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A KIPLING ANTHOLOGY

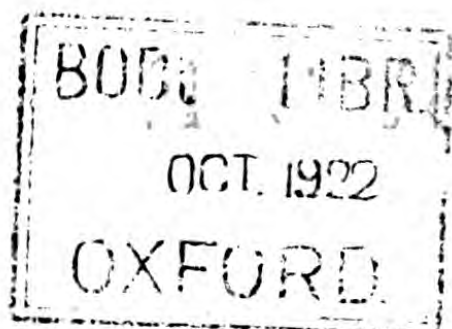
V E R S E

A KIPLING ANTHOLOGY

V E R S E



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THE EAST

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{x} + \frac{1}{x^2} \right) \quad (1)$$

where $f(x)$ is the function defined on $\mathbb{R}^+$ by $f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{x} + \frac{1}{x^2} \right)$.

Let

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{x} + \frac{1}{x^2} \right) \quad (2)$$

where $f(x)$ is the function defined on $\mathbb{R}^+$ by $f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{x} + \frac{1}{x^2} \right)$.

Let $f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{x} + \frac{1}{x^2} \right)$ be the function defined on $\mathbb{R}^+$ by $f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{x} + \frac{1}{x^2} \right)$.

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THE EAST



THE FIRES

(Prelude to Collected Verse)

ACROSS the high hills and the sea
And all the changeful skies,
The Four Winds blow the smoke to me
Till the tears are in my eyes.

Until the tears are in my eyes
And my heart is wellnigh broke
For thinking on old memories
That gather in the smoke.

With every shift of every wind
The homesick memories come,
From every quarter of mankind
Where I have made me a home.

* * *

Oh, you Four Winds that blow so strong
And know that this is true,
Stoop for a little and carry my song
To all the men I knew !



THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

1889

*OH, East is East, and West is West, and never the
twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great
Judgment Seat ;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed,
nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they
come from the ends of the earth !*

* * * * *

They have looked each other between the eyes, and
there they found no fault,
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood
on leavened bread and salt :
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood
on fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and
the Wondrous Names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's
boy the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where
there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full
twenty swords flew clear—
There was not a man but carried his feud with the
blood of the mountaineer.
“Ha' done ! ha' done !” said the Colonel's son.
“Put up the steel at your sides !
“Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—
to-night 't is a man of the Guides !”

ARITHMETIC ON THE FRONTIER

A GREAT and glorious thing it is
To learn, for seven years or so,
The Lord knows what of that and this,
Ere reckoned fit to face the foe—
The flying bullet down the Pass,
That whistles clear : " All flesh is grass."

* * * * *

A scrimmage in a Border Station—
A canter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee *jezail*—
The Crammer's boast, the Squadron's pride,
Shot like a rabbit in a ride !



POSSIBILITIES

Ay, lay him 'neath the Simla pine—
A fortnight fully to be missed,
Behold, we lose our fourth at whist,
A chair is vacant where we dine.

His place forgets him ; other men
Have bought his ponies, guns, and traps.
His fortune is the Great Perhaps
And that cool rest-house down the glen.

CHOLERA CAMP

(Infantry in India)

WE'VE got the cholerer in camp—it's worse than
forty fights ;
We're dyin' in the wilderness the same as Isrulites ;
It's before us, an' be'ind us, an' we cannot get away,
An' the doctor's just reported we've ten more
to-day !

* * * * *

Our Colonel's white an' twitterly—'e gets no sleep
nor food,
But mucks about in 'orspital where nothing does
no good.
'E sends us 'eaps o' comforts, all bought from 'is
pay—
But there aren't much comfort 'andy on ten deaths
a day.



THE OVERLAND MAIL

(Foot-service to the Hills)

WITH a jingle of bells as the dusk gathers in,
He turns to the footpath that heads up the hill—
The bags on his back and a cloth round his chin,
And, tucked in his waistbelt, the Post Office
bill ;—
“ Dispatched on this date, as received by the rail,
“ *Per* runner, two bags of the Overland Mail.”

* * * * *

From aloe to rose-oak, from rose-oak to fir,
From level to upland, from upland to crest,
From rice-field to rock-ridge, from rock-ridge to spur,
Fly the soft-sandalled feet, strains the brawny,
brown chest.

From rail to ravine—to the peak from the vale—
Up, up through the night goes the Overland Mail.

There's a speck on the hillside, a dot on the road—
A jingle of bells on the footpath below—
There's a scuffle above in the monkey's abode—
The world is awake and the clouds are aglow.
For the great Sun himself must attend to the hail :—
“ In the Name of the Empress, the Overland
Mail ! ”



AN OLD SONG

So long as 'neath the Kalka hills
The tonga-horn shall ring,
So long as down the Solon dip
The hard-held ponies swing,
So long as Tara Devi sees
The lights of Simla town,
So long as Pleasure calls us up,
Or Duty drives us down,
If you love me as I love you
What pair so happy as we two ?

* * *

By Docket, Billet-doux, and File,
 By Mountain, Cliff, and Fir,
 By Fan and Sword and Office-box,
 By Corset, Plume, and Spur,
 By Riot, Revel, Waltz, and War,
 By Women, Work, and Bills,
 By all the life that fizzes in
 The Everlasting Hills,
If you love me as I love you
What pair so happy as we two?



THE LOVERS' LITANY

EYES of grey—a sodden quay,
 Driving rain and falling tears,
 As the steamer puts to sea
 In a parting storm of cheers.
 Sing, for Faith and Hope are high—
 None so true as you and I—
 Sing the Lovers' Litany :—
" Love like ours can never die ! "

* * *

Maidens, of your charity,
 Pity my most luckless state.
 Four times Cupid's debtor I—
 Bankrupt in quadruplicate.
 Yet, despite my evil case,
 An a maiden showed me grace,
 Four-and-forty times would I
 Sing the Lovers' Litany :—
" Love like ours can never die ! "

IN SPRINGTIME

My garden blazes brightly with the rose-bush and
the peach,
And the *kōil* ¹ sings above it, in the *siris* by the
well,
From the creeper-covered trellis comes the squirrel's
chattering speech,
And the blue jay screams and flutters where the
cheery *sat-bhai* ² dwell.
But the rose has lost its fragrance, and the *kōil*'s
note is strange ;
I am sick of endless sunshine, sick of blossom-
burdened bough.
Give me back the leafless woodlands where the
winds of Springtime range—
Give me back one day in England, for it's Spring
in England now !



TWO MONTHS

JUNE

No hope, no change ! The clouds have shut us in,
And through the cloud the sullen Sun strikes
down
Full on the bosom of the tortured Town,
Till Night falls heavy as remembered sin

¹ The Indian bell-bird.² Indian starlings.

That will not suffer sleep or thought of ease,
And, hour on hour, the dry-eyed Moon in spite
Glares through the haze and mocks with watery
light
The torment of the uncomplaining trees.

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER

At dawn there was a murmur in the trees,
A ripple on the tank, and in the air
Presage of coming coolness—everywhere
A voice of prophecy upon the breeze.
Up leapt the Sun and smote the dust to gold,
And strove to parch anew the heedless land,
All impotently, as a King grown old
Wars for the Empire crumbling 'neath his hand.



CHRISTMAS IN INDIA

DIM dawn behind the tamarisks—the sky is saffron-
yellow—
As the women in the village grind the corn,
And the parrots seek the river-side, each calling to
his fellow
That the Day, the staring Eastern Day, is
born.

O the white dust on the highway ! O the
stenches in the byway !

O the clammy fog that hovers over earth !
And at Home they're making merry 'neath the
white and scarlet berry—

What part have India's exiles in their mirth ?

* * * * *

High noon behind the tamarisks—the sun is hot
above us—

As at Home the Christmas Day is breaking wan.
They will drink our healths at dinner—those who
tell us how they love us,

And forget us till another year be gone !

O the toil that knows no breaking ! O the
heimweh, ceaseless, aching !

O the black dividing Sea and alien Plain !
Youth was cheap—wherefore we sold it. Gold
was good—we hoped to hold it.

And to-day we know the fulness of our gain !



A TALE OF TWO CITIES

ONCE, two hundred years ago, the trader came
Meek and tame.

Where his timid foot first halted, there he stayed,
Till mere trade

Grew to Empire, and he sent his armies forth
South and North,

Till the country from Peshawar to Ceylon
Was his own.
Thus the midday halt of Charnock—more's the
pity!—

Grew a City.
As the fungus sprouts chaotic from its bed,
So it spread—
Chance-directed, chance-erected, laid and built
On the silt—
Palace, byre, hovel—poverty and pride—
Side by side ;
And, above the packed and pestilential town,
Death looked down.

* * * * *

Though the argosies of Asia at Her doors
Heap their stores,
Though her enterprise and energy secure
Income sure,
Though “out-station orders punctually obeyed”
Swell Her trade—
Still, for rule, administration, and the rest,
Simla's best !



THE BALLAD OF THE KING'S JEST

1890

IN a turquoise twilight, crisp and chill,
A kafilā camped at the foot of the hill.
Then blue smoke-haze of the cooking rose,
And tent-peg answered to hammer-nose ;

And the picketed ponies, shag and wild,
Strained at their ropes as the feed was piled ;
And the bubbling camels beside the load
Sprawled for a furlong adown the road ;
And the Persian pussy-cats, brought for sale,
Spat at the dogs from the camel-bale ;
And the tribesmen bellowed to hasten the food ;
And the camp-fires twinkled by Fort Jumrood ;
And there fled on the wings of the gathering dusk
A savour of camels and carpets and musk,
A murmur of voices, a reek of smoke,
To tell us the trade of the Khyber woke.



SONG OF THE WISE CHILDREN

1902

WE shall go back by the boltless doors,
To the life unaltered our childhood knew—
To the naked feet on the cool, dark floors,
And the high-ceiled rooms that the Trade blows
through.

* * * * *

The wayside magic, the threshold spells,
Shall soon undo what the North has done—
Because of the sights and the sounds and the smells
That ran with our youth in the eye of the sun.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

BEAST AND MAN IN INDIA

GREAT is the sword and mighty is the pen,
But over all the labouring ploughman's blade—
For on its oxen and its husbandmen
An Empire's strength is laid.

The Oxen.

The black bulk heaving where the oxen pant,
The bowed head toiling where the guns careen,
Declare our might—our slave the Elephant
And servant of the Queen.

The Elephant.

The beasts are very wise,
Their mouths are clean of lies,
They talk one to the other,
Bullock to bullock's brother
Resting after their labours,
Each in stall with his neighbours.



MANY INVENTIONS

'LESS you want your toes trod off you'd better get
back at once,
For the bullocks are walking two by two,
The *byles* are walking two by two,
And the elephants bring the guns.
Ho ! Yuss !

Great—big—long—black—forty-pounder guns.
Jiggery-jolty to and fro,
Each as big as a launch in tow—
Blind—dumb—broad-breeched—beggars o' batter-
ing-guns.

My Lord the Elephant.



PARADE-SONG OF THE CAMP-ANIMALS

ALL THE BEASTS TOGETHER

CHILDREN of the Camp are we,
Serving each in his degree ;
Children of the yoke and goad,
Pack and harness, pad and load.
See our line across the plain,
Like a heel-rope bent again,
Reaching, writhing, rolling far,
Sweeping all away to war !
While the men that walk beside,
Dusty, silent, heavy-eyed,
Cannot tell why we or they
March and suffer day by day.

*Children of the Camp are we,
Serving each in his degree ;
Children of the yoke and goad,
Pack and harness, pad and load.*

ROAD-SONG OF THE *BANDAR-LOG*

HERE we go in a flung festoon,
Half-way up to the jealous moon !
Don't you envy our pranceful bands ?
Don't you wish you had extra hands ?
Wouldn't you like if your tails were—so—
Curved in the shape of a Cupid's bow ?
Now you're angry, but—never mind,
Brother, thy tail hangs down behind !



DARZEE'S CHAUNT

(Sung in honour of Rikki-tikki-tavi)

GIVE him the Thanks of the Birds,
Bowling with tail-feathers spread !
Praise him in nightingale-words—
Nay, I will praise him instead.
Hear ! I will sing you the praise of the bottle-tailed
Rikki, with eyeballs of red !



OUTSONG IN THE JUNGLE

ON the trail that thou must tread
To the thresholds of our dread,
Where the Flower blossoms red ;
Through the nights when thou shalt lie
Prisoned from our Mother-sky,
Hearing us, thy loves, go by ;

In the dawns when thou shalt wake
To the toil thou canst not break,
Heartsick for the Jungle's sake ;
Wood and Water, Wind and Tree,
Wisdom, Strength, and Courtesy,
Jungle-Favour go with thee!



CHAPTER HEADINGS

THE NAULAHKA

Now it is not good for the Christian's health to
hustle the Aryan brown,
For the Christian riles, and the Aryan smiles and
he weareth the Christian down ;
And the end of the fight is a tombstone white with
the name of the late deceased,
And the epitaph drear : " A Fool lies here who
tried to hustle the East."



PAGETT, M.P.

The toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each tooth-point goes
The butterfly upon the road
Preaches contentment to that toad.

PAGETT, M.P., was a liar, and a fluent liar there-
with,—
He spoke of the heat of India as " The Asian Solar
Myth " ;

Come on a four months' visit, to "study the East"
in November,
And I got him to make an agreement vowing to
stay till September.

* * * * *

And I laughed as I drove from the station, but
the mirth died out on my lips
As I thought of the fools like Pagett who write of
their "Eastern trips,"
And the sneers of the travelled idiots who duly
misgovern the land,
And I prayed to the Lord to deliver another one
into my hand.



HADRAMAUTI

He was the son of an ape, ill at ease in his clothing.
He talked with his head, hands and feet. I endured
him with loathing.
Whatever his spirit conceived his countenance
showed it
As a frog shows in a mud-puddle. Yet I abode it!



WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

Queen Victoria's Jubilee

JUNE 21ST, 1887

By the well, where the bullocks go
Silent and blind and slow—
By the field, where the young corn dies
In the face of the sultry skies,
They have heard, as the dull Earth hears
The voice of the wind of an hour,
The sound of the Great Queen's voice :—
“ My God hath given me years,
“ Hath granted dominion and power :
“ And I bid you, O Land, rejoice.”

* * * * *

And the Ploughman settled the share
More deep in the sun-dried clod :—
“ Mogul, Mahratta, and *Mlech*¹ from the North,
“ And White Queen over the Seas—
“ God raiseth them up and driveth them forth
“ As the dust of the ploughshare flies in the breeze ;
“ But the wheat and the cattle are all my care,
“ And the rest is the will of God.”

¹ The foreigner.



THE SONG OF THE WOMEN

(Lady Dufferin's Fund for medical aid to the Women of India)

How shall she know the worship we would do her ?

The walls are high and she is very far.

How shall the women's message reach unto her

Above the tumult of the packed bazaar ?

Free wind of March, against the lattice blowing,

Bear thou our thanks lest she depart unknowing.

* * * * *

Haste, for our hearts are with thee, take no rest !

Loud-voiced ambassador, from sea to sea

Proclaim the blessing, manifold, confest,

Of those in darkness by her hand set free,

Then very softly to her presence move,

And whisper : " Lady, lo, they know and love ! "



ONE VICEROY RESIGNS

You'll never plumb the Oriental mind,

And if you did, it isn't worth the toil.

Think of a sleek French priest in Canada ;

Divide by twenty half-breeds. Multiply

By twice the Sphinx's silence. There's your East,

And you're as wise as ever. So am I.

Accept on trust and work in darkness, strike

At venture, stumble forward, make your mark,

(It's chalk on granite) then thank God no flame

Leaps from the rock to shrivel mark and man.

* * * * *

I envy you the twenty years you've gained,
But not the five to follow. What's that? One!
Two!—Surely not so late. Good-night. *Don't*
dream.

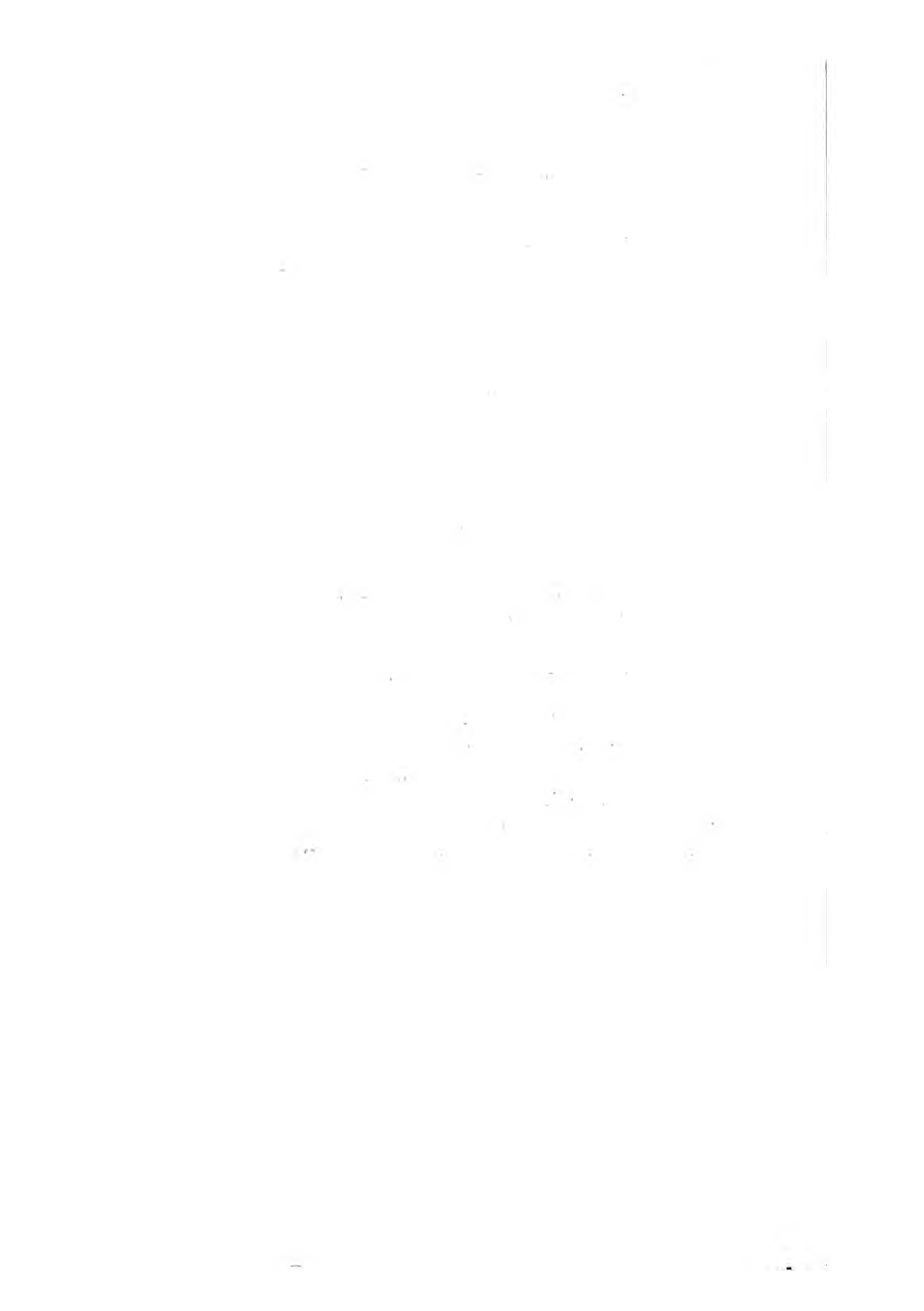


L'ENVOI

(Departmental Ditties)

“WE know the Shrine is void,” they said,
“The Goddess flown—
“Yet wreaths are on the altar laid—
“The Altar-Stone
“Is black with fumes of sacrifice,
“Albeit She has fled our eyes.

“For, it may be, if still we sing
“And tend the Shrine,
“Some Deity on wandering wing
“May there incline;
“And, finding all in order meet,
“Stay while we worship at Her feet.”



LYRICAL

THE MIRACLES

1894

I SENT a message to my dear—
A thousand leagues and more to Her—
The dumb sea-levels thrilled to hear,
And Lost Atlantis bore to Her !

Behind my message hard I came,
And nigh had found a grave for me ;
But that I launched of steel and flame
Did war against the wave for me.

* * *

Dawn ran to meet me at my goal—
Ah, day no tongue shall tell again !
And little folk of little soul
Rose up to buy and sell again !



THE LOVE SONG OF HAR DYAL

ALONE upon the housetops to the North
I turn and watch the lightning in the sky—
The glamour of thy footsteps in the North.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die.

MANDALAY

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to
 the sea,
 There's a Burma girl a-settin', and I know she
 thinks o' me ;
 For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the temple-
 bells they say :
 " Come you back, you British soldier ; come
 back to Mandalay ! "
 Come you back to Mandalay,
 Where the old Flotilla lay :
 Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from
 Rangoon to Mandalay ?
 On the road to Mandalay,
 Where the flyin'-fishes play,
 An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer
 China 'crost the Bay !



BROOKLAND ROAD

I WAS very well pleased with what I knowed,
 I reckoned myself no fool—
 Till I met with a maid on the Brookland Road,
 That turned me back to school.
 * * * * *
 O, stop your ringing and let me be—
 Let be, O Brookland bells !
 You'll ring Old Goodman ¹ out of the sea,
 Before I wed one else !
 * * * * *

¹ Earl Godwin of the Goodwin Sands ?

Low down—low down !

*Where the liddle green lanterns shine—
O maids, I've done with 'ee all but one,
And she can never be mine !*



THE LADIES

WHAT did the Colonel's Lady think ?
Nobody never knew.
Somebody asked the Sergeant's Wife,
An' she told 'em true !
When you get to a man in the case,
They're like as a row of pins—
For the Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady
Are sisters under their skins !



MY RIVAL

I go to concert, party, ball—
What profit is in these ?
I sit alone against the wall
And strive to look at ease.
The incense that is mine by right
They burn before Her shrine ;
And that's because I'm seventeen
And she is forty-nine.

* * *

But even She must older grow
And end Her dancing days,
She can't go on for ever so
At concerts, balls, and plays.
One ray of priceless hope I see
Before my footsteps shine ;
Just think, that She'll be eighty-one
When I am forty-nine !



THE VAMPIRE

1897

A FOOL there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I !)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
(We called her the woman who did not care)
But the fool he called her his lady fair—
(Even as you and I !)



THE OLDEST SONG

For before Eve was Lilith.—*Old Tale*

“THESE were never your true love's eyes.
Why do you feign that you love them ?
You that broke from their constancies,
And the wide calm brows above them !

This was never your true love's speech.
Why do you thrill when you hear it?
You that have ridden out of its reach
The width of the world or near it!"

* * * * *

"All these things I know, I know.
And that's why my heart is breaking!"
"Then what do you gain by pretending so?"
"The joy of an old wound waking."



"RIMINI"

(Marching Song of a Roman Legion of the Later Empire)

WHEN I left Rome for Lalage's sake
By the Legions' Road to Rimini,
She vowed her heart was mine to take
With me and my shield to Rimini—
(Till the Eagles flew from Rimini—)
And I've tramped Britain, and I've tramped Gaul,
And the Pontic shore where the snow-flakes fall
As white as the neck of Lalage—
(As cold as the heart of Lalage!)
And I've lost Britain, and I've lost Gaul,
And I've lost Rome and, worst of all,
I've lost Lalage!



THE VIRGINITY

TRY as he will, no man breaks wholly loose
From his first love, no matter who she be.
Oh, was there ever sailor free to choose,
That didn't settle somewhere near the sea?

* * * * *

*Parsons in pulpits, tax-payers in pews,
Kings on your thrones, you know as well as me,
We've only one virginity to lose,
And where we lost it there our hearts will be!*



THE MOTHER-LODGE

So man on man got talkin',
An' not a Brother stirred
Till mornin' waked the parrots
An' that dam' brain-fever-bird;
We'd say 'twas 'ighly curious,
An' we'd all ride 'ome to bed,
With Mo'ammed, God, an' Shiva
Changin' pickets in our 'ead.



THE THOUSANDTH MAN

ONE man in a thousand, Solomon says,
Will stick more close than a brother.
And it's worth while seeking him half your days
If you find him before the other.

Nine hundred and ninety-nine depend
On what the world sees in you,
But the Thousandth Man will stand your friend
With the whole round world agin you.



CHAPTER HEADINGS

JUST-SO STORIES

Pussy can sit by the fire and sing,
Pussy can climb a tree,
Or play with a silly old cork and string
To 'muse herself, not me.
But *I* like *Binkie*, my dog, because
He knows how to behave ;
So, *Binkie's* the same as the First Friend was,
And I am the Man in the Cave !
The Cat That Walked by Himself.



MOTHER O' MINE

If I were damned of body and soul,
I know whose prayers would make me whole,
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine !



SEA PIECES

THE SEA-WIFE

1893

THERE dwells a wife by the Northern Gate,
And a wealthy wife is she ;
She breeds a breed o' rovin' men
And casts them over sea.

* * * * *

The good wife's sons come home again
With little into their hands,
But the lore of men that have dealt with men
In the new and naked lands.

* * * * *

And some return by failing light,
And some in waking dream,
For she hears the heels of the dripping ghosts
That ride the rough roof-beam.

Home, they come home from all the ports,
The living and the dead ;
The good wife's sons come home again
For her blessing on their head !



HARP SONG OF THE DANE WOMEN

WHAT is woman that you forsake her,
And the hearth-fire and the home-acre,
To go with the old grey Widow-maker ?



THORKILD'S SONG

THERE'S no wind along these seas,
Out oars for Stavanger !
Forward all for Stavanger !
So we must wake the white-ash breeze,
Let fall for Stavanger !
A long pull for Stavanger !

Oh, hear the benches creak and strain !
(A long pull for Stavanger !)
She thinks she smells the Northland rain !
(A long pull for Stavanger !)



THE GALLEY-SLAVE

OH, gallant was our galley from her carven steering-
wheel
To her figurehead of silver and her beak of ham-
mered steel ;
The leg-bar chafed the ankle and we gasped for
cooler air,
But no galley on the waters with our galley could
compare !

* * * * *

But to-day I leave the galley and another takes
my place ;
There's my name upon the deck-beam—let it stand
a little space.
I am free—to watch my messmates beating out to
open main,
Free of all that Life can offer—save to handle
sweep again.

By the brand upon my shoulder, by the gall of
clinging steel,
By the welt the whips have left me, by the scars
that never heal ;
By eyes grown old with staring through the sun-
wash on the brine,
I am paid in full for service. Would that service
still were mine !



WHITE HORSES

1897

WHERE run your colts at pasture ?
Where hide your mares to breed ?
'Mid bergs about the Ice-cap
Or wove Sargasso weed ;
By chartless reef and channel,
Or crafty coastwise bars,
But most the ocean-meadows
All purple to the stars !

* * *

Trust ye the curdled hollows—
Trust ye the neighing wind—
Trust ye the moaning groundswell—
Our herds are close behind !
To bray your foeman's armies—
To chill and snap his sword—
Trust ye the wild White Horses,
The Horses of the Lord !



THE MERCHANTMEN

1893

KING SOLOMON drew merchantmen,
Because of his desire
For peacocks, apes, and ivory,
From Tarshish unto Tyre,
With cedars out of Lebanon
Which Hiram rafted down,
But we be only sailormen
That use in London town.

* * * * *

*Coastwise—cross-seas—round the world and back
again,
Whither flaw shall fail us or the Trades drive
down :
Plain-sail—storm-sail—lay your board and tack
again—
And all to bring a cargo up to London Town !*

BIG STEAMERS

1914-18

“ Oh, where are you going to, all you Big Steamers,
With England's own coal, up and down the salt
seas ? ”

“ We are going to fetch you your bread and your
butter,
Your beef, pork, and mutton, eggs, apples, and
cheese ! ”

* * * * *

“ *For the bread that you eat and the biscuits you
nibble,
The sweets that you suck and the joints that you
carve,*

*They are brought to you daily by all us Big Steamers—
And if any one hinders our coming you'll starve ! ”*



CHAPTER HEADINGS

JUST-SO STORIES

I'VE never sailed the Amazon,
I've never reached Brazil ;
But the *Don* and *Magdalena*,
They can go there when they will !

Yes, weekly from Southampton,
Great steamers, white and gold,
Go rolling down to Rio
(Roll down—roll down to Rio !)
And I'd like to roll to Rio
Some day before I'm old !
The Beginning of the Armadilloes.

WHEN the cabin port-holes are dark and green
Because of the seas outside ;
When the ship goes *wop* (with a wiggle between)
And the steward falls into the soup-tureen,
And the trunks begin to slide ;
When Nursey lies on the floor in a heap,
And Mummy tells you to let her sleep,
And you are n't waked or washed or dressed,
Why, then you will know (if you have n't guessed)
You're " Fifty North and Forty West ! "

How the Whale Got His Throat.



THE SEA AND THE HILLS

1902

WHO hath desired the Sea ?—the immense and
contemptuous surges ?
The shudder, the stumble, the swerve, as the star-
stabbing bowsprit emerges ?
The orderly clouds of the Trades, the ridged, roar-
ing sapphire thereunder—
Unheralded cliff-haunting flaws and the headsail's
low-volleying thunder—
His Sea in no wonder the same—his Sea and the
same through each wonder :
His Sea as she rages or stills ?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise—hill-
men desire their Hills

A SONG IN STORM

1914-18

BE well assured that on our side
The abiding oceans fight,
Though headlong wind and heaping tide
Make us their sport to-night.
By force of weather not of war
In jeopardy we steer :
Then welcome Fate's discourtesy
Whereby it shall appear,
How in all time of our distress,
And our deliverance too,
The game is more than the player of the game,
And the ship is more than the crew !



THE BALLAD OF THE *BOLIVAR*

1890

JUST a pack o' rotten plates puttied up with tar,
In we came, an' time enough, 'cross Bilbao Bar.
Overloaded, undermanned, meant to founder, we
Euchred God Almighty's storm, bluffed the Eterna
Sea !



RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

1893

*AWAY by the lands of the Japanee
Where the paper lanterns glow
And the crews of all the shipping drink
In the house of Blood Street Joe,
At twilight, when the landward breeze
Brings up the harbour noise,
And ebb of Yokohama Bay
Swings chattering through the buoys,
In Cisco's Dewdrop Dining Rooms
They tell the tale anew
Of a hidden sea and a hidden fight,
When the Baltic ran from the Northern Light
And the Stralsund fought the two.*

* * * * *

It was the sealer *Northern Light*, to the Smoky Seas
she bore.
With a stovepipe stuck from a starboard port and
the Russian flag at her fore.
(*Baltic*, *Stralsund*, and *Northern Light*—oh! they
were birds of a feather—
Slipping away to the Smoky Seas, three seal-thieves
together!)
And at last she came to a sandy cove and the *Baltic*
lay therein,
But her men were up with the herding seal to drive
and club and skin.

There were fifteen hundred skins abeach, cool pelt
and proper fur,
When the *Northern Light* drove into the bight and
the sea-mist drove with her.
The *Baltic* called her men and weighed—she could
not choose but run—
For a stovepipe seen through the closing mist, it
shows like a four-inch gun
(And loss it is that is sad as death to lose both
trip and ship
And lie for a rotting contraband on Vladivostok
slip).



“ LUKANNON ”

(Song of the Seal-rookeries, Aleutian Islands)

THE song of pleasant stations beside the salt la-
goons,
The song of blowing squadrons that shuffled down
the dunes,
The song of midnight dances that churned the sea
to flame—
The Beaches of Lukannon—before the sealers came !
Wheel down, wheel down to southward ! Oh,
Gooverooska go !
And tell the Deep-Sea Viceroys the story of our
woe ;
Ere, empty as the shark's egg the tempest flings
ashore,
The Beaches of Lukannon shall know their sons
no more !

THE LINER SHE'S A LADY

1894

THE Liner she's a lady by the paint upon 'er face,
An' if she meets an accident they count it sore
disgrace.

The Man-o'-War's 'er 'usband, and 'e's always
'andy by,

But, oh, the little cargo-boats, they've got to load
or die !



THE WET LITANY

WHEN the unseen leadsmen lean
Questioning a deep unseen ;
When their lessened count they tell
To a bridge invisible ;
When the hid and perilous
Cliffs return our cry to us ;

When the treble thickness spread
Swallows up our next-ahead ;
When her siren's frightened whine
Shows her sheering out of line ;
When—her passage undiscerned—
We must turn where she has turned,
Hear the Channel Fleet at sea :
Libera nos Domine !

POSEIDON'S LAW

"Now and henceforward serve unshod, through
wet and wakeful shifts,
A present and oppressive God, but take, to aid,
my gifts—
The wide and windward-opening eye, the large
and lavish hand,
The soul that cannot tell a lie—except upon the
land!"



THE DEEP-SEA CABLES

THE wrecks dissolve above us; their dust drops
down from afar—
Down to the dark, to the utter dark, where the
blind white sea-snakes are.
There is no sound, no echo of sound, in the deserts
of the deep,
Or the great grey level plains of ooze where the
shell-burred cables creep.



ANCHOR SONG

1893

WELL, ah, fare you well, and it's Ushant slams the
door on us,
Whirling like a windmill through the dirty scud
to lee,
Till the last, last flicker goes
From the tumbling water-rows,

And we're off to Mother Carey
(Walk her down to Mother Carey !)
Oh, we're bound for Mother Carey where she
feeds her chicks at sea !



THE COASTWISE LIGHTS

OUR brows are bound with spindrift and the wind
is on our knees ;
Our loins are battered 'neath us by the swinging,
smoking seas.
From reef and rock and skerry—over headland,
ness, and voe—
The Coastwise Lights of England watch the ships
of England go !



THE SONG OF THE DEAD

WE have fed our sea for a thousand years
And she calls us, still unfed,
Though there's never a wave of all her waves
But marks our English dead :
We have strawed our best to the weed's unrest,
To the shark and the sheering gull.
If blood be the price of admiralty,
Lord God, we ha' paid in full !

There's never a flood goes shoreward now
But lifts a keel we manned ;
There's never an ebb goes seaward now
But drops our dead on the sand—

But slinks our dead on the sands forlore,
From the Ducies to the Swin.
If blood be the price of admiralty,
If blood be the price of admiralty,
Lord God, we ha' paid it in!



THE LAST CHANTEY

1892

"And there was no more sea"

THUS said the Lord in the Vault above the Cheru-
bim,
Calling to the Angels and the Souls in their
degree :
"Lo! Earth has passed away
On the smoke of Judgment Day.
That Our word may be established shall We
gather up the sea?"

* * * * *

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,
Crying: "Under Heaven, here is neither lead
nor lee!
Must we sing for evermore
On the windless, glassy floor?
Take back your golden fiddles and we'll beat to
open sea!"

Then stooped the Lord, and He called the good
 sea up to Him,
And 'stablishèd its borders unto all eternity,
 That such as have no pleasure
 For to praise the Lord by measure,
They may enter into galleons and serve Him
 on the sea.

*Sun, Wind, and Cloud shall fail not from the face
 of it,
Stinging, ringing spindrift, nor the fulmar flying
 free ;
And the ships shall go abroad
 To the Glory of the Lord
Who heard the silly sailor-folk and gave them back
 their sea !*

ADVENTURE

A DEDICATION

(To Soldiers Three)

Lo, I have wrought in common clay
Rude figures of a rough-hewn race,
Since pearls strew not the market-place
In this my town of banishment,
Where with the shifting dust I play,
And eat the bread of discontent.

* * *

Small mirth was in the making—now
I lift the cloth that cloaks the clay,
And, wearied, at thy feet I lay
My wares, ere I go forth to sell.
The long bazar will praise, but thou—
Heart of my heart—have I done well?



THE WISHING-CAPS

LIFE's all getting and giving,
I've only myself to give.
What shall I do for a living?
I've only one life to live.
End it? I'll not find another.
Spend it? But how shall I best?
Sure the wise plan is to live like a man
And Luck may look after the rest!

Largesse ! Largesse, Fortune !
Give or hold at your will.
If I've no care for Fortune
Fortune must follow me still.



THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

1897

*HE must go—go—go away from here !
On the other side the world he's overdue.
'Send your road is clear before you when the old
Spring-fret comes o'er you,
And the Red Gods call for you !*

So for one the wet sail arching through the rainbow
round the bow,
And for one the creak of snow-shoes on the crust ;
And for one the lakeside lilies where the bull-moose
waits the cow,
And for one the mule-train coughing in the dust.
Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight ? Who
hath heard the birch-log burning ?
Who is quick to read the noises of the night ?
Let him follow with the others, for the Young Men's
feet are turning
To the camps of proved desire and known delight !

THE LONG TRAIL

THE days are sick and cold, and the skies are grey
and old,

And the twice-breathed airs blow damp ;
And I'd sell my tired soul for the bucking beam-sea
roll

Of a black Bilbao tramp,

With her load-line over her hatch, dear lass,
And a drunken Dago crew,

And her nose held down on the old trail, our
own trail, the out trail

From Cadiz south on the Long Trail—the
trail that is always new.

* * * * *

The Lord knows what we may find, dear lass,
And The Deuce knows what we may do—

But we're back once more on the old trail, our
own trail, the out trail,

We're down, hull-down, on the Long Trail—
the trail that is always new !



THE EXPLORER

1898

“THERE’S no sense in going further—it’s the edge of cultivation,”

So they said, and I believed it—broke my land
and sowed my crop—

Built my barns and strung my fences in the little
border station

Tucked away below the foothills where the trails
run out and stop.

Till a voice, as bad as Conscience, rang interminable
changes

On one everlasting Whisper day and night
repeated—so :

“Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look
behind the Ranges—

“Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and
waiting for you. Go !”

* * * * *

I remember lighting fires ; I remember sitting by
'em ;

I remember seeing faces, hearing voices, through
the smoke ;

I remember they were fancy—for I threw a stone to
try 'em.

“Something lost behind the Ranges” was the
only word they spoke.

* * * * *

Yes, your "Never-never country"—yes, your
"edge of cultivation"

And "no sense in going further"—till I crossed
the range to see.

God forgive me! No, *I* didn't. It's God's present
to our nation.

Anybody might have found it but—His Whisper
came to Me!



"FOR TO ADMIRE"

THE Injian Ocean sets an' smiles

So sof', so bright, so bloomin' blue;

There aren't a wave for miles an' miles

Excep' the jiggle from the screw.

The ship is swep', the day is done,

The bugle's gone for smoke and play;

An' black ag'in the settin' sun

The Lascar sings, "*Hum deckty hai!*"¹

For to admire an' for to see,

For to be'old this world so wide—

It never done no good to me,

But I can't drop it if I tried!

¹ I'm looking out.



SESTINA OF THE TRAMP-ROYAL

1896

SPEAKIN' in general, I 'ave tried 'em all—
The 'appy roads that take you o'er the world.
Speakin' in general, I 'ave found them good
For such as cannot use one bed too long,
But must get 'ence, the same as I 'ave done,
An' go observin' matters till they die.

* * * * *

Therefore, from job to job I've moved along.
Pay couldn't 'old me when my time was done,
For something in my 'ead upset it all,
Till I 'ad dropped whatever 'twas for good,
An', out at sea, be'eld the dock-lights die,
An' met my mate—the wind that tramps the world!



THE LOST LEGION

1895

WE preach in advance of the Army,
We skirmish ahead of the Church,
With never a gunboat to help us
When we're scuppered and left in the lurch.
But we know as the cartridges finish,
And we're filed on our last little shelves,
That the Legion that never was 'listed
Will send us as good as ourselves
(Good men !)
Five hundred as good as ourselves !

THE GIPSY TRAIL

THE white moth to the closing bine,
The bee to the opened clover,
And the gipsy blood to the gipsy blood
Ever the wide world over.

* * *

Out of the dark of the gorgio camp,
Out of the grime and the gray
(Morning waits at the end of the world),
Gipsy, come away !



THE EXILES' LINE

1890

Now the new year reviving old desires,
The restless soul to open sea aspires,
Where the Blue Peter flickers from the fore,
And the grimed stoker feeds the engine-fires.

* * * * *

Bound in the wheel of Empire, one by one,
The chain-gangs of the East from sire to son,
The Exiles' Line takes out the exiles' line
And ships them homeward when their work is done.

How runs the old indictment ? " Dear and slow,"
So much and twice so much. We gird, but go.

For all the soul of our sad East is there,
Beneath the house-flag of the P. and O.

JOBSON'S AMEN

" BLESSED be the English and everything they own.
Cursèd be the Infidels that bow to wood and stone ! "
" Amen," quo' Jobson, " but where I used to lie
Was neither pew nor Gospelleer to save my brethren
by :

" But a desert stretched and stricken, left and right,
left and right,
Where the piled mirages thicken under white-hot
light—
A skull beneath a sand-hill and a viper coiled inside—
And a red wind out of Libya roaring : ' Run and
hide ! ' "



THE BROKEN MEN

1902

For things we never mention,
For Art misunderstood—
For excellent intention
That did not turn to good ;
From ancient tales' renewing,
From clouds we would not clear—
Beyond the Law's pursuing
We fled, and settled here.

* * *

On church and square and market
The noonday silence falls ;
You'll hear the drowsy mutter
Of the fountain in our halls.
Asleep amid the yuccas
The city takes her ease—
Till twilight brings the land-wind
To the clicking jalousies.

* * *

Ah God ! One sniff of England—
To greet our flesh and blood—
To hear the traffic slurring
Once more through London mud !
Our towns of wasted honour—
Our streets of lost delight !
How stands the old Lord Warden ?
Are Dover's cliffs still white ?



THE SONG OF THE BANJO

1894

You couldn't pack a Broadwood half a mile—
You mustn't leave a fiddle in the damp—
You couldn't raft an organ up the Nile,
And play it in an Equatorial swamp.
I travel with the cooking-pots and pails—
I'm sandwiched 'tween the coffee and the pork—
And when the dusty column checks and tails,
You should hear me spur the rearguard to a walk !

* * * * *

By the bitter road the Younger Son must tread,
Ere he win to hearth and saddle of his own,—
'Mid the riot of the shearers at the shed,
In the silence of the herder's hut alone—
In the twilight, on a bucket upside down,
Hear me babble what the weakest won't confess—
I am Memory and Torment—I am Town !
I am all that ever went with evening dress !

* * * * *

And the tunes that mean so much to you alone—
Common tunes that make you choke and blow
your nose,
Vulgar tunes that bring the laugh that brings the
groan—
I can rip your very heartstrings out with those ;
With the feasting, and the folly, and the fun—
And the lying, and the lusting, and the drink,
And the merry play that drops you, when you're
done,
To the thoughts that burn like irons if you think.

* * * * *

With my “ *Plunka-lunka-lunka-lunka-lunk !* ”
Here's a trifle on account of pleasure past,
Ere the wit that made you win gives you eyes to see
your sin
And—the heavier repentance at the last !



LICHTENBERG

(New South Wales Contingent)

SMELLS are surer than sounds or sights
To make your heartstrings crack—
They start those awful voices o' nights
That whisper, "Old man, come back!"
That must be why the big things pass
And the little things remain,
Like the smell of the wattle by Lichtenberg,
Riding in, in the rain.

* * * * *

It was all Australia to me—
All I had found or missed :
Every face I was crazy to see,
And every woman I'd kissed :
All that I shouldn't ha' done, God knows !
(As He knows I'll do it again),
That smell of the wattle round Lichtenberg,
Riding in, in the rain !



A BOY SCOUTS' PATROL SONG

1913

Look out when your front is clear,
And you feel you are bound to win.
Look out for your flank and your rear—
That's where surprises begin.
For the rustle that isn't a rat,
For the splash that isn't a trout,
For the boulder that may be a hat
(Chorus) All Patrols look out !

THE SONG OF THE LITTLE HUNTER

ERE Mor the Peacock flutters, ere the Monkey
People cry,

Ere Chil the Kite swoops down a furlong sheer,
Through the Jungle very softly flits a shadow and a
sigh—

He is Fear, O Little Hunter, he is Fear !
Very softly down the glade runs a waiting, watching
shade,

And the whisper spreads and widens far and near.
And the sweat is on thy brow for he passes even
now—

He is Fear, O Little Hunter, he is Fear !



A SONG OF TRAVEL

WHERE'S the lamp that Hero lit

Once to call Leander home ?

Equal Time hath shovelled it

'Neath the wrack of Greece and Rome.

Neither wait we any more

That worn sail which Argo bore.

PEOPLE AND THINGS

DEDICATION FROM "BARRACK ROOM BALLADS"

BEYOND the path of the outmost sun through utter
darkness hurled—
Farther than ever comet flared or vagrant star-dust
swirled—
Live such as fought and sailed and ruled and loved
and made our world.

* * * * *

And oft-times cometh our wise Lord God, master
of every trade,
And tells them tales of His daily toil, of Edens
newly made ;
And they rise to their feet as He passes by, gentle-
men unafraid.



AN IMPERIAL RESCRIPT

1890

THEY passed one resolution :—" Your sub-com-
mittee believe
" You can lighten the curse of Adam when you're
lifted the curse of Eve.

“ But till we are built like angels, with hammer and
chisel and pen,
“ We will work for ourselves and a woman, for ever
and ever, amen.”



THE SECRET OF THE MACHINES

(MODERN MACHINERY)

WE were taken from the ore-bed and the mine,
We were melted in the furnace and the pit—
We were cast and wrought and hammered to design,
We were cut and filed and tooled and gauged to
fit.

Some water, coal, and oil is all we ask,
And a thousandth of an inch to give us play :
And now if you will set us to our task,
We will serve you four and twenty hours a day !

We can pull and haul and push and lift and drive,
We can print and plough and weave and heat and
light,

We can run and jump and swim and fly and dive,
We can see and hear and count and read and
write !

* * * * *

But remember, please, the Law by which we live,
We are not built to comprehend a lie,
We can neither love nor pity nor forgive,
If you make a slip in handling us you die !

We are greater than the Peoples or the Kings—
Be humble, as you crawl beneath our rods!—
Our touch can alter all created things,
We are everything on earth—except The Gods!

*Though our smoke may hide the Heavens from your
eyes,
It will vanish and the stars will shine again,
Because, for all our power and weight and size,
We are nothing more than children of your brain!*



M'ANDREW'S HYMN

1893

LORD, Thou hast made this world below the shadow
of a dream,
An', taught by time, I tak' it so—exceptin' always
Steam.
From coupler-flange to spindle-guide I see Thy
Hand, O God—
Predestination in the stride o' yon connectin'-rod.

* * * * *

Obsairve. Per annum we'll have here two thou-
sand souls aboard—
Think not I dare to justify myself before The Lord,
But—average fifteen hunder souls safe-borne fra'
port to port—
I *am* o' service to my kind. Ye wadna blame the
thought?

Maybe they steam from Grace to Wrath—to sin by
folly led—
It isna mine to judge their path—their lives are on
my head.

* * * * *

Romance ! Those first-class passengers they like it
very well,
Printed an' bound in little books ; but why don't
poets tell ?
I'm sick of all their quirks an' turns—the loves an'
doves they dream—
Lord, send a man like Robbie Burns to sing the
Song o' Steam !

* * * * *

Oh for a man to weld it then, in one trip-hammer
strain,
Till even first-class passengers could tell the meanin'
plain !
But no one cares except mysel' that serve an'
understand . . .



THE MARY GLOSTER

1894

AND they asked me how I did it, and I gave 'em the
Scripture text,
"You keep your light so shining a little in front o'
the next !"

They copied all they could follow, but they couldn't
copy my mind,
And I left 'em sweating and stealing a year and a
half behind.



KING HENRY VII AND THE SHIPWRIGHTS

(A.D. 1487)

" I HAVE taken plank and rope and nail, without
the King his leave,
After the custom of Portesmouth, but I will not
suffer a thief.
Nay, never lift up thy hand at me—there's no clean
hands in the trade,
Steal in measure," quo' Brygandyne. " There's
measure in all things made ! "



" POOR HONEST MEN "

(A.D. 1800)

NAPOLEON'S embargo
Is laid on all cargo
Which comfort or aid to King George may intend ;
And since roll, twist and leaf,
Of all comforts is chief,
They try for to steal it from poor honest men !

* * * * *

Twix' the Lizard and Dover,
We hand our stuff over,
Though I may not inform how we do it, nor when.
But a light on each quarter
Low down on the water
Is well understood by poor honest men.



A SMUGGLER'S SONG

If you wake at midnight, and hear a horse's feet,
Don't go drawing back the blind, or looking in the
street,
Them that ask no questions isn't told a lie.
Watch the wall, my darling, while the Gentlemen
go by!
Five and twenty ponies,
Trotting through the dark—
Brandy for the Parson,
'Baccy for the Clerk ;
Laces for a lady, letters for a spy,
And watch the wall, my darling, while the Gentle-
men go by !



MULHOLLAND'S CONTRACT

1894

An' I sign for four-pound-ten a month and save the
money clear,
An' I am in charge of the lower deck, an' I never
lose a steer ;
An' I believe in Almighty God an' I preach His
Gospel here.

The skippers say I'm crazy, but I can prove 'em
wrong,
For I am in charge of the lower deck with all that
doth belong—
*Which they would not give to a lunatic, and the com-
petition so strong !*



THE SPIES' MARCH

1913

THERE are no leaders to lead us to honour, and yet
without leaders we sally,
Each man reporting for duty alone, out of sight, out
of reach, of his fellow.
There are no bugles to call the battalions, and yet
without bugle we rally
From the ends of the earth to the ends of the earth,
to follow the Standard of Yellow !
Fall in ! O fall in ! O fall in !

* * * * *

“ Go where his pickets hide—
Unmask the shape they take,
Whether a gnat from the waterside,
Or a stinging fly in the brake,
Or filth of the crowded street,
Or a sick rat limping by,
Or a smear of spittle dried in the heat—
That is the work of a spy!
(Drums)—*Death is upon us, spy!* ”



THE CONUNDRUM OF THE WORKSHOPS

1890

WHEN the flicker of London sun falls faint on the
Club-room's green and gold,
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch with
their pens in the mould—
They scratch with their pens in the mould of their
graves, and the ink and the anguish start,
For the Devil mutters behind the leaves : “ It's
pretty, but is it Art ? ”



IN THE NEOLITHIC AGE

1895

STILL the world is wondrous large,—seven seas from
marge to marge—

And it holds a vast of various kinds of man ;
And the wildest dreams of Kew are the facts of
Khatmandhu,

And the crimes of Clapham chaste in Martaban.

Here's my wisdom for your use, as I learned it
when the moose

And the reindeer roared where Paris roars to-
night :—

*“ There are nine and sixty ways of constructing
tribal lays,*

“ And—every—single—one—of—them—is—right ! ”

ENGLAND

THE GLORY OF THE GARDEN

OUR England is a garden, and such gardens are not
made
By singing :—" Oh, how beautiful ! " and sitting
in the shade,
While better men than we go out and start their
working lives
At grubbing weeds from gravel-paths with broken
dinner-knives.

* * * * *

Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him
sees
That half a proper gardener's work is done upon
his knees,
So when your work is finished, you can wash your
hands and pray
For the Glory of the Garden that it may not pass
away !
And the Glory of the Garden it shall never pass away !



PUCK'S SONG

SEE you the ferny ride that steals
Into the oak-woods far ?
O that was whence they hewed the keels
That rolled to Trafalgar.

* * *

(Out of the Weald, the secret Weald,
Men sent in ancient years,
The horse-shoes red at Flodden Field,
The arrows at Poitiers !)

* * *

Trackway and Camp and City lost,
Salt Marsh where now is corn—
Old Wars, old Peace, old Arts that cease,
And so was England born !



THE WAY THROUGH THE WOODS

THEY shut the road through the woods
Seventy years ago.
Weather and rain have undone it again,
And now you would never know
There was once a road through the woods
Before they planted the trees.
It is underneath the coppice and heath,
And the thin anemones.
Only the keeper sees
That, where the ring-dove broods,
And the badgers roll at ease,
There was once a road through the woods.

A BRITISH-ROMAN SONG

(A.D. 406)

STRONG heart with triple armour bound,
Beat strongly, for thy life-blood runs,
Age after Age, the Empire round—
In us thy Sons

Who, distant from the Seven Hills,
Loving and serving much, require
Thee—*thee* to guard 'gainst home-born ills,
The Imperial Fire !



A PICT SONG

WE are the Little Folk—we !
Too little to love or to hate.
Leave us alone and you'll see
How we can drag down the State !
We are the worm in the wood !
We are the rot at the root !
We are the taint in the blood !
We are the thorn in the foot !

SIR RICHARD'S SONG

(A.D. 1066)

I FOLLOWED my Duke ere I was a lover,
To take from England fief and fee ;
But now this game is the other way over—
But now England hath taken me !

* * * * *

Howso great man's strength be reckoned,
There are two things he cannot flee.
Love is the first, and Death is the second—
And Love in England hath taken me !



THE LAND

HIS dead are in the churchyard—thirty generations
laid.
Their names were old in history when Domesday
Book was made.
And the passion and the piety and prowess of his
line
Have seeded, rooted, fruited in some land the Law
calls mine.

Not for any beast that burrows, not for any bird
that flies,
Would I lose his large sound council, miss his keen
amending eyes.
He is bailiff, woodman, wheelwright, field-surveyor,
engineer,
And if flagrantly a poacher—'taint for me to
interfere.

"Hob, what about that River-bit?" I turn to
him again,
With Fabricius and Ogier and William of Warene.
"Hev it jest as you've a mind to, *but*"—and here
he takes command.
For whoever pays the taxes old Mus' Hobden owns
the land.



THE STRANGER

THE men of my own stock,
Bitter bad they may be,
But, at least, they hear the things I hear,
And see the things I see;
And whatever I think of them and their likes
They think of the likes of me.



SUSSEX

1902

No tender-hearted garden crowns,
No bosomed woods adorn
Our blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed Downs,
But gnarled and writhen thorn—
Bare slopes where chasing shadows skim,
And, through the gaps revealed,
Belt upon belt, the wooded, dim,
Blue goodness of the Weald.

* * * * *

Here through the strong and shadeless days
The tinkling silence thrills ;
Or little, lost, Down churches praise
The Lord who made the hills :
But here the Old Gods guard their round,
And, in her secret heart,
The heathen kingdom Wilfrid found
Dreams, as she dwells, apart.



A THREE-PART SONG

I'm just in love with all these three,
The Weald and the Marsh and the Down countrie.
Nor I don't know which I love the most,
The Weald or the Marsh or the white Chalk coast !

* * * * *

I've given my soul to the Southdown grass,
And sheep-bells tinkled where you pass.
Oh Firle an' Ditchling an' sails at sea,
I reckon you keep my soul for me !



A CHARM

TAKE of English flowers these—
Spring's full-facèd primroses,
Summer's wild wide-hearted rose,
Autumn's wall-flower of the close,
And, thy darkness to illumè,
Winter's bee-thronged ivy-bloom.
Seek and serve them where they bide
From Candlemas to Christmas-tide,
For these simples, used aright,
Can restore a failing sight.



THE BEE BOY'S SONG

BEES ! Bees ! Hark to your bees !
" Hide from your neighbours as much as you
please,
But all that has happened, to us you must tell.
Or else we will give you no honey to sell ! "

A CAROL

OUR Lord Who did the Ox command
To kneel to Judah's King,
He binds His frost upon the land
To ripen it for Spring—
To ripen it for Spring, good sirs,
According to His Word.
Which well must be as ye can see—
And who shall judge the Lord ?



A TREE SONG

(A.D. 1200)

OF all the trees that grow so fair,
Old England to adorn,
Greater are none beneath the Sun,
Than Oak, and Ash, and Thorn.
Sing Oak, and Ash, and Thorn, good sirs,
(All of a Midsummer morn !)
Surely we sing no little thing,
In Oak, and Ash, and Thorn !

Oak of the Clay lived many a day,
Or ever Æneas began.
Ash of the Loam was a lady at home,
When Brut was an outlaw man.

Thorn of the Down saw New Troy Town
(From which was London born) ;
Witness hereby the ancientry
Of Oak, and Ash, and Thorn !

* * * * *

Sing Oak, and Ash, and Thorn, good sirs,
(All of a Midsummer morn !)
England shall bide till Judgment tide,
By Oak, and Ash, and Thorn !



“OUR FATHERS OF OLD”

EXCELLENT herbs had our fathers of old—
Excellent herbs to ease their pain—
Alexanders and Marigold,
Eyebright, Orris, and Elecampane.
Basil, Rocket, Valerian, Rue,
(Almost singing themselves they run)
Vervain, Dittany, Call-me-to-you—
Cowslip, Melilot, Rose of the Sun.
Anything green that grew out of the mould
Was an excellent herb to our fathers of old.



CUCKOO SONG

(Spring begins in Southern England on the 14th April, on which date the Old Woman lets the Cuckoo out of her basket at Heathfield Fair—locally known as Heffle Cuckoo Fair.)

TELL it to the locked-up trees,
Cuckoo, bring your song here !
Warrant, Act and Summons, please,
For Spring to pass along here !
Tell old Winter, if he doubt,
Tell him squat and square—a !
Old Woman !
Old Woman !
Old Woman's let the Cuckoo out
At Heffle Cuckoo Fair—a !



OLD MOTHER LAIDINWOOL

'Twas all a warm September an' the hops had
flourished grand,
She saw the folks get into 'em with stockin's on
their hands ;
An' none of 'em was foreigners but all which she
had known,
And old Mother Laidinwool she blessed 'em every
one.

She saw her daughters picking an' their childern
them-beside,
An' she moved among the babies an' she stilled 'em
when they cried.
She saw their clothes was bought, not begged, an'
they was clean an' fat,
An' old Mother Laidinwool she thanked the Lord
for that.



THE LOOKING-GLASS

(A Country Dance)

THE Queen was in her chamber, her sins were on
her head.
She looked the spirits up and down and statelily
she said :—
“ Backward and forward and sideways though I’ve
been,
Yet I am Harry’s daughter and I am England’s
Queen ! ”
And she faced the looking-glass (and whatever else
there was)
And she saw her day was over and she saw her
beauty pass
In the cruel looking-glass, that can always hurt a
lass
More hard than any ghost there is or any man
there was !

THE CHILDREN'S SONG

LAND of our Birth, we pledge to thee
Our love and toil in the years to be ;
When we are grown and take our place,
As men and women with our race.

Father in Heaven who lovest all,
Oh, help Thy children when they call ;
That they may build from age to age,
An undefiled heritage.

SONGS OF EMPIRE

THE ENGLISH FLAG

1891

WINDS of the World, give answer ! They are
whimpering to and fro—
And what should they know of England who only
England know ?—
The poor little street-bred people that vapour and
fume and brag,
They are lifting their heads in the stillness to yelp
at the English Flag !

* * * * *

“ Never was isle so little, never was sea so lone,
“ But over the scud and the palm-trees an English
flag was flown.”

* * * * *

“ Never the lotos closes, never the wild-fowl wake,
“ But a soul goes out on the East Wind that died
for England’s sake ”—

* * * * *

“ What is the Flag of England ? Ye have but
my breath to dare,
“ Ye have but my waves to conquer. Go forth,
for it is there !”

A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

1893

FAIR is our lot—O goodly is our heritage!
(Humble ye, my people, and be fearful in your
mirth!)

For the Lord our God Most High
He hath made the deep as dry,
He hath smote for us a pathway to the ends of all
the Earth!

Yea, though we sinned, and our rulers went from
righteousness—
Deep in all dishonour though we stained our gar-
ments' hem,
Oh, be ye not dismayed,
Though we stumbled and we strayed,
We were led by evil counsellors—the Lord shall
deal with them!



THE NATIVE-BORN

1894

To the home of the floods and thunder,
To her pale dry healing blue—
To the lift of the great Cape combers,
And the smell of the baked Karroo.
To the growl of the sluicing stamp-head—
To the reef and the water-gold,
To the last and the largest Empire,
To the map that is half unrolled.

* * * * *

To the hearth of Our People's People—
To her well-ploughed windy sea,
To the hush of our dread high-altar
Where The Abbey makes us We.
To the grist of the slow-ground ages,
To the gain that is yours and mine—
To the Bank of the Open Credit,
To the Power-house of the Line!



THE FLOWERS

1895

*BUY my English posies !
Kent and Surrey may—
Violets of the Undercliff
Wet with Channel spray ;
Cowslips from a Devon combe—
Midland furze afire—
Buy my English posies
And I'll sell your heart's desire !*

Buy my English posies !
You that scorn the May,
Won't you greet a friend from home
Half the world away ?

* * *

Buy my English posies !
Ye that have your own
Buy them for a brother's sake
Overseas, alone !
Weed ye trample underfoot
Floods his heart abrim—
Bird ye never heeded,
Oh, she calls his dead to him !
Far and far our homes are set round the Seven Seas ;
Woe for us if we forget, we who hold by these !
Unto each his mother-beach, bloom and bird and
land—
Masters of the Seven Seas, oh, love and under-
stand !



OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

1897

(Canadian Preferential Tariff, 1897)

“ CARRY the word to my sisters—
To the Queens of the East and the South.
I have proven faith in the Heritage
By more than the word of the mouth.
They that are wise may follow
Ere the world's war-trumpet blows,
But I—I am first in the battle,’
Said our Lady of the Snows.

*A Nation spoke to a Nation,
A Throne sent word to a Throne :
" Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open,
As the gates are mine to close,
And I abide by my Mother's House,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.*



SOUTH AFRICA

1903

LIVED a woman wonderful,
(May the Lord amend her !)
Neither simple, kind, nor true,
But her Pagan beauty drew
Christian gentlemen a few
Hotly to attend her.

*Christian gentlemen a few
From Berwick unto Dover ;
For she was South Africa,
And she was South Africa,
She was Our South Africa,
Africa all over !*



THE HOUSES

1898

(A Song of the Dominions)

'TwiXT my house and thy house what talk can
there be
Of headship or lordship, or service or fee ?
Since my house to thy house no greater can send
Than thy house to my house—friend comforting
friend ;
And thy house to my house no meaner can bring
Than my house to thy house—King counselling
King.



ENGLAND'S ANSWER

IN the day of Armageddon, at the last great fight
of all,
That Our House stand together and the pillars do
not fall.
Draw now the threefold knot firm on the ninefold
bands,
And the Law that ye make shall be law after the
rule of your lands.
This for the waxen Heath, and that for the Wattle-
bloom,
This for the Maple-leaf, and that for the southern
Broom.

THE SONG OF THE CITIES

MADRAS

CLIVE kissed me on the mouth and eyes and brow,
Wonderful kisses, so that I became
Crowned above Queens—a withered beldame now,
Brooding on ancient fame.

CAPETOWN

Hail! Snatched and bartered oft from hand to
hand,
I dream my dream, by rock and heath and pine,
Of Empire to the northward. Ay, one land
From Lion's Head to Line!



THE CITY OF BOMBAY

1894

SURELY in toil or fray
Under an alien sky,
Comfort it is to say:
"Of no mean city am I!"



"CLEARED"

1890

(In memory of the Parnell Commission)

HELP for a patriot distressed, a spotless spirit hurt,
Help for an honourable clan sore trampled in the
dirt !

From Queenstown Bay to Donegal, Oh, listen to
my song,
The honourable gentlemen have suffered grievous
wrong.

* * * * *

Their sin it was that fed the fire—small blame to
them that heard—

The boys get drunk on rhetoric, and madden at a
word—

They knew whom they were talking at, if they
were Irish too,

The gentlemen that lied in Court, they knew,
and well they knew !

* * * * *

If black is black or white is white, in black and
white it's down,

You're only traitors to the Queen and rebels to
the Crown.

If print is print or words are words, the learned
Court perpend :—

We are not ruled by murderers, but only—by their
friends.

THE BALLAD OF THE RED EARL

1891

YE have followed fast, ye have followed far,
And where did the wandering lead ?
From the day that ye praised the spoken word
To the day ye must gloss the deed.



THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

1898

“ BUT (pay, and I put back the bandage) *this* is
the time to fear,
When he stands up like a tired man, tottering near
and near ;
When he stands up as pleading, in wavering, man-
brute guise,
When he veils the hate and cunning of his little
swinish eyes ;

“ When he shows as seeking quarter, with paws
like hands in prayer,
That is the time of peril—the time of the Truce of
the Bear ! ”

Over and over the story, ending as he began :—
“ *There is no truce with Adam-zad, the Bear that
looks like a Man !* ”

PHARAOH AND THE SERGEANT

1897

It was wicked bad campaigning (cheap and nasty
from the first),
There was heat and dust and coolie-work and
sun,
There were vipers, flies, and sandstorms, there was
cholera and thirst,
But Pharaoh done the best he ever done.
Down the desert, down the railway, down the
river,
Like Israelites from bondage so he came,
'Tween the clouds o' dust and fire to the land
of his desire,
And his Moses, it was Sergeant Whatis-
name !



KITCHENER'S SCHOOL

1898

Being a translation of the song that was made by a Mohammedan schoolmaster of Bengal Infantry (sometime on service at Suakim) when he heard that Kitchener was taking money from the English to build a Madrisa for Hubshees—or a college for the Sudanese.

OH, Hubshee, carry your shoes in your hand and
bow your head on your breast !
This is the message of Kitchener who did not break
you in jest.

It was permitted to him to fulfil the long-appointed
years ;
Reaching the end ordained of old over your dead
Emirs.

* * * * *

Knowing that ye are forfeit by battle and have no
right to live,
He begs for money to bring you learning—and all
the English give.
It is their treasure—it is their pleasure—thus are
their hearts inclined :
For Allah created the English mad—the maddest
of all mankind !

* * * * *

Certainly also is Kitchener mad. But one sure
thing I know—
If he who broke you be minded to teach you, to
his Madrissa go !
Go, and carry your shoes in your hand and bow
your head on your breast,
For he who did not slay you in sport, he will not
teach you in jest.



THE OLD ISSUE

OCTOBER 9, 1899

(Outbreak of Boer War)

- "HERE is nothing new nor aught unproven," say
the Trumpets,
"Many feet have worn it and the road is old
indeed.
"It is the King—the King we schooled aforetime!"
(Trumpets in the marshes—in the eyot at Runnymede!)
- "Here is neither haste, nor hate, nor anger," peal
the Trumpets,
"Pardon for his penitence or pity for his fall.
"It is the King!"—inexorable Trumpets—
(Trumpets round the scaffold at the dawning by
Whitehall!)



A SONG OF THE WHITE MEN

1899

Now, this is the faith that the White Men hold
When they built their homes afar—
"Freedom for ourselves and freedom for our sons
And, failing freedom, War."
We have proved our faith—bear witness to our
faith,
Dear souls of freemen slain!
Oh, well for the world when the White Men join
To prove their faith again!

ET DONA FERENTES

1896

I HAVE watched them in their tantrums, all that
pentecostal crew,
French, Italian, Arab, Spaniard, Dutch and Greek,
and Russ and Jew,
Celt and savage, buff and ochre, cream and yellow,
mauve and white ;
But it never really mattered till the English grew
polite.

* * * * *

Oh, my country, bless the training that from cot
to castle runs—
The pitfall of the stranger but the bulwark of thy
sons—
Measured speech and ordered action, sluggish soul
and unperturbed,
Till we wake our Island-Devil—nowise cool for
being curbed !



THE ABSENT-MINDED BEGGAR

WHEN you've shouted "Rule, Britannia," when
you've sung "God save the Queen,"
When you've finished killing Kruger with your
mouth,
Will you kindly drop a shilling in my little tam-
bourine
For a gentleman in *kharki* ordered South ?

He's an absent-minded beggar, and his weaknesses
are great—

But we and Paul must take him as we find him—
He is out on active service, wiping something off
a slate—

And he's left a lot of little things behind him !
Duke's son—cook's son—son of a hundred kings—
(Fifty thousand horse and foot going to Table
Bay !)

Each of 'em doing his country's work
(and who's to look after their things ?)
Pass the hat for your credit's sake,
and pay—pay—pay !

* * * * *

Let us manage so as, later, we can look him in the
face,

And tell him—what he'd very much prefer—
That, while he saved the Empire, his employer
saved his place,
And his mates (that's you and me) looked out
for *her*.



THE OLD MEN

1902

THIS is our lot if we live so long and labour unto
the end—
That we outlive the impatient years and the much
too patient friend :

And because we know we have breath in our mouth
and think we have thoughts in our head,
We shall assume that we are alive, whereas we are
really dead.



THE KING'S TASK

1902

" BUT now we are purged of that fever—cleansed
by the letting of blood,
" Something leaner of body—something keener of
mood.
" And the men new-freed from the levies return
to the fields again,
" Matching a hundred battles, cottar and lord and
thane.
" And they talk loud in the temples where the
ancient war-gods are.
" They thumb and mock and belittle the holy
harness of war.
" They jest at the sacred chariots, the robes and
the gilded staff.
" These things fill them with laughter, they lean
on their spears and laugh.
" The men grown old in the war-game, hither and
thither they range—
" And scorn and laughter together are sire and
dam of change ;

“ And change may be good or evil—but we know
not what it will bring :

“ Therefore our King must teach us. That is thy
task, O King ! ”



“ A SERVANT WHEN HE REIGNETH ”

AN Handmaid that is Mistress
We need not call upon,
A Fool when he is full of Meat
Will fall asleep anon.
An Odious Woman Married
May bear a babe and mend,
But a Servant when He Reigneth
Is Confusion to the end.

* * *

His vows are lightly spoken,
His faith is hard to bind,
His trust is easy broken,
He fears his fellow-kind.
The nearest mob will move him
To break the pledge he gave—
Oh, a Servant when He Reigneth
Is more than ever slave !



THE ISLANDERS

1902

FENCED by your careful fathers, ringed by your
 leaden seas,
Long did ye wake in quiet and long lie down at
 ease ;
Till ye said of Strife, " What is it ? " of the Sword,
 " It is far from our ken " ;
Till ye made a sport of your shrunken hosts and a
 toy of your armed men.
Ye stopped your ears to the warning—ye would
 neither look nor heed—
Ye set your leisure before their toil and your lusts
 above their need.

* * * * *

But ye say, " It will mar our comfort." Ye say,
 " It will minish our trade."
Do ye wait for the spattered shrapnel ere ye learn
 how a gun is laid ?
For the low, red glare to southward when the
 raided coast-towns burn ?
(Light ye shall have on that lesson, but little time
 to learn.)



THE DYKES

1902

WALKING along the wreck of the dykes, watching
the work of the seas !
These were the dykes our fathers made to our great
profit and ease.
But the peace is gone and the profit is gone, with the
old sure days withdrawn . . .
That our own houses show as strange when we come
back in the dawn !



THE CITY OF BRASS

1909

SWIFTLY these pulled down the walls that their
fathers had made them—
The impregnable ramparts of old, they razed and
relaid them
As playgrounds of pleasure and leisure with limitless
entries,
And havens of rest for the wastrels where once
walked the sentries ;
And because there was need of more pay for the
shouters and marchers,
They disbanded in face of their foemen their yeomen
and archers.

* * * * *

When they were fullest of wine and most flagrant
in error,
Out of the sea rose a sign—out of Heaven a terror.
Then they saw, then they heard, then they knew—
for none troubled to hide it,
An host had prepared their destruction, but still
they denied it.



THE DEAD KING

(EDWARD VII)

1910

*Who in the Realm to-day lays down dear life for the
sake of a land more dear?*

*And, unconcerned for his own estate, toils till the
last grudged sands have run?*

*Let him approach. It is proven here
Our King asks nothing of any man more than Our
King himself has done.*

* * * * *

And God poured him an exquisite wine, that was
daily renewed to him,
In the clear-welling love of his peoples that daily
accrued to him.

* * * * *

For on him each new day laid command, every
tyrannous hour,
To confront, or confirm, or make smooth some dread
issue of power ;

To deliver true judgment aright at the instant,
 unaided,
In the strict, level, ultimate phrase that allowed or
 dissuaded ;
To foresee, to allay, to avert from us perils unnum-
 bered,
To stand guard on our gates when he guessed that
 the watchmen had slumbered ;
To win time, to turn hate, to woo folly to service and,
 mightily schooling
His strength to the use of his Nations, to rule as
 not ruling.



THE DECLARATION OF LONDON

JUNE 29, 1911

Our ears still carry the sound
 Of our once-Imperial seas,
Exultant after our King was crowned,
 Beneath the sun and the breeze.
It is too early to have them bound
 Or sold at your decrees.



ULSTER

1912

THE dark eleventh hour
Draws on and sees us sold
To every evil power
We fought against of old.
Rebellion, rapine, hate,
Oppression, wrong and greed
Are loosed to rule our fate,
By England's act and deed.

* * *

Believe, we dare not boast,
Believe, we do not fear—
We stand to pay the cost
In all that men hold dear.
What answer from the North?
One Law, one Land, one Throne.
If England drive us forth
We shall not fall alone!



GEHAZI

1915

“WHENCE comest thou, Gehazi,
So reverend to behold,
In scarlet and in ermines
And chain of England's gold?”

“ From following after Naaman
To tell him all is well,
Whereby my zeal hath made me
A Judge in Israel.”

* * *

Stand up, stand up, Gehazi,
Draw close thy robe and go,
Gehazi, Judge in Israel,
A leper white as snow !



THE VERDICTS

(JUTLAND)

1916

Not in the thick of the fight,
Not in the press of the odds,
Do the heroes come to their height,
Or we know the demi-gods.

* * *

They are too near to be great,
But our children shall understand
When and how our fate
Was changed, and by whose hand.



THE BENEFACTORS

ALL Power, each Tyrant, every Mob
Whose head has grown too large,
Ends by destroying its own job
And works its own discharge.



THE CHILDREN

1917

THESE were our children who died for our lands :
they were dear in our sight.
We have only the memory left of their home-
treasured sayings and laughter.
The price of our loss shall be paid to our hands, not
another's hereafter.
Neither the Alien nor Priest shall decide on it.
That is our right.
But who shall return us the children ?



JUSTICE

OCTOBER, 1918

ACROSS a world where all men grieve
And grieving strive the more,
The great days range like tides and leave
Our dead on every shore.

Heavy the load we undergo,
And our own hands prepare,
If we have parley with the foe,
The load our sons must bear.



THE BEGINNINGS

1914-18

It was not part of their blood,
It came to them very late
With long arrears to make good,
When the English began to hate.

* * *

It was not suddenly bred,
It will not swiftly abate,
Through the chill years ahead,
When Time shall count from the date
When the English began to hate.



RUSSIA TO THE PACIFISTS

1918

God rest you, peaceful gentlemen, but give us leave
to pass.
We go to dig a nation's grave as great as England
was.
For this Kingdom and this Glory and this Power
and this Pride
Three hundred years it flourished—in three hundred
days it died.

MESOPOTAMIA

1917

OUR dead shall not return to us while Day and Night
divide—

Never while the bars of sunset hold.

But the idle-minded overlings who quibbled while
they died,

Shall they thrust for high employments as of old ?

Shall we only threaten and be angry for an hour ?

When the storm is ended shall we find

How softly but how swiftly they have sidled back
to power

By the favour and contrivance of their kind ?



THE WAGE-SLAVES

1902

FROM forge and farm and mine and bench,

Deck, altar, outpost lone—

Mill, school, battalion, counter, trench,

Rail, senate, sheepfold, throne—

Creation's cry goes up on high

From age to cheated age :

“ Send us the men who do the work

For which they draw the wage ! ”

WARFARE

“ THE MEN THAT FOUGHT AT MINDEN ”

THE men that fought at Minden, they had anarch-
istic bombs

Served to 'em by name of 'and-grenades ;
But they got it in the eye (same as you will by-an'-
by)

When they clubbed their field-parades.



CHAPTER HEADINGS

MANY INVENTIONS

ALL the world over, nursing their scars,
Sit the old fighting-men broke in the wars—
Sit the old fighting men, surly and grim,
Mocking the lilt of the conquerors' hymn.

Sons of the Laurel who press to your meed,
(Worthy God's pity most—ye who succeed !)
Ere you go triumphing, crowned, to the stars
Pity poor fighting men, broke in the wars !

Collected.

THE LAST OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

THEY laid their heads together that were scarred
and lined and gray ;
Keen were the Russian sabres, but want was keener
than they ;
And an old troop sergeant muttered, " Let us go
to the man who writes
The things on Balaclava the kiddies at school
recites."

* * * * *

" No, thank you, we don't want food, sir ; but
couldn't you take an' write
A sort of ' to be continued ' and ' see next page ' o'
the fight ?
We think that some one has blundered, an' couldn't
you tell 'em how ?
You wrote we were heroes once, sir. Please, write
we are starving now."



THE VETERANS

*(Written for the gathering of survivors of the Indian Mutiny,
Albert Hall, 1907)*

TO-DAY, across our fathers' graves,
The astonished years reveal
The remnant of that desperate host
Which cleansed our East with steel.

THE WIDOW AT WINDSOR

'AVE you 'eard o' the Widow at Windsor
With a hairy gold crown on 'er 'ead?
She 'as ships on the foam—she 'as millions at 'ome,
An' she pays us poor beggars in red.
(Ow, poor beggars in red!)

There's 'er nick on the cavalry 'orses,
There's 'er mark on the medical stores—
An' 'er troopers you'll find with a fair wind be'ind
That takes us to various wars.
(Poor beggars!—barbarious wars!)

Then 'ere's to the Widow at Windsor,
An' 'ere's to the stores an' the guns,
The men an' the 'orses what makes up the
forces
O' Missis Victorier's sons.
(Poor beggars! Victorier's sons!)



TOMMY

FOR it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck
'im out, the brute!"
But it's "Saviour of 'is country" when the guns
begin to shoot;
An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything
you please;
An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool—you bet that
Tommy sees!

ROUTE MARCHIN'

WE'RE marchin' on relief over Injia's sunny plains,
A little front o' Christmas-time an' just be'ind the
 Rains ;
Ho ! get away you bullock-man, you've 'eard the
 bugle blowed,
There's a regiment a-comin' down the Grand Trunk
 Road ;
 With its best foot first
 And the road a-sliding past,
 An' every blooming campin'-ground exactly
 like the last ;
 While the Big Drum says,
 With 'is "*rowdy-dowdy-dow!*"—
 "*Kiko kissywarsti* don't you *hamsher argy*
 jow?"¹



FORD O' KABUL RIVER

KABUL town's by Kabul river—
 Blow the bugle, draw the sword—
There I lef' my mate for ever,
 Wet an' drippin' by the ford.
 Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
 Ford o' Kabul river in the dark !
There's the river up and brimmin', an' there's
 'arf a squadron swimmin'
 'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

¹ Why don't you get on ?

THE BALLAD OF BOH DA THONE

1888

(Burma War, 1883-85)

BUT little they cared for the Native Press,
The worn white soldiers in khaki dress,

Who tramped through the jungle and camped in the
byre,
Who died in the swamp and were tombed in the mire,

Who gave up their lives, at the Queen's Command,
For the Pride of their Race and the Peace of the
Land.



GUNGA DIN

I SHA'N'T forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight
With a bullet where my belt-plate should 'a' been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst,
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.
'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' he plugged me where I bled,
An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water green.
It was crawlin' and it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefulest to one from Gunga Din.

It was "Din ! Din ! Din !
" 'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is spleen ;
" 'E's chawin' up the ground,
" An' 'e's kickin' all around :
" For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din ! "



"BACK TO THE ARMY AGAIN"

I'm 'ere in a ticky ulster an' a broken billycock 'at,
A-layin' on to the sergeant I don't know a gun
from a bat ;
My shirt's doin' duty for jacket, my sock's stickin'
out o' my boots,
An' I'm learnin' the damned old goose-step along
o' the new recruits !

Back to the Army again, sergeant,
Back to the Army again.
Don't look so 'ard, for I 'aven't no card,
I'm back to the Army again !



THE SHUT-EYE SENTRY

SEZ the Junior Orderly Sergeant
To the Senior Orderly Man :
" Our Orderly Orf'cer's *hokee-mut*,¹
" You 'elp 'im all you can.

¹ Very drunk.

"For the wine was old and the night is cold,
"An' the best we may go wrong,
"So, 'fore 'e gits to the sentry-box,
"You pass the word along."

* * * * *

There's them that's 'ot an' 'aughty,
There's them that's cold an' 'ard,
But there comes a night when the best gets
tight,
And then turns out the Guard.
I've seen them 'ide their liquor
In every kind o' way,
But most depends on makin' friends
With Privit Thomas A. !



CELLS

I'VE a head like a concertina, I've a tongue like a
button-stick,
I've a mouth like an old potato, and I'm more than
a little sick,
But I've had my fun o' the Corp'ral's Guard ; I've
made the cinders fly,
And I'm here in the Clink for a thundering drink
and blacking the Corporal's eye.

“SOLDIER AN’ SAILOR TOO”

(The Royal Regiment of Marines)

AN’, after, I met ’im all over the world, a-doin’ all
kinds of things,
Like landin’ ’isself with a Gatlin’ gun to talk to
them ’eathen kings ;
’E sleeps in an’ ’ammick instead of a cot, an’ ’e
drills with the deck on a slew,
An’ ’e sweats like a Jolly—’Er Majesty’s Jolly—
soldier an’ sailor too !
For there isn’t a job on the top o’ the earth the
beggar don’t know, nor do—
You can leave ’im at night on a bald man’s ’ead, to
paddle ’is own canoe—
’E’s a sort of a bloomin’ cosmopolouse—soldier an’
sailor too.



“FOLLOW ME ’OME”

THERE was no one like ’im, ’Orse or Foot,
Nor any o’ the Guns I knew ;
An’ because it was so, why, o’ course ’e went an’ died,
Which is just what the best men do.

*So it’s knock out your pipes an’ follow me !
An’ it’s finish up your swipes an’ follow me !
Oh, ’ark to the big drum callin’,
Follow me—follow me ’ome !*

LOOT

If you've ever stole a pheasant-egg be'ind the
keeper's back,
If you've ever snigged the washin' from the line,
If you've ever crammed a gander in your bloomin'
'aversack,
You will understand this little song o' mine.



SCREW-GUNS

SMOKIN' my pipe on the mountings, sniffin' the
mornin' cool,
I walks in my old brown gaiters along o' my old
brown mule,
With seventy gunners be'ind me, an' never a beggar
forgets
It's only the pick of the Army that handles the dear
little pets—'Tss ! 'Tss !



UBIQUE

(Royal Artillery)

UBIQUE means that warnin' grunt the perished
linesman knows,
When o'er 'is strung an' sufferin' front the shrapnel
sprays 'is foes ;

An' as their firin' dies away the 'usky whisper runs
From lips that 'aven't drunk all day : " The Guns !
Thank Gawd, the Guns ! "

Extreme, depressed, point-blank or short, end-first
or any'ow,
From Colesberg Kop to Quagga's Poort—from
Ninety-Nine till now—
By what I've 'eard the others tell an' I in spots 'ave
seen,
There's nothin' this side 'Eaven or 'Ell Ubique
doesn't mean !



BOOTS

(Infantry Columns)

WE'RE foot — slog — slog — slog — sloggin' over
Africa !

Foot—foot—foot—foot—sloggin' over Africa—
(Boots—boots—boots—boots—movin' up and down
again !)

There's no discharge in the war !



TWO KOPJES

(Made Yeomanry towards End of Boer War)

ONLY two African kopjes,
Only the cart-tracks that wind
Empty and open between 'em,
Only the Transvaal behind ;
Only an Aldershot column
Marching to conquer the land . . .
Only a sudden and solemn
Visit, unarmed, to the Rand.

Then scorn not the African kopje,
The kopje that smiles in the heat,
The wholly unoccupied kopje,
The home of Cornelius and Piet.
You can never be sure of your kopje,
But of this be you blooming well sure,
A kopje is always a kopje,
And a Boojer is always a Boer !



STELLENBOSH

AND it all goes into the laundry,
But it never comes out in the wash,
'Ow we're sugared about by the old men
('Eavy-sterned amateur old men !)
That 'amper an' 'inder an' scold men
For fear o' Stellenbosh !

DIRGE OF DEAD SISTERS

1902

(For the Nurses who died in the South African War)

WHO recalls the twilight and the ranged tents in
order

(Violet peaks uplifted through the crystal evening
air) ?

And the clink of iron teacups and the piteous, noble
laughter,

And the faces of the Sisters with the dust upon
their hair ?

* * * * *

Who recalls the noontide and the funerals through
the market

(Blanket-hidden bodies, flagless, followed by the
flies) ?

And the footsore firing-party, and the dust and
stench and staleness,

And the faces of the Sisters and the glory in their
eyes ?

(Bold behind the battle, in the open camp all-
hallowed,

Patient, wise and mirthful in the ringed and reek-
ing town,

These endured unresting till they rested from their
labours—

Little wasted bodies, ah, so light to lower down !)

BRIDGE-GUARD IN THE KARROO

1901

SUDDEN the desert changes,
The raw glare softens and clings,
Till the aching Oudtshoorn ranges
Stand up like the thrones of Kings—

Ramparts of slaughter and peril—
Blazing, amazing, aglow—
'Twixt the sky-line's belting beryl
And the wine-dark flats below.

Royal the pageant closes,
Lit by the last of the sun—
Opal and ash-of-roses,
Cinnamon, umber, and dun.



M. I.

(Mounted Infantry of the Line)

I WISH my mother could see me now, with a fence-
post under my arm,
And a knife and a spoon in my putties that I found
on a Boer farm,
Atop of a sore-backed Argentine, with a thirst that
you couldn't buy.
I used to be in the Yorkshires once
(Sussex, Lincolns, and Rifles once),
Hampshires, Glosters, and Scottish once ! (*ad lib.*)
But now I am M. I.

HALF-BALLAD OF WATERVAL

(Non-commissioned Officers in Charge of Prisoners)

THEY'LL never know the shame that brands—
Black shame no livin' down makes white—
The mockin' from the sentry-stands,
The women's laugh, the gaoler's spite.
We are too bloomin'-much polite,
But that is 'ow I'd 'ave us be . . .
Since I 'ave learned at Waterval
The meaning of captivity.



THE MARRIED MAN

(Reservist of the Line)

THE bachelor 'e fights for one
As joyful as can be ;
But the married man don't call it fun,
Because 'e fights for three—
For 'Im an' 'Er an' It
(An' Two an' One make Three)
'E wants to finish 'is little bit,
An' 'e wants to go 'ome to 'is tea !



PIET

(Regular of the Line)

I DO not love my Empire's foes,
Nor call 'em angels ; still,
What *is* the sense of 'atin' those
'Oom you are paid to kill ?
So, barrin' all that foreign lot
Which only joined for spite,
Myself, I'd just as soon as not
Respect the man I fight.
Ah there, Piet !—'is trousies to 'is knees,
'Is coat-tails lyin' level in the bullet-sprinkled
breeze ;
'E does not lose 'is rifle an' 'e does not lose 'is
seat,
I've known a lot o' people ride a dam' sight
worse than Piet.



THE PARTING OF THE COLUMNS

WE'VE rode and fought and ate and drunk as rations
come to hand,
Together for a year and more around this stinkin'
land :
Now you are goin' home again, but we must see it
through.
We needn't tell we liked you well. Good-bye—
good luck to you !

* * * * *

Good-bye !—So-long ! Don't lose yourselves—nor
us, nor all kind friends,
But tell the girls your side the drift we're comin'—
when it ends !
Good-bye, you bloomin' Atlases ! You've taught
us somethin' new :
The world's no bigger than a kraal. Good-bye—
good luck to you !



THE RETURN

(*All Arms*)

PEACE is declared, an' I return
To 'Ackneystadt, but not the same ;
Things 'ave transpired which made me learn
The size and meanin' of the game.

I did no more than others did,
I don't know where the change began.
I started as a average kid,
I finished as a thinkin' man.

*If England was what England seems,
An' not the England of our dreams,
But only putty, brass, an' paint,
'Ow quick we'd drop 'er ! But she ain't !*

CHANT-PAGAN

(English Irregular discharged)

ME that 'ave been what I've been—
Me that 'ave gone where I've gone—
Me that 'ave seen what I've seen—
'Ow can I ever take on
With awful old England again,
An' 'ouses both sides of the street,
And 'edges two sides of the lane,
And the parson an' gentry between,
An' touchin' my 'at when we meet—
Me that 'ave been what I've been ?



FRANCE

1903

BROKE to every known mischance, lifted over all
By the light sane joy of life, the buckler of the Gaul ;
Furious in luxury, merciless in toil,
Terrible with strength renewed from a tireless soil ;
Strictest judge of her own worth, gentlest of man's
mind,
First to face the Truth and last to leave old Truths
behind—
France, beloved of every soul that loves or serves
its kind !

HYMN BEFORE ACTION

1896

THE earth is full of anger,
The seas are dark with wrath,
The Nations in their harness
Go up against our path :
Ere yet we loose the legions—
Ere yet we draw the blade,
Jehovah of the Thunders,
Lord God of Battles, aid !



THE HOLY WAR

1917

A PEDLAR from a hovel,
The lowest of the low,
The Father of the Novel,
Salvation's first Defoe,
Eight blinded generations
Ere Armageddon came,
He showed us how to meet it,
And Bunyan was his name !



“FOR ALL WE HAVE AND ARE”

1914

For all we have and are,
For all our children's fate,
Stand up and take the war.
The Hun is at the gate!
Our world has passed away
In wantonness o'erthrown.
There is nothing left to-day
But steel and fire and stone!
 Though all we knew depart,
 The old Commandments stand:—
 “ In courage keep your heart,
 In strength lift up your hand.”



THE IRISH GUARDS

1918

WE'RE not so old in the Army List,
 But we're not so young at our trade,
For we had the honour at Fontenoy
 Of meeting the Guards' Brigade.
'Twas Lally, Dillon, Bulkeley, Clare,
 And Lee that led us then,
And after a hundred and seventy years
 We're fighting for France again!

* * * * *

*Ah, France ! And did we stand by you,
When life was made splendid with gifts and rewards ?
Ah, France ! And will we deny you
In the hour of your agony, Mother of Swords ?
Old Days ! The wild geese are flighting,
Head to the storm as they faced it before !
For where there are Irish there's loving and fighting,
And when we stop either, it's Ireland no more !
Ireland no more !*



THE NORTH SEA PATROL

1914-18

WHERE the East wind is brewed fresh and fresh
every morning,
And the balmy night-breezes blow straight from
the Pole,
I heard a Destroyer sing : " What an enjoyable life
does one lead on the North Sea Patrol !

" To blow things to bits is our business (and Fritz's),
Which means there are mine-fields wherever you
stroll.

Unless you've particular wish to die quick, you'll
avoid steering close to the North Sea Patrol."

“ THE TRADE ”

1914-1918

THEY bear, in place of classic names,
Letters and numbers on their skin,
They play their grisly blindfold games
In little boxes made of tin.
Sometimes they stalk the Zeppelin,
Sometimes they learn where mines are laid
Or where the Baltic ice is thin.
That is the custom of “ The Trade.”

* * * * *

The Scout's quadruple funnel flames
A mark from Sweden to the Swin,
The Cruiser's thund'rous screw proclaims
Her comings out and goings in :
But only whiffs of paraffin
Or creamy rings that fizz and fade
Show where the one-eyed Death has been.
That is the custom of “ The Trade.”



THE EGG-SHELL

THE wind got up with the morning—
The fog blew off with the rain,
When the Witch of the North saw the Egg-shell
And the little Blue Devil again.

“ Did you swim ? ” she said. “ Did you sink ? ”
she said.

And the little Blue Devil replied :

“ For myself I swam, but I think,” he said,

“ There’s somebody sinking outside.”



THE LOWESTOFT BOAT

(East Coast Patrols)

1914–18

In Lowestoft a boat was laid,
Mark well what I do say
And she was built for the herring trade,
But she has gone a-rovin’, a-rovin’, a-rovin’,
The Lord knows where !

* * * * *

Her cook was chef in the Lost Dogs’ Home,
Mark well what I do say !
And I’m sorry for Fritz when they all come
A-rovin’, a-rovin’, a-roarin’ and a-rovin’,
Round the North Sea rovin’,
The Lord knows where !



MINE SWEEPERS

1914-18

Noon off the Foreland—the first ebb making
Lumpy and strong in the bight.
Boom after boom, and the golf-hut shaking
And the jackdaws wild with fright!
“ Mines located in the fairway,
“ Boats now working up the chain,
“ Sweepers—*Unity, Claribel, Assyrian, Stormcock*
and *Golden Gain.*”



MY BOY JACK

1914-18

“ HAVE you news of my boy Jack ? ”
 Not this tide.
“ When d’you think that he’ll come back ? ”
 Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.
 * * * * *
Then hold your head up all the more,
 This tide,
 And every tide ;
Because he was the son you bore,
 And gave to that wind blowing and that tide !



THE QUEEN'S MEN

SCARCE had they lifted up
Life's full and fiery cup,
Than they had set it down untouched before them.
Before their day arose
They beckoned it to close—
Close in confusion and destruction o'er them.



REBIRTH

1914-18

For we are what we are—
So broke to blood
And the strict works of war—
So long subdued
To sacrifice, that threadbare Death commands
Hardly observance at our busier hands.



THE SONG OF THE LATHES

1918

*(Being the words of the tune hummed at her lathe by Mrs. L.
Embsay, widow)*

THE fans and the beltings they roar round me.
The power is shaking the floor round me
Till the lathes pick up their duty and the midnight-
shift takes over.

It is good for me to be here !

* * * * *

Man's hate passes as his love will pass.
God made woman what she always was.
Them that bear the burden they will never grant
forgiveness

So long as they are here !

*Guns in Flanders—Flanders guns !
(I had a son that worked 'em once !)
Shells for guns in Flanders, Flanders !
Shells for guns in Flanders ! Feed the
guns !*



1914-18

*THE Star stands forth in Heaven.
The watchers watch in vain
For Sign of the Promise given
Of peace on Earth again—
(Again ! Again !)
“ But I know for Whom he fell ”—
The steadfast mother smiled,
“ Is it well with the child—is it well ?
It is well—it is well with the child ! ”*



EX-CLERK

PITY not ! The Army gave
Freedom to a timid slave :
In which Freedom did he find
Strength of body, will, and mind :
By which strength he came to prove
Mirth, Companionship, and Love :
For which Love to Death he went :
In which Death he lies content.

**If any mourn us in the workshop, say
We died because the shift kept holiday.**

COMMON FORM

If any question why we died,
Tell them, because our fathers lied.

A DEAD STATESMAN

I could not dig : I dared not rob :
Therefore I lied to please the mob.
Now all my lies are proved untrue
And I must face the men I slew.
What tale shall serve me here among
Mine angry and defrauded young ?

PORTRAITS

A SCHOOL SONG

'LET us now praise famous men'—

*Men of little showing—
For their work continueth,
And their work continueth,
Broad and deep continueth,
Greater than their knowing !*

* * *

*And we all praise famous men—
Ancients of the College ;
For they taught us common sense—
Tried to teach us common sense—
Truth and God's Own Common Sense
Which is more than knowledge !*

* * *

*Wherefore praise we famous men
From whose bays we borrow—
They that put aside To-day—
All the joys of their To-day—
And with toil of their To-day
Bought for us To-morrow !*



THE PRO-CONSULS

LESSER men feign greater goals,
Failing whereof they may sit
Scholarly to judge the souls
That go down into the pit,
And, despite its certain clay,
Heave a new world towards the day.



GENERAL JOUBERT

1900

(Died, South African War, March 27, 1900)

WITH those that bred, with those that loosed the
strife,
He had no part whose hands were clear of gain ;
But subtle, strong, and stubborn, gave his life
To a lost cause, and knew the gift was vain.



BOBS

(Field-Marshal Lord Roberts of Kandahar)

WHAT 'e does not know o' war,
Gen'ral Bobs,
You can arst the shop next door—
Can't they, Bobs ?

Oh, 'e's little but he's wise ;
'E's terror for 'is size,
An'—'e—*does—not—advertise—*
Do yer, Bobs ?



LORD ROBERTS

1914

HE passed in the very battle-smoke
Of the war that he had descried.
Three hundred mile of cannon spoke
When the Master-Gunner died.

* * * * *

Clean, simple, valiant, well-beloved,
Flawless in faith and fame,
Whom neither ease nor honours moved
An hair's-breadth from his aim.

Never again the war-wise face,
The weighed and urgent word
That pleaded in the market-place—
Pleaded and was not heard !



GREAT-HEART

(THEODORE ROOSEVELT IN 1919)

PLAIN speech with plain folk,
And plain words for false things,
Plain faith in plain dealing
'Twixt neighbours or kings
He used and he followed,
However it sped. . . .
Oh, our world is none more honest
Now Great-Heart is dead !

* * *

Let those who would handle
Make sure they can wield
His far-reaching sword
And his close-guarding shield ;
For those who must journey
Henceforward alone
Have need of stout convoy
Now Great-Heart is gone.



THE BURIAL

1902

(C. J. Rhodes, buried in the Matoppos, April 10, 1902)

THERE, till the vision he foresaw
Splendid and whole arise,
And unimagined Empires draw
To council 'neath his skies,

The immense and brooding Spirit still
Shall quicken and control.
Living he was the land, and dead,
His soul shall be her soul !



THINGS AND THE MAN

(IN MEMORIAM, JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN)

1904

THRONES, Powers, Dominions block the view
With episodes and underlings—
The meek historian deems them true
Nor heeds the song that Clio sings—
The simple central truth that stings
The mob to boo, the priest to ban ;
Things never yet created things—
“ Once on a time there was a Man.”



THE PRODIGAL SON

(WESTERN VERSION)

I NEVER was very refined, you see,
(And it weighs on my brother's mind, you see)
But there's no reproach among swine, d'you see,
For being a bit of a swine.
So I'm off with wallet and staff to eat
The bread that is three parts chaff to wheat,
But glory be !—there's a laugh to it,
Which isn't the case when we dine.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

He drank strong waters and his speech was coarse ;
He purchased raiment and forebore to pay ;
He stuck a trusting junior with a horse,
And won gymkhanas in a doubtful way.
Then, 'twixt a vice and folly, turned aside
To do good deeds and straight to cloak them, lied.

A Bank Fraud.



GENTLEMEN-RANKERS

To the legion of the lost ones, to the cohort of the
damned,
To my brethren in their sorrow overseas,
Sings a gentleman of England cleanly bred, ma-
chinely crammed,
And a trooper of the Empress, if you please.
Yes, a trooper of the forces who has run his own
six horses,
And faith he went the pace and went it blind,
And the world was more than kin while he held
the ready tin,
But to-day the Sergeant's something less than
kind.

A ST. HELENA LULLABY

“How far is St. Helena from the Capes of Trafalgar ? ”

A longish way—a longish way—with ten year more to run.

It's South across the water underneath a falling star.

(What you cannot finish you must leave undone !)

* * * * *

“How far from St. Helena to the Gate of Heaven's Grace ? ”

That no one knows—that no one knows—and no one ever will.

But fold your hands across your heart and cover up your face,

And after all your trapesings, child, lie still !

MORALITIES

TO THE TRUE ROMANCE

1893

*THY face is far from this our war,
Our call and counter-cry,
I shall not find Thee quick and kind,
Nor know Thee till I die.
Enough for me in dreams to see
And touch Thy garments' hem :
Thy feet have trod so near to God
I may not follow them !*

* * * * *

O Charity, all patiently
Abiding wrack and scaith !
O Faith, that meets ten thousand cheats
Yet drops no jot of faith !
Devil and brute Thou dost transmute
To higher, lordlier show,
Who art in sooth that lovely Truth
The careless angels know !



THE KING

1894

"ROMANCE!" the season-tickets mourn,
"He never ran to catch his train,
"But passed with coach and guard and horn—
"And left the local—late again!"
Confound Romance! . . . And all unseen
Romance brought up the nine-fifteen.



THE THREE-DECKER

1894

"The three-volume novel is extinct."

FULL thirty foot she towered from waterline to
rail.
It cost a watch to steer her, and a week to shorten
sail;
But, spite all modern notions, I've found her first
and best—
The only certain packet for the Islands of the
Blest.

* * * * *

That route is barred to steamers: you'll never lift
again
Our purple-painted headlands or the lordly keeps
of Spain.

They're just beyond your skyline, howe'er so far
you cruise

In a ram-you-damn-you liner with a brace of
bucking screws.

* * * * *

Her crews are babes or madmen? Her port is
all to make?

You're manned by Truth and Science, and you
steam for steaming's sake?

Well, tinker up your engines—you know your
business best—

She's taking tired people to the Islands of the
Blest!



THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

1899

TAKE up the White Man's burden—

Have done with childish days—

The lightly proffered laurel,

The easy, ungrudged praise.

Comes now, to search your manhood

Through all the thankless years,

Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,

The judgment of your peers!

IF——

If you can dream—and not make dreams your
master ;

If you can think—and not make thoughts your
aim,

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster

And treat those two impostors just the same ;

If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken

Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,

Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,

And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools :

* * * * *

Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,

And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!



THE REFORMERS

1901

THE yoke he bore shall press him still,

And, long-ingrainèd effort goad

To find, to fashion, and fulfil

The cleaner life, the sterner code.

Not in the camp his victory lies—

The world (unheeding his return)

Shall see it in his children's eyes

And from his grandson's lips shall learn !

WHEN EARTH'S LAST PICTURE IS PAINTED

1892

AND those that were good shall be happy : they
shall sit in a golden chair ;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with
brushes of comets' hair.
They shall find real saints to draw from—Mag-
dalene, Peter, and Paul ;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never
be tired at all !

**TOMLINSON**

1891

Now Tomlinson gave up the ghost in his house in
Berkeley Square,
And a Spirit came to his bedside and gripped him
by the hair—
A Spirit gripped him by the hair and carried him
far away,
Till he heard as the roar of a rain-fed ford the
roar of the Milky Way :
Till he heard the roar of the Milky Way die down
and drone and cease,
And they came to the Gate within the Wall where
Peter holds the keys.

* * * * *

And Tomlinson looked up and up, and saw against
the night

The belly of a tortured star blood-red in Hell-
Mouth light ;

And Tomlinson looked down and down, and saw
beneath his feet

The frontlet of a tortured star milk-white in Hell-
Mouth heat.

“ O I had a love on earth,” said he, “ that kissed
me to my fall ;

“ And if ye would call my love to me I know she
would answer all.”

—“ All that ye did in love forbid it shall be written
fair,

“ But now ye wait at Hell-Mouth Gate and not in
Berkeley Square :

“ Though we whistled your love from her bed
to-night, I trow she would not run,

“ For the sin ye do by two and two ye must pay
for one by one ! ”



AN ASTROLOGER'S SONG

To the Heavens above us

O look and behold

The Planets that love us

All harnessed in gold !

What chariots, what horses

Against us shall bide

While the Stars in their courses

Do fight on our side ?

A SONG TO MITHRAS

(Hymn of the XXX Legion : circa 350 A.D.)

MITHRAS, God of the Morning, our trumpets waken
the Wall !

“ Rome is above the Nations, but Thou art over
all ! ”

Now as the names are answered, and the guards
are marched away,

Mithras, also a soldier, give us strength for the
day !

* * * * *

Mithras, God of the Midnight, here where the great
bull dies,

Look on thy children in darkness. Oh take our
sacrifice !

Many roads thou hast fashioned—all of them lead
to the Light,

Mithras, also a soldier, teach us to die aright !



HERIOT'S FORD

“ THEN wheel my horse against the foe ! ”

He's down and overpast, my lord.

You war against the sunset-glow,

The judgment follows fast, my lord !

THE FAIRIES' SIEGE

I'd not give way for an Emperor,
I'd hold my road for a King—
To the Triple Crown I would not bow down—
But this is a different thing.
I'll not fight with the Powers of Air,
Sentry, pass him through !
Drawbridge let fall, 'tis the Lord of us all,
The Dreamer whose dreams come true !



THE CITY OF SLEEP

OVER the edge of the purple down,
Where the single lamplight gleams,
Know ye the road to the Merciful Town
That is hard by the Sea of Dreams—
Where the poor may lay their wrongs away,
And the sick may forget to weep ?
But we—pity us ! Oh, pity us !
We wakeful ; ah, pity us !—
We must go back with Policeman Day—
Back from the City of Sleep !



THE SETTLER

1903

(South African War ended, May, 1902)

HERE, where my fresh-turned furrows run,
And the deep soil glistens red,
I will repair the wrong that was done
To the living and the dead.
Here, where the senseless bullet fell,
And the barren shrapnel burst,
I will plant a tree, I will dig a well,
Against the heat and the thirst.



THE CHOICE

1917

The American Spirit speaks :

LET Freedom's Land rejoice !
Our ancient bonds are riven ;
Once more to us the eternal choice
Of Good or Ill is given.

Not at a little cost,
Hardly by prayer or tears,
Shall we recover the road we lost
In the drugged and doubting years.

AN AMERICAN

1894

The American Spirit speaks :

ENSLAVED, illogical, elate,
He greets the embarrassed Gods, nor fears
To shake the iron hand of Fate
Or match with Destiny for beers.

Lo, imperturbable he rules,
Unkempt, disreputable, vast—
And, in the teeth of all the schools,
I—I shall save him at the last !



ZION

1914-18

THE Doorkeepers of Zion,
They do not always stand
In helmet and whole armour,
With halberds in their hand ;
But, being sure of Zion,
And all her mysteries,
They rest awhile in Zion,
Sit down and smile in Zion ;
Ay, even jest in Zion ;
In Zion, at their ease.

THE JESTER

THERE are three degrees of bliss
And three abodes of the Blest,
And the lowest place is his
Who has saved a soul by a jest
And a brother's soul in sport . . .
But there do the Angels resort.

**THE NECESSITARIAN**

I know not in Whose hands are laid
To empty upon earth
From unsuspected ambushade
The very Urns of Mirth.

* * *

Yet, it must be, on wayside jape,
The selfsame Power bestows
The selfsame power as went to shape
His Planet or His Rose.

**THE FOUR ANGELS**

As Adam lay a-dreaming beneath the Apple Tree
The Angel of the Earth came down, and offered
Earth in fee.

But Adam did not need it,
Nor the plough he would not speed it,

Singing :—" Earth and Water, Air and Fire,
 " What more can mortal man desire ? "
 (The Apple Tree's in bud.)

* * * * *

As Adam was a-working outside of Eden-Wall,
 He used the Earth, he used the Seas, he used the
 Air and all ;
 Till out of black disaster
 He arose to be the master
 Of Earth and Water, Air and Fire,
 But never reached his heart's desire !
 (The Apple Tree's cut down !)



BUDDHA AT KAMAKURA

1892

" And there is a Japanese idol at Kamakura "

O YE who tread the Narrow Way
 By Tophet-flare to Judgment Day,
 Be gentle when " the heathen " pray
 To Buddha at Kamakura !

* * * * *

And down the loaded air there comes
 The thunder of Thibetan drums,
 And droned—" *Om mane padme hums* "—
 A world's-width from Kamakura.

* * * * *

¹ The Buddhist invocation.

A tourist-show, a legend told,
A rusting bulk of bronze and gold,
So much, and scarce so much, ye hold
The meaning of Kamakura ?

* * * * *

But when the morning prayer is prayed,
Think, ere ye pass to strife and trade,
Is God in human image made
No nearer than Kamakura ?



THE PRAYER

My brother kneels, so saith Kabir,
To stone and brass in heathen-wise,
But in my brother's voice I hear
My own unanswered agonies.
His God is as his fates assign,
His prayer is all the world's—and mine



EDDI'S SERVICE

(A.D. 687)

EDDI, priest of St. Wilfrid
In his chapel at Manhood End,
Ordered a midnight service
For such as cared to attend.

* * *

Till the gale blew off on the marshes
And the windows showed the day,
And the Ox and the Ass together
Wheeled and clattered away.

And when the Saxons mocked him,
Said Eddi of Manhood End,
"I dare not shut His chapel
On such as care to attend."



A PILGRIM'S WAY

I do not look for holy saints to guide me on my way,
Or male and female devilkins to lead my feet astray.
If these are added, I rejoice—if not, I shall not mind,
So long as I have leave and choice to meet my
fellow-kind.

For as we come and as we go (and deadly-soon
go we!)

The people, Lord, Thy people, are good enough
for me!



COLD IRON

"*GOLD is for the mistress—silver for the maid—
Copper for the craftsman cunning at his trade.*"
"Good!" said the Baron, sitting in his hall,
"But Iron—Cold Iron—is master of them all."

* * * * *

*"Crowns are for the valiant—sceptres for the bold!
Thrones and powers for mighty men who dare to
take and hold."*

"Nay!" said the Baron, kneeling in his hall,

"But Iron—Cold Iron—is master of men all!

Iron out of Calvary is master of men all!"



CHAPTER HEADINGS

PLAIN TALES FROM THE HILLS

RIDE with an idle whip, ride with an unused heel,
But, once in a way, there will come a day
When the colt must be taught to feel
The lash that falls, and the curb that galls, and the
sting of the rowelled steel.

The Conversion of Aurelian McGoggin.



THE SONS OF MARTHA

THE Sons of Mary seldom bother, for they have
inherited that good part;
But the Sons of Martha favour their Mother of the
careful soul and the troubled heart.

And because she lost her temper once, and because
she was rude to the Lord her Guest,
Her Sons must wait upon Mary's Sons, world with-
out end, reprieve, or rest.

It is their care in all the ages to take the buffet and
cushion the shock.

It is their care that the gear engages ; it is their
care that the switches lock.

It is their care that the wheels run truly ; it is their
care to embark and entrain,

Tally, transport, and deliver duly the Sons of Mary
by land and main.

* * * * *

They do not preach that their God will rouse them
a little before the nuts work loose.

They do not teach that His Pity allows them to
leave their job when they dam-well choose.



MARY'S SON

1911

If you stop to consider the work you have done
And to boast what your labour is worth, dear,
Angels may come for you, Willie, my son,
But you'll never be wanted on Earth, dear !

NATURAL THEOLOGY

MONEY spent on an Army or Fleet
Is homicidal lunacy. . . .
My son has been killed in the Mons retreat,
Why is the Lord afflicting me ?
Why are murder, pillage and arson
And rape allowed by the Deity ?
I will write to the *Times*, deriding our parson
Because my God has afflicted me.

* * * * *

As was the sowing so the reaping
Is now and evermore shall be.
Thou art delivered to thine own keeping.
Only Thyself hath afflicted thee !



CHAPTER HEADINGS

JUST-SO STORIES

I KEEP six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew) ;
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.
I send them over land and sea,
I send them east and west ;
But after they have worked for me,
I give them all a rest.

The Elephant's Child.

THE TWO-SIDED MAN

MUCH I owe to the Lands that grew—
More to the Lives that fed—
But most to Allah Who gave me two
Separate sides to my head.

* * * *

I would go without shirt or shoe,
Friend, tobacco or bread,
Sooner than lose for a minute the two
Separate sides of my head!



CHAPTER HEADINGS

JUST-SO STORIES

THE Camel's hump is an ugly lump,
Which well you may see at the Zoo;
But uglier yet is the hump we get
From having too little to do.
How the Camel got His Hump.



THE WINNERS

WHITE hands cling to the tightened rein,
Slipping the spur from the booted heel,
Tenderest voices cry, "Turn again,"
Red lips tarnish the scabbarded steel,
High hopes faint on a warm hearth stone—
He travels the fastest who travels alone.

“ OUR FATHERS ALSO ”

ALL Profit, all Device, all Truth
Written it was or said
By the mighty men of their mighty youth,
Which is mighty being dead.



BUTTERFLIES

“ HEAVEN is beautiful, Earth is ugly ”
The three-dimensioned preacher saith,
So we must not look where the snail and the slug lie
For Psyche's birth. . . . And that is our death !



MERROW DOWN

HER brows are bound with bracken-fronds,
And golden elf-locks fly above ;
Her eyes are bright as diamonds
And bluer than the sky above.

In mocassins and deer-skin cloak,
Unfearing, free and fair she flits,
And lights her little damp-wood smoke
To show her Daddy where she flits.

For far—oh, very far behind,
So far she cannot call to him,
Comes Tegumai alone to find
The daughter that was all to him !



THE RETURN OF THE CHILDREN

NEITHER the harps nor the crowns amused, nor the
cherubs' dove-winged races—
Holding hands forlornly the Children wandered
beneath the Dome,
Plucking the splendid robes of the passers-by, and
with pitiful faces
Begging what Princes and Powers refused : “ Ah,
please will you let us go home ? ”



A RECANTATION

1917

(TO LYDE OF THE MUSIC HALLS)

ERE certain Fate had touched a heart
By fifty years made cold,
I judged thee, Lyde, and thy art
O'erblown and over-bold.

But he—but he, of whom bereft
I suffer vacant days—
He on his shield not meanly left—
He cherished all thy lays.



THE SACK OF THE GODS

THEY will come back—come back again, as long as
the red Earth rolls.
He never wasted a leaf or a tree. Do you think He
would squander souls ?



“THE POWER OF THE DOG”

THERE is sorrow enough in the natural way
From men and women to fill our day ;
And when we are certain of sorrow in store,
Why do we always arrange for more ?
Brothers and Sisters, I bid you beware
Of giving your heart to a dog to tear.



THE COMFORTERS

CHASE not with undesired largesse
Of sympathy the heart
Which, knowing her own bitterness,
Presumes to dwell apart.

* * *

E'en from good words thyself refrain,
And tremblingly admit
There is no anodyne for pain
Except the shock of it.



EN-DOR

OH, the road to En-dor is the oldest road
And the craziest road of all !
Straight it runs to the Witch's abode,
As it did in the days of Saul,
And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store
For such as go down on the road to En-dor !



PROPHETS AT HOME

PROPHETS have honour all over the Earth,
Except in the village where they were born,
Where such as knew them boys from birth,
Nature-ally hold 'em in scorn.

When Prophets are naughty and young and vain,
They make a won'eful grievance of it ;
(You can see by their writings how they complain),
But O, 'tis won'eful good for the Prophet !



THE PRESS

THE Soldier may forget his Sword,
The Sailorman the Sea,
The Mason may forget the Word,
And the Priest his Litany :
The Maid may forget both jewel and gem,
And the Bride her wedding-dress—
But the Jew shall forget Jerusalem
Ere we forget the Press !

* * * * *

The Pope may launch his Interdict,
The Union its decree,
But the bubble is blown and the bubble is pricked
By Us and such as We.
Remember the battle and stand aside
While Thrones and Powers confess
That King over all the children of pride
Is the Press—the Press—the Press !



THE FILES

1903

(The Sub-editor Speaks)

FILES—

The Files—

Office Files !

Oblige me by referring to the Files.

* * * * *

Oh, my brother, keep your temper !

Light your pipe and take a look along the Files.

You've a better chance to guess

At the meaning of Success

(Which is Greatness—*vide* press)

When you've seen it in perspective in the Files.



CHAPTER HEADINGS

THE NAULAHKA

THERE is pleasure in the wet, wet clay,

When the artist's hand is potting it ;

THERE is pleasure in the wet, wet lay,

When the poet's pad is blotting it ;

There is pleasure in the shine of your picture on the
line

At the Royal Acade-my ;

But the pleasure felt in these is as chalk to Cheddar
cheese

When it comes to a well-made Lie.—

To a quite unwreckable Lie,

To a most impeccable Lie !

To a water-tight, fire-proof, angle-iron, sunk-hinge,
time-lock, steel-faced Lie !

Not a private hansom Lie,

But a pair-and-brougham Lie,

Not a little-place-at-Tooting, but a country-house-
with-shooting

And a ring-fence-deer-park Lie.



THE FABULISTS

1914–1918

WHEN desperate Folly daily laboureth

To work confusion upon all we have,

When diligent Sloth demandeth Freedom's death,

And banded Fear commandeth Honour's grave—

Even in that certain hour before the fall

Unless men please they are not heard at all.



THE LEGEND OF MIRTH

It chanced on one of Heaven's long-lighted days,
The Four and all the Host being gone their ways
Each to his Charge, the shining Courts were void
Save for one Seraph whom no charge employed,
With folden wings and slumber-threatened brow,
To whom the Word : " Beloved, what dost thou ? " "
" By the Permission," came the answer soft,
" Little I do nor do that little oft.
As is The Will in Heaven so on Earth
Where by The Will I strive to make men mirth."
He ceased and sped, hearing The Word once more :
" Beloved, go thy way and greet the Four."



THE SONG OF SEVEN CITIES

I WAS Lord of Cities very sumptuously builded.
Seven roaring Cities paid me tribute from afar.
Ivory their outposts were—the guardrooms of them
gilded,
And garrisoned with Amazons invincible in war.
* * * * *
Rain on rain-gorged channels raised the water-
levels round them,
Freshet backed on freshet swelled and swept their
world from sight,
Till the emboldened floods linked arms and, flashing
forward, drowned them—
Drowned my Seven Cities and their peoples in one
night !

SONG OF THE FIFTH RIVER

A RULER without a Throne,
A Prince without a Sword,
Israel follows his quest.
In every land a guest,
Of many lands a lord,
In no land King is he.
But the Fifth Great River keeps
The secret of Her deeps
For Israel alone,
As it was ordered to be.



“CITIES AND THRONES AND POWERS”

CITIES and Thrones and Powers,
Stand in Time's eye,
Almost as long as flowers,
Which daily die :
But, as new buds put forth
To glad new men,
Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth,
The Cities rise again.



THE PALACE

1902

WHEN I was a King and a Mason—in the open noon
of my pride,
They sent me a Word from the Darkness—They
whispered and called me aside.
They said—"The end is forbidden." They said—
"Thy use is fulfilled.
Thy Palace shall stand as that other's—the spoil
of a King who shall build."



RECESSIONAL

1897

God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

“ BEFORE A MIDNIGHT BREAKS IN STORM ”

1903

YET instant to foreshadowed need
The eternal balance swings ;
That wingèd men the Fates may breed
So soon as Fate hath wings.
These shall possess
Our littleness,
And in the imperial task (as worthy) lay
Up our lives' all to piece one giant Day.



“ MY NEW-CUT ASHLAR ”

My new-cut ashlar takes the light
Where crimson-blank the windows flare.
By my own work before the night,
Great Overseer, I make my prayer.

* * * * *

Take not that vision from my ken—
Oh, whatsoe'er may spoil or speed.
Help me to need no aid from men
That I may help such men as need !

SONGS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY

THE RIVER'S TALE

(PREHISTORIC)

*TWENTY bridges from Tower to Kew
Wanted to know what the River knew,
For they were young and the Thames was old,
And this is the tale that the River told :—*

“ I walk my beat before London Town,
Five hours up and seven down.
Up I go till I end my run
At Tide-end-town, which is Teddington.
Down I come with the mud in my hands
And plaster it over the Maplin Sands.
But I'd have you know that these waters of mine
Were once a branch of the River Rhine,
When hundreds of miles to the East I went
And England was joined to the Continent.”



THE ROMAN CENTURION'S SONG

(ROMAN OCCUPATION OF BRITAIN, A.D. 300)

FOR me this land, that sea, these airs, those folk
and fields suffice.
What purple Southern pomp can match our change-
ful Northern skies,

Black with December snows unshed or pearled
with August haze—

The clanging arch of steel-grey March, or June's
long-lighted days ?

* * * * *

You'll take the old Aurelian Road through shore-
descending pines

Where, blue as any peacock's neck, the Tyrrhene
Ocean shines.

You'll go where laurel crowns are won, but—will
you e'er forget

The scent of hawthorn in the sun, or bracken in the
wet ?

* * * * *

Legate, I come to you in tears—My cohort ordered
home !

I've served in Britain forty years. What should I
do in Rome ?

Here is my heart, my soul, my mind—the only life
I know.

I cannot leave it all behind. Command me not
to go !



DANEGELD

(A.D. 980–1016)

It is always a temptation to a rich and lazy nation
To puff and look important and to say :—

“ Though we know we should defeat you, we have
not the time to meet you.

We will therefore pay you cash to go away.”

And that is called paying the Dane-geld ;
But we've proved it again and again,
That if once you have paid him the Dane-geld
You never get rid of the Dane.



THE ANVIL

(NORMAN CONQUEST, 1066)

ENGLAND'S on the anvil ! Heavy are the blows !
(But the work will be a marvel when it's done)
Little bits of Kingdoms cannot stand against their
foes.

England's being hammered, hammered, ham-
mered into one !



NORMAN AND SAXON

(A.D. 1100)

" My son," said the Norman Baron, " I am dying,
and you will be heir
To all the broad acres in England that William
gave me for my share
When we conquered the Saxon at Hastings, and a
nice little handful it is.
But before you go over to rule it I want you to
understand this :—

“ The Saxon is not like us Normans. His manners
are not so polite.
But he never means anything serious till he talks
about justice and right.
When he stands like an ox in the furrow with his
sullen set eyes on your own,
And grumbles, ‘ This isn’t fair dealings,’ my son,
leave the Saxon alone.”



THE REEDS OF RUNNYMEDE

(MAGNA CHARTA, JUNE 15, 1215)

At Runnymede, at Runnymede,
What say the reeds at Runnymede ?
The lissom reeds that give and take,
That bend so far, but never break.
They keep the sleepy Thames awake
With tales of John at Runnymede.

At Runnymede, at Runnymede,
Oh hear the reeds at Runnymede :—
“ You must n’t sell, delay, deny,
A freeman’s right or liberty,
It wakes the stubborn Englishry,
We saw ’em roused at Runnymede !

MY FATHER'S CHAIR

(PARLIAMENTS OF HENRY III, 1265)

THERE are four good legs to my Father's Chair—
Priest and People and Lords and Crown.
I sits on all of 'em fair and square,
And that is the reason it don't break down.

* * * * *

When your time comes to sit in my Chair,
Remember your Father's habits and rules.
Sit on all four legs, fair and square,
And never be tempted by one-legged stools !



THE DAWN WIND

(THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY)

So when the world is asleep, and there seems no
hope of her waking
Out of some long, bad dream that makes her
mutter and moan,
Suddenly, all men arise to the noise of fetters
breaking,
And every one smiles at his neighbour and tells
him his soul is his own !

THE KING'S JOB

(THE TUDOR MONARCHY)

THE wisest thing, we suppose, that a man can do
for his land,
Is the work that lies under his nose, with the tools
that lie under his hand.



WITH DRAKE IN THE TROPICS

(A.D. 1580)

How long the time 'twixt bell and bell !
How still our lanthorns burn !
How strange our whispered words that tell
Of England and return !
Old towns, old streets, old friends, old loves,
We name them each to each,
While the lit face of Heaven removes
Them farther from our reach.



“ TOGETHER ”

(ENGLAND AT WAR)

It is not wealth nor talk nor trade nor schools nor
even the Vote,
Will save your land when the enemy's hand is
tightening round your throat.
But a King and a People who thoroughly trust
each other in all that is done
Can sleep on their bed without any dread—for the
world will leave 'em alone !



JAMES I

(1603–1625)

He was the author of his line—
He wrote that witches should be burnt ;
He wrote that monarchs were divine,
And left a son who—proved they weren't !



EDGEHILL FIGHT

(CIVIL WARS, 1642)

NAKED and grey the Cotswolds stand
Beneath the autumn sun,
And the stubble-fields on either hand
Where Stour and Avon run.
There is no change in the patient land
That has bred us every one.

THE DUTCH IN THE MEDWAY

(1664-1672)

IF wars were won by feasting,
Or victory by song,
Or safety found in sleeping sound,
How England would be strong !
But honour and dominion
Are not maintained so,
They're only got by sword and shot,
And this the Dutchmen know !



“ BROWN BESS ”

(THE ARMY MUSKET—1700-1815)

IN the days of lace-ruffles, perukes and brocade
Brown Bess was a partner whom none could
despise—
An out-spoken, flinty-lipped, brazen-faced jade,
With a habit of looking men straight in the eyes—
At Blenheim and Ramillies fops would confess
They were pierced to the heart by the charms of
Brown Bess.

Though her sight was not long and her weight was
not small

Yet her actions were winning, her language was
clear ;

And every one bowed as she opened the ball

On the arm of some high-gaitered, grim grenadier.
Half Europe admitted the striking success
Of the dances and routs that were given by Brown
Bess.



THE AMERICAN REBELLION

(1776)

I

BEFORE

Not till their foes were driven forth
By England o'er the main—
Not till the Frenchman from the North
Had gone with shattered Spain ;
Not till the clean-swept oceans showed
No hostile flag unrolled,
Did they remember what they owed
To Freedom—and were bold !



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