours  
A brood of nature's minstrels chirp and fly,  
Glad as that sunshine and the laughing sky.

## NOVEMBER

Sybil of months, and worshipper of winds,  
I love thee, rude and boisterous as thou art;  
And scraps of joy my wandering ever finds  
Mid thy uproarious madness—when the start  
Of sudden tempests stirs the forest leaves  
Into hoarse fury, till the shower set free  
Stills the huge swells. Then ebb the mighty heaves,  
That sway the forest like a troubled sea.  
I love thy wizard noise, and rave in turn  
Half-vacant thoughts and rhymes of careless form;  
Then hide me from the shower, a short sojourn,  
Neath ivied oak; and mutter to the storm,  
Wishing its melody belonged to me,  
That I might breathe a living song to thee.

## EARTH'S ETERNITY

Man, Earth's poor shadow! talks of Earth's decay:  
But hath it nothing of eternal kin?  
No majesty that shall not pass away?  
No soul of greatness springing up within?  
Thought marks without hoar shadows of sublime,  
Pictures of power, which if not doomed to win  
Eternity, stand laughing at old Time  
For ages: in the grand ancestral line  
Of things eternal, mounting to divine,  
I read Magnificence where ages pay  
Worship like conquered foes to the Apennine,  
Because they could not conquer. There sits Day  
Too high for Night to come at—mountains shine,  
Outpeering Time, too lofty for decay.

## AUTUMN

Autumn comes laden with her ripened load  
Of fruitage and so scatters them abroad  
That each fern-smothered heath and mole-hill waste  
Are black with bramble berries—where in haste  
The chubby urchins from the village hie  
To feast them there, stained with the purple dye;  
While painted woods around my rambles be  
In draperies worthy of eternity.  
Yet will the leaves soon patter on the ground,  
And death's deaf voice awake at every sound:  
One drops—then others—and the last that fell  
Rings for those left behind their passing bell.  
Thus memory every where her tidings brings  
How sad death robs us of life's dearest things.

## SIGNS OF WINTER

The cat runs races with her tail. The dog  
Leaps oer the orchard hedge and knarls the grass.  
The swine run round and grunt and play with straw,  
Snatching out hasty mouthfuls from the stack.  
Sudden upon the elmtree tops the crow  
Unceremonious visit pays and croaks,  
Then swops away. From mossy barn the owl  
Bobs hasty out—wheels round and, scared as soon,  
As hastily retires. The ducks grow wild  
And from the muddy pond fly up and wheel  
A circle round the village and soon, tired,  
Plunge in the pond again. The maids in haste  
Snatch from the orchard hedge the mizzled clothes  
And laughing hurry in to keep them dry.



## NIGHTWIND

Darkness like midnight from the sobbing woods  
Clamours with dismal tidings of the rain,  
Roaring as rivers breaking loose in floods  
To spread and foam and deluge all the plain.  
The cotter listens at his door again,  
Half doubting whether it be floods or wind,  
And through the thickening darkness looks afraid,  
Thinking of roads that travel has to find  
Through night's black depths in danger's garb arrayed.  
And the loud glabber round the flaze soon stops  
When hushed to silence by the lifted hand  
Of fearing dame who hears the noise in dread  
And thinks a deluge comes to drown the land;  
Nor dares she go to bed until the tempest drops.

## BIRDS IN ALARM

The firetail tells the boys when nests are nigh  
And tweets and flies from every passer-bye.  
The yellowhammer never makes a noise  
But flies in silence from the noisy boys;  
The boys will come and take them every day,  
And still she lays as none were ta'en away.

The nightingale keeps tweeting-churring round  
But leaves in silence when the nest is found.  
The pewit hollos "chewrit" as she flies  
And flops about the shepherd where he lies;  
But when her nest is found she stops her song  
And cocks [her] coppled crown and runs along.  
Wrens cock their tails and chitter loud and play,  
And robins hollo "tut" and fly away.

## DYKE SIDE

The frog croaks loud, and maidens dare not pass  
But fear the noisome toad and shun the grass;  
And on the sunny banks they dare not go  
Where hissing snakes run to the flood below.  
The nuthatch noises loud in wood and wild,  
Like women turning skreeking to a child.  
The schoolboy hears and brushes through the trees  
And runs about till drabbled to the knees.  
The old hawk winnows round the old crow's nest;  
The schoolboy hears and wonder fills his breast.  
He throws his basket down to climb the tree  
And wonders what the red blotched eggs can be:  
The green woodpecker bounces from the view  
And hollos as he buzzes bye "kew kew."

## **BADGER**

When midnight comes a host of dogs and men  
 Go out and track the badger to his den,  
 And put a sack within the hole, and lie  
 Till the old grunting badger passes bye.  
 He comes and hears—they let the strongest loose.  
 The old fox hears the noise and drops the goose.  
 The poacher shoots and hurries from the cry,  
 And the old hare half wounded buzzes bye.  
 They get a forked stick to bear him down  
 And clap the dogs and take him to the town,  
 And bait him all the day with many dogs,  
 And laugh and shout and fright the scampering hogs.  
 He runs along and bites at all he meets:  
 They shout and hollo down the noisy streets.

He turns about to face the loud uproar  
 And drives the rebels to their very door.  
 The frequent stone is hurled where eer they go;  
 When badgers fight, then every one's a foe.  
 The dogs are clapt and urged to join the fray;  
 The badger turns and drives them all away.  
 Though scarcely half as big, demure and small,  
 He fights with dogs for bones and beats them all.  
 The heavy mastiff, savage in the fray,  
 Lies down and licks his feet and turns away.  
 The bulldog knows his match and waxes cold,  
 The badger grins and never leaves his hold.  
 He drives the crowd and follows at their heels  
 And bites them through—the drunkard swears and reels.

The frightened women take the boys away,  
 The blackguard laughs and hurries on the fray.  
 He tries to reach the woods, an awkward race,  
 But sticks and cudgels quickly stop the chace.  
 He turns agen and drives the noisy crowd  
 And beats the many dogs in noises loud.  
 He drives away and beats them every one,  
 And then they loose them all and set them on.  
 He falls as dead and kicked by boys and men,  
 Then starts and grins and drives the crowd agen;

Till kicked and torn and beaten out he lies  
And leaves his hold and cackles, groans, and dies.

## THE FOX

The shepherd on his journey heard when nigh  
His dog among the bushes barking high;  
The ploughman ran and gave a hearty shout,  
He found a weary fox and beat him out.  
The ploughman laughed and would have ploughed him in  
But the old shepherd took him for the skin.  
He lay upon the furrow stretched for dead,  
The old dog lay and licked the wounds that bled,  
The ploughman beat him till his ribs would crack,  
And then the shepherd slung him at his back;  
And when he rested, to his dog's surprise,  
The old fox started from his dead disguise;  
And while the dog lay panting in the sedge  
He up and snapt and bolted through the hedge.

He scampered to the bushes far away;  
The shepherd called the ploughman to the fray;  
The ploughman wished he had a gun to shoot.  
The old dog barked and followed the pursuit.  
The shepherd threw his hook and tottered past;  
The ploughman ran but none could go so fast;  
The woodman threw his faggot from the way  
And ceased to chop and wondered at the fray.  
But when he saw the dog and heard the cry  
He threw his hatchet—but the fox was bye.  
The shepherd broke his hook and lost the skin;  
He found a badger hole and bolted in.  
They tried to dig, but, safe from danger's way,  
He lived to chase the hounds another day.

## THE VIXEN

Among the taller wood with ivy hung,  
The old fox plays and dances round her young.  
She snuffs and barks if any passes bye  
And swings her tail and turns prepared to fly.  
The horseman hurries bye, she bolts to see,  
And turns agen, from danger never free.  
If any stands she runs among the poles  
And barks and snaps and drives them in the holes.  
The shepherd sees them and the boy goes bye  
And gets a stick and progs the hole to try.  
They get all still and lie in safety sure  
And out again when every thing's secure  
And start and snap at blackbirds bouncing bye  
To fight and catch the great white butterfly.

## TURKEYS

The turkeys wade the close to catch the bees  
In the old border full of maple trees  
And often lay away and breed and come  
And bring a brood of chelping chickens home.  
The turkey gobbles loud and drops his rag  
And struts and sprunts his tail and then lets drag  
His wing on ground and makes a huzzing noise,  
Nauntles at passer-bye and drives the boys  
And bounces up and flies at passer-bye.  
The old dog snaps and grins nor ventures nigh.  
He gobbles loud and drives the boys from play;  
They throw their sticks and kick and run away.



## THE POET'S DEATH

The world is taking little heed  
And plods from day to day:  
The vulgar flourish like a weed,  
The learned pass away.

We miss him on the summer path  
The lonely summer day,  
Where mowers cut the pleasant swath  
And maidens make the hay.

The vulgar take but little heed;  
The garden wants his care;  
There lies the book he used to read,  
There stands the empty chair.

The boat laid up, the voyage oer,  
And passed the stormy wave,  
The world is going as before,  
The poet in his grave.

## THE BEAUTIFUL STRANGER

I cannot know what country owns thee now,  
With France's forest lilies on thy brow.  
When England knew thee thou wert passing fair;  
I never knew a foreign face so rare.  
The world of waters rolls and rushes bye,  
Nor lets me wander where thy vallies lie.  
But surely France must be a pleasant place  
That greets the stranger with so fair a face;  
The English maiden blushes down the dance,  
But few can equal the fair maid of France.  
I saw thee lovely and I wished thee mine,  
And the last song I ever wrote is thine.

Thy country's honour on thy face attends;  
Men may be foes but beauty makes us friends.

## THE TRAMP

He eats (a moment's stoppage to his song)  
The stolen turnip as he goes along;  
And hops along and heeds with careless eye  
The passing crowded stage coach reeling bye.  
He talks to none but wends his silent way,  
And finds a hovel at the close of day,  
Or under any hedge his house is made.  
He has no calling and he owns no trade.  
An old smoaked blanket arches oer his head,  
A whisp of straw or stubble makes his bed.  
He knows a lawless law that claims no kin  
But meet and plunder on and feel no sin—  
No matter where they go or where they dwell  
They dally with the winds and laugh at hell.

## FARMER'S BOY

He waits all day beside his little flock  
And asks the passing stranger what's o'clock,  
But those who often pass his daily tasks  
Look at their watch and tell before he asks.  
He mutters stories to himself and lies  
Where the thick hedge the warmest house supplies,  
And when he hears the hunters far and wide  
He climbs the highest tree to see them ride—  
He climbs till all the fields are blea and bare  
And makes the old crow's nest an easy chair.  
And soon his sheep are got in other grounds—  
He hastens down and fears his master come,  
He stops the gap and keeps them all in bounds  
And tends them closely till it's time for home.

## BRAGGART

With careful step to keep his balance up  
He reels on warily along the street,  
Slabbering at mouth and with a staggering stoop  
Mutters an angry look at all he meets.  
Bumptious and vain and proud he shoulders up  
And would be something if he knew but how;  
To any man on earth he will not stoop  
But cracks of work, of horses and of plough.  
Proud of the foolish talk, the ale he quaffs,  
He never heeds the insult loud that laughs:  
With rosy maid he tries to joke and play,—  
Who shrugs and nettles deep his pomp and pride.  
And calls him "drunken beast" and runs away—  
King to himself and fool to all beside.

## SUNDAY DIP

The morning road is thronged with merry boys  
Who seek the water for their Sunday joys;  
They run to seek the shallow pit, and wade  
And dance about the water in the shade.  
The boldest ventures first and dashes in,  
And others go and follow to the chin,  
And duck about, and try to lose their fears,  
And laugh to hear the thunder in their ears.  
They bundle up the rushes for a boat  
And try across the deepest place to float:  
Beneath the willow trees they ride and stoop—  
The awkward load will scarcely bear them up.  
Without their aid the others float away,  
And play about the water half the day.

## MERRY MAID

Bonny and stout and brown, without a hat,  
She frowns offended when they call her fat—  
Yet fat she is, the merriest in the place,  
And all can know she wears a pretty face.  
But still she never heeds what praise can say,  
But does the work, and oft runs out to play,  
To run about the yard and ramp and noise  
And spring the mop upon the servant boys.  
When old hens noise and cackle every where  
She hurries eager if the eggs are dear,  
And runs to seek them when they lay away  
To get them ready for the market day.  
She gambols with the men and laughs aloud  
And only quarrels when they call her proud.

## SCANDAL

She hastens out and scarcely pins her clothes  
To hear the news and tell the news she knows;  
She talks of sluts, marks each unmended gown,  
Her self the dirtiest slut in all the town.  
She stands with eager haste at slander's tale,  
And drinks the news as drunkards drink their ale.  
Excuse is ready at the biggest lie—  
She only heard it and it passes bye.  
The very cat looks up and knows her face  
And hastens to the chair to get the place;  
When once set down she never goes away,  
Till tales are done and talk has nought to say.  
She goes from house to house the village oer,  
Her slander bothers everybody's door.



## QUAIL'S NEST

I wandered out one rainy day  
And heard a bird with merry joys  
Cry "wet my foot" for half the way;  
I stood and wondered at the noise,

When from my foot a bird did flee—  
The rain flew bouncing from her breast  
I wondered what the bird could be,  
And almost trampled on her nest.

The nest was full of eggs and round—  
I met a shepherd in the vales,  
And stood to tell him what I found.  
He knew and said it was a quail's,

For he himself the nest had found,  
Among the wheat and on the green,  
When going on his daily round,  
With eggs as many as fifteen.

Among the stranger birds they feed,  
Their summer flight is short and low;  
There's very few know where they breed,  
And scarcely any where they go.

## MARKET DAY

With arms and legs at work and gentle stroke  
That urges switching tail nor mends his pace,  
On an old ribbed and weather beaten horse,  
The farmer goes jogtrotting to the fair.  
Both keep their pace that nothing can provoke  
Followed by brindled dog that snuffs the ground  
With urging bark and hurries at his heels.  
His hat slouched down, and great coat buttoned close  
Bellied like hooped keg, and chuffy face  
Red as the morning sun, he takes his round  
And talks of stock: and when his jobs are done  
And Dobbin's hay is eaten from the rack,  
He drinks success to corn in language hoarse,  
And claps old Dobbin's hide, and potters back.

## STONEPIT

The passing traveller with wonder sees  
A deep and ancient stonepit full of trees;  
So deep and very deep the place has been,  
The church might stand within and not be seen.  
The passing stranger oft with wonder stops  
And thinks he een could walk upon their tops,  
And often stoops to see the busy crow,  
And stands above and sees the eggs below;  
And while the wild horse gives its head a toss,  
The squirrel dances up and runs across.  
The boy that stands and kills the black nosed bee  
Dares down as soon as magpies' nests are found,  
And wonders when he climbs the highest tree  
To find it reaches scarce above the ground.

## "THE LASS WITH THE DELICATE AIR"

Timid and smiling, beautiful and shy,  
She drops her head at every passer by.  
Afraid of praise she hurries down the streets  
And turns away from every smile she meets.  
The forward clown has many things to say  
And holds her by the gown to make her stay,  
The picture of good health she goes along,  
Hale as the morn and happy as her song.  
Yet there is one who never feels a fear  
To whisper pleasing fancies in her ear;  
Yet een from him she shuns a rude embrace,  
And stooping holds her hands before her face,—  
She even shuns and fears the bolder wind,  
And holds her shawl, and often looks behind.

## THE LOU

For Sunday's play he never makes excuse,  
But plays at taw, and buys his Spanish juice.  
Hard as his toil, and ever slow to speak,  
Yet he gives maidens many a burning cheek;  
For none can pass him but his witless grace  
Of bawdry brings the blushes in her face.  
As vulgar as the dirt he treads upon  
He calls his cows or drives his horses on;  
He knows the lamest cow and strokes her side  
And often tries to mount her back and ride,  
And takes her tail at night in idle play,  
And makes her drag him homeward all the way.  
He knows of nothing but the football match,  
And where hens lay, and when the duck will hatch.

## HODGE

He plays with other boys when work is done,  
But feels too clumsy and too stiff to run,  
Yet where there's mischief he can find a way  
The first to join and last [to run] away.  
What's said or done he never hears or minds  
But gets his pence for all the eggs he finds.  
He thinks his master's horses far the best,  
And always labours longer than the rest.  
In frost and cold though lame he's forced to go—  
The call's more urgent when he journeys slow.  
In surly speed he helps the maids by force  
And feeds the cows and hallos till he's hoarse;  
And when he's lame they only jest and play  
And bid him throw his kiby heels away.

## FARM BREAKFAST

Maids shout to breakfast in a merry strife,  
And the cat runs to hear the whetted knife,  
And dogs are ever in the way to watch  
The mouldy crust and falling bone to catch.  
The wooden dishes round in haste are set,  
And round the table all the boys are met;  
All know their own save Hodge who would be first,  
But every one his master leaves the worst.  
On every wooden dish, a humble claim,  
Two rude cut letters mark the owner's name;  
From every nook the smile of plenty calls,  
And rusty flitches decorate the walls,  
Moore's Almanack where wonders never cease—  
All smeared with candle snuff and bacon grease.

## LOVE AND SOLITUDE

I hate the very noise of troublous man  
Who did and does me all the harm he can.  
Free from the world I would a prisoner be  
And my own shadow all my company;  
And lonely see the shooting stars appear,  
Worlds rushing into judgment all the year.  
O lead me onward to the loneliest shade,  
The darkest place that quiet ever made,  
Where kingcups grow most beauteous to behold  
And shut up green and open into gold.  
Farewell to poesy—and leave the will;  
Take all the world away—and leave me still  
The mirth and music of a woman's voice,  
That bids the heart be happy and rejoice.



## GIPSIES

The snow falls deep; the forest lies alone;  
The boy goes hasty for his load of brakes,  
Then thinks upon the fire and hurries back;  
The gipsy knocks his hands and tucks them up,  
And seeks his squalid camp, half hid in snow,  
Beneath the oak which breaks away the wind,  
And bushes close in snow-like hovel warm;  
There tainted mutton wastes upon the coals,  
And the half-wasted dog squats close and rubs,  
Then feels the heat too strong, and goes aloof;  
He watches well, but none a bit can spare,  
And vainly waits the morsel thrown away.  
Tis thus they live—a picture to the place,  
A quiet, pilfering, unprotected race.

## THE FRIGHTENED PLOUGHMAN

I went in the fields with the leisure I got,  
The stranger might smile but I heeded him not,  
The hovel was ready to screen from a shower,  
And the book in my pocket was read in an hour.

The bird came for shelter, but soon flew away;  
The horse came to look, and seemed happy to stay;  
He stood up in quiet, and hung down his head,  
And seemed to be hearing the poem I read.

The ploughman would turn from his plough in the day  
And wonder what being had come in his way,  
To lie on a molehill and read the day long  
And laugh out aloud when he'd finished his song.

The pewit turned over and stooped oer my head  
Where the raven croaked loud like the ploughman ill-bred,  
But the lark high above charmed me all the day long,  
So I sat down and joined in the chorus of song.

The foolhardy ploughman I well could endure,  
His praise was worth nothing, his censure was poor,  
Fame bade me go on and I toiled the day long  
Till the fields where he lived should be known in my song.

## FAREWELL

Farewell to the bushy clump close to the river  
And the flags where the butter-bump hides in for ever;  
Farewell to the weedy nook, hemmed in by waters;  
Farewell to the miller's brook and his three bonny daughters;  
Farewell to them all while in prison I lie—  
In the prison a thrall sees nought but the sky.

Shut out are the green fields and birds in the bushes;  
In the prison yard nothing builds, blackbirds or thrushes,  
Farewell to the old mill and dash of the waters,  
To the miller and, dearer still, to his three bonny daughters.

In the nook, the large burdock grows near the green willow;  
In the flood, round the moorcock dashes under the billow;  
To the old mill farewell, to the lock, pens, and waters,  
To the miller himsel', and his three bonny daughters.

## THE OLD YEAR

The Old Year's gone away  
To nothingness and night:  
We cannot find him all the day  
Nor hear him in the night:  
He left no footstep, mark or place  
In either shade or sun:  
The last year he'd a neighbour's face,  
In this he's known by none.

All nothing everywhere:  
Mists we on mornings see  
Have more of substance when they're here  
And more of form than he.  
He was a friend by every fire,  
In every cot and hall—  
A guest to every heart's desire,  
And now he's nought at all.

Old papers thrown away,  
Old garments cast aside,  
The talk of yesterday,  
Are things identified;  
But time once torn away  
No voices can recall:  
The eve of New Year's Day  
Left the Old Year lost to all.

## THE YELLOWHAMMER

When shall I see the white-thorn leaves agen,  
And yellowhammers gathering the dry bents  
By the dyke side, on stilly moor or fen,  
Feathered with love and nature's good intents?  
Rude is the tent this architect invents,  
Rural the place, with cart ruts by dyke side.  
Dead grass, horse hair, and downy-headed bents  
Tied to dead thistles—she doth well provide,  
Close to a hill of ants where cowslips bloom  
And shed oer meadows far their sweet perfume.  
In early spring, when winds blow chilly cold,  
The yellowhammer, trailing grass, will come  
To fix a place and choose an early home,  
With yellow breast and head of solid gold.

## AUTUMN

The thistle-down's flying, though the winds are all still,  
On the green grass now lying, now mounting the hill,  
The spring from the fountain now boils like a pot;  
Through stones past the counting it bubbles red hot.

The ground parched and cracked is like overbaked bread,  
The greensward all wracked is, bents dried up and dead.  
The fallow fields glitter like water indeed,  
And gossamers twitter, flung from weed unto weed.

Hill tops like hot iron glitter bright in the sun,  
And the rivers we're eying burn to gold as they run;  
Burning hot is the ground, liquid gold is the air;  
Whoever looks round sees Eternity there.

## SONG

I peeled bits of straws and I got switches too  
From the grey peeling willow as idlers do,  
And I switched at the flies as I sat all alone  
Till my flesh, blood, and marrow was turned to dry bone.  
My illness was love, though I knew not the smart,  
But the beauty of love was the blood of my heart.  
Crowded places, I shunned them as noises too rude  
And fled to the silence of sweet solitude.  
Where the flower in green darkness buds, blossoms, and fades,  
Unseen of all shepherds and flower-loving maids—  
The hermit bees find them but once and away.  
There I'll bury alive and in silence decay.

I looked on the eyes of fair woman too long,  
Till silence and shame stole the use of my tongue:  
When I tried to speak to her I'd nothing to say,  
So I turned myself round and she wandered away.  
When she got too far off, why, I'd something to tell,  
So I sent sighs behind her and walked to my cell.  
Willow switches I broke and peeled bits of straws,  
Ever lonely in crowds, in Nature's own laws—  
My ball room the pasture, my music the bees,  
My drink was the fountain, my church the tall trees.  
Who ever would love or be tied to a wife  
When it makes a man mad all the days of his life?

## THE WINTER'S COME

Sweet chestnuts brown like soling leather turn;  
 The larch trees, like the colour of the Sun;  
 That paled sky in the Autumn seemed to burn,  
 What a strange scene before us now does run—  
 Red, brown, and yellow, russet, black, and dun;  
 White thorn, wild cherry, and the poplar bare;  
 The sycamore all withered in the sun.  
 No leaves are now upon the birch tree there:  
 All now is stript to the cold wintry air.

See, not one tree but what has lost its leaves—  
 And yet the landscape wears a pleasing hue.  
 The winter chill on his cold bed receives  
 Foliage which once hung oer the waters blue.  
 Naked and bare the leafless trees repose.  
 Blue-headed titmouse now seeks maggots rare,  
 Sluggish and dull the leaf-strewn river flows;  
 That is not green, which was so through the year  
 Dark chill November draweth to a close.

Tis Winter, and I love to read indoors,  
 When the Moon hangs her crescent up on high;  
 While on the window shutters the wind roars,  
 And storms like furies pass remorseless by.  
 How pleasant on a feather bed to lie,  
 Or, sitting by the fire, in fancy soar  
 With Dante or with Milton to regions high,  
 Or read fresh volumes we've not seen before,  
 Or oer old Burton's Melancholy pore.



## SUMMER WINDS

The wind waves oer the meadows green  
And shakes my own wild flowers  
And shifts about the moving scene  
Like the life of summer hours;  
The little bents with reedy head,  
The scarce seen shapes of flowers,  
All kink about like skeins of thread  
In these wind-shaken hours.

All stir and strife and life and bustle  
In everything around one sees;  
The rushes whistle, sedges rustle,  
The grass is buzzing round like bees;  
The butterflies are tossed about  
Like skiffs upon a stormy sea;  
The bees are lost amid the rout  
And drop in [their] perplexity.

Wilt thou be mine, thou bonny lass?  
Thy drapery floats so gracefully;  
We'll walk along the meadow grass,  
We'll stand beneath the willow tree.  
We'll mark the little reeling bee  
Along the grassy ocean rove,  
Tossed like a little boat at sea,  
And interchange our vows of love.

## **BONNY LASSIE O!**

O the evening's for the fair, bonny lassie O!  
To meet the cooler air and walk an angel there,  
With the dark dishevelled hair,  
Bonny lassie O!

The bloom's on the brere, bonny lassie O!  
Oak apples on the tree; and wilt thou gang to see  
The shed I've made for thee,  
Bonny lassie O!

Tis agen the running brook, bonny lassie O!  
In a grassy nook hard by, with a little patch of sky,  
And a bush to keep us dry,  
Bonny lassie O!

There's the daisy all the year, bonny lassie O!  
There's the king-cup bright as gold, and the speedwell never cold,  
And the arum leaves unrolled,  
Bonny lassie O!

O meet me at the shed, bonny lassie O!  
With a woodbine peeping in, and the roses like thy skin  
Blushing, thy praise to win,  
Bonny lassie O!

I will meet thee there at e'en, bonny lassie O!  
When the bee sips in the bean, and grey willow branches lean,  
And the moonbeam looks between,  
Bonny lassie O!

## MEET ME IN THE GREEN GLEN

Love, meet me in the green glen,  
Beside the tall elm tree,  
Where the sweet briar smells so sweet agen;  
There come with me,  
Meet me in the green glen.

Meet me at the sunset  
Down in the green glen,  
Where we've often met  
By hawthorn tree and foxes' den,  
Meet me in the green glen.

Meet me in the green glen,  
By sweet briar bushes there;  
Meet me by your own sen,  
Where the wild thyme blossoms fair.  
Meet me in the green glen.

Meet me by the sweet briar,  
By the mole hill swelling there;  
When the West glows like a fire  
God's crimson bed is there.  
Meet me in the green glen.

## LOVE CANNOT DIE

In crime and enmity they lie  
Who sin and tell us love can die,  
Who say to us in slander's breath  
That love belongs to sin and death.  
From heaven it came on angel's wing  
To bloom on earth, eternal spring;  
In falsehood's enmity they lie  
Who sin and tell us love can die.

Twas born upon an angel's breast.  
The softest dreams, the sweetest rest,  
The brightest sun, the bluest sky,  
Are love's own home and canopy.  
The thought that cheers this heart of mine  
Is that of love; love so divine  
They sin who say in slander's breath  
That love belongs to sin and death.

The sweetest voice that lips contain,  
The sweetest thought that leaves the brain,  
The sweetest feeling of the heart—  
There's pleasure in its very smart.  
The scent of rose and cinnamon  
Is not like love remembered on;  
In falsehood's enmity they lie  
Who sin and tell us love can die.

## PEGGY

Peggy said good morning and I said good bye,  
When farmers dib the corn and laddies sow the rye.  
Young Peggy's face was common sense and I was rather shy  
When I met her in the morning when the farmers sow the rye.

Her half laced boots fit tightly as she tripped along the grass,  
And she set her foot so lightly where the early bee doth pass.  
Oh Peggy was a young thing, her face was common sense,  
I courted her about the spring and loved her ever thence.

Oh Peggy was the young thing and bonny as to size;  
Her lips were cherries of the spring and hazel were her eyes.  
Oh Peggy she was straight and tall as is the poplar tree,  
Smooth as the freestone of the wall, and very dear to me.

Oh Peggy's gown was chocolate and full of cherries white;  
I keep a bit on't for her sake and love her day and night.  
I drest myself just like a prince and Peggy went to woo,  
But she's been gone some ten years since, and I know not what to do.

## THE CROW SAT ON THE WILLOW

The crow sat on the willow tree  
 A-lifting up his wings,  
 And glossy was his coat to see,  
 And loud the ploughman sings,  
 "I love my love because I know  
 The milkmaid she loves me";  
 And hoarsely croaked the glossy crow  
 Upon the willow tree.  
 "I love my love" the ploughman sung,  
 And all the fields with music rung.

"I love my love, a bonny lass,  
 She keeps her pails so bright,  
 And blythe she trips the dewy grass  
 At morning and at night.  
 A cotton dress her morning gown,  
 Her face was rosy health:  
 She traced the pastures up and down  
 And nature was her wealth."  
 He sung, and turned each furrow down,  
 His sweetheart's love in cotton gown.

"My love is young and handsome  
 As any in the town,  
 She's worth a ploughman's ransom  
 In the drab cotton gown."  
 He sang and turned his furrow oer  
 And urged his team along,  
 While on the willow as before  
 The old crow croaked his song:  
 The ploughman sung his rustic lay  
 And sung of Phoebe all the day.

The crow he was in love no doubt  
 And [so were] many things:  
 The ploughman finished many a bout,  
 And lustily he sings,  
 "My love she is a milking maid  
 With red rosy cheek;  
 Of cotton drab her gown was made,  
 I loved her many a week."

His milking maid the ploughman sung  
Till all the fields around him rung.

## Now Is Past

*Now* is past—the happy *now*  
 When we together roved  
 Beneath the wildwood's oak-tree bough  
 And Nature said we loved.  
 Winter's blast  
 The *now* since then has crept between,  
 And left us both apart.  
 Winters that withered all the green  
 Have froze the beating heart.  
 Now is past.

*Now* is past since last we met  
 Beneath the hazel bough;  
 Before the evening sun was set  
 Her shadow stretched below.  
 Autumn's blast  
 Has stained and blighted every bough;  
 Wild strawberries like her lips  
 Have left the mosses green below,  
 Her bloom's upon the hips.  
 Now is past.

*Now* is past, is changed agen,  
 The woods and fields are painted new.  
 Wild strawberries which both gathered then,  
 None know now where they grew.  
 The skys oercast.  
 Wood strawberries faded from wood sides,  
 Green leaves have all turned yellow;  
 No Adelaide walks the wood rides,  
 True love has no bed-fellow.  
 Now is past.



## SONG

I wish I was where I would be,  
With love alone to dwell,  
Was I but her or she but me,  
Then love would all be well.  
I wish to send my thoughts to her  
As quick as thoughts can fly,  
But as the winds the waters stir  
The mirrors change and fly.

## FIRST LOVE

I ne'er was struck before that hour  
With love so sudden and so sweet.  
Her face it bloomed like a sweet flower  
And stole my heart away complete.  
My face turned pale as deadly pale,  
My legs refused to walk away,  
And when she looked "what could I ail?"  
My life and all seemed turned to clay.

And then my blood rushed to my face  
And took my sight away.  
The trees and bushes round the place  
Seemed midnight at noonday.  
I could not see a single thing,  
Words from my eyes did start;  
They spoke as chords do from the string  
And blood burnt round my heart.

Are flowers the winter's choice?  
Is love's bed always snow?  
She seemed to hear my silent voice  
And love's appeal to know.  
I never saw so sweet a face  
As that I stood before:  
My heart has left its dwelling-place  
And can return no more.

## MARY BAYFIELD

How beautiful the summer night  
When birds roost on the mossy tree,  
When moon and stars are shining bright  
And home has gone the weary bee!  
Then Mary Bayfield seeks the glen,  
The white hawthorn and grey oak tree,  
And nought but heaven can tell me then  
How dear thy beauty is to me.

Dear is the dewdrop to the flower,  
The old wall to the weary bee,  
And silence to the evening hour,  
And ivy to the stooping tree.  
Dearer than these, than all beside,  
Than blossoms to the moss-rose tree,  
The maid who wanders by my side—  
Sweet Mary Bayfield is to me.

Sweet is the moonlight on the tree,  
The stars above the glassy lake,  
That from the bottom look at me  
Through shadows of the crimping brake.  
Such are sweet things—but sweeter still  
Than these and all beside I see  
The maid whose look my heart can thrill,  
My Mary Bayfield's look to me.

O Mary with the dark brown hair,  
The rosy cheek, the beaming eye,  
I would thy shade were ever near;  
Then would I never grieve or sigh.  
I love thee, Mary dearly love—  
There's nought so fair on earth I see,  
There's nought so dear in heaven above,  
As Mary Bayfield is to me.

## THE MAID OF JERUSALEM

Maid of Jerusalem, by the Dead Sea,  
I wandered all sorrowing thinking of thee,—  
Thy city in ruins, thy kindred deplored,  
All fallen and lost by the Ottoman's sword.

I saw thee sit there in disconsolate sighs,  
Where the hall of thy fathers a ruined heap lies.  
Thy fair finger showed me the place where they trod,  
In thy childhood where flourished the city of God.

The place where they fell and the scenes where they lie,  
In the tomb of Siloa—the tear in her eye  
She stifled: transfixed there it grew like a pearl,  
Beneath the dark lash of the sweet Jewish Girl.

Jerusalem is fallen! still thou art in bloom,  
As fresh as the ivy around the lone tomb,  
And fair as the lily of morning that waves  
Its sweet-scented bells over desolate graves.

When I think of Jerusalem in kingdoms yet free,  
I shall think of its ruins and think upon thee;  
Thou beautiful Jewess, content thou mayest roam;  
A bright spot in Eden still blooms as thy home.

## SONG

I would not feign a single sigh  
Nor weep a single tear for thee:  
The soul within these orbs burns dry;  
A desert spreads where love should be.  
I would not be a worm to crawl  
A writhing suppliant in thy way;  
For love is life, is heaven, and all  
The beams of an immortal day.

For sighs are idle things and vain,  
And tears for idiots vainly fall.  
I would not kiss thy face again  
Nor round thy shining slippers crawl.  
Love is the honey, not the bee,  
Nor would I turn its sweets to gall  
For all the beauty found in thee,  
Thy lily neck, rose cheek, and all.

I would not feign a single tale  
Thy kindness or thy love to seek;  
Nor sigh for Jenny of the Vale,  
Her ruby smile or rosy cheek.  
I would not have a pain to own  
For those dark curls and those bright eyes  
A frowning lip, a heart of stone,  
False love and folly I despise.

## THOU FLOWER OF SUMMER

When in summer thou walkest  
In the meads by the river,  
And to thyself talkest,  
Dost thou think of one ever—  
A lost and a lorn one  
That adores thee and loves thee?  
And when happy morn's gone,  
And nature's calm moves thee,  
Leaving thee to thy sleep like an angel at rest,  
Does the one who adores thee still live in thy breast?

Does nature eer give thee  
Love's past happy vision,  
And wrap thee and leave thee  
In fancies elysian?  
Thy beauty I clung to,  
As leaves to the tree;  
When thou fair and young too  
Looked lightly on me,  
Till love came upon thee like the sun to the west  
And shed its perfuming and bloom on thy breast.

## THE SWALLOW

Pretty swallow, once again  
Come and pass me in the rain.  
Pretty swallow, why so shy?  
Pass again my window by.

The horsepond where he dips his wings,  
The wet day prints it full of rings.  
The raindrops on his [ ] track  
Lodge like pearls upon his back.

Then again he dips his wing  
In the wrinkles of the spring,  
Then oer the rushes flies again,  
And pearls roll off his back like rain.

Pretty little swallow, fly  
Village doors and windows by,  
Whisking oer the garden pales  
Where the blackbird finds the snails;

Whewing by the ladslove tree  
For something only seen by thee;  
Pearls that on the red rose hing  
Fall off shaken by thy wing.

On that low thatched cottage stop,  
In the sooty chimney pop,  
Where thy wife and family  
Every evening wait for thee.

## THE SAILOR-BOY

Tis three years and a quarter since I left my own fireside  
To go aboard a ship through love, and plough the ocean wide.  
I crossed my native fields, where the scarlet poppies grew,  
And the groundlark left his nest like a neighbour which I knew.

The pigeons from the dove cote cooed over the old lane,  
The crow flocks from the oakwood went flopping oer the grain;  
Like lots of dear old neighbours whom I shall see no more  
They greeted me that morning I left the English shore.

The sun was just a-rising above the heath of furze,  
And the shadows grow to giants; that bright ball never stirs:  
There the shepherds lay with their dogs by their side,  
And they started up and barked as my shadow they espied.

A maid of early morning twirled her mop upon the moor;  
I wished her my farewell before she closed the door.  
My friends I left behind me for other places new,  
Crows and pigeons all were strangers as oer my head they flew.

Trees and bushes were all strangers, the hedges and the lanes,  
The steeples and the houses and broad untrodden plains.  
I passed the pretty milkmaid with her red and rosy face;  
I knew not where I met her, I was strange to the place.

At last I saw the ocean, a pleasing sight to me:  
I stood upon the shore of a mighty glorious sea.  
The waves in easy motion went rolling on their way,  
English colours were a-flying where the British squadron lay.

I left my honest parents, the church clock and the village;  
I left the lads and lasses, the labour and the tillage;  
To plough the briny ocean, which soon became my joy—  
I sat and sang among the shrouds, a lonely sailor-boy.



## THE SLEEP OF SPRING

O for that sweet, untroubled rest  
 That poets oft have sung!—  
 The babe upon its mother's breast,  
 The bird upon its young,  
 The heart asleep without a pain—  
 When shall I know that sleep again?

When shall I be as I have been  
 Upon my mother's breast  
 Sweet Nature's garb of verdant green  
 To woo to perfect rest—  
 Love in the meadow, field, and glen,  
 And in my native wilds again?

The sheep within the fallow field,  
 The herd upon the green,  
 The larks that in the thistle shield,  
 And pipe from morn to e'en—  
 O for the pasture, fields, and fen!  
 When shall I see such rest again?

I love the weeds along the fen,  
 More sweet than garden flowers,  
 For freedom haunts the humble glen  
 That blest my happiest hours.  
 Here prison injures health and me:  
 I love sweet freedom and the free.

The crows upon the swelling hills,  
 The cows upon the lea,  
 Sheep feeding by the pasture rills,  
 Are ever dear to me,  
 Because sweet freedom is their mate,  
 While I am lone and desolate.

I loved the winds when I was young,  
 When life was dear to me;  
 I loved the song which Nature sung,  
 Endearing liberty;  
 I loved the wood, the vale, the stream,  
 For there my boyhood used to dream.

There even toil itself was play;  
Twas pleasure een to weep;  
Twas joy to think of dreams by day,  
The beautiful of sleep.  
When shall I see the wood and plain,  
And dream those happy dreams again?

## MARY BATEMAN

My love she wears a cotton plaid,  
A bonnet of the straw;  
Her cheeks are leaves of roses spread,  
Her lips are like the haw.  
In truth she is as sweet a maid  
As true love ever saw.

Her curls are ever in my eyes,  
As nets by Cupid flung;  
Her voice will oft my sleep surprise,  
More sweet then ballad sung.  
O Mary Bateman's curling hair!  
I wake, and there is nothing there.

I wake, and fall asleep again,  
The same delights in visions rise;  
There's nothing can appear more plain  
Than those rose cheeks and those bright eyes.  
I wake again, and all alone  
Sits Darkness on his ebon throne.

All silent runs the silver Trent,  
The cobweb veils are all wet through,  
A silver bead's on every bent,  
On every leaf a bleb of dew.  
I sighed, the moon it shone so clear;  
Was Mary Bateman walking here?

## **BONNY MARY O!**

The morning opens fine, bonny Mary O!  
 The robin sings his song by the dairy O!  
 Where the little Jenny wrens cock their tails among the hens,  
 Singing morning's happy songs with Mary O!

The swallow's on the wing, bonny Mary O!  
 Where the rushes fringe the spring, bonny Mary O!  
 Where the cowslips do unfold, shaking tassels all of gold,  
 Which make the milk so sweet, bonny Mary O!

There's the yellowhammer's nest, bonny Mary O!  
 Where she hides her golden breast, bonny Mary O!  
 On her mystic eggs she dwells, with strange writing on their shells,  
 Hid in the mossy grass, bonny Mary O!

There the spotted cow gets food, bonny Mary O!  
 And chews her peaceful cud, bonny Mary O!  
 In the mole-hills and the bushes, and the clear brook fringed with rushes  
 To fill the evening pail, bonny Mary O!

The cowpond once agen, bonny Mary O!  
 Lies dimpled like thy sen, bonny Mary O!  
 Where the gnat swarms fall and rise under evening's mellow skies,  
 And on flags sleep dragon flies, bonny Mary O!

And I will meet thee there, bonny Mary O!  
 When a-milking you repair, bonny Mary O!  
 And I'll kiss thee on the grass, my buxom, bonny lass,  
 And be thine own for aye, bonny Mary O!

## WHERE SHE TOLD HER LOVE

I saw her crop a rose  
 Right early in the day,  
 And I went to kiss the place  
 Where she broke the rose away  
 And I saw the patten rings  
 Where she oer the stile had gone,  
 And I love all other things  
 Her bright eyes look upon.  
 If she looks upon the hedge or up the leafing tree,  
 The whitethorn or the brown oak are made dearer things to me.

I have a pleasant hill  
 Which I sit upon for hours,  
 Where she cropt some sprigs of thyme  
 And other little flowers;  
 And she muttered as she did it  
 As does beauty in a dream,  
 And I loved her when she hid it  
 On her breast, so like to cream,  
 Near the brown mole on her neck that to me a diamond shone  
 Then my eye was like to fire, and my heart was like to stone.

There is a small green place  
 Where cowslips early curled,  
 Which on Sabbath day I trace,  
 The dearest in the world.  
 A little oak spreads oer it,  
 And throws a shadow round,  
 A green sward close before it,  
 The greenest ever found:  
 There is not a woodland nigh nor is there a green grove,  
 Yet stood the fair maid nigh me and told me all her love.

## AUTUMN

I love the fitful gust that shakes  
The casement all the day,  
And from the glossy elm tree takes  
The faded leaves away,  
Twirling them by the window pane  
With thousand others down the lane.

I love to see the shaking twig  
Dance till the shut of eve,  
The sparrow on the cottage rig,  
Whose chirp would make believe  
That Spring was just now flirting by  
In Summer's lap with flowers to lie.

I love to see the cottage smoke  
Curl upwards through the trees,  
The pigeons nestled round the cote  
On November days like these;  
The cock upon the dunghill crowing,  
The mill sails on the heath a-going.

The feather from the raven's breast  
Falls on the stubble lea,  
The acorns near the old crow's nest  
Drop pattering down the tree;  
The grunting pigs, that wait for all,  
Scramble and hurry where they fall.

## INVITATION TO ETERNITY

Say, wilt thou go with me, sweet maid,  
Say, maiden, wilt thou go with me  
Through the valley-depths of shade,  
Of bright and dark obscurity;  
Where the path has lost its way,  
Where the sun forgets the day,  
Where there's nor light nor life to see,  
Sweet maiden, wilt thou go with me?

Where stones will turn to flooding streams,  
Where plains will rise like ocean's waves,  
Where life will fade like visioned dreams  
And darkness darken into caves,  
Say, maiden, wilt thou go with me  
Through this sad non-identity  
Where parents live and are forgot,  
And sisters live and know us not?

Say, maiden, wilt thou go with me  
In this strange death of life to be,  
To live in death and be the same,  
Without this life or home or name,  
At once to be and not to be—  
That was and is not—yet to see  
Things pass like shadows, and the sky  
Above, below, around us lie?

The land of shadows wilt thou trace,  
Nor look nor know each other's face;  
The present marred with reason gone,  
And past and present both as one?  
Say, maiden, can thy life be led  
To join the living and the dead?  
Then trace thy footsteps on with me:  
We are wed to one eternity.

## THE MAPLE TREE

The maple with its tassel flowers of green,  
That turns to red a staghorn-shaped seed,  
Just spreading out its scalloped leaves is seen,  
Of yellowish hue, yet beautifully green;  
Bark ribbed like corderoy in seamy screed,  
That farther up the stem is smoother seen,  
Where the white hemlock with white umbel flowers  
Up each spread stoven to the branches towers;  
And moss around the stoven spreads, dark green,  
And blotched leaved orchis, and the blue bell flowers;  
Thickly they grow and neath the leaves are seen;  
I love to see them gemmed with morning hours,  
I love the lone green places where they be,  
And the sweet clothing of the maple tree.



## HOUSE OR WINDOW FLIES

These little window dwellers, in cottages and halls, were always entertaining to me; after dancing in the window all day from sunrise to sunset they would sip of the tea, drink of the beer, and eat of the sugar, and be welcome all summer long. They look like things of mind or fairies, and seem pleased or dull as the weather permits. In many clean cottages and genteel houses, they are allowed every liberty to creep, fly, or do as they like; and seldom or ever do wrong. In fact they are the small or dwarfish portion of our own family, and so many fairy familiars that we know and treat as one of ourselves.

## DEWDROPS

The dewdrops on every blade of grass are so much like silver drops that I am obliged to stoop down as I walk to see if they are pearls, and those sprinkled on the ivy-woven beds of primroses underneath the hazels, whitethorns and maples are so like gold beads that I stooped down to feel if they were hard, but they melted from my finger. And where the dew lies on the primrose, the violet and whitethorn leaves they are emerald and beryl, yet nothing more than the dews of the morning on the budding leaves; nay, the road grasses are covered with gold and silver beads, and the further we go the brighter they seem to shine, like solid gold and silver. It is nothing more than the sun's light and shade upon them in the dewy morning; every thorn-point and every bramble-spear has its trembling ornament: till the wind gets a little brisker, and then all is shaken off, and all the shining jewelry passes away into a common spring morning full of budding leaves, primroses, violets, vernal speedwell, bluebell and orchis, and commonplace objects.

## FRAGMENT

The cataract, whirling down the precipice,  
Elbows down rocks and, shouldering, thunders through.  
Roars, howls, and stifled murmurs never cease;  
Hell and its agonies seem hid below.  
Thick rolls the mist, that smokes and falls in dew;  
The trees and greenwood wear the deepest green.  
Horrible mysteries in the gulph stare through,  
Roars of a million tongues, and none knows what they mean.

## FROM "A RHAPSODY"

Sweet solitude, what joy to be alone—  
 In wild, wood-shady dell to stay for hours.  
 Twould soften hearts if they were hard as stone  
 To see glad butterflies and smiling flowers.  
 Tis pleasant in these quiet lonely places,  
 Where not the voice of man our pleasure mars,  
 To see the little bees with coal black faces  
 Gathering sweets from little flowers like stars.

The wind seems calling, though not understood.  
 A voice is speaking; hark, it louder calls.  
 It echoes in the far-outstretching wood.  
 First twas a hum, but now it loudly squalls;  
 And then the pattering rain begins to fall,  
 And it is hushed—the fern leaves scarcely shake,  
 The tottergrass it scarcely stirs at all.  
 And then the rolling thunder gets awake,  
 And from black clouds the lightning flashes break.

The sunshine's gone, and now an April evening  
 Commences with a dim and mackerel sky.  
 Gold light and woolpacks in the west are leaving,  
 And leaden streaks their splendid place supply.  
 Sheep ointment seems to daub the dead-hued sky,  
 And night shuts up the lightsomeness of day,  
 All dark and absent as a corpse's eye.  
 Flower, tree, and bush, like all the shadows grey,  
 In leaden hues of desolation fade away.

Tis May; and yet the March flower Dandelion  
 Is still in bloom among the emerald grass,  
 Shining like guineas with the sun's warm eye on—  
 We almost think they are gold as we pass,  
 Or fallen stars in a green sea of grass.  
 They shine in fields, or waste grounds near the town.  
 They closed like painter's brush when even was.  
 At length they turn to nothing else but down,  
 While the rude winds blow off each shadowy crown.

## SECRET LOVE

I hid my love when young till I  
Couldn't bear the buzzing of a fly;  
I hid my love to my despite  
Till I could not bear to look at light:  
I dare not gaze upon her face  
But left her memory in each place;  
Where eer I saw a wild flower lie  
I kissed and bade my love good bye.

I met her in the greenest dells  
Where dewdrops pearl the wood blue bells  
The lost breeze kissed her bright blue eye,  
The bee kissed and went singing by,  
A sunbeam found a passage there,  
A gold chain round her neck so fair;  
As secret as the wild bee's song  
She lay there all the summer long.

I hid my love in field and town  
Till een the breeze would knock me down,  
The bees seemed singing ballads oer,  
The fly's bass turned a lion's roar;  
And even silence found a tongue,  
To haunt me all the summer long;  
The riddle nature could not prove  
Was nothing else but secret love.

## BANTRY BAY

On the eighteenth of October we lay in Bantry Bay,  
All ready to set sail, with a fresh and steady gale:  
A fortnight and nine days we in the harbour lay,  
And no breeze ever reached us or strained a single sail.  
Three ships of war had we, and the great guns loaded all;  
But our ships were dead and beaten that had never feared a foe.  
The winds becalmed around us cared for no cannon ball;  
They locked us in the harbour and would not let us go.

On the nineteenth of October, by eleven of the clock,  
The sky turned black as midnight and a sudden storm came on—  
Awful and sudden—and the cables felt the shock;  
Our anchors they all broke away and every sheet was gone.  
The guns fired off amid the strife, but little hope had we;  
The billows broke above the ship and left us all below.  
The crew with one consent cried "Bear further out to sea,"  
But the waves obeyed no sailor's call, and we knew not where to go.

She foundered on a rock, while we clambered up the shrouds,  
And staggered like a mountain drunk, wedged in the waves almost.  
The red hot boiling billows foamed in the stooping clouds,  
And in that fatal tempest the whole ship's crew were lost.  
Have pity for poor mariners, ye landsmen, in a storm.  
O think what they endure at sea while safe at home you stay.  
All ye that sleep on beds at night in houses dry and warm,  
O think upon the whole ship's crew, all lost at Bantry Bay.

## PEGGY'S THE LADY OF THE HALL

And will she leave the lowly clowns  
For silk and satins gay,  
Her woollen aprons and drab gowns  
For lady's cold array?  
And will she leave the wild hedge rose,  
The redbreast and the wren,  
And will she leave her Sunday beaus  
And milk shed in the glen?  
And will she leave her kind friends all  
To be the Lady of the Hall?

The cowslips bowed their golden drops,  
The white thorn white as sheets;  
The lamb agen the old ewe stops,  
The wren and robin tweets.  
And Peggy took her milk pails still,  
And sang her evening song,  
To milk her cows on Cowslip Hill  
For half the summer long.  
But silk and satins rich and rare  
Are doomed for Peggy still to wear.

But when the May had turned to haws,  
The hedge rose swelled to hips,  
Peggy was missed without a cause,  
And left us in eclipse.  
The shepherd in the hovel milks,  
Where builds the little wren,  
And Peggy's gone, all clad in silks—  
Far from the happy glen,  
From dog-rose, woodbine, clover, all  
To be the Lady of the Hall.

## I DREAMT OF ROBIN

I opened the casement this morn at starlight,  
And, the moment I got out of bed,  
The daisies were quaking about in their white  
And the cowslip was nodding its head.  
The grass was all shivers, the stars were all bright,  
And Robin that should come at e'en—  
I thought that I saw him, a ghost by moonlight,  
Like a stalking horse stand on the green.

I went bed agen and did nothing but dream  
Of Robin and moonlight and flowers.  
He stood like a shadow transfixed by a stream,  
And I couldn't forget him for hours.  
I'd just dropt asleep when I dreamed Robin spoke,  
And the casement it gave such a shake,  
As if every pane in the window was broke;  
Such a patter the gravel did make.

So I up in the morning before the cock crew  
And to strike me a light I sat down.  
I saw from the door all his track in the dew  
And, I guess, called "Come in and sit down."  
And one, sure enough, tramples up to the door,  
And who but young Robin his sen?  
And ere the old folks were half willing to stir  
We met, kissed, and parted agen.



## THE PEASANT POET

He loved the brook's soft sound,  
The swallow swimming by.  
He loved the daisy-covered ground,  
The cloud-bedappled sky.  
To him the dismal storm appeared  
The very voice of God;  
And when the evening rack was reared  
Stood Moses with his rod.  
And everything his eyes surveyed,  
The insects in the brake,  
Were creatures God Almighty made,  
He loved them for His sake—  
A silent man in life's affairs,  
A thinker from a boy,  
A peasant in his daily cares,  
A poet in his joy.

## TO JOHN CLARE

Well, honest John, how fare you now at home?  
The spring is come, and birds are building nests;  
The old cock robin to the sty is come,  
With olive feathers and its ruddy breast;  
And the old cock, with wattles and red comb,  
Struts with the hens, and seems to like some best,  
Then crows, and looks about for little crumbs,  
Swept out by little folks an hour ago;  
The pigs sleep in the sty; the bookman comes—  
The little boy lets home-close nesting go,  
And pockets tops and taws, where daisies bloom,  
To look at the new number just laid down,  
With lots of pictures, and good stories too,  
And Jack the Giant-killer's high renown.

*Feb. 10, 1860.*

## EARLY SPRING

The Spring is come, and Spring flowers coming too,  
The crocus, patty kay, the rich hearts' ease;  
The polyanthus peeps with blebs of dew,  
And daisy flowers; the buds swell on the trees;  
While oer the odd flowers swim grandfather bees  
In the old homestead rests the cottage cow;  
The dogs sit on their haunches near the pail,  
The least one to the stranger growls "bow wow,"  
Then hurries to the door and cocks his tail,  
To knaw the unfinished bone; the placid cow  
Looks oer the gate; the thresher's lumping flail  
Is all the noise the spring encounters now.

*May 28, 1860.*

## CLOCK-A-CLAY

In the cowslip pips I lie,  
Hidden from the buzzing fly,  
While green grass beneath me lies,  
Pearled with dew like fishes' eyes,  
Here I lie, a clock-a-clay,  
Waiting for the time of day.

While the forest quakes surprise,  
And the wild wind sobs and sighs,  
My home rocks as like to fall,  
On its pillar green and tall;  
When the pattering rain drives by  
Clock-a-clay keeps warm and dry.

Day by day and night by night,  
All the week I hide from sigh;  
In the cowslip pips I lie,  
In rain and dew still warm and dry;  
Day and night, and night and day,  
Red, black-spotted clock-a-clay.

My home shakes in wind and showers,  
Pale green pillar topped with flowers,  
Bending at the wild wind's breath,  
Till I touch the grass beneath;  
Here I live, lone clock-a-clay,  
Watching for the time of day.

## LITTLE TROTTY WAGTAIL

Little trotty wagtail he went in the rain,  
And tittering, tottering sideways he neer got straight again,  
He stooped to get a worm, and looked up to get a fly,  
And then he flew away ere his feathers they were dry.

Little trotty wagtail, he waddled in the mud,  
And left his little footmarks, trample where he would.  
He waddled in the water-pudge, and waggle went his tail,  
And chirrupt up his wings to dry upon the garden rail.

Little trotty wagtail, you nimble all about,  
And in the dimpling water-pudge you waddle in and out;  
Your home is nigh at hand, and in the warm pig-stye,  
So, little Master Wagtail, I'll bid you a good-bye.

## THE DYING CHILD

He could not die when trees were green,  
For he loved the time too well.  
His little hands, when flowers were seen,  
Were held for the bluebell,  
As he was carried oer the green.

His eye glanced at the white-nosed bee;  
He knew those children of the Spring:  
When he was well and on the lea  
He held one in his hands to sing,  
Which filled his heart with glee.

Infants, the children of the Spring!  
How can an infant die  
When butterflies are on the wing,  
Green grass, and such a sky?  
How can they die at Spring?

He held his hands for daisies white,  
And then for violets blue,  
And took them all to bed at night  
That in the green fields grew,  
As childhood's sweet delight.

And then he shut his little eyes,  
And flowers would notice not;  
Birds' nests and eggs caused no surprise,  
He now no blossoms got:  
They met with plaintive sighs.

When Winter came and blasts did sigh,  
And bare were plain and tree,  
As he for ease in bed did lie  
His soul seemed with the free,  
He died so quietly.

## LOVE OF NATURE

I love thee, Nature, with a boundless love!  
The calm of earth, the storm of roaring woods!  
The winds breathe happiness where'er I rove!  
There's life's own music in the swelling floods!  
My heart is in the thunder-melting clouds,  
The snow-cap't mountain, and the rolling sea!  
And hear ye not the voice where darkness shrouds  
The heavens? There lives happiness for me!

My pulse beats calmer while His lightnings play!  
My eye, with earth's delusions waxing dim,  
Clears with the brightness of eternal day!  
The elements crash round me! It is He!  
Calmly I hear His voice and never start.  
From Eve's posterity I stand quite free,  
Nor feel her curses rankle round my heart.

Love is not here. Hope is, and at His voice—  
The rolling thunder and the roaring sea—  
My pulses leap, and with the hills rejoice;  
Then strife and turmoil are at end for me.  
No matter where life's ocean leads me on,  
For Nature is my mother, and I rest,  
When tempests trouble and the sun is gone,  
Like to a weary child upon her breast.

## THE INVITATION

Come hither, my dear one, my choice one, and rare one,  
And let us be walking the meadows so fair,  
Where on pilewort and daisies the eye fondly gazes,  
And the wind plays so sweet in thy bonny brown hair.

Come with thy maiden eye, lay silks and satins by;  
Come in thy russet or grey cotton gown;  
Come to the meads, dear, where flags, sedge, and reeds appear,  
Rustling to soft winds and bowing low down.

Come with thy parted hair, bright eyes, and forehead bare;  
Come to the whitethorn that grows in the lane;  
To banks of primroses, where sweetness reposes,  
Come, love, and let us be happy again.

Come where the violet flowers, come where the morning showers  
Pearl on the primrose and speedwell so blue;  
Come to that clearest brook that ever runs round the nook  
Where you and I pledged our first love so true.



## TO THE LARK

Bird of the morn,  
 When roseate clouds begin  
 To show the opening dawn  
 Thou gladly sing'st it in,  
 And o'er the sweet green fields and happy vales  
 Thy pleasant song is heard, mixed with the morning gales.

Bird of the morn,  
 What time the ruddy sun  
 Smiles on the pleasant corn  
 Thy singing is begun,  
 Heartfelt and cheering over labourers' toil,  
 Who chop in coppice wild and delve the russet soil.

Bird of the sun,  
 How dear to man art thou!  
 When morning has begun  
 To gild the mountain's brow,  
 How beautiful it is to see thee soar so blest,  
 Winnowing thy russet wings above thy twitchy nest.

Bird of the Summer's day,  
 How oft I stand to hear  
 Thee sing thy airy lay,  
 With music wild and clear,  
 Till thou becom'st a speck upon the sky,  
 Small as the clods that crumble where I lie.

Thou bird of happiest song,  
 The Spring and Summer too  
 Are thine, the months along,  
 The woods and vales to view.  
 If climes were evergreen thy song would be  
 The sunny music of eternal glee.

## PHOEBE OF THE SCOTTISH GLEN

Agen I'll take my idle pen  
 And sing my bonny mountain maid—  
 Sweet Phoebe of the Scottish glen,  
 Nor of her censure feel afraid.  
 I'll charm her ear with beauty's praise,  
 And please her eye with songs agen—  
 The ballads of our early days—  
 To Phoebe of the Scottish glen.

There never was a fairer thing  
 All Scotland's glens and mountains through.  
 The siller gowans of the Spring,  
 Besprent with pearls of mountain dew,  
 The maiden blush upon the brere,  
 Far distant from the haunts of men,  
 Are nothing half so sweet or dear  
 As Phoebe of the Scottish glen.

How handsome is her naked foot,  
 Moist with the pearls of Summer dew:  
 The siller daisy's nothing to 't,  
 Nor hawthorn flowers so white to view,  
 She's sweeter than the blooming brere,  
 That blossoms far away from men:  
 No flower in Scotland's half so dear  
 As Phoebe of the Scottish glen.

## MAID OF THE WILDERNESS

Maid of the wilderness,  
Sweet in thy rural dress,  
Fond thy rich lips I press  
Under this tree.

Morning her health bestows,  
Sprinkles dews on the rose,  
That by the bramble grows:  
Maid happy be.  
Womanhood round thee glows,  
Wander with me.

The restharrow blooming,  
The sun just a-coming,  
Grass and bushes illuming,  
And the spreading oak tree;

Come hither, sweet Nelly,  
\* \* \*

The morning is loosing  
Its incense for thee.  
The pea-leaf has dews on;  
Love wander with me.

We'll walk by the river,  
And love more than ever;  
There's nought shall dissever  
My fondness from thee.

Soft ripples the water,  
Flags rustle like laughter,  
And fish follow after;  
Leaves drop from the tree.  
Nelly, Beauty's own daughter,  
Love, wander with me.

## WHEN SHALL WE MEET AGAIN?

How many times Spring blossoms meek  
Have faded on the land  
Since last I kissed that pretty cheek,  
Caressed that happy hand.  
Eight time the green's been painted white  
With daisies in the grass  
Since I looked on thy eyes so bright,  
And pressed my bonny lass.

The ground lark sung about the farms,  
The blackbird in the wood,  
When fast locked in each other's arms  
By hedgerow thorn we stood.  
It was a pleasant Sabbath day,  
The sun shone bright and round,  
His light through dark oaks passed, and lay  
Like gold upon the ground.

How beautiful the blackbird sung,  
And answered soft the thrush;  
And sweet the pearl-like dew-drops hung  
Upon the white thorn bush.  
O happy day, eight years ago!  
We parted without pain:  
The blackbird sings, primroses blow;  
When shall we meet again?

## THE LOVER'S INVITATION

Now the wheat is in the ear, and the rose is on the brere,  
And bluecaps so divinely blue, with poppies of bright scarlet hue,  
Maiden, at the close o' eve, wilt thou, dear, thy cottage leave,  
And walk with one that loves thee?

When the even's tiny tears bead upon the grassy spears,  
And the spider's lace is wet with its pinhead blebs of dew,  
Wilt thou lay thy work aside and walk by brooklets dim descried,  
Where I delight to love thee?

While thy footfall lightly press'd tramples by the skylark's nest,  
And the cockle's streaky eyes mark the snug place where it lies,  
Mary, put thy work away, and walk at dewy close o' day  
With me to kiss and love thee.

There's something in the time so sweet, when lovers in the evening  
meet,  
The air so still, the sky so mild, like slumbers of the cradled  
child,  
The moon looks over fields of love, among the ivy sleeps the dove:  
To see thee is to love thee.

## NATURE'S DARLING

Sweet comes the morning  
 In Nature's adorning,  
 And bright shines the dew on the buds of the thorn,  
 Where Mary Ann rambles  
 Through the sloe trees and brambles;  
 She's sweeter than wild flowers that open at morn;  
 She's a rose in the dew;  
 She's pure and she's true;  
 She's as gay as the poppy that grows in the corn.

Her eyes they are bright,  
 Her bosom's snow white,  
 And her voice is like songs of the birds in the grove.  
 She's handsome and bonny,  
 And fairer than any,  
 And her person and actions are Nature's and love.  
 She has the bloom of all roses,  
 She's the breath of sweet posies,  
 She's as pure as the brood in the nest of the dove.

Of Earth's fairest daughters,  
 Voiced like falling waters,  
 She walks down the meadows, than blossoms more fair.  
 O her bosom right fair is,  
 And her rose cheek so rare is,  
 And parted and lovely her glossy black hair.  
 Her bosom's soft whiteness!  
 The sun in its brightness  
 Has never been seen so bewilderingly fair.

The dewy grass glitters,  
 The house swallow twitters,  
 And through the sky floats in its visions of bliss;  
 The lark soars on high,  
 On cowslips dews lie,  
 And the last days of Summer are nothing like this.  
 When Mary Ann rambles  
 Through hedgerows and brambles,  
 The soft gales of Spring are the seasons of bliss.

## I'LL DREAM UPON THE DAYS TO COME

I'll lay me down on the green sward,  
 Mid yellowcups and speedwell blue,  
 And pay the world no more regard,  
 But be to Nature leal and true.  
 Who break the peace of hapless man  
 But they who Truth and Nature wrong?  
 I'll hear no more of evil's plan,  
 But live with Nature and her song.

Where Nature's lights and shades are green,  
 Where Nature's place is strewn with flowers.  
 Where strife and care are never seen,  
 There I'll retire to happy hours,  
 And stretch my body on the green,  
 And sleep among the flowers in bloom,  
 By eyes of malice seldom seen,  
 And dream upon the days to come.

I'll lay me by the forest green,  
 I'll lay me on the pleasant grass;  
 My life shall pass away unseen;  
 I'll be no more the man I was.  
 The tawny bee upon the flower,  
 The butterfly upon the leaf,  
 Like them I'll live my happy hour,  
 A life of sunshine, bright and brief.

In greenwood hedges, close at hand,  
 Build, brood, and sing the little birds,  
 The happiest things in the green land,  
 While sweetly feed the lowing herds,  
 While softly bleat the roving sheep.  
 Upon the green grass will I lie,  
 A Summer's day, to think and sleep.  
 Or see the clouds sail down the sky.

## TO ISABEL

Arise, my Isabel, arise!  
The sun shoots forth his early ray,  
The hue of love is in the skies,  
The birds are singing, come away!  
O come, my Isabella, come,  
With inky tendrils hanging low;  
Thy cheeks like roses just in bloom,  
That in the healthy Summer glow.

That eye it turns the world away  
From wanton sport and recklessness;  
That eye beams with a cheerful ray,  
And smiles propitiously to bless.  
O come, my Isabella, dear!  
O come, and fill these longing arms!  
Come, let me see thy beauty here,  
And bend in worship o'er thy charms.

O come, my Isabella, love!  
My dearest Isabella, come!  
Thy heart's affection, let me prove,  
And kiss thy beauty in its bloom.  
My Isabella, young and fair,  
Thou darling of my home and heart,  
Come, love, my bosom's truth to share,  
And of its being form a part.



## THE SHEPHERD'S DAUGHTER

How sweet is every lengthening day,  
 And every change of weather,  
 When Summer comes, on skies blue grey,  
 And brings her hosts together,  
 Her flocks of birds, her crowds of flowers,  
 Her sunny-shining water!  
 I dearly love the woodbine bowers,  
 That hide the Shepherd's Daughter—  
 In gown of green or brown or blue,  
 The Shepherd's Daughter, leal and true.

How bonny is her lily breast!  
 How sweet her rosy face!  
 She'd give my aching bosom rest,  
 Where love would find its place.  
 While earth is green, and skies are blue,  
 And sunshine gilds the water,  
 While Summer's sweet and Nature true,  
 I'll love the Shepherd's Daughter—  
 Her nut brown hair, her clear bright eye,  
 My daily thought, my only joy.

She's such a simple, sweet young thing,  
 Dressed in her country costume.  
 My wits had used to know the Spring,  
 Till I saw, and loved, and lost 'em.  
 How quietly the lily lies  
 Upon the deepest water!  
 How sweet to me the Summer skies!  
 And so's the Shepherd's Daughter—  
 With lily breast and rosy face  
 The sweetest maid in any place.

My singing bird, my bonny flower,  
 How dearly could I love thee!  
 To sit with thee one pleasant hour,  
 If thou would'st but approve me!  
 I swear by lilies white and yellow,  
 That flower on deepest water,  
 Would'st thou but make me happy fellow,  
 I'd wed the Shepherd's Daughter!

By all that's on the earth or water,  
I more than love the Shepherd's Daughter.

## LASSIE, I LOVE THEE

Lassie, I love thee!  
The heavens above thee  
Look downwards to move thee,  
And prove my love true.  
My arms round thy waist, love,  
My head on thy breast, love;  
By a true man caressed love,  
Ne'er bid me adieu.

Thy cheek's full o' blushes,  
Like the rose in the bushes,  
While my love ardent gushes  
With over delight.  
Though clouds may come o'er thee,  
Sweet maid, I'll adore thee,  
As I do now before thee:  
I love thee outright.

It stings me to madness  
To see thee all gladness,  
While I'm full of sadness  
Thy meaning to guess.  
Thy gown is deep blue, love,  
In honour of true love:  
Ever thinking of you, love,  
My love I'll confess.

My love ever showing,  
Thy heart worth the knowing,  
It is like the sun glowing,  
And hid in thy breast.  
Thy lover behold me;  
To my bosom I'll fold thee,  
For thou, love, thou'st just told me,  
So here thou may'st rest.

## THE GIPSY LASS

Just like the berry brown is my bonny lassie O!  
And in the smoky camp lives my bonny lassie O!  
Where the scented woodbine weaves  
Round the white-thorn's glossy leaves:  
The sweetest maid on earth is my gipsy lassie O!

The brook it runs so clear by my bonny lassie O!  
And the blackbird singeth near my bonny lassie O!  
And there the wild briar rose  
Wrinkles the clear stream as it flows  
By the smoky camp of my bonny lassie O!

The groundlark singeth high o'er my bonny lassie O!  
The nightingale lives nigh my gipsy lassie O!  
They're with her all the year,  
By the brook that runs so clear,  
And there's none in all the world like my gipsy lassie O!

With a bosom white as snow is my gipsy lassie O!  
With a foot like to the roe is my bonny lassie O!  
Like the sweet birds she will sing,  
While echo it will ring:  
Sure there's none in the world like my bonny lassie O!

## AT THE FOOT OF CLIFFORD HILL

Who loves the white-thorn tree,  
And the river running free?  
There a maiden stood with me  
In Summer weather.  
Near a cottage far from town,  
While the sun went brightly down  
O'er the meadows green and brown,  
We loved together.

How sweet her drapery flowed,  
While the moor-cock oddly crowed;  
I took the kiss which love bestowed,  
Under the white-thorn tree.  
Soft winds the water curled,  
The trees their branches furled;  
Sweetest nook in all the world  
Is where she stood with me.

Calm came the evening air,  
The sky was sweet and fair,  
In the river shadowed there,  
Close by the hawthorn tree.  
Round her neck I clasped my arms,  
And kissed her rosy charms;  
O'er the flood the hackle swarms,  
Where the maiden stood with me.

O there's something falls so dear  
On the music of the ear,  
Where the river runs so clear,  
And my lover met with me.  
At the foot of Clifford Hill  
Still I hear the clacking mill,  
And the river's running still  
Under the trysting tree.

## TO MY WIFE—A VALENTINE

O once I had a true love,  
As blest as I could be:  
Patty was my turtle dove,  
And Patty she loved me.  
We walked the fields together,  
By roses and woodbine,  
In Summer's sunshine weather,  
And Patty she was mine.

We stopped to gather primroses,  
And violets white and blue,  
In pastures and green closes  
All glistening with the dew.  
We sat upon green mole-hills,  
Among the daisy flowers,  
To hear the small birds' merry trills,  
And share the sunny hours.

The blackbird on her grassy nest  
We would not scare away,  
Who nuzzling sat with brooding breast  
On her eggs for half the day.  
The chaffinch chirruped on the thorn,  
And a pretty nest had she;  
The magpie chattered all the morn  
From her perch upon the tree.

And I would go to Patty's cot,  
And Patty came to me;  
Each knew the other's very thought  
Under the hawthorn tree.  
And Patty had a kiss to give,  
And Patty had a smile,  
To bid me hope and bid me love,  
At every stopping stile.

We loved one Summer quite away,  
And when another came,  
The cowslip close and sunny day,  
It found us much the same.  
We both looked on the selfsame thing,

Till both became as one;  
The birds did in the hedges sing,  
And happy time went on.

The brambles from the hedge advance,  
In love with Patty's eyes:  
On flowers, like ladies at a dance,  
Flew scores of butterflies.  
I claimed a kiss at every stile,  
And had her kind replies.  
The bees did round the woodbine toil,  
Where sweet the small wind sighs.

Then Patty was a slight young thing;  
Now she's long past her teens;  
And we've been married many springs,  
And mixed in many scenes.  
And I'll be true for Patty's sake,  
And she'll be true for mine;  
And I this little ballad make,  
To be her valentine.

## MY TRUE LOVE IS A SAILOR

'T was somewhere in the April time,  
 Not long before the May,  
 A-sitting on a bank o' thyme  
 I heard a maiden say,  
 "My true love is a sailor,  
 And ere he went away  
 We spent a year together,  
 And here my lover lay.

The gold furze was in blossom,  
 So was the daisy too;  
 The dew-drops on the little flowers  
 Were emeralds in hue.  
 On this same Summer morning,  
 Though then the Sabbath day,  
 He crop't me Spring pol'ant'uses,  
 Beneath the whitethorn may.

He crop't me Spring pol'ant'uses,  
 And said if they would keep  
 They'd tell me of love's fantasies,  
 For dews on them did weep.  
 And I did weep at parting,  
 Which lasted all the week;  
 And when he turned for starting  
 My full heart could not speak.

The same roots grow pol'ant'us' flowers  
 Beneath the same haw-tree;  
 I crop't them in morn's dewy hours,  
 And here love's offerings be.  
 O come to me my sailor beau  
 And ease my aching breast;  
 The storms shall cease to rave and blow,  
 And here thy life find rest."



## THE SAILOR'S RETURN

The whitethorn is budding and rushes are green,  
The ivy leaves rustle around the ash tree,  
On the sweet sunny bank blue violets are seen,  
That tremble beneath the wild hum of the bee.  
The sunbeams they play on the brook's plashy ripples,  
Like millions of suns in each swirl looking on;  
The rush nods and bows till its tasseled head tipples  
Right into the wimpled flood, kissing the stones.

'T was down in the cow pasture, just at the gloaming,  
I met a young woman sweet tempered and mild,  
I said "Pretty maiden, say, where are you roving?"  
"I'm walking at even," she answered, and smiled.  
"Here my sweetheart and I gathered posies at even;  
It's eight years ago since they sent him to sea.  
Wild flowers hung with dew are like angels from heaven:  
They look up in my face and keep whispering to me.

They whisper the tales that were told by my true love;  
In the evening and morning they glisten with dew;  
They say (bonny blossoms) 'I'll ne'er get a new love;  
I love her; she's kindly.' I say, 'I love him too.'  
The passing-by stranger's a stranger no longer;  
He kissed off the teardrop which fell from her e'e;  
With blue-jacket and trousers he is bigger and stronger;  
'T is her own constant Willy returned from the sea.

## BIRDS, WHY ARE YE SILENT?

Why are ye silent, Birds?  
 Where do ye fly?  
 Winter's not violent,  
 With such a Spring sky.  
 The wheatlands are green, snow and frost are away,  
 Birds, why are ye silent on such a sweet day?

By the slated pig-stye  
 The redbreast scarce whispers:  
 Where last Autumn's leaves lie  
 The hedge sparrow just lispers.  
 And why are the chaffinch and bullfinch so still,  
 While the sulphur primroses bedeck the wood hill?

The bright yellow-hammers  
 Are strutting about,  
 All still, and none stammers  
 A single note out.  
 From the hedge starts the blackbird, at brook side to drink:  
 I thought he'd have whistled, but he only said "prink."

The tree-creeper hustles  
 Up fir's rusty bark;  
 All silent he bustles;  
 We needn't say hark.  
 There's no song in the forest, in field, or in wood,  
 Yet the sun gilds the grass as though come in for good.

How bright the odd daisies  
 Peep under the stubbs!  
 How bright pilewort blazes  
 Where ruddled sheep rubs  
 The old willow trunk by the side of the brook,  
 Where soon for blue violets the children will look!

By the cot green and mossy  
 Feed sparrow and hen:  
 On the ridge brown and glossy  
 They cluck now and then.  
 The wren cocks his tail o'er his back by the stye,  
 Where his green bottle nest will be made by and bye.

Here's bunches of chickweed,  
With small starry flowers,  
Where red-caps oft pick seed  
In hungry Spring hours.  
And blue cap and black cap, in glossy Spring coat,  
Are a-peeping in buds without singing a note.

Why silent should birds be  
And sunshine so warm?  
Larks hide where the herds be  
By cottage and farm.  
If wild flowers were blooming and fully set in the Spring  
May-be all the birdies would cheerfully sing.

## MEET ME TO-NIGHT

O meet me to-night by the bright starlight,  
 Now the pleasant Spring's begun.  
 My own dear maid, by the greenwood shade,  
 In the crimson set of the sun,  
 Meet me to-night.

The sun he goes down with a ruby crown  
 To a gold and crimson bed;  
 And the falling dew, from heaven so blue,  
 Hangs pearls on Phoebe's head.  
 Love, leave the town.

Come thou with me; 'neath the green-leaf tree  
 We'll crop the bonny sweet brere.  
 O come, dear maid, 'neath the hazlewood shade,  
 For love invites us there.  
 Come then with me.

The owl pops, scarce seen, from the ivy green,  
 With his spectacles on I ween:  
 See the moon's above and the stars twinkle, love;  
 Better time was never seen.  
 O come, my queen.

The fox he stops, and down he drops  
 His head beneath the grass.  
 The birds are gone; we're all alone;  
 O come, my bonny lass.  
 Come, O come!

## YOUNG JENNY

The cockchafer hums down the rut-rifted lane  
Where the wild roses hang and the woodbines entwine,  
And the shrill squeaking bat makes his circles again  
Round the side of the tavern close by the sign.  
The sun is gone down like a wearisome queen,  
In curtains the richest that ever were seen.

The dew falls on flowers in a mist of small rain,  
And, beating the hedges, low fly the barn owls;  
The moon with her horns is just peeping again,  
And deep in the forest the dog-badger howls;  
In best bib and tucker then wanders my Jane  
By the side of the woodbines which grow in the lane.

On a sweet eventide I walk by her side;  
In green hoods the daisies have shut up their eyes.  
Young Jenny is handsome without any pride;  
Her eyes (O how bright!) have the hue of the skies.  
O 'tis pleasant to walk by the side of my Jane  
At the close of the day, down the mossy green lane.

We stand by the brook, by the gate, and the stile,  
While the even star hangs out his lamp in the sky;  
And on her calm face dwells a sweet sunny smile,  
While her soul fondly speaks through the light of her eye.  
Sweet are the moments while waiting for Jane;  
'Tis her footsteps I hear coming down the green lane.

## ADIEU!

"Adieu, my love, adieu!  
Be constant and be true  
As the daisies gemmed with dew,  
Bonny maid."  
The cows their thirst were slaking,  
Trees the playful winds were shaking;  
Sweet songs the birds were making  
In the shade.

The moss upon the tree  
Was as green as green could be,  
The clover on the lea  
Ruddy glowed;  
Leaves were silver with the dew,  
Where the tall sowthistles grew,  
And I bade the maid adieu  
On the road.

Then I took myself to sea,  
While the little chiming bee  
Sung his ballad on the lea,  
Humming sweet;  
And the red-winged butterfly  
Was sailing through the sky,  
Skimming up and bouncing by  
Near my feet.

I left the little birds,  
And sweet lowing of the herds,  
And couldn't find out words,  
Do you see,  
To say to them good bye,  
Where the yellow cups do lie;  
So heaving a deep sigh,  
Took to sea.

## MY BONNY ALICE AND HER PITCHER

There's a bonny place in Scotland,  
 Where a little spring is found;  
 There Nature shows her honest face  
 The whole year round.  
 Where the whitethorn branches, full of may,  
 Hung near the fountain's rim,  
 Where comes sweet Alice every day  
 And dips her pitcher in;  
 A gallon pitcher without ear,  
 She fills it with the water clear.

My bonny Alice she is fair;  
 There's no such other to be found.  
 Her rosy cheek and dark brown hair—  
 The fairest maid on Scotland's ground.  
 And there the heather's pinhead flowers  
 All blossom over bank and brae,  
 While Alice passes by the bowers  
 To fill her pitcher every day;  
 The pitcher brown without an ear  
 She dips into the fountain clear.

O Alice, bonny, sweet, and fair,  
 With roses on her cheeks!  
 The little birds come drinking there,  
 The throstle almost speaks.  
 He dips his wings and wimples makes  
 Upon the fountain clear,  
 Then vanishes among the brakes  
 For ever singing near;  
 While Alice, listening, stands to hear,  
 And dips her pitcher without ear.

O Alice, bonny Alice, fair,  
 Thy pleasant face I love;  
 Thy red-rose cheek, thy dark brown hair,  
 Thy soft eyes, like a dove.  
 I see thee by the fountain stand,  
 With the sweet smiling face;  
 There's not a maid in all the land  
 With such bewitching grace

As Alice, who is drawing near,  
To dip the pitcher without ear.



## THE MAIDEN I LOVE

How sweet are Spring wild flowers! They grow past the counting.  
How sweet are the wood-paths that thread through the grove!  
But sweeter than all the wild flowers of the mountain  
Is the beauty that walks here—the maiden I love.  
Her black hair in tangles  
The rose briar mangles;  
Her lips and soft cheeks,  
Where love ever speaks:  
O there's nothing so sweet as the maiden I love.

It was down in the wild flowers, among brakes and brambles,  
I met the sweet maiden so dear to my eye,  
In one of my Sunday morn midsummer rambles,  
Among the sweet wild blossoms blooming close by.  
Her hair it was coal black,  
Hung loose down her back;  
In her hand she held posies  
Of blooming primroses,  
The maiden who passed on the morning of love.

Coal black was her silk hair that shaded white shoulders;  
Ruby red were her ripe lips, her cheeks of soft hue;  
Her sweet smiles, enchanting the eyes of beholders,  
Thrilled my heart as she rambled the wild blossoms through.  
Like the pearl, her bright eye;  
In trembling delight I  
Kissed her cheek, like a rose  
In its gentlest repose.  
O there's nothing so sweet as the maiden I love!

## TO JENNY LIND

I cannot touch the harp again,  
And sing another idle lay,  
To cool a maddening, burning brain,  
And drive the midnight fiend away.  
Music, own sister to the soul.  
Bids roses bloom on cheeks all pale;  
And sweet her joys and sorrows roll  
When sings the Swedish Nightingale.

\* \* \* \* \*

I cannot touch the harp again;  
No chords will vibrate on the string;  
Like broken flowers upon the plain,  
My heart e'en withers while I sing.  
Aeolian harps have witching tones,  
On morning or the evening gale;  
No melody their music owns  
As sings the Swedish nightingale.

## THE FOREST MAID

O once I loved a pretty girl, and dearly love her still;  
 I courted her in happiness for two short years or more.  
 And when I think of Mary it turns my bosom chill,  
 For my little of life's happiness is faded and is o'er.  
 O fair was Mary Littlechild, and happy as the bee,  
 And sweet was bonny Mary as the song of forest bird;  
 And the smile upon her red lips was very dear to me,  
 And her tale of love the sweetest that my ear has ever heard.

O the flower of all the forest was Mary Littlechild;  
 There's few could be so dear to me and none could be so fair.  
 While many love the garden flowers I still esteem the wild,  
 And Mary of the forest is the fairest blossom there.  
 She's fairer than the may flowers that bloom among the thorn,  
 She's dearer to my eye than the rose upon the brere;  
 Her eye is brighter far than the bonny pearls of morn,  
 And the name of Mary Littlechild is to me ever dear.

O once I loved a pretty girl. The linnet in its mirth  
 Was never half so blest as I with Mary Littlechild—  
 The rose of the creation, and the pink of all the earth,  
 The flower of all the forest, and the best for being wild.  
 O sweet are dews of morning, ere the Autumn blows so chill,—  
 And sweet are forest flowers in the hawthorn's mossy shade,  
 But nothing is so fair, and nothing ever will  
 Bloom like the rosy cheek of my bonny Forest Maid.

## LOVE'S EMBLEM

Go rose, my Chloe's bosom grace:  
How happy should I prove,  
Could I supply that envied place  
With never-fading love.

Accept, dear maid, now Summer glows,  
This pure, unsullied gem,  
Love's emblem in a full-blown rose,  
Just broken from the stem.

Accept it as a favourite flower  
For thy soft breast to wear;  
'Twill blossom there its transient hour,  
A favourite of the fair.

Upon thy cheek its blossom glows,  
As from a mirror clear,  
Making thyself a living rose,  
In blossom all the year.

It is a sweet and favourite flower  
To grace a maiden's brow,  
Emblem of love without its power—  
A sweeter rose art thou.

The rose, like hues of insect wing,  
May perish in an hour;  
'T is but at best a fading thing,  
But thou'rt a living flower.

The roses steeped in morning dews  
Would every eye enthrall,  
But woman, she alone subdues;  
Her beauty conquers all.

## THE MORNING WALK

The linnet sat upon its nest,  
 By gales of morning softly prest,  
 His green wing and his greener breast  
 Were damp with dews of morning:  
 The dog-rose near the oaktree grew,  
 Blush'd swelling 'neath a veil of dew,  
 A pink's nest to its prickles grew,  
 Right early in the morning.

The sunshine glittered gold, the while  
 A country maiden clomb the stile;  
 Her straw hat couldn't hide the smile  
 That blushed like early morning.  
 The lark, with feathers all wet through,  
 Looked up above the glassy dew,  
 And to the neighbouring corn-field flew,  
 Fanning the gales of morning.

In every bush was heard a song,  
 On each grass blade, the whole way long,  
 A silver shining drop there hung,  
 The milky dew of morning.  
 Where stepping-stones stride o'er the brook  
 The rosy maid I overtook.  
 How ruddy was her healthy look,  
 So early in the morning!

I took her by the well-turned arm,  
 And led her over field and farm,  
 And kissed her tender cheek so warm,  
 A rose in early morning.  
 The spiders' lacework shone like glass,  
 Tied up to flowers and cat-tail grass;  
 The dew-drops bounced before the lass,  
 Sprinkling the early morning.

Her dark curls fanned among the gales,  
 The skylark whistled o'er the vales,  
 I told her love's delightful tales  
 Among the dews of morning.  
 She crop't a flower, shook oft' the dew,

And on her breast the wild rose grew;  
She blushed as fair, as lovely, too—  
The living rose of morning.

## To Miss C.....

Thy glance is the brightest,  
 Thy voice is the sweetest,  
 Thy step is the lightest,  
 Thy shape the completest:  
 Thy waist I could span, dear,  
 Thy neck's like a swan's, dear,  
 And roses the sweetest  
 On thy cheeks do appear.

The music of Spring  
 Is the voice of my charmer.  
 When the nightingales sing  
 She's as sweet; who would harm her?  
 Where the snowdrop or lily lies  
 They show her face, but her eyes  
 Are the dark clouds, yet warmer,  
 From which the quick lightning flies  
 O'er the face of my charmer.

Her faith is the snowdrop,  
 So pure on its stem;  
 And love in her bosom  
 She wears as a gem;  
 She is young as Spring flowers,  
 And sweet as May showers,  
 Swelling the clover buds, and bending the stem,  
 She's the sweetest of blossoms, she love's favourite gem.

## I PLUCK SUMMER BLOSSOMS

I pluck Summer blossoms,  
 And think of rich bosoms—  
 The bosoms I've leaned on, and worshipped, and won.  
 The rich valley lilies,  
 The wood daffodillies,  
 Have been found in our rambles when Summer begun.

Where I plucked thee the bluebell,  
 'T was where the night dew fell,  
 And rested till morn in the cups of the flowers;  
 I shook the sweet posies,  
 Bluebells and brere roses,  
 As we sat in cool shade in Summer's warm hours.

Bedlam-cowslips and cuckoos,  
 With freck'd lip and hooked nose,  
 Growing safe near the hazel of thicket and woods,  
 And water blobs, ladies' smocks,  
 Blooming where haycocks  
 May be found, in the meadows, low places, and floods.

And cowslips a fair band  
 For May ball or garland,  
 That bloom in the meadows as seen by the eye;  
 And pink ragged robin,  
 Where the fish they are bobbing  
 Their heads above water to catch at the fly.

Wild flowers and wild roses!  
 'T is love makes the posies  
 To paint Summer ballads of meadow and glen.  
 Floods can't drown it nor turn it,  
 Even flames cannot burn it;  
 Let it bloom till we walk the green meadows again.



## THE MARCH NOSEGAY

The bonny March morning is beaming  
 In mingled crimson and grey,  
 White clouds are streaking and creaming  
 The sky till the noon of the day;  
 The fir deal looks darker and greener,  
 And grass hills below look the same;  
 The air all about is serener,  
 The birds less familiar and tame.

Here's two or three flowers for my fair one,  
 Wood primroses and celandine too;  
 I oft look about for a rare one  
 To put in a posy for you.  
 The birds look so clean and so neat,  
 Though there's scarcely a leaf on the grove;  
 The sun shines about me so sweet,  
 I cannot help thinking of love.

So where the blue violets are peeping,  
 By the warm sunny sides of the woods,  
 And the primrose, 'neath early morn weeping,  
 Amid a large cluster of buds,  
 (The morning it was such a rare one,  
 So dewy, so sunny, and fair,)  
 I sought the wild flowers for my fair one,  
 To wreath in her glossy black hair.

## LEFT ALONE

Left in the world alone,  
Where nothing seems my own,  
And everything is weariness to me,  
'T is a life without an end,  
'T is a world without a friend,  
And everything is sorrowful I see.

There's the crow upon the stack,  
And other birds all black,  
While bleak November's frowning wearily;  
And the black cloud's dropping rain,  
Till the floods hide half the plain,  
And everything is dreariness to me.

The sun shines wan and pale,  
Chill blows the northern gale,  
And odd leaves shake and quiver on the tree,  
While I am left alone,  
Chilled as a mossy stone,  
And all the world is frowning over me.

## TO MARY

Mary, I love to sing  
About the flowers of Spring,  
For they resemble thee.  
In the earliest of the year  
Thy beauties will appear,  
And youthful modesty.

Here's the daisy's silver rim,  
With gold eye never dim,  
Spring's earliest flower so fair.  
Here the pilewort's golden rays  
Set the cow green in a blaze,  
Like the sunshine in thy hair.

Here's forget-me-not so blue;  
Is there any flower so true?  
Can it speak my happy lot?  
When we courted in disguise  
This flower I used to prize,  
For it said "Forget-me-not."

Speedwell! And when we meet  
In the meadow paths so sweet,  
Where the flowers I gave to thee  
All grew beneath the sun,  
May thy gentle heart be won,  
And I be blest with thee.

## THE NIGHTINGALE

This is the month the nightingale, clod brown,  
Is heard among the woodland shady boughs:  
This is the time when in the vale, grass-grown,  
The maiden hears at eve her lover's vows,  
What time the blue mist round the patient cows  
Dim rises from the grass and half conceals  
Their dappled hides. I hear the nightingale,  
That from the little blackthorn spinney steals  
To the old hazel hedge that skirts the vale,  
And still unseen sings sweet. The ploughman feels  
The thrilling music as he goes along,  
And imitates and listens; while the fields  
Lose all their paths in dusk to lead him wrong,  
Still sings the nightingale her soft melodious song.

## MARY

The skylark mounts up with the morn,  
 The valleys are green with the Spring,  
 The linnets sit in the whitethorn,  
 To build mossy dwellings and sing;  
 I see the thornbush getting green,  
 I see the woods dance in the Spring,  
 But Mary can never be seen,  
 Though the all-cheering Spring doth begin.

I see the grey bark of the oak  
 Look bright through the underwood now;  
 To the plough plodding horses they yoke,  
 But Mary is not with her cow.  
 The birds almost whistle her name:  
 Say, where can my Mary be gone?  
 The Spring brightly shines, and 'tis shame  
 That she should be absent alone.

The cowslips are out on the grass,  
 Increasing like crowds at a fair;  
 The river runs smoothly as glass,  
 And the barges float heavily there;  
 The milkmaid she sings to her cow,  
 But Mary is not to be seen;  
 Can Nature such absence allow  
 At milking on pasture and green?

When Sabbath-day comes to the green,  
 The maidens are there in their best,  
 But Mary is not to be seen,  
 Though I walk till the sun's in the west.  
 I fancy still each wood and plain,  
 Where I and my Mary have strayed,  
 When I was a young country swain,  
 And she was the happiest maid.

But woods they are all lonely now,  
 And the wild flowers blow all unseen;  
 The birds sing alone on the bough,  
 Where Mary and I once have been.  
 But for months she now keeps away.

And I am a sad lonely hind;  
Trees tell me so day after day,  
As slowly they wave in the wind.

Birds tell me, while swaying the bough,  
That I am all threadbare and old;  
The very sun looks on me now  
As one dead, forgotten, and cold.  
Once I'd a place where I could rest.  
And love, for then I was free;  
That place was my Mary's dear breast  
And hope was still left unto me.

The Spring comes brighter day by day,  
And brighter flowers appear,  
And though she long has kept away  
Her name is ever dear.  
Then leave me still the meadow flowers,  
Where daffies blaze and shine;  
Give but the Spring's young hawthorn bower,  
For then sweet Mary's mine.

## SPRING

Come, gentle Spring, and show thy varied greens  
In woods, and fields, and meadows, by clear brooks;  
Come, gentle Spring, and bring thy sweetest scenes,  
Where peace, with solitude, the loveliest looks;  
Where the blue unclouded sky  
Spreads the sweetest canopy,  
And Study wiser grows without her books.

Come hither, gentle May, and with thee bring  
Flowers of all colours, and the wild briar rose;  
Come in wind-floating drapery, and bring  
Fragrance and bloom, that Nature's love bestows—  
Meadow pinks and columbines,  
Kecksies white and eglantines,  
And music of the bee that seeks the rose.

Come, gentle Spring, and bring thy choicest looks,  
Thy bosom graced with flowers, thy face with smiles;  
Come, gentle Spring, and trace thy wandering brooks,  
Through meadow gates, o'er footpath crooked stiles;  
Come in thy proud and best array,  
April dews and flowers of May,  
And singing birds that come where heaven smiles.

## EVENING

In the meadow's silk grasses we see the black snail,  
Creeping out at the close of the eve, sipping dew,  
While even's one star glitters over the vale,  
Like a lamp hung outside of that temple of blue.  
I walk with my true love adown the green vale,  
The light feathered grasses keep tapping her shoe;  
In the whitethorn the nightingale sings her sweet tale,  
And the blades of the grasses are sprinkled with dew.

If she stumbles I catch her and cling to her neck,  
As the meadow-sweet kisses the blush of the rose:  
Her whisper none hears, and the kisses I take  
The mild voice of even will never disclose.  
Her hair hung in ringlets adown her sweet cheek,  
That blushed like the rose in the hedge hung with dew;  
Her whisper was fragrance, her face was so meek—  
The dove was the type on't that from the bush flew.



## THE SWALLOW

Swift goes the sooty swallow o'er the heath,  
Swifter than skims the cloud-rack of the skies;  
As swiftly flies its shadow underneath,  
And on his wing the twittering sunbeam lies,  
As bright as water glitters in the eyes  
Of those it passes; 'tis a pretty thing,  
The ornament of meadows and clear skies:  
With dingy breast and narrow pointed wing,  
Its daily twittering is a song to Spring.

## JOCKEY AND JENNY

"Will Jockey come to-day, mither?  
 Will Jockey come to-day?  
 He's taen sic likings to my brither  
 He's sure to come the day."  
 "Haud yer tongue, lass, mind your rockie;  
 But th'other day ye wore a pockie.  
 What can ye mean to think o' Jockey?  
 Ye've bin content the season long,  
 Ye'd best keep to your harmless song."

"Ye'll soon see falling tears, mither,  
 If love's a sin in youth;  
 He leuks to me, and talks wi' brither,  
 But I know the secret truth.  
 He's courted me the year, mither;  
 Judge not the matter queer, mither;  
 Ye're a' the while as dear, mither,  
 As ye've been the Summer long.  
 I cannot sing my song.

I'll hear nae farder preaching, mither;  
 I'se bin a child ower lang;  
 He led me frae the teaching, mither,  
 Ann wherefore did he wrang?  
 I ken he often tauks wi' brither;  
 I neither look at ane or 'tither;  
 You ken as well as I, mither,  
 There's nae love in my song,  
 Though I've sang the Summer long."

"Nae, dinna be sae saucy, lassie,  
 I may be kenned ye ill.  
 If love has taen the hold, lassie,  
 There's nae cure i' the pill."  
 "Nae, I dinna want a pill, mither;  
 He leuks at me and tauks to ither;  
 And twice we've bin at kirk thegither.  
 I'm 's well now as a' Summer long,  
 But somehew cauna sing a song.

He comes and talks to brither, mither,  
 But leuks his thoughts at me;  
 He always says gude neet to brither,  
 And looks gude neet to me."  
 "Lassie, ye seldom vexed yer mither;  
 Ye're ower too fair a flower to wither;  
 So be ye are to come thegither,  
 I'll be nae damp to yer new claes;  
 Cheer up and sing o'er 'Loggan braes.'"

Jockey comes o' Sabbath days,  
 His face is not a face o'er brassy;  
 Her mither sits to praise the claes;  
 Holds him her box; to win the lassie  
 He taks a pinch, and greets wi' granny,  
 And helps his chair up nearer Jenny,  
 And vows he loves her muir than any.  
 She thinks her mither seldom wrong,  
 And "Loggan braes" is her daily song.

## THE FACE I LOVE SO DEARLY

Sweet is the violet, th' scented pea,  
Haunted by red-legged, sable bee,  
But sweeter far than all to me  
Is she I love so dearly;  
Than perfumed pea and sable bee,  
The face I love so dearly.

Sweeter than hedgerow violets blue,  
Than apple blossoms' streaky hue,  
Or black-eyed bean-flower blebbed with dew  
Is she I love so dearly;  
Than apple flowers or violets blue  
Is she I love so dearly.

Than woodbine upon branches thin,  
The clover flower, all sweets within,  
Which pensive bees do gather in,  
Three times as sweet, or nearly,  
Is the cheek, the eye, the lip, the chin  
Of her I love so dearly.

## THE BEANFIELD

A beanfield full in blossom smells as sweet  
As Araby, or groves of orange flowers;  
Black-eyed and white, and feathered to one's feet,  
How sweet they smell in morning's dewy hours!  
When seething night is left upon the flowers,  
And when morn's sun shines brightly o'er the field,  
The bean bloom glitters in the gems of showers,  
And sweet the fragrance which the union yields  
To battered footpaths crossing o'er the fields.

## MILKING O' THE KYE

Young Jenny wakens at the dawn,  
Fresh as carnations newly blown,  
And o'er the pasture every morn  
Goes milking o' the kye.  
She sings her songs of happy glee,  
While round her swirls the humble bee;  
The butterfly, from tree to tree,  
Goes gaily flirting by.

Young Jenny was a bonny thing  
As ever wakened in the Spring,  
And blythe she to herself could sing  
At milking o' the kye.  
She loved to hear the old crows croak  
Upon the ash tree and the oak,  
And noisy pies that almost spoke  
At milking o' the kye.

She crop't the wild thyme every night,  
Scenting so sweet the dewy light,  
And hid it in her breast so white  
At milking o' the kye.  
I met and clasped her in my arms,  
The finest flower on twenty farms;  
Her snow-white breast my fancy warms  
At milking o' the kye.

## A LOVER'S VOWS

Scenes of love and days of pleasure,  
I must leave them all, lassie.  
Scenes of love and hours of leisure,  
All are gone for aye, lassie.  
No more thy velvet-bordered dress  
My fond and longing een shall bless,  
Thou lily in the wilderness;  
And who shall love thee then, lassie?  
Long I've watched thy look so tender,  
Often clasped thy waist so slender:  
Heaven, in thine own love defend her,  
God protect my own lassie.

By all the faith I've shown afore thee,  
I'll swear by more than that, lassie:  
By heaven and earth I'll still adore thee,  
Though we should part for aye, lassie!  
By thy infant years so loving,  
By thy woman's love so moving,  
That white breast thy goodness proving,  
I'm thine for aye, through all, lassie!  
By the sun that shines for ever,  
By love's light and its own Giver,  
Who loveth truth and leaveth never,  
I'm thine for aye, through all, lassie!

## THE FALL OF THE YEAR

The Autumn's come again,  
And the clouds descend in rain,  
And the leaves are fast falling in the wood;  
The Summer's voice is still,  
Save the clacking of the mill  
And the lowly-muttered thunder of the flood.

There's nothing in the mead  
But the river's muddy speed,  
And the willow leaves all littered by its side.  
Sweet voices are all still  
In the vale and on the hill,  
And the Summer's blooms are withered in their pride.

Fled is the cuckoo's note  
To countries far remote,  
And the nightingale is vanished from the woods;  
If you search the lordship round  
There is not a blossom found,  
And where the hay-cock scented is the flood.

My true love's fled away  
Since we walked 'mid cocks of hay,  
On the Sabbath in the Summer of the year;  
And she's nowhere to be seen  
On the meadow or the green,  
But she's coming when the happy Spring is near.

When the birds begin to sing,  
And the flowers begin to spring,  
And the cowslips in the meadows reappear,  
When the woodland oaks are seen  
In their monarchy of green,  
Then Mary and love's pleasures will be here.



## EARLY LOVE

The Spring of life is o'er with me,  
 And love and all gone by;  
 Like broken bough upon yon tree,  
 I'm left to fade and die.  
 Stern ruin seized my home and me,  
 And desolate's my cot:  
 Ruins of halls, the blasted tree,  
 Are emblems of my lot.

I lived and loved, I woo'd and won,  
 Her love was all to me,  
 But blight fell o'er that youthful one,  
 And like a blasted tree  
 I withered, till I all forgot  
 But Mary's smile on me;  
 She never lived where love was not,  
 And I from bonds was free.

The Spring it clothed the fields with pride,  
 When first we met together;  
 And then unknown to all beside  
 We loved in sunny weather;  
 We met where oaks grew overhead,  
 And whitethorns hung with may;  
 Wild thyme beneath her feet was spread,  
 And cows in quiet lay.

I thought her face was sweeter far  
 Than aught I'd seen before—  
 As simple as the cowslips are  
 Upon the rushy moor:  
 She seemed the muse of that sweet spot,  
 The lady of the plain,  
 And all was dull where she was not,  
 Till we met there again.

## EVENING

'T is evening: the black snail has got on his track,  
And gone to its nest is the wren,  
And the packman snail, too, with his home on his back,  
Clings to the bowed bents like a wen.

The shepherd has made a rude mark with his foot  
Where his shadow reached when he first came,  
And it just touched the tree where his secret love cut  
Two letters that stand for love's name.

The evening comes in with the wishes of love,  
And the shepherd he looks on the flowers,  
And thinks who would praise the soft song of the dove,  
And meet joy in these dew-falling hours.

For Nature is love, and finds haunts for true love,  
Where nothing can hear or intrude;  
It hides from the eagle and joins with the dove,  
In beautiful green solitude.

## A VALENTINE

Here's a valentine nosegay for Mary,  
Some of Spring's earliest flowers;  
The ivy is green by the dairy,  
And so are these laurels of ours.  
Though the snow fell so deep and the winter was dreary,  
The laurels are green and the sparrows are cheery.

The snowdrops in bunches grow under the rose,  
And aconites under the lilac, like fairies;  
The best in the bunches for Mary I chose,  
Their looks are as sweet and as simple as Mary's.  
The one will make Spring in my verses so bare,  
The other set off as a braid thy dark hair.

Pale primroses, too, at the old parlour end,  
Have bloomed all the winter 'midst snows cold and dreary,  
Where the lavender-cotton kept off the cold wind,  
Now to shine in my valentine nosegay for Mary;  
And appear in my verses all Summer, and be  
A memento of fondness and friendship for thee.

Here's the crocus half opened, that spreads into gold,  
Like branches of sunbeams left there by a fairy:  
I place them as such in these verses so cold,  
But they'll bloom twice as bright in the presence of Mary,  
These garden flowers crop't, I will go to the field,  
And see what the valley and pasture land yield.

Here peeps the pale primrose from the skirts of the wild wood,  
And violet blue 'neath the thorn on the green;  
The wild flowers we plucked in the days of our childhood,  
On the very same spot, as no changes have been—  
In the very same place where the sun kissed the leaves,  
And the woodbine its branches of thorns interweaves.

And here in the pasture, all swarming with rushes,  
Is a cowslip as blooming and forward as Spring;  
And the pilewort like sunshine grows under the bushes,  
While the chaffinch there sitting is trying to sing;  
And the daisies are coming, called "stars of the earth,"  
To bring to the schoolboy his Springtime of mirth.

Here, then, is the nosegay: how simple it shines!  
It speaks without words to the ear and the eye;  
The flowers of the Spring are the best valentines;  
They are young, fair, and simple, and pleasingly shy.  
That you may remain so and your love never vary,  
I send you these flowers as a valentine, Mary.

## TO LIBERTY

O spirit of the wind and sky,  
Where doth thy harp neglected lie?  
Is there no heart thy bard to be,  
To wake that soul of melody?  
Is liberty herself a slave?  
No! God forbid it! On, ye brave!

I've loved thee as the common air,  
And paid thee worship everywhere:  
In every soil beneath the sun  
Thy simple song my heart has won.  
And art thou silent? Still a slave?  
And thy sons living? On, ye brave!

Gather on mountain and on plain!  
Make gossamer the iron chain!  
Make prison walls as paper screen,  
That tyrant maskers may be seen!  
Let earth as well as heaven be free!  
So, on, ye brave, for liberty!

I've loved thy being from a boy:  
The Highland hills were once my joy:  
Then morning mists did round them lie,  
Like sunshine in the happiest sky.  
The hills and valley seemed my own,  
When Scottish land was freedom's throne

And Scottish land is freedom's still:  
Her beacon fires, on every hill,  
Have told, in characters of flame,  
Her ancient birthright to her fame.  
A thousand hills will speak again,  
In fire, that language ever plain

To sychophants and fawning knaves,  
That Scotland ne'er was made for slaves!  
Each fruitful vale, each mountain throne,  
Is ruled by Nature's laws alone;  
And nought but falsehood's poisoned breath  
Will urge the claymore from its sheath.

O spirit of the wind and sky,  
Where doth thy harp neglected lie?  
Is there no harp thy bard to be,  
To wake that soul of melody?  
Is liberty herself a slave?  
No! God forbid it! On, ye brave!

## APPROACH OF WINTER

The Autumn day now fades away,  
The fields are wet and dreary;  
The rude storm takes the flowers of May,  
And Nature seemeth weary;  
The partridge coveys, shunning fate,  
Hide in the bleaching stubble,  
And many a bird, without its mate,  
Mourns o'er its lonely trouble.

On hawthorns shine the crimson haw,  
Where Spring brought may-day blossoms:  
Decay is Nature's cheerless law—  
Life's Winter in our bosoms.  
The fields are brown and naked all,  
The hedges still are green,  
But storms shall come at Autumn's fall,  
And not a leaf be seen.

Yet happy love, that warms the heart  
Through darkest storms severe,  
Keeps many a tender flower to start  
When Spring shall re-appear.  
Affection's hope shall roses meet,  
Like those of Summer bloom,  
And joys and flowers shall be as sweet  
In seasons yet to come.

## MARY DOVE

Sweet Summer, breathe your softest gales  
 To charm my lover's ear:  
 Ye zephyrs, tell your choicest tales  
 Where'er she shall appear;  
 And gently wave the meadow grass  
 Where soft she sets her feet,  
 For my love is a country lass,  
 And bonny as she's sweet.

The hedges only seem to mourn,  
 The willow boughs to sigh,  
 Though sunshine o'er the meads sojourn,  
 To cheer me where I lie:  
 The blackbird in the hedgerow thorn  
 Sings loud his Summer lay;  
 He seems to sing, both eve and morn,  
 "She wanders here to-day."

The skylark in the summer cloud  
 One cheering anthem sings,  
 And Mary often wanders out  
 To watch his trembling wings.

\* \* \* \* \*

I'll wander down the river way,  
 And wild flower posies make,  
 For Nature whispers all the day  
 She can't her promise break.  
 The meads already wear a smile,  
 The river runs more bright,  
 For down the path and o'er the stile  
 The maiden comes in sight.

The scene begins to look divine;  
 We'll by the river walk.  
 Her arm already seems in mine,  
 And fancy hears her talk.  
 A vision, this, of early love:  
 The meadow, river, rill,



Scenes where I walked with Mary Dove,  
Are in my memory still.

## SPRING'S NOSEGAY

The prim daisy's golden eye  
On the fallow land doth lie,  
Though the Spring is just begun:  
Pewits watch it all the day,  
And the skylark's nest of hay  
Is there by its dried leaves in the sun.

There the pilewort, all in gold,  
'Neath the ridge of finest mould,  
Blooms to cheer the ploughman's eye:  
There the mouse his hole hath made,  
And 'neath the golden shade  
Hides secure when the hawk is prowling by.

Here's the speedwell's sapphire blue:  
Was there anything more true  
To the vernal season still?  
Here it decks the bank alone,  
Where the milkmaid throws a stone  
At noon, to cross the rapid, flooded rill.

Here the cowslip, chill with cold,  
On the rushy bed behold,  
It looks for sunshine all the day.  
Here the honey bee will come,  
For he has no sweets at home;  
Then quake his weary wing and fly away.

And here are nameless flowers,  
Culled in cold and rawky hours  
For my Mary's happy home.  
They grew in murky blea,  
Rush fields and naked lea,  
But suns will shine and pleasing Spring will come.

## THE LOST ONE

I seek her in the shady grove,  
And by the silent stream;  
I seek her where my fancies rove,  
In many a happy dream;  
I seek her where I find her not,  
In Spring and Summer weather:  
My thoughts paint many a happy spot,  
But we ne'er meet together.

The trees and bushes speak my choice,  
And in the Summer shower  
I often hear her pleasant voice,  
In many a silent hour:  
I see her in the Summer brook,  
In blossoms sweet and fair;  
In every pleasant place I look  
My fancy paints her there.

The wind blows through the forest trees,  
And cheers the pleasant day;  
There her sweet voice is sure to be  
To lull my cares away.  
The very hedges find a voice,  
So does the gurgling rill;  
But still the object of my choice  
Is lost and absent still.

## THE SKYLARK

Although I'm in prison  
 Thy song is uprisen,  
 Thou'rt singing away to the feathery cloud,  
 In the blueness of morn,  
 Over fields of green corn,  
 With a song sweet and trilling, and rural and loud.

When the day is serenest,  
 When the corn is the greenest,  
 Thy bosom mounts up and floats in the light,  
 And sings in the sun,  
 Like a vision begun  
 Of pleasure, of love, and of lonely delight.

The daisies they whiten  
 Plains the sunbeams now brighten,  
 And warm thy snug nest where thy russet eggs lie,  
 From whence thou'rt now springing,  
 And the air is now ringing,  
 To show that the minstrel of Spring is on high.

The cornflower is blooming,  
 The cowslip is coming,  
 And many new buds on the silken grass lie:  
 On the earth's shelt'ring breast  
 Thou hast left thy brown nest,  
 And art towering above it, a speck in the sky.

Thou'rt the herald of sunshine,  
 And the soft dewy moonshine  
 Gilds sweetly the sleep of thy brown speckled breast:  
 Thou'rt the bard of the Spring,  
 On thy brown russet wing,  
 And of each grassy close thou'rt the poet and guest.

There's the violet confiding,  
 In the mossy wood riding,  
 And primrose beneath the old thorn in the glen,  
 And the daisies that bed  
 In the sheltered homestead—  
 Old friends with old faces, I see them again.

And thou, feathered poet,  
I see thee, and know it—  
Thou'rt one of the minstrels that cheered me last Spring:  
With Nature thou'rt blest,  
And green grass round thy nest  
Will keep thee still happy to mount up and sing.

## POETS LOVE NATURE—A FRAGMENT

Poets love Nature, and themselves are love.  
 Though scorn of fools, and mock of idle pride.  
 The vile in nature worthless deeds approve,  
 They court the vile and spurn all good beside.  
 Poets love Nature; like the calm of Heaven,  
 Like Heaven's own love, her gifts spread far and wide:  
 In all her works there are no signs of leaven

\* \* \* \*

Her flowers \* \* \* \*  
 They are her very Scriptures upon earth,  
 And teach us simple mirth where'er we go.  
 Even in prison they can solace me,  
 For where they bloom God is, and I am free.

## MY SCHOOLBOY DAYS

The Spring is come forth, but no Spring is for me  
 Like the Spring of my boyhood on woodland and lea,  
 When flowers brought me heaven and knew me again,  
 In the joy of their blooming o'er mountain and plain.  
 My thoughts are confined and imprisoned: O when  
 Will freedom find me my own valleys again?

The wind breathes so sweet, and the day is so calm;  
 In the woods and the thicket the flowers look so warm;  
 And the grass is so green, so delicious and sweet;  
 O when shall my manhood my youth's valleys meet—  
 The scenes where my children are laughing at play—  
 The scenes that from memory are fading away?

The primrose looks happy in every field;  
 In strange woods the violets their odours will yield,  
 And flowers in the sunshine, all brightly arrayed,  
 Will bloom just as fresh and as sweet in the shade,  
 But the wild flowers that bring me most joy and content  
 Are the blossoms that glow where my childhood was spent.

The trees are all naked, the bushes are bare,  
 And the fields are as brown as if Winter was there;  
 But the violets are there by the dykes and the dell,  
 Where I played "hen and chickens" and heard the church bell,  
 Which called me to prayer-book and sermons in vain:  
 O when shall I see my own valleys again?

The churches look bright as the sun at noon-day;  
 There the meadows look green ere the winter's away;  
 There the pooty still lies for the schoolboy to find,  
 And a thought often brings these sweet places to mind;  
 Where trees waved and wind moaned; no music so well:  
 There nought sounded harsh but the school-calling bell.

There are spots where I played, there are spots where I loved,  
 There are scenes where the tales of my choice were approved,  
 As green as at first, and their memory will be  
 The dearest of life's recollections to me.  
 The objects seen there, in the care of my heart,  
 Are as fair as at first, and will never depart.

Though no names are mentioned to sanction my themes,  
Their hearts beat with mine, and make real my dreams;  
Their memories with mine their diurnal course run,  
True as night to the stars and as day to the sun;  
And as they are now so their memories will be,  
While sense, truth, and reason remain here with me.



## MARY APPLEBY

I look upon the hedgerow flower,  
 I gaze upon the hedgerow tree,  
 I walk alone the silent hour,  
 And think of Mary Appleby.  
 I see her in the brimming streams,  
 I see her in the gloaming hour,  
 I hear her in my Summer dreams  
 Of singing bird and blooming flower.

For Mary is the dearest bird,  
 And Mary is the sweetest flower,  
 That in Spring bush was ever heard—  
 That ever bloomed on bank or bower.  
 O bonny Mary Appleby!  
 The sun did never sweeter shine  
 Than when in youth I courted thee,  
 And, dreaming, fancied you'd be mine.

The lark above the meadow sings,  
 Wood pigeons coo in ivied trees,  
 The butterflies, on painted wings,  
 Dance daily with the meadow bees.  
 All Nature is in happy mood,  
 The sueing breeze is blowing free.  
 And o'er the fields, and by the wood,  
 I think of Mary Appleby.

O bonny Mary Appleby;  
 My once dear Mary Appleby!  
 A crown of gold thy own should be,  
 My handsome Mary Appleby!  
 Thy face is like the Summer rose,  
 Its maiden bloom is all divine,  
 And more than all the world bestows  
 I'd give had Mary e'er been mine.

## AMONG THE GREEN BUSHES

Among the green bushes the songs of the thrushes  
 Are answering each other in music and glee,  
 While the magpies and rooks, in woods, hedges, near brooks,  
 Mount their Spring dwellings on every high tree.  
 There meet me at eve, love, we'll on grassy banks lean love,  
 And crop a white branch from the scented may tree,  
 Where the silver brook wimples and the rosy cheek dimples,  
 Sweet will the time of that courting hour be.

We'll notice wild flowers, love, that grow by thorn bowers, love,  
 Though sinful to crop them now beaded with dew;  
 The violet is thine, love, the primrose is mine, love,  
 To Spring and each other so blooming and true.  
 With dewdrops all beaded, the feather grass seeded,  
 The cloud mountains turn to dark woods in the sky;  
 The daisy bud closes, while sleep the hedge roses;  
 There's nothing seems wakeful but you love and I.

Larks sleep in the rushes, linnets perch on the bushes,  
 While mag's on her nest with her tail peeping out;  
 The moon it reveals her, yet she thinks night conceals her,  
 Though birdnesting boys are not roving about.  
 The night winds won't wrong her, nor aught that belong her,  
 For night is the nurse of all Nature in sleep;  
 The moon, love, is keeping a watch o'er the sleeping,  
 And dews for real pleasure do nothing but weep.

Among the green bushes we'll sit with the thrushes,  
 And blackbirds and linnets, an hour or two long,  
 That are up at the dawning, by times in the morning,  
 To cheer thee when milking with music and song.  
 Then come at the eve, love, and where the banks lean, love,  
 By the brook that flows on in its dribbles of song;  
 While the moon looks so pale, love, and the trees look so hale,  
 love,  
 I will tell thee a tale, love, an hour or two long.

## TO JANE

The lark's in the sky, love,  
 The flowers on the lea,  
 The whitethorn's in bloom, love,  
 To please thee and me;  
 'Neath its shade we can rest, love,  
 And sit on the hill,  
 And as last we met, love,  
 Enjoy the Spring still.

The Spring is for lovers,  
 The Spring is for joy:  
 O'er the moor, where the plovers  
 Whirr, startled, and cry,  
 We'll seek the white hawthorn, love,  
 And sit on the hill;  
 In the sweet sunny morn, love,  
 We'll be lovers still;

Where the partridge is craking  
 From morning to e'en,  
 In the wheat lands awaking,  
 The sprouts young and green,  
 Where the brook dribbles past, love,  
 Down the willowy glen,  
 And as we met last, love,  
 Be lovers again.

The lark's in the grass, love,  
 A-building her nest;  
 And the brook's running fast, love,  
 'Neath the carrion-crow's nest:  
 There the wild woodbines twine, love;  
 And, till the day's gone,  
 Sun's set, and stars shine, love,  
 I'll call thee my own.

## MAYING; OR, A LOVE OF FLOWERS

Upon a day, a merry day,  
 When summer in her best,  
 Like Sunday belles, prepares for play,  
 And joins each merry guest,  
 A maid, as wild as is a bird  
 That never knew a cage,  
 Went out her parents' kine to herd,  
 And Jocky, as her page,

Must needs go join her merry toils;  
 A silly shepherd he,  
 And little thought the aching broils  
 That in his heart would be;  
 For he as yet knew nought of love,  
 And nought of love knew she;  
 Yet without learning love can move  
 The wildest to agree.

The wind, enamoured of the maid,  
 Around her drapery swims,  
 And moulds in luscious masquerade  
 Her lovely shape and limbs.  
 Smith's "Venus stealing Cupid's bow"  
 In marble hides as fine;  
 But hers were life and soul, whose glow  
 Makes meaner things divine.

In sooth she was a lovely toy—  
 A worship-moving thing  
 As ever brought the season joy,  
 Or beautified the Spring;  
 So sweet a thing no heart might hurt,  
 Gay as a butterfly;  
 Tho' Cupid chased 'twas half in sport—  
 He meant not to destroy.

When speaking, words with breathing grace  
 Her sweet lips seeming wooed,  
 Pausing to leave so sweet a place  
 Ere they could part for good—  
 Those lips that pouted from her face,

As the wild rose bursts the bud  
Which June, so eager to embrace,  
Tempts from beneath its hood.

Her eyes, like suns, did seem to light  
The beauties of her face,  
Suffusing all her forehead white  
And cheeks of rosy grace,  
Her bosom swelled to pillows large,  
Till her so taper waist  
Scarce able seemed to bear the charge  
Of each lawn-bursting breast.

A very flower! how she did shine.  
Her beauty all displaying!  
In truth this modern Proserpine  
Might set the angels maying,  
As, like a fairy mid the flowers,  
She flew to this, now that;  
And some she braided in her hair—  
Some wreathed within her hat.

Then oft she skipt, in bowers to hide,  
By Cupid led, I ween,  
Putting her bosom's lawn aside,  
To place some thyme at ween.  
The shepherd saw her skin so white—  
Two twin suns newly risen:  
Tho' love had chained him there till night,  
Who would have shunned the prison?

Then off again she skipt, and flew  
With foot so light and little  
That Cinderella's fancy shoe  
Had fit her to a tittle.  
The shepherd's heart, like playing coal,  
Beat as 't would leave the socket:  
He sighed, but thought it, silly fool,  
The watch within his pocket.

But bold in love grow silly sheep,  
And so right bold grew he;  
He ran; she fled; and at bo-peep  
She met him round a tree.  
A thorn, enamoured like the swain.

Caught at her lily arm.  
And then good faith, to ease her pain,  
Love had a double charm.

She sighed; he wished it well, I wis;  
The place was sadly swollen;  
And then he took a willing kiss,  
And made believe 't was stolen;  
Then made another make-believe,  
Till thefts grew past concealing,  
For when love once begins to thief  
There grows no end to stealing.

They played and toyed till down the skies  
The sun had taken flight,  
And still a sun was in her eyes  
To keep away the night;  
And there he talked of love so well,  
Or else he talked so ill,  
That soon the priest was sought to tell  
The story better still.

## TWO SONNETS TO MARY

### I

I met thee like the morning, though more fair,  
 And hopes 'gan travel for a glorious day;  
 And though night met them ere they were aware,  
 Leading the joyous pilgrims all astray,  
 Yet know I not, though they did miss their way,  
 That joyed so much to meet thee, if they are  
 To blame or bless the fate that bade such be.  
 Thou seem'dst an angel when I met thee first,  
 Nor has aught made thee otherwise to me:  
 Possession has not cloyed my love, nor curst  
 Fancy's wild visions with reality.  
 Thou art an angel still; and Hope, awoke  
 From the fond spell that early raptures nurst,  
 Still feels a joy to think that spell ne'er broke.

### II

The flower that's gathered beauty soon forsakes;  
 The bliss grows feeble as we gain the prize;  
 Love dreams of joy, and in possession wakes,  
 Scarce time enough to hail it ere it dies:  
 Life intermingles, with its cares and sighs,  
 And rapture's dreams are ended. Heavenly flower!  
 It is not so with thee! Still fancy's power  
 Throws rainbow halos round thee, and thine eyes,  
 That once did steal their sapphire blue from even,  
 Are beaming on; thy cheeks' bewitching dye,  
 Where partial roses all their blooms had given,  
 Still in fond memory with the rose can vie;  
 And thy sweet bosom, which to view was heaven,  
 No lily yet a fairer hue supplies.

## MARCH

The insect world, now sunbeams higher climb,  
Oft dream of Spring, and wake before their time:  
Bees stroke their little legs across their wings,  
And venture short flights where the snow-drop hangs  
Its silver bell, and winter aconite  
Its buttercup-like flowers that shut at night,  
With green leaf furling round its cup of gold,  
Like tender maiden muffled from the cold:  
They sip and find their honey-dreams are vain,  
Then feebly hasten to their hives again.  
The butterflies, by eager hopes undone,  
Glad as a child come out to greet the sun,  
Beneath the shadows of a sunny shower  
Are lost, nor see to-morrow's April flower.



## THE OLD MAN'S LAMENT

Youth has no fear of ill, by no cloudy days annoyed,  
 But the old man's all hath fled, and his hopes have met their doom:  
 The bud hath burst to flower, and the flower been long destroyed,  
 The root also is withered; I no more can look for bloom.  
 So I have said my say, and I have had my day,  
 And sorrow, like a young storm, creeps dark upon my brow;  
 Hopes, like to summer clouds, have all blown far away,  
 And the world's sunny side is turned over with me now,  
 And I am left a lame bird upon a withered bough.

I look upon the past: 't is as black as winter days,  
 But the worst is not yet over; there are blacker, days to come.  
 O, I would I had but known of the wide world's many ways,  
 But youth is ever blind, so I e'en must meet my doom.  
 Joy once gave brightest forecasts of prospects that are past,  
 But now, like a looking glass that's turned to the wall,  
 Life is nothing but a blank, and the sunny shining past  
 Is overcast in glooms that my every hope enthrall,  
 While troubles daily thicken in the wind ere they fall.

Life smiled upon me once, as the sun upon the rose;  
 My heart, so free and open, guessed in every face a friend:  
 Though the sweetest flower must fade, and the sweetest season  
 close,  
 Yet I never gave it thought that my happiness would end,  
 Till the warmest-seeming friends grew the coldest at the close,  
 As the sun from lonely night hides its haughty shining face,  
 Yet I could not think them gone, for they turned not open foes,  
 While memory fondly mused, former favours to retrace,  
 So I turned, but only found that my shadow kept its place.

And this is nought but common life, which everybody finds  
 As well as I, or more's the luck of those that better speed.  
 I'll mete my lot to bear with the lot of kindred minds,  
 And grudge not those who say they for sorrow have no need.  
 Why should I, when I know that it will not aid a nay?  
 For Summer is the season; even then the little fly  
 Finds friends enow, indeed, both for leisure and for play;  
 But on the winter window it must crawl alone to die:  
 Such is life, and such am I—a wounded, stricken fly.

## SPRING FLOWERS

Bowing adorers of the gale,  
Ye cowslips delicately pale,  
Upraise your loaded stems;  
Unfold your cups in splendour; speak!  
Who decked you with that ruddy streak  
And gilt your golden gems?

Violets, sweet tenants of the shade,  
In purple's richest pride arrayed,  
Your errand here fulfil;  
Go, bid the artist's simple stain  
Your lustre imitate—in vain—  
And match your Maker's skill.

Daisies, ye flowers of lowly birth,  
Embroiderers of the carpet earth,  
That stud the velvet sod,  
Open to Spring's refreshing air,  
In sweetest smiling bloom declare  
Your Maker and your God.

## THE WANTON CHLOE—A PASTORAL

Young Chloe looks sweet as the rose,  
And her love might be reckoned no less,  
But her bosom so freely bestows  
That all may a portion possess.  
Her smiles would be cheering to see,  
But so freely they're lavished abroad  
That each silly swain, like to me,  
Can boast what the wanton bestowed.

Her looks and her kisses so free  
Are for all, like the rain and the sky;  
As the blossom love is to the bee,  
Each swain is as welcome as I.  
And though I my folly can see,  
Yet still must I love and adore,  
Though I know the love whispered to me  
Has been told to so many before.

'T is sad that a bosom so fair,  
And soft lips so seemingly sweet,  
Should study false ways, to ensnare,  
And breathe in their kisses deceit.  
But beauty's no guide to the best:  
The rose, that out-blushes the morn,  
While it tempts the glad eye to its breast,  
Will pierce the fond hand with a thorn.

Yet still must I love, silly swain!  
And put up with all her deceit,  
And try to be jealous, in vain,  
For I cannot help thinking her sweet.  
I see other swains in her bower,  
And I sigh, and excuse what I see,  
While I say to myself, "Is the flower  
Any worse when it's kissed by the bee?"

## THE OLD SHEPHERD

'T is pleasant to bear recollections in mind  
 Of joys that time hurries away—  
 To look back on smiles that have passed like the wind,  
 And compare them with frowns of to-day.  
 'T was the constant delight of Old Robin, forsooth,  
 On the past with clear vision to dwell—  
 To recount the fond loves and the raptures of youth,  
 And tales of lost pleasures to tell.

"'T is now many years," like a child, he would say,  
 "Since I joined in the sports of the green—  
 Since I tied up the flowers for the garland of May,  
 And danced with the holiday queen.  
 My memory looks backward in sorrowful pride,  
 And I think, till my eyes dim with tears,  
 Of the past, where my happiness withered and died,  
 And the present dull, desolate years.

I love to be counting, while sitting alone,  
 With many a heart-aching sigh,  
 How many a season has rapidly flown,  
 And springs, with their summers, gone by,  
 Since Susan the pride of the village was deemed,  
 To whom youth's affections I gave;  
 Whom I led to the church, and beloved and esteemed,  
 And followed in grief to the grave.

Life's changes for many hours musings supply;  
 Both the past and the present appear;  
 I mark how the years that remain hurry by,  
 And feel that my last must be near.  
 The youths that with me to man's summer did bloom  
 Have dwindled away to old men,  
 And maidens, like flowers of the Spring, have made room  
 For many new blossoms since then.

I have lived to see all but life's sorrows pass by,  
 Leaving changes, and pains, and decay,  
 Where nought is the same but the wide-spreading sky,  
 And the sun that awakens the day.  
 The green, where I tended my sheep when a boy,

Has yielded its pride to the plough;  
And the shades where my infancy revelled in joy  
The axe has left desolate now.

Yet a bush lingers still, that will urge me to stop—  
(What heart can such fancies withstand?)  
Where Susan once saw a bird's nest on the top,  
And I reached her the eggs with my hand:  
And so long since the day I remember so well,  
It has stretched to a sizable tree,  
And the birds yearly come in its branches to dwell,  
As far from a giant as me.

On a favourite spot, by the side of a brook,  
When Susan was just in her pride,  
A ripe bunch of nuts from her apron she took,  
To plant as she sat by my side.  
They have grown up with years, and on many a bough  
Cluster nuts like their parents agen,  
Where shepherds no doubt have oft sought them ere now,  
To please other Susans since then.

The joys that I knew when my youth was in prime,  
Like a dream that's half ended, are o'er;  
And the faces I knew in that changeable time  
Are met with the living no more.  
I have lived to see friends that I loved pass away  
With the pleasures their company gave:  
I have lived to see love, with my Susan, decay,  
And the grass growing green on her grave."

## TO A ROSEBUD IN HUMBLE LIFE

Sweet, uncultivated blossom,  
 Reared in Spring's refreshing dews,  
 Dear to every gazer's bosom,  
 Fair to every eye that views;—  
 Opening bud, whose youth can charm us,  
 Thine be many a happy hour:  
 Spreading rose, whose beauties warm us—  
 Flourish long, my lovely flower.

Though pride look disdainful on thee,  
 Scorning scenes so mean as thine,  
 Although fortune frown upon thee,  
 Lovely blossom, ne'er repine:  
 Health unbought is ever with thee,  
 Which their wealth can never gain;  
 Innocence doth garments give thee,  
 Such as fashion apes in vain.

When fit time and reason grant thee  
 Leave to quit the parent tree,  
 May some happy hand transplant thee  
 To a station suiting thee.  
 On some lover's faithful bosom  
 May'st thou then thy sweets resign;  
 And may each unfolding blossom  
 Open charms as sweet as thine.

Till that time may joys unceasing  
 Thy bard's every wish fulfil.  
 When that's come may joys increasing  
 Make thee blest and happier still.  
 Flourish fair, thou flower of Jessies,  
 Pride of each admiring swain—  
 Envy of despairing lasses—  
 Queen of Walkherd's lovely plain.

## THE TRIUMPHS OF TIME

Emblazoned Vapour! Half-eternal Shade!  
 That gathers strength from ruin and decay;—  
 Emperor of empires! (for the world hath made  
 No substance that dare take thy shade away;)   
 Thy banners nought but victories display:  
 In undisturbed success thou'rt grown sublime:  
 Kings are thy subjects, and their sceptres lay  
 Round thy proud footstool: tyranny and crime  
 Thy serving vassals are. Then hail, victorious Time!

The elements that wreck the marble dome  
 Proud with the polish of the artisan—  
 Bolts that crash shivering through the humble home,  
 Traced with the insignificance of man—  
 Are architects of thine, and proudly plan  
 Rich monuments to show thy growing prime:  
 Earthquakes that rend the rocks with dreadful span,  
 Lightnings that write in characters sublime,  
 Inscribe their labours all unto the praise of Time.

Thy palaces are kingdoms lost to power;  
 The ruins of ten thousand thrones thy throne;  
 Thy crown and sceptre the dismantled tower,  
 A place of kings, yet left to be unknown,  
 Now with triumphing ivy overgrown—  
 Ivy oft plucked on Victory's brow to shine—  
 That fades in crowns of kings, preferring stone;  
 It only prospers where they most decline,  
 To flourish o'er their fate, and live alone in thine.

Thy dwellings are in ruins made sublime.  
 Impartial Monitor, no dream of fear,  
 No dread of treason for a royal crime,  
 Deters thee from thy purpose: everywhere  
 Thy power is shown: thou art arch-emperor here:  
 Thou soil'st the very crowns with stains and rust;  
 On royal robes thy havoc doth appear;  
 The little moth, to thy proud summons just,  
 Dares scarlet pomp to scorn, and eats it into dust.

Old shadows of magnificence, where now—  
 Where now and what your grandeur? Come and see  
 Busts broken and thrown down, with wreathless brow,  
 Walls stained with colours, not of paint, but thee.  
 Moss, lichens, ferns, and lonely elder tree;  
 That upon ruins gladly climb to bloom,  
 And add a beauty where't is vain to be,  
 Like to the soft moonlight in a prison's gloom,  
 Or lovely maid in youth death-smitten for the tomb.

Pride may build palaces and splendid halls;  
 Power may display its victories and be brave;  
 The eye finds weakest spots in strongest walls,  
 And meets no strength that can out-wear the grave.  
 Nature, thy handmaid and imperial slave,  
 The pomp of splendour's finery never heeds:  
 Kings reign and die: pride may no respite crave;  
 Nature in barrenness ne'er mourns thy deeds:  
 Graves, poor and rich alike, she overruns with weeds.

In thy proud eye, imperial Arbiter,  
 An insect small to prize appeareth man;  
 His pomp and honours have o'er thee no spell,  
 To win thy purpose from the little span  
 Allotted unto life in Nature's plan;  
 Trifles to him thy favour can engage;  
 High he looks up, and soon his race is run;  
 While the small daisy upon Nature's page,  
 On which he sets his foot, gains endless heritage.

Look at the farces played in every age  
 By puny empires, vaunting vain display,  
 And blush to read the historian's fulsome page,  
 Where kings are worshipped like to gods in clay.  
 Their pride the earth disdained and swept away,  
 By thee, a shadow, worsted of their all—  
 Legions of soldiers, battle's dread array—  
 Kings' speeches—golden bribes—nought saved their fall;  
 All 'neath thy feet are laid, thy robe their funeral pall.

How feeble and how vain, compared to thine,  
 The glittering pageantry of earthly kings,  
 Though in their little light they would outshine  
 Thy splendid sun: yet soon thy vengeance flings  
 Its gloom around their crowns, poor puny things.



What then remains of all that great hath been?  
 A tattered state, that as a mockery clings  
 To greatness, and concludes the idle scene—  
 In life how mighty thought, and found in death how mean.

Thus Athens lingers on, a nest of slaves,  
 And Babylon's an almost doubted name:  
 Thou with thy finger writ'st upon their graves,  
 On one obscurity, the other shame.  
 The richest greatness or the proudest fame  
 Thy sport concludeth as a farce at last:  
 They were and would be, but are not the same:  
 Tyrants, that made all subject where they passed,  
 Become a common jest for laughter at the last.

Here where I stand thy voice breathes from the ground  
 A buried tale of sixteen hundred years,  
 And many a Roman fragment, littered round,  
 In each new-rooted mole-hill reappears.  
 Ah! what is fame, that honour so reveres?  
 And what is Victory's laurel-crowned event  
 When thy unmasked intolerance interferes?  
 A Caesar's deeds are left to banishment,  
 Indebted e'en to moles to show us where he went.

A mighty poet them, and every line  
 Thy grand conception traces is sublime:  
 No language doth thy god-like works confine;  
 Thy voice is earth's grand polyglot, O Time!  
 Known of all tongues, and read in every clime,  
 Changes of language make no change in thee:  
 Thy works have worsted centuries of their prime,  
 Yet new editions every day we see—  
 Ruin thy moral theme, its end eternity.

A satirist, too, thy pen is deadly keen;  
 Thou turnest things that once did wonder claim  
 To jests ridiculous and memories mean;—  
 The Egyptian pyramids, without a name,  
 Stand monuments to chaos, not to fame—  
 Stone jests of kings which thou in sport did'st save,  
 As towering satires of pride's living shame—  
 Beacons to prove thy overbearing wave  
 Will make all fame at last become its owner's grave.

Mighty survivors! Thou shalt see the hour  
 When all the grandeur that the earth contains—  
 Its pomp, its splendour, and its hollow power—  
 Shall waste like water from its weakened veins,  
 And not a shadow or a myth remain—  
 When names and fames of which the earth is full,  
 And books, with all their knowledge urged in vain—  
 When dead and living shall be void and null,  
 And Nature's pillow be at last a human skull.

E'en temples raised to worship and to prayer,  
 Sacred from ruin in all eyes but thine,  
 Are laid as level, and are left as bare,  
 As spots with no pretensions to resign;  
 Nor lives one relic that was deemed divine.  
 By thee, great sacrilegious Shade, all, all  
 Are swept away, and common weeds enshrine  
 That place of tombs and memories prodigal—  
 Itself a tomb at last, the record of its fall.

All then shall mingle fellowship with one,  
 And earth be strewn with wrecks of human things,  
 When tombs are broken up and memory's gone  
 Of proud aspiring mortals, crowned as kings,  
 Mere insects, sporting upon waxen wings  
 That melt at thy all-mastering energy;  
 And, when there's nought to govern, thy fame springs  
 To new existence, conquered, yet to be  
 An uncrowned partner still of dread eternity.

'T is done, o'erpowering Vision! And no more  
 My simple numbers chronicle thy fame;  
 'T is gone: the spirit of my voice is o'er,  
 Adventuring praises to thy mighty name.  
 To thee an atom am I, and in shame  
 I shrink from these aspirings to my doom;  
 For all the world contains to praise or blame  
 Is but a garden hastening out of bloom  
 To fill up Nature's wreck-mere rubbish for the tomb.

Imperial Moralist! Thy every page,  
 Like grand prophetic visions, doth instal  
 Truth for all creeds. The savage, saint, and sage  
 In unison may answer to thy call.  
 Thy voice as universal, speaks to all;

It tells us what all were and are to be;  
That evil deeds will evil hearts enthrall,  
And God the just maintain the grand decree,  
That whoso righteous lives shall win eternity.

## THE BIRDS AND ST. VALENTINE

Some two or three weeks before Valentine's day,  
 Sir Winter grew kind, and, minded to play,  
 Shook hands with Miss Flora, and woo'd her to spare  
 A few pretty snowdrops to stick in his hair,  
 Intending for truth, as he said, to resign  
 His throne to Miss Spring and her priest Valentine;  
 Which trifle he asked for before he set forth,  
 To remind him of all when he got in the North;  
 And this is the reason that snowdrops appear  
 'Mid the cold of the Winter, so soon in the year.

Flora complied, and, the instant she heard,  
 Flew away with the news to each bachelor bird,  
 Who in raptures half moved on Love's errand to start,  
 Their songs muttered over to get them by heart:  
 Nay, the Mavis at once sung aloud in his glee,  
 And looked for a spot where love's dwelling should be;  
 And ever since then, both in garden and grove,  
 The Mavis tunes first a short ditty to love,  
 While all the young gentlemen birds that were near  
 Fell to trimming their jackets anew for the year:  
 One and all they determined to seek for a mate,  
 And thought it a folly for seasons to wait,  
 So even agreed, before Valentine's day,  
 To join hearts in love; but the ladies said, Nay!  
 Yet each one consented at once to resign  
 Her heart unto Hymen on St. Valentine;  
 While Winter, who only pretended to go,  
 Lapt himself out of sight in some hillocks of snow,  
 That behind all the rest 'neath the wood hedges lay  
 So close that the sun could not drive them away:  
 Yet the gentlemen birds on their love errands flew,  
 Thinking all Flora told them was nothing but true,  
 Till out Winter came, and his frowns in a trice  
 Turned the lady birds' hearts all as hardened as ice.

In vain might the gentles in love sue and plead—  
 They heard, but not once did they notice or heed:  
 From Winter they crept, who, in tyranny proud,  
 Yoked his horses of storms to his coach of a cloud;

For on Valentine's morn he was raving so high,  
 Lady Spring for the life of her durst not come nigh;  
 While Flora's gay feet were so numbed with the snow  
 That she could not put on her best slippers to go.

Then the Spring she fell ill, and, her health to regain,  
 On a sunbeam rode back to her South once again;  
 And, as both were the bridesmaids, their teasing delay  
 Made the lady birds put off their weddings till May.  
 Some sighed their excuses, and feared to catch cold;  
 And the Redcap, in mantle all bordered with gold,  
 Sore feared that the weather would spoil her fine clothes,  
 And nought but complaints through the forest arose.

So St. Valentine came on his journey alone  
 In the coach of the Morn, for he'd none of his own,  
 And put on his cassock and band, and went in  
 To the temple of Hymen, the rites to begin,  
 Where the Mavis Thrush waited along with his bride,  
 Nor in the whole place was a lady beside.  
 The gentlemen they came alone to the saint,  
 And instead of being married, each made a complaint  
 Of Sir Winter, whose folly had caused the delay,  
 And forced Love to put off the wedding till May;  
 So the priest shook his head, and unrobed to be gone,  
 As he had no day for his leisure but one.

And when the May came with Miss Flora and Spring,  
 They had nought but old cares and new sorrows to sing;  
 For some of the lady birds ceased to be kind  
 To their old loves, and changed for new-comers their mind;  
 And some had resolved to keep single that year,  
 Until St. Valentine with the next should appear.

The birds sung their sorrows the whole Summer long,  
 And the Robin first mixed up his ills with his song:  
 He sung of his griefs—how in love he'd been crossed,  
 And gave up his heart as eternally lost;  
 'T was burnt to a coal, as sly Cupid let fall  
 A spark that scorched through both the feathers and all.  
 To cure it Time tried, but ne'er found out the way,  
 So the mark on his bosom he wears to this day:  
 And when birds are all silent, and not a leaf seen  
 On the trees, but the ivy and holly so green,  
 In frost and in snow little Robin will sing,

To put off the sorrow that ruffles his wing.  
 And that is the cause in our gardens we hear  
 The Robin's sweet note at the close of the year.

The Wagtail, too, mourned in his doublet of grey,  
 As if powdered with rime on a dull winter's day;  
 He twittered of love—how he courted a fair,  
 Who altered her mind, and so made him despair.  
 In a stone-pit he chose her a place for a nest,  
 But she, like a wanton, but made it a jest.  
 Though he dabbled in brooks to convince her how kind  
 He would feed her with worms which he laboured to find,  
 Till he e'en got the ague, still nought could prevail,  
 So ever since then he's been wagging his tail.

In the whitethorn the Linnet bides lonely to sing  
 How his lady-love shunned his embraces in Spring,  
 Though he found out a bush that the sun had half drest  
 With leaves quite sufficient to shelter their nest;  
 And yet she forsook him, no more to be seen,  
 So that is the reason he dresses in green.

Then aloud in his grief sings the gay speckled Thrush,  
 That changes his music on every bush—  
 "My love she has left me to sorrow and mourn,  
 Yet I hope in my heart she'll repent and return;"  
 So he tries at all notes her approval to meet,  
 And that is the reason he singeth so sweet.

And as sweet sang the Bullfinch, although he confest  
 That the anguish he felt was more deep than the rest,  
 And they all marvelled much how he'd spirits to sing,  
 When to show them his anguish he held up his wing;  
 From his throat to his tail not a feather was found  
 But what had been stained red with blood from the wound.

And sad chirped the Sparrow of joys fled and gone,  
 Of his love being lost he so doted upon;  
 So he vowed constant silence for that very thing,  
 And this is the reason why Sparrows don't sing.

Then next came the Rook and the sorrowful Crow,  
 To tell birds the cause why in mourning they go,  
 Ever since their old loves their embraces forsook;  
 And all seemed to pity the Crow and the Rook.

The Jay he affected to hide his despair,  
 And rather than mourn he had spirits to wear  
 A coat of all colours, but in it some blue  
 Denoted his passion; though crossed, 't was true;  
 So now in lone woods he will hide him all day,  
 And aloud he scolds all that intrude in his way.

The Magpie declared it should never be said  
 That he mourned for a lover, though fifty had fled;  
 Yet his heart all the while was so burnt and distress,  
 That it turned all the feathers coal-black on his breast.  
 The birds they all marvelled, but still he denied,  
 And wore a black cap his deep blushes to hide;  
 So that is the reason himself and his kin  
 Wear hoods with the lappets quite under the chin.

Then last came the Owl, grieving loud as he flew,  
 Saying how his false lover had bade him adieu;  
 And though he knew not where to find her or follow,  
 Yet round their old haunts he would still whoop and halloo,  
 For no sleep could he get in his sorrowful plight.  
 So that is the reason Owls halloo at night.

And here ends the song of each woe-stricken bird.  
 Now was a more pitiful story e'er heard?  
 The rest were all coupled, and happy, and they  
 Sung the old merry songs which they sing at this day:  
 And good little boys, when this tale they read o'er,  
 Will ne'er have the heart to hurt birds any more,  
 And add to the griefs they already have sung  
 By robbing their nests of their eggs and their young;  
 But feel for their sufferings, and pity their pain,  
 Nor give them new cause of their lot to complain.

## THE GIPSY'S SONG

The gipsy's life is a merry life,  
 And ranting boys we be;  
 We pay to none or rent or tax,  
 And live untith'd and free.  
 None care for us, for none care we,  
 And where we list we roam,  
 And merry boys we gipsies be,  
 Though the wild woods are our home.

And come what will brings no dismay;  
 Our minds are ne'er perplex;  
 For if to-day is a swaly day,  
 We meet with luck the next.  
 And thus we sing and kiss our mates,  
 While our chorus still shall be,—  
 Bad luck to tyrant magistrates,  
 And the gipsies' camp still free.

To mend old pans and bottom chairs  
 Around the towns we tramp,  
 Then a day or two our purse repairs,  
 And plenty fills our camp;  
 And our song we sing, and our fiddles sound  
 Their catgut harmony,  
 While echo fills the woods around  
 With gipsy liberty.

The green grass is our softest bed,  
 The sun our clock we call,  
 The nightly sky hangs over head,  
 Our curtains, house, and all.  
 Tho' houseless while the wild winds blow,  
 Our joys are uncontroll'd;  
 We barefoot dance through Winter's snow,  
 When others die with cold.

Our maidens they are fond and free,  
 And lasting are their charms;  
 Brown as the berry on the tree,  
 No sun their beauty harms:  
 Their beauties are no garden blooms,



That fade before they flower;  
 Unshelter'd where the tempest comes,  
 They smile in sun and shower.

And they are wild as the woodland hare,  
 That feeds on the evening lea;  
 And what care we for ladies fair,  
 Since ours are fond and free?  
 False hearts hide in a lily skin,  
 But ours are coarse and fond;  
 No parson's fetters link us in,—  
 Our love's a stronger bond.

Tho' wild woods are our house and home,  
 'T is a home of liberty;  
 Free as the Summer clouds we roam,  
 And merry boys we be.  
 We dance and sing the year along,  
 And loud our fiddles play;  
 And no day goes without its song,  
 While every month is May.

The hare that haunts the fallow ground,  
 And round the common feeds;  
 The fox that tracks the woodland bounds,  
 And in the thicket breeds;  
 These are the neighbours where we dwell,  
 And all the guests we see,  
 That share and love the quiet well  
 Of gipsy liberty.

The elements are grown our friends,  
 And leave our huts alone;  
 The thunder-bolt, that shakes and rends  
 The cotter's house of stone,  
 Flies harmless by the blanket roof,  
 Where the winds may burst and blow,  
 For our camps, tho' thin, are tempest proof,  
 We reck not rain and snow.

May the lot we've met our lives befall,  
 And nothing worse attend;  
 So here's success to gipsies all,  
 And every gipsy's friend.  
 And while the ass that bears our camp

Can find a common free,  
Around old England's heaths we'll tramp  
In gipsy liberty.

## PEGGY BAND

O it was a lorn and a dismal night,  
And the storm beat loud and high;  
Not a friendly light to guide me right  
Was there shining in the sky,  
When a lonely hut my wanderings met,  
Lost in a foreign land,  
And I found the dearest friend as yet  
In my lovely Peggy Band.

"O, father, here's a soldier lad,  
And weary he seems to be."  
"Then welcome in," the old man said,  
And she gave her seat to me.  
The fire she trimmed, and my clothes she dried  
With her own sweet lily hand,  
And o'er the soldier's lot she sighed,  
While I blest my Peggy Band.

When I told the tale of my wandering years,  
And the nights unknown to sleep,  
She made excuse to hide her tears,  
And she stole away to weep.  
A pilgrim's blessing I seemed to share,  
As saints of the Holy Land,  
And I thought her a guardian angel there,  
Though he called her his Peggy Band.

The night it passed, and the hour to part  
With the morning winged away,  
And I felt an anguish at my heart  
That vainly bid to stay.  
I thanked the old man for all he did,  
And I took his daughter's hand,  
But my heart was full, and I could not bid  
Farewell to my Peggy Band.

A blessing on that friendly cot,  
Where the soldier found repose,  
And a blessing be her constant lot  
Who soothed the stranger's woes.  
I turned a last look at the door,

As she held it in her hand,  
And my heart ached sore, as I crossed the moor,  
For to leave my Peggy Band.

## TO A BROOK

Sweet brook! I've met thee many a summer's day,  
And ventured fearless in thy shallow flood,  
And rambled oft thy sweet unwearied way,  
'Neath willows cool that on thy margin stood,  
With crowds of partners in my artless play—  
Grasshopper, beetle, bee, and butterfly—  
That frisked about as though in merry mood  
To see their old companion sporting by.  
Sweet brook! life's glories then were mine and thine;  
Shade clothed thy spring that now doth naked lie;  
On thy white glistening sand the sweet woodbine  
Darkened and dipt its flowers. I mark, and sigh,  
And muse o'er troubles since we met the last,  
Like two fond friends whose happiness is past.

## ADIEU TO MY FALSE LOVE FOREVER

The week before Easter, the days long and clear,  
So bright shone the sun and so cool blew the air,  
I went in the meadow some flowers to find there,  
But the meadow would yield me no posies.

The weather, like love, did deceitful appear,  
And I wandered alone when my sorrow was near,  
For the thorn that wounds deeply doth bide the whole year,  
When the bush it is naked of roses.

I courted a girl that was handsome and gay,  
I thought her as constant and true as the day,  
Till she married for riches and said my love "Nay,"  
And so my poor heart got requited.

I was bid to the bridal; I could not say "No:"  
The bridemen and maidens they made a fine show;  
I smiled like the rest but my heart it was low,  
To think how its hopes they were blighted.

The bride started gaily, the weather was fine,  
Her parents looked after, and thought her divine;  
She smiled in their faces, but looked not in mine,  
Indeed I'd no heart to regard her.

Though love like the poplar doth lift its head high,  
The top it may fade and the root it may die,  
And they may have heart-aches that now live in joy,  
But Heaven I'll leave to reward her.

When I saw my false love in the merry church stand,  
With her ring on her finger and her love in her hand,  
Smiling out in the joy of her houses and land,  
My sighs I strove vainly to smother.

When my false love for dinner did dainties partake,  
I sat me down also, but nothing could eat;  
I thought her sweet company better than meat,  
Although she was tied to another.

When my false love had gone to her bride bed at night,  
My eyes filled with water which made double my sight;

I thought she was there when she'd bade us "Good night"  
And her chair was put by till the morrow.

I drank to her joy with a tear on my face,  
And the wine glass as usual I pushed on the space,  
Nor knew she was gone till I looked at the place,  
Such a fool was I made of by sorrow.

Now make me a bed in yon river so deep,  
Let its waves be my mourners; nought living will weep,  
And there let me lie and take a long sleep,  
So adieu to my false love for ever.

## O SILLY LOVE! O CUNNING LOVE!

O silly love! O cunning love!  
 An old maid to trepan:  
 I cannot go about my work  
 For loving of a man.  
 I cannot bake, I cannot brew,  
 And, do the best I can,  
 I burn the bread and chill the mash,  
 Through loving of a man.

Shrove Tuesday last I tried, and tried,  
 To turn the cakes in pan,  
 And dropt the batter on the floor,  
 Through thinking of a man.  
 My mistress screamed, my master swore,  
 Boys cursed me in a troop;  
 The cat was all the friends I had,  
 Who helped to clean it up.

Last Christmas eve, from off the spit  
 I took the goose to table,  
 Or should have done, but teasing Love  
 Did make me quite unable;  
 And down slipt dish, and goose, and all  
 With din and clitter-clatter;  
 All but the dog fell foul on me;  
 He licked the broken platter.

Although I'm ten years past a score,  
 Too old to play the fool,  
 My mistress says I must give o'er  
 My service for a school.  
 Good faith! What must I do, and do,  
 To keep my service still;  
 I'll give the winds my thoughts to love,  
 Indeed and so I will.

And if the wind my love should lose,  
 Right foolish were the play,  
 For I should mourn what I had lost,  
 And love another day.  
 With crosses and with losses



Right double were the ill,  
So I'll e'en bear with love and all,  
Alack, and so I will.

## FARE THEE WELL

Here's a sad good bye for thee, my love,  
 To friends and foes a smile:  
 I leave but one regret behind,  
 That's left with thee the while,  
 But hopes that fortune is our friend  
 Already pays the toil.

Force bids me go, your friends to please.  
 Would they were not so high!  
 But be my lot on land or seas,  
 It matters not where by,  
 For I shall keep a thought for thee,  
 In my heart's core to lie.

Winter shall lose its frost and snow,  
 The spring its blossomed thorn,  
 The summer all its bloom forego,  
 The autumn hound and horn  
 Ere I will lose that thought of thee,  
 Or ever prove forsworn.

The dove shall change a hawk in kind,  
 The cuckoo change its tune,  
 The nightingale at Christmas sing,  
 The fieldfare come in June—  
 Ere I do change my love for thee  
 These things shall change as soon.

So keep your heart at ease, my love,  
 Nor waste a joy for me:  
 I'll ne'er prove false to thee, my love,  
 Till fish drown in the sea,  
 And birds forget to fly, my love,  
 And then I'll think of thee.

The red cock's wing may turn to grey,  
 The crow's to silver white,  
 The night itself may be for day,  
 And sunshine wake at night:  
 Till then—and then I'll prove more true  
 Than Nature, life, and light.

Though you may break your fondest vow,  
And take your heart from me,  
And though my heart should break to hear  
What I may never see,  
Yet never can'st thou break the link  
That binds my love to thee.

So fare-thee-well, my own true love;  
No vow from thee I crave,  
But thee I never will forego,  
Till no spark of life I have,  
Nor will I ever thee forget  
Till we both lie in the grave.

## MARY NEELE

My love is tall and handsome;  
All hearts she might command;  
She's matchless for her beauty,  
The queen of all the land.  
She has my heart in keeping,  
For which there's no repeal,  
For the fairest of all woman kind  
Is my love, Mary Neele.

I felt my soul enchanted  
To view this turtle dove,  
That lately seems descended  
From heavenly bowers of love;  
And might I have the fortune  
My wishes could reveal,  
I'd turn my back on splendour  
And fly to Mary Neele.

She is the flower of nations,  
The diamond of my eye;  
All others are but glowworms  
That in her splendour die.  
As shining stars all vanish  
When suns their light reveal,  
So beauties shrink to shadows  
At the feet of Mary Neele.

I ask no better fortune  
Than to embrace her charms;  
Like Plato I would laugh at wealth  
While she was in my arms;  
And if I cannot gain her  
From grief there's no appeal;  
My joy, my pain, my life, my all  
Are fixed with Mary Neele.

The stone of vain philosophers,  
That wonder-working toy,  
The golden fleece of Jason,  
That Helen stole from Troy,  
The beauty and the riches

That all these fames unseal,  
Are nothing all, and less than that,  
Compared to Mary Neele.

O if I cannot gain her  
Right wretched must I be,  
And caves and lonely mountains  
Must be the life for me,  
To pine in gloom and sorrow,  
And hide the deaths I feel,  
For light nor life I may not share  
When lost to Mary Neele.

## LOVE SCORNE BY PRIDE

O far is fled the winter wind,  
And far is fled the frost and snow,  
But the cold scorn on my love's brow  
Hath never yet prepared to go.

More lasting than ten winters' wind,  
More cutting than ten weeks of frost,  
Is the chill frowning of thy mind,  
Where my poor heart was pledged and lost.

I see thee taunting down the street,  
And by the frowning that I see  
I might have known it long ere now,  
Thy love was never meant for me.

And had I known ere I began  
That love had been so hard to win,  
I would have filled my heart with pride,  
Nor left one hope to let love in.

I would have wrapped it in my breast,  
And pinned it with a silver pin,  
Safe as a bird within its nest,  
And 'scaped the trouble I am in.

I wish I was a happy bird,  
And thou a true and timid dove:  
O I would fly the land of grief,  
And rest me in the land of love.

O I would rest where I love best;  
Where I love best I may not be:  
A hawk doth on that rose-tree sit,  
And drives young love to fear and flee.

O would I were the goldfinch gay!  
My richer suit had tempted strong.  
O would I were the nightingale!  
Thou then had'st listened to my song.

Though deep my scorn I cannot hate,  
Thy beauty's sweet though sour thy pride;

To praise thee is to love thee still,  
And it doth cheer my heart beside.

For I could swim the deepest lake,  
And I could climb the highest tree,  
The greatest danger face and brave,  
And all for one kind kiss of thee.

O love is here, and love is there:  
O love is like no other thing:  
Its frowns can make a king a slave,  
Its smiles can make a slave a king.

## **BETRAYED**

Dream not of love, to think it like  
What waking love may prove to be,  
For I dreamed so and broke my heart,  
When my false lover slighted me.

Love, like to flowers, is sweet when green;  
The rose in bud aye best appears;  
And she that loves a handsome man  
Should have more wit than she has years.

I put my finger in a bush,  
Thinking the sweeter rose to find;  
I pricked my finger to the bone,  
And left the sweetest rose behind.

I threw a stone into the sea,  
And deep it sunk into the sand,  
And so did my poor heart in me  
When my false lover left the land.

I watched the sun an hour too soon  
Set into clouds behind the town;  
So my false lover left, and said  
"Good night" before the day was down.

I cropt a lily from the stalk,  
And in my hand it died away;  
So did my joy, so will my heart,  
In false love's cruel grasp decay.



## THE MAIDEN'S WELCOME

Of all the swains that meet at eve  
 Upon the green to play,  
 The shepherd is the lad for me,  
 And I'll ne'er say him nay.  
 Though father glowers beneath his hat,  
 And mother talks of bed,  
 I'll take my cloak up, late or soon,  
 To meet my shepherd lad.

Aunt Kitty loved a soldier lad,  
 Who left her love for war;  
 A sailor loved my sister Sue,  
 Whose jacket smelt of tar;  
 But my love's sweet as land new ploughed;  
 He is my heart's delight,  
 And he ne'er leaves his love so far  
 But he can come at night.

So father he may glower and frown,  
 And mother scold about it;  
 The shepherd has my heart to keep,  
 And can I live without it?  
 I'm sure he will not part with it,  
 In spite of what they say,  
 And if he would as sure I am  
 It would not come away.

So friends may frown, while I can smile  
 To know I'm loved by one  
 Who has my heart, and him to seek  
 What better can be done?  
 And be it Spring or Summer both,  
 Or be it Winter cold,  
 If pots should freeze upon the fire  
 I'd meet him at the fold.

I'm fain to make my wedding gown,  
 Which he has bought for me,  
 But it will wake my mother's thoughts,  
 And evil they will be,  
 Although he has but stole my heart,

Which gives me nought of pain,  
For bye and bye he'll buy the ring,  
And bring my heart again.

## THE FALSE KNIGHT'S TRAGEDY

A false knight wooed a maiden poor,  
And his high halls left he  
To stoop in at her cottage door,  
When night left none to see.

And, well-a-day, it is a tale  
For pity too severe—  
A tale would melt the sternest eye,  
And wake the deafest ear.

He stole her heart, he stole her love,  
'T was all the wealth she had;  
Her truth and fame likewise stole he,

\* \* \* \*

And they rode on, and they rode on;  
Far on this pair did ride,  
Till the maiden's heart with fear and love  
Beat quick against her side.

And on they rode till rocks grew high.  
"Sir Knight, what have we here?"  
"Unsaddle, maid, for here we stop:"  
And death's tongue smote her ear.

Some ruffian rude she took him now,  
And wished she'd barred the door,  
Nor was it one that she could read  
Of having heard before.

"Thou art not my true love," she said,  
"But some rude robber loon;  
He'd take me from the saddle bow,  
Nor leave me to get down."

"I ne'er was your true love," said he,  
"For I'm more bold than true;  
Though I'm the knight that came at dark  
To kiss and toy with you."

"I know you're not my love," said she,  
"That came at night and wooed;

Although ye try and mock his speech  
His way was ne'er so rude.

He ne'er said word but called me dear,  
And dear he is to me:  
Ye spake as ye ne'er knew the word,  
Rude ruffian as ye be.

Ye never was my knight, I trow,  
Ye pay me no regard,  
But he would take my arm in his  
If we but went a yard."

"No matter whose true love I am;  
I'm more than true to you,  
For I'll ne'er wed a shepherd wench,—  
Although I came to woo."

And on to the rock's top they walked,  
Till they stood o'er the salt sea's brim.  
"And there," said he, "'s your bridal bed,  
Where you may sink or swim."

A moonbeam shone upon his face,  
The maid sunk at his feet,  
For 't was her own false love she saw,  
That once so fond did greet.

"And did ye promise love for this?  
Is the grave my priest to be?  
And did ye bring this silken dress  
To wed me with the sea?"

"O never mind your dress," quoth he,  
'T is well to dress for sea:  
Mermaids will love to see you fine;  
Your bridesmaids they will be."

"O let me cast this gown away,  
It's brought no good to me,  
And if my mother greets my clay  
Too wretched will she be.

For she, for my sad sake, would keep  
This guilty bridal dress,  
To break and tell her bursting heart  
She had a daughter less."

So off she threw her bridal gown,  
Likewise her gold clasped shoon:  
His looks frowned hard as any stone,  
Hers pale turned as the moon.

"O false, false knight you've wrapped me warm  
Ere I was cold before,  
And now you strip me unto death,  
Although I'm out of door.

O dash away those thistles rude,  
That crowd about the shore;  
They'll wound my tender feet, that ne'er  
Went barefoot thus before.

O dash those stinging nettles down,  
And cut away the brier,  
For deep they wound those lily arms  
Which you did once admire."

And he nor briers nor thistles cut,  
Although she grieved full sore,  
And he nor shed one single tear,  
Nor kiss took evermore.

She shrieked—and sank, and is at rest,  
All in the deep, deep sea;  
And home in base and scornful pride,  
With haunted heart, rode he.

Now o'er that rock there hangs a tree,  
And chains do creak thereon;  
And in those chains his memory hangs,  
Though all beside is gone.

## LOVE'S RIDDLE

"Unriddle this riddle, my own Jenny love,  
Unriddle this riddle for me,  
And if ye unriddle the riddle aright,  
A kiss your prize shall be,  
And if ye riddle the riddle all wrong,  
Ye're treble the debt to me:

I'll give thee an apple without any core;  
I'll give thee a cherry where stones never be;  
I'll give thee a palace, without any door,  
And thou shalt unlock it without any key;  
I'll give thee a fortune that kings cannot give,  
Nor any one take from thee."

"How can there be apples without any core?  
How can there be cherries where stones never be?  
How can there be houses without any door?  
Or doors I may open without any key?  
How can'st thou give fortunes that kings cannot give,  
When thou art no richer than me?"

"My head is the apple without any core;  
In cherries in blossom no stones ever be;  
My mind is love's palace without any door,  
Which thou can'st unlock, love, without any key.  
My heart is the wealth, love, that kings cannot give,  
Nor any one take it from thee.

So there are love's riddles, my own Jenny love,  
Ye cannot unriddle to me,  
And for the one kiss you've so easily lost  
I'll make ye give seven to me.  
To kiss thee is sweet, but 't is sweeter by far  
To be kissed, my dear Jenny, by thee.

Come pay me the forfeit, my own Jenny love;  
Thy kisses and cheeks are akin,  
And for thy three sweet ones I'll give thee a score  
On thy cheeks, and thy lips, and thy chin."  
She laughed while he gave her, as much as to say,  
"T were better to lose than to win."

## THE BANKS OF IVORY

'T was on the banks of Ivory, 'neath the hawthorn-scented shade,  
Early one summer's morning, I met a lovely maid;  
Her hair hung o'er her shoulders broad, her eyes like suns did  
shine,  
And on the banks of Ivory, O I wished the maid was mine.

Her face it wore the beauty of heaven's own broken mould;  
The world's first charm seemed living still; her curls like hanks  
of gold  
Hung waving, and her eyes glittered timid as the dew,  
When by the banks of Ivory I swore I loved her true.

"Kind sir," she said, "forsake me, while it is no pain to go,  
For often after kissing and such wooing there comes woe;  
And woman's heart is feeble; O I wish it were a stone;  
So by the banks of Ivory I'd rather walk alone.

For learned seems your gallant speech, and noble is your trim,  
And thus to court an humble maid is just to please your whim;  
So go and seek some lady fair, as high in pedigree,  
Nor stoop so low by Ivory to flatter one like me."

"In sooth, fair maid, you mock at me, for truth ne'er harboured  
ill;  
I will not wrong your purity; to love is all my will:  
My hall looks over yonder groves; its lady you shall be,  
For on the banks of Ivory I'm glad I met with thee."

He put his hands unto his lips, and whistled loud and shrill,  
And thirty six well-armed men came at their master's will,  
Said he "I've flattered maids full long, but now the time is past,  
And the bonny hills of Ivory a lady own at last.

My steed's back ne'er was graced for a lady's seat before;  
Fear not his speed; I'll guard thee, love, till we ride o'er the  
moor,  
To seek the priest, and wed, and love until the day we die."  
So she that was but poor before is Lady Ivory.

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