

that had such consent been asked, it would have been cheerfully given. If there be, under the circumstances, an apparent sin against good taste in the matter, the publishers must bear the blame;—for it is they who have put the pressure upon the Editor, and compelled his assent to a selection, which would not have been necessary, if the original idea of the volume had been adhered to. As regards the selection itself, it claims to justify its title, and to afford a fair as well as comprehensive view of the rise, progress, and present state of English poetry. All the “Gems” in the volume are not of equal brilliancy. The diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and pearls of literature are few;—but there are other “gems” than these, of inferior value, but still gemlike;—agate, cornelian, amethyst, turquoise, onyx, and scores of others known to the lapidary and jeweller, and prized by them and by the public to whose appreciation they are offered. To the living writers, whose consent has been given to the appearance of their “gems” in these pages, the Editor offers his best thanks;—to the living writers whose consent has not been asked, he offers his apologies, and would gladly have included some specimens of their genius had time and the bulk of the volume permitted; and to those who have been asked and who have not replied, he has to explain that wherever permission was possible, he would not act without it. To the publishers of the works of authors recently deceased, and proprietors of their copyrights, he has also to offer his acknowledgments for their courtesy, and for the promptitude with which they entered into what, he supposes, would have been the feelings of those poets if they had been still alive;—the very natural desire to appear in the immortal company of the Fathers of English Song.

LONDON,
January, 1867.

A THOUSAND AND ONE GEMS OF ENGLISH POETRY.

[GEOFFREY CHAUCER. 1328—1400.]

PRAISE OF WOMEN.

FOR, this ye know well, tho' I wouldin
lie,

In women is all truth and steadfastness;
For, in good faith, I never of them sie
But much worship, bounty, and gentle-
ness,

Right coming, fair, and full of meekness;
Good, and glad, and lowly, I you ensure,
Is this goodly and angelic creature.

And if it hap a man be in disease,
She doth her business and her full pain
With all her might him to comfort and
please,

If fro his disease him she might restrain;
In word ne deed, I wis, she wold not faine;
With all her might she doth her business
To bringen him out of his heaviness.

Lo, here what gentleness these women
have,

If we could know it for our rudeness!
How busy they be us to keep and save
Both in hele and also in sickness,
And alway right sorry for our distress!
In every manere thus shew they ruth,
That in them is all goodness and all
truth.

THE YOUNG SQUIRE.

WITH him there was his son, a youngé
Squire,
A lover and a lusty bacholer,
With lockés crull, as they were laid in
press.
Of twenty year of age he was I guess.

Of his stature he was of even length,
And wonderly deliver and great of
strength;

And he had been some time in chevachie
In Flandres, in Artois, and in Picardy,
And borne him well, as of so little space,
In hope to standen in his lady's grace

Embroidered was he, as it were a mead
All full of freshé flowers white and red.
Singing he was or fluting all the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his gown, with sleevés long
and wide;

Well could he sit on horse, and fairé ride.
He couldé songés well make, and indite,
Joust, and eke dance, and well pourtray
and write.

So hot he lovéd, that by nightertale
He slept no more than doth the nightin-
gale.

Courteous he was, lowly and serviceable,
And carved before his father at the table.

ARCITA'S DYING ADDRESS.

“ALAS the wo! alas, the painés strong
That I for you have suffered, and so
long!

Alas, the death!—alas mine Emelie!
Alas, departing of our company!
Alas, mine herté's queen!—alas, my wife,
Mine herté's lady—ender of my life!
What is this world? What axen men to
have?

Now with his love, now in his coldé
grave

Alone! withouten any company,
Farewell, my sweet!—farewell, mine
Emelie!”

GOOD COUNSEL OF CHAUCER.

FLY from the press,* and dwell with
soothfastness ;
Suffice unto thy good, though it be
small,
For hoard † hath hate, and climbing
tickleness ; ‡
Preise § hath envie, and weal is blent
o'er all.
Savor || no more than thee behoven
shall,
Rede ¶ well thy self that other folk can't
rede,
And Truth thee shalt deliver — 'tis no
drede.**

That thee is sent receive in buxomness :
The wrestling of this world, asketh a
fall.
Here is no home, here is but wilderness.
Forth, pilgrim, forth—on, best out of
thy stall,
Look up on high, and thank the God
of all !
Weivith †† thy lust, and let thy ghost ‡‡
thee lead,
And Truth thee shalt deliver — 'tis no
drede.

[The EARL OF SURREY. 1506—1547.]

GIVE PLACE, YE LOVERS.

GIVE place, ye lovers, here before
That spent your boasts and brags in
vain ;
My lady's beauty passeth more
The best of yours, I dare well sayen,
Than doth the sun the candlelight,
Or brightest day the darkest night ;
And thereto hath a troth as just
As had Penelope the fair ;
For what she saith ye may it trust,
As it by writing sealed were ; —
And virtues hath she many mo'
Than I with pen have skill to show.

* The crowd. † Treasure. ‡ Uncertainty.
§ Commendation. || Desire. ¶ Counsel.
** Fear. †† Subdue. ‡‡ Spirit.

I could rehearse, if that I would,
The whole effect of Nature's plaint,
When she had lost the perfect mould,
The like to whom she could not
paint.
With wringing hands, how did she
cry !
And what she said, I know it aye.

I know she swore, with raging mind,
Her kingdom only set apart,
There was no loss by law of kind
That could have gone so near her
heart ;
And this was chiefly all her pain, —
"She could not make the like again."

Sith Nature thus gave her the praise
To be the chiefest work she wrought,
In faith, methink, some better ways
On your behalf might well be sought,
Than to compare, as ye have done,
To match the candle with the sun.

HOW NO AGE IS CONTENT
WITH ITS OWN ESTATE.

LAYD in my quiet bed in study as I
were,
I saw within my troubled head, a heap of
thoughts appear,
And every thought did shew so lyvely in
myne eyes,
That now I sight, and then I smilde, as
cause of thoughts did ryse.
I saw the little boy, in thought how oft
that he
Did wishe of God, to scape the rod, a tall
young man to be,
The young man eake that feles his bones
with paines opprest
How he would be a riche old man, to
live and lye at rest ;
The riche olde man that sees his end
draw on so sore,
How he would be a boy againe to live so
much the more.
Whereat full oft I smylde, to see how all
those three
From boy to man, from man to boy,
would chop and change degree.

And musing thus, I think, the case is
very strange,
That man from wealth, to live in wo,
doth ever seke to change.
Thus thoughtfull as I lay, I sawe my
withered skyn,
How it doth shew my dented chewes, the
flesh was worn so thin,
And eke my totheless chaps, the gates of
my right way,
That opes and shuttes, as I do speak, do
thus unto me say :
The white and horish heres, the mes-
sengers of age,
That shew like lines of true belief, that
this life doth assuage,
Biddes the lay hand, and feele them
hanging on thy chin.
The whiche doth write to ages past, the
third now coming in ;
Hang up therefore the bitte, of thy yong
wanton tyme,
And thou that therein beaten art, the
happiest life defyne.
Whereat I sighed, and sayde, farewell
my wonted toye,
Trusse up thy packe, and trudge from me,
to every little boy,
And tell them thus from me, their time
most happy is,
If to theyr time they reason had, to know
the truth of this.

[SIR THOMAS WYATT. 1503—1554.]

A DESCRIPTION OF SUCH A
ONE AS HE COULD LOVE.

A FACE that should content me wonde-
rous well,
Should not be fatt, but lovely to behold,
Of lively look all grieffe for to repell
With right good grace so would I that
it should.
Speak without word, such words as none
can tell ;
Her tress also should be of crisped gold.
With wit and these, perchance I might
be tryde
And knit againe with knot that should
not slide.

COMPLAINT OF THE ABSENCE
OF HIS LOVE.

SOE feeble is the thred that doth the
burden stay,
Of my poor life in heavy plight that falleth
in decay,
That but it have elsewhere some ayde or
some succours,
The running spindle of my fate anon shall
end his course.
For since the unhappy houre that dyd me
to depart,
From my sweet weale one only hoape
hath stayed my life apart,
Which doth perswade such words unto
my soled mynde,
Maintaine thy selfe, O wofull wight, some
better luck to find.
For though thou be deprived from thy
desired sight
Who can thee tell, if thy returne before
thy more delight ;
Or who can tell thy loss if thou mayst
once recover,
Some pleasant houres thy wo may wrap,
and thee defend and cover.
Thus in this trust, as yet it hath my life
sustained,
But now (alas) I see it faint, and I by
trust am trayned.
The tyme doth flete, and I see how the
hours do bende,
So fast that I have scant the space to
marke my coming end.
Westward the sunn from out the east scant
shewed his lite,
When in the west he hies him strait
within the dark of night
And comes as fast, where he began his
path awry,
From east to west, from west to east, so
doth his journey lye.
Thy lyfe so short, so frayle, that mortall
men lyve here,
Soe great a weight, so heavy charge the
bodies that we bere,
That when I think upon the distance and
the space,
That doth so farre divide me from thy
dere desired face,
I know not how t'attaine the winges that
I require,

To lyft me up that I might fly to follow
my desyre.
Thus of that hope that doth my lyfe some-
thyng susteyne, [remaiue.
Alas I fear, and partly feel full little doth
Eche place doth bring me grieffe where I
doe not behold,
Those lively eyes which of my thoughts,
were wont the keys to hold.
Those thoughts were pleasant sweet whilst
I enjoy'd that grace,
My pleasure past, my present pain, when
I might well embrace.
And for because my want should more
my woe increase,
In watch and sleep both day and night
my will doth never cease.
That thing to wishe whereof synce I did
lose the sight,
Was never thing that mought in ought
my wofull hart delight.
Th' uneasy life I lead doth teach me for
to mete,
The floods, the seas, the land, the hills,
that doth them intermete,
Twene me and those shene lights that
wonted for to clere,
My darked pangs of cloudy thoughts as
bright as Phebus sphere;
It teacheth me also, what was my pleas-
ant state,
The more to feele by such record how
that my welth doth bate.
If such record (alas) provoke the inflamed
mynde,
Which sprung that day that I dyd leave
the best of me behynde,
If love forgeat himselfe by length of
absence let,
Who doth me guid (O wofull wretch)
unto this baited net:
Where doth encrease my care, much
better were for me,
As dumm as stone all things forgott, still
absent for to be.
Alas the clear christall, the bright tran-
splendant glasse,
Doth not bewray the colours hid which
underneath it hase.
As doth the accumbred sprite the
thoughtfull throwes discover,
Of teares delyte of fervent love that in
our hartes we cover,

Out by these eyes, it sheweth that ever-
more delight;
In plaint and teares to seek redress, and
eke both day and night.
Those kindes of pleasures most wherein
men soe rejoyce,
To me they do redouble still of stormy
sighes the voice.
For, I am one of them, whom plaint doth
well content,
It fits me well my absent wealth me
semes for to lament,
And with my teares t' assy to charge
myne eyes twayne,
Like as my hart above the brink is
fraughted full of payne.
And for because thereto, that these fair
eyes do treat,
Do me provoke, I will returne, my plaint
thus to repeate; [within,
For there is nothing els, so toucheth me
Where they rule all, and I alone, nought
but the case or skin.
Wherefore I shall returne to them as well
or spring,
From whom descends my mortall wo,
above all other thing.
So shall myne eyes in paine accompany
my heart,
That were the guides, that did it lead of
love to feel the smart.
The crisped gold that doth surmount
Appolloe's pride,
The lively streames of pleasant starrs that
under it doth glyde,
Wherein the beames of love doe still
increase their heate,
Which yet so far touch me to near in cold
to make me sweat,
The wise and pleasant take, so rare or
else alone,
That gave to me the curties gyft, that
earst had never none.
Be far from me alas, and every other
thing,
I might forbear with better will, then
this that did me bring.
With pleasand woord and cheer, redress
of lingred payne,
And wonted oft in kindled will, to vertue
me to trayne.
Thus am I forc'd to hear and hearken
after news,

My comfort scant, my large desire in
doubtful trust renews.
And yet with more delight to move my
wofull case,
I must complaine these hands, those
armes, that firmly do embrace,
Me from myself, and rule the sterne of
my poor life,
The sweet disdaynes, the pleasant wrathes,
and eke the holy strife,
That wonted well to tune in temper just
and mete,
The rage, that oft did make me err by
furour undiscrete.
All this is hid from me with sharp and
ragged hills,
At others will my long abode, my depe
dyspayr fulfills.
And of my hope sometime ryse up by
some redresse,
It stumbleth strait for feable faint my
fear hath such excesse.
Such is the sort of hoape, the less for
more desyre,
And yet I trust e're that I dye, to see
that I require.
The resting-place of love, where virtue
dwells and growes,
There I desire my weary life sometime
may take repose,
My song thou shalt attaine, to find the
pleasant place,
Where she doth live by whom I live, may
chance to have this grace.
When she hath read and seen, the griefe
wherein I serve,
Between her breasts she shall thee put,
there shall she thee reserve.
Then tell her, that I come, she shall me
shortly see,
And if for waight the body fayl, the soul
shall to her flee.

THE LONGER LIFE THE MORE
OFFENCE.

THE longer life the more offence
The more offence the greater paine,
The greater paine the lesse defence,
The lesse defence the lesser gaine;
The loss of gaine long yll doth trye,

Wherefore come death and let me dye.
The shorter life, less count I finde,
The less account the sooner made,
The account soon made, the merier mind,
The merier mynd doth thought evade;
Short life in truth this thing doth trye,
Wherefore come death and let me dye.
Come gentle death, the ebbe of care,
The ebbe of care, the flood of life,
The flood of life, the joyfull fare,
The joyfull fare, the end of strife,
The end of strife, that thing wish I,
Wherefore come death and let me die.

THE AGED LOVER RENOUNCETH
LOVE.

I LOTHE that I dyd love,
In youth that I thought swete,
As time requires for my behove,
Methinks they are not mete.
My lustes they do me leave,
My fancies all are fled,
And tract of time begynnes to weave
Gray heares upon my hed.
For age with stealing steps
Hath clawde me with his crouche,
And lusty lyfe away she leapes
As there had been none such.
My muse doth not delight
Me as she dyd before,
My hand and pen are not in plight,
As they have been of yore.
For reason me denies
This youthly ydle ryme,
And day by day to me cries,
Leave of these toys in tyme.
The wrinkles in my browe,
The furrows in my face,
Say lymping age will lodge hym now,
Where youth must geve him place.
The harbinger of death,
To me I see him ride,
The cough, the cold, the gasping breath
Doth byd me to provyde
A pickax and a spade
And eke a shrowding shete,
A house of clay for to be made,
For such a geaste most mete.
Methinks I hear the clarke
That knoles the carefull knell,

And byddes me leave my woful warke,
Ere nature me compell.

My keepers knit the knot,
That youth did laugh to skorne,
Of me that cleane shall be forgot,
As I had not been borne.

Thus must I youth geve up,
Whose badge I long dyd weare,
To them I yelde the wanton cup,
That better may it beare.

Lo, here the bare hed skull,
By whose balde signe I know,
That stouping age away shall pull
Which youthful yeres did sowe.

For beauty with her hand
These croked cares hath wrought,
And shipped me into the land,
From whence I fyrst was brought.

And ye that byde behinde,
Have ye none other trust
As ye of clay were cast by kynd,
So shall ye waste to dust.

[ANONYMOUS. 1521.]

THE NUT-BROWN MAID.

BE it right or wrong, these men among
Of women do complain ;
Affirming this, how that it is
A labour spent in vain,

To love them well ; for never a deal
They love a man again :

For let a man do what he can,
Their favour to attain,

Yet, if a new do them pursue,
Their first true lover then
Labourereth for nought ; for from their
thought

He is a banished man.

I say not nay, but that all day

It is both writ and said,
That woman's faith is, as who saith,
All utterly decayed ;

But, nevertheless, right good witness
In this case might be laid,

That they love true, and continde :
Record the Nut-brown Maid :

Which, when her love came, her to
prove,

To her to make his moan,

Would not depart ; for in her
heart

She loved but him alone.

Then between us let us discuss
What was all the manner

Between them two : we will also
Tell all the pain, and fear,

That she was in. Now I begin,
So that ye me answer ;

Wherefore, all ye, that present be
I pray you, give an ear.

"I am the knight ; I come by
night,

As secret as I can ;

Saying, alas ! thus standeth the
case,

I am a banished man."

SHE.—And I your will for to fulfil
In this will not refuse ;

Trustyng to shew, in wordès few,
That men have an ill use

(To their own shame) women to
blame,

And causeless them accuse ;

Therefore to you I answer now,

All women to excuse,—

Mine own heart dear, with you
what cheer ?

I pray you, tell anon ;

For, in my mind, of all man-
kind

I love but you alone.

HE.—It standeth so ; a deed is do

Whereof great harm shall grow :

My destiny is for to die

A shameful death, I trow ;

Or else to flee : the one must be.

None other way I know,

But to withdraw as an outlaw,

And take me to my bow.

Wherefore adieu, my own heart
true !

None other rede I can :

For I must to the green wood
go,

Alone a banished man.

SHE.—O Lord, what is this worldys
bliss,

That changeth as the moon !

My Summer's day in lusty May
Is derked * before the noon.

I hear you say, Farewell : nay,
nay,

We départ not so soon.

Why say ye so ? whither will ye
go ?

Alas ! what have you done ?

All my welfäre to sorrow and
care

Should change, if you were
gone ;

For in my mind, of all mankind

I love but you alone.

HE.—I can believe, it shall you grieve,

And somewhat you distrust ;

But, afterward, your paynes hard

Within a day or twain

Shall soon aslake † : and ye shall
take

Comfort to you again.

Why should ye ought ? for to make
thought,

Your labour were in vain.

And thus I do ; and pray you to,

As hart'ly, as I can ;

For I must to the green wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—Now, sith that ye have shewed to
me

The secret of your mind,

I shall be plain to you again,

Like as ye shall me find.

Sith it is so, that ye will go,

I will not leve behind ;

Shall never be said, the nut-brown
maid

Was to her love unkind :

Make you ready, for so am I,

Although it were anon ;

For, in my mind, of all mankind,

I love but you alone.

HE.—Yet I you rede ‡ to take good
heed

What men will think, and say :

Of young, and old it shall be told,

That ye be gone away,

Your wanton will for to fulfil,
In green wood you to play ;
And that ye might from your
delight

No longer make delay.

Rather than ye should thus for me
Be called an ill woman,

Yet would I to the green wood
go,

Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—Though it be song of old and
young,

That I should be to blame,

Theirs be the charge, that speak
so large

In hurting of my name :

For I will prove that faithful love

It is devoid of shame ;

In your distress, and heaviness,

To part with you, the same :

And sure all those, that do not
so,

True lovers are they none ;

For, in my mind, of all mankind

I love but you alone.

HE.—I counsel you, remember how,

It is no maiden's law,

Nothing to doubt, but to run out

To wood with an outlaw :

For ye must there in your hand
bear

A bow, ready to draw,

And, as a thief, thus must you
live,

Ever in dread and awe ;

Whereby to you great harm might
grow :

Yet had I lever * than,

That I did to the green wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—I think not nay, but as ye say,
It is no maiden's lore :

But love may make me for your
sake,

As I have said before,

To come on foot, to hunt, and
shoot

To get us meat in store ;

* Derked—darkened. † Aslake—abate.
‡ Rede—advise.

* Lever—rather.

For so that I your company
May have, I ask no more :
From which to part, it maketh my
heart
As cold as any stone ;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—For an outlaw this is the law,
That men him take and bind ;
Without pity, hanged to be,
And waver with the wind.
If I had need (as God forbid !)
What rescue could ye find ?
Forsooth, I trow, ye and your
bow
For fear would draw behind :
And no marvel ; for little avail
Were in your counsel then :
Wherefore I will to the green wood
go,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—Right well know ye that woman
be
But feeble for to fight ;
No womanhede it is indeed
To be bold as a knight :
Yet, in such fear if that ye were
With enemies day or night,
I would withstand, with bow in
hand,
To grieve them as I might,
And you to save ; as women have
From death men many one ;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—Yet take good heed ; for ever I
dread
That ye could not sustain
The thorny ways, the deep valleys,
The snow, the frost, the rain,
The cold, the heat : for dry, or
wet,
We must lodge on the plain ;
And, us above, none other roof
But a brake bush, or twain :
Which soon should grieve you, I
believe,
And ye would gladly than
That I had to the green wood gone,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—Sith I have here been partynere
With you of joy and bliss,
I must also part of your woe
Endure, as reason is :
Yet am I sure of one pleasure ;
And shortly, it is this :
That, where ye be, me seemeth,
pardè,*
I could not fare amiss.
Without more speech, I you be-
seech
That we were soon agone ;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—If you go thither, ye must con-
sider,
When ye have lust to dine,
There shall no meat be for you
gete,
Nor drink, beer, ale, nor wine.
No shètes clean, to lie between,
Made of thread and twine ;
None other house but leaves and
boughs,
To cover your head and mine,
O mine heart sweet, this evil
dyete
Should make you pale and
wan ;
Wherefore I will to the green-
wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—Among the wild deer, such an
archer
As men say that ye be,
Ne may not fail of good vitayle,
Where is so great plenty :
And water clear of the river
Shall be full sweet to me ;
With which in hele† I shall right
wele
Endure, as ye shall see ;
And, or we go, a bed or two
I can provide anon ;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—Lo yet, before, ye must do more,
If ye will go with me :

* Pardè—in truth.

† Hele—health.

As cut your hair up by your ear,
Your kirtle by the knee ;
With bow in hand, for to with-
stand
Your enemies, if need be :
And this same night before day-
light,
To wood-ward will I flee.
If that ye will all this fulfil,
Do it shortly as ye can :
Else will I to the green wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—I shall as now do more for you
Than longeth to womanhede ;
To shote* my hair, a bow to bear,
To shoot in time of need.
O mysweet mother, before all other
For you I have most dread :
But now, adieu ! I must ensue,†
Where fortune doth me lead.
All this make ye : now let us flee ;
The day cometh fast upon ;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—Nay, nay, not so ; ye shall not go,
And I shall tell you why,—
Your appetite is to be light
Of love, I well espy :
For, like as ye have said to me,
In likewise hardely
Ye would answer whosoever it
were,
In way of company.
It is said of old, Soon hot, soon
cold :
And so is a woman.
Wherefore I to the wood will go,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—If you take heed, it is no need
Such words to say by me ;
For oft ye prayed, and long as-
sayed,
B'fore I you loved, pardè :
And though that I of ancestry
A baron's daughter be,
Yet have you proved how I you
loved,
A squire of low degree ;

And ever shall, whatso befall ;
To die therefore anon ;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—A baron's child to be beguill'd !
It were a cursed deed ;
To be felawe* with an outlaw !
Almighty God forbid !
Yet better were the poor squyere
Alone to forest yede,†
Than ye should say another day,
That, by my cursed deed,
Ye were betray'd : Wherefore,
good maid,
The best rede ‡ that I can,
Is, that I to the green wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—Whatever befall, I never shall
Of this thing you upbraid :
But if ye go, and leave me so,
Then have you me betray'd.
Remember you well, how that
ye deal ;
For, if ye, as ye said,
Be so unkind, to leave behind,
Your love, the Nut-brown Maid,
Trust me truly, that I shall die
Soon after ye be gone ;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—If that ye went, ye should repent ;
For in the forest now
I have purvayed § me of a maid,
Whom I love more than you ;
Another fairer than ever ye were,
I dare it well avow ;
And of you both each should be
wroth
With other as I trow :
It were mine ease to live in peace ;
So will I, if I can ;
Wherefore I to the wood will go,
Alone, a banished man.

SHE.—Though in the wood I understood
Ye had a paramour,

* Felawe—companion.

† Yede—went.

‡ Rede—advice.

§ Purvayed—provided.

* Shote—cut.

† Ensue—follow.

All this may nought remove my thought,
But that I will be your :
And she shall find me soft and kind,
And courteous every hour ;
Glad to fulfil all that she will
Command me to my power :
For had ye, lo, an hundred mo,
"Of them I would be one,"
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—Mine own dear love, I see the proof
That ye be kind and true ;
Of maid, and wife, in all my life,
The best that ever I knew.
Be merry and glad, be no more sad,
The case is changed new ;
For it were ruth, that, for your truth,
Ye should have cause to rue.
Be not dismayed ; whatsoever I said
To you when I began ;
I will not to the green wood go ;
I am no banished man.

SHE.—These tidings be more glad to me,
Than to be made a queen,
If I were sure they should endure ;
But it is often seen,
When men will break promise,
they speak
The wordes on the spleen.
Ye shape some wile me to beguile,
And steal from me, I ween :
Then were the case worse than it was,
And I more woe-begone ;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

HE.—Ye shall not need further to dread ;
I will not disparage
You (God defend !), sith ye descend
Of so great lineage.
Now understand ; to Westmoreland,
Which is mine heritage,

I will you bring ; and with a ring,
By way of marriage
I will you take, and lady make,
As shortly as I can :
Thus have you won an Erly's son,
And not a banished man.

AUTHOR.—Here may ye see, that woman be

In love, meek, kind and stable :
Let never man reprove them then,
Or call them variable ;
But rather pray God that we may
To them be comfortable ;
Which sometimes proveth such,
as he loveth,
If they be charitable.
For sith men would that women should
Be meek to them each one ;
Much more ought they to God obey,
And serve but him alone.

[BEN JONSON. 1573—1637.]

TO CELIA.

I.

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine ;
Or leave a kiss within the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise,
Doth ask a drink divine :
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

II.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee,
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not withered be ;
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me,
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee.

EPITAPH ON THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

UNDERNEATH this sable hearse,
Lies the subject of all verse,

Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother ;
Death, ere thou has slain another,
Learned, and fair, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee !

SONG OF HESPERUS.

(From "Cynthia's Revels.")

QUEEN and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep.
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright !

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose ;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear, when day did close.
Bless us then with wishéd sight,
Goddess excellently bright !

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal-shining quiver :
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe how short soever ;
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright !

THE SWEET NEGLECT.

STILL to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast :
Still to be poud'red, still perfum'd :
Lady, it is to be presum'd,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a looke, give me a face,
That makes simplicitie a grace ;
Robes loosely flowing, haire as free :
Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
Than all th' adulteries of art,
That strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

ELEGY ON SHAKSPEARE.

To draw no envy, Shakspeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book and fame :

While I confess thy writings to be such,
As neither man nor muse can praise too much.
* * * * *

Soul of the age !

Th' applause ! delight ! the wonder of our stage !
My Shakspeare rise ! I will not lodge thee by

Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room :
Thou art a monument without a tomb,
And art alive still, while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praise to give.

That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses,
I mean with great, but disproportion'd muses :

For if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers,

And tell how far thou didst our Lily out-shine,
Or sportive Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.

And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence to honour thee, I will not seek

For names ; but call forth thund'ring Eschylus,

Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
To live again, to hear thy buskin tread,
And shake a stage ; or when thy socks were on,

Leave thee alone for the comparison
Of all, that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.

Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.

He was not of an age, but for all time !
And all the muses still were in their prime,

When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm !

Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joyed to wear the dressing of his
lines!

* * * * *

Sweet swan of Avon! what a sight it were
To see thee in our water yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks of
Thames,

That so did take Eliza, and our James!
But stay, I see thee in the hemisphere
Advanc'd, and made a constellation there!
Shine forth, thou star of poets, and with
rage,
Or influence, chide, or cheer the droop-
ing stage,
Which, since thy flight from hence, hath
mourn'd like night,
And despairs day, but for thy volumes
light.

JEALOUSY.

WRETCHED and foolish Jealousy,
How cam'st thou thus to enter me?
I ne'er was of thy kind:
Nor have I yet the narrow mind
To vent that poor desire,
That others should not warm them at my
fire:
I wish the sun should shine
On all men's fruits and flowers, as well
as mine.

But under the disguise of love,
Thou say'st thou only cam'st to prove
What my affections were.
Think'st thou that love is helped by
fear?
Go, get thee quickly forth,
Love's sickness, and his noted want of
worth,
Seek doubting men to please,
I ne'er will owe my health to a disease.

COME LEAVE THE LOATHED STAGE.

COME leave the loathed stage,
And the more loathsome age,
Where pride and impudence (in fashion
knit),
Usurp the chair of wit!

Inditing and arraiging every day,
Something they call a play.

Let their fastidious, vain
Commission of the brain
Run on, and rage, sweat, censure, and
condemn:
They were not made for thee, less thou
for them.

Say that thou pour'st them wheat,
And they will acorns eat;
'Twere simple fury still thyself to waste
On such as have no taste!
To offer them a surfeit of pure bread,
Whose appetites are dead!
No, give them grains their fill,
Husks, draff to drink and swill.
If they love lees, and leave the lusty wine,
Envy them not their palates with the
swine.

No doubt some mouldy tale,
Like Pericles, and stale
As the shrieves crusts, and nasty as his
fish-
Scraps, out of every dish
Thrown forth, and rank'd into the com-
mon tub,
May keep up the play-club:
There sweepings do as well
As the best order'd meal.
For who the relish of these guests will fit,
Needs set them but the alms-basket of wit.

And much good do't you then:
Brave plush and velvet men
Can feed on orts: and safe in your stage-
clothes,
Dare quit upon your oaths,
The stagers and the stage-wrights too
(your peers)
Of larding your large ears
With their foul comic socks;
Wrought upon twenty blocks;
Which, if they are torn, and turn'd, and
patch'd enough,
The gamesters share your guilt, and you
their stuff.

Leave things so prostitute,
And take the Alcæic lute;
Or thine own Horace, or Anacreon's lyre,
Warm thee by Pindar's fire:

And though thy nerves be shrunk, and
blood be cold,
Ere years have made thee old;
Strike that disdainful heat
Throughout to their defeat:
As curious fools, and envious of thy strain,
May, blushing, swear no palsy's in thy
brain.

But when they hear thee sing
The glories of thy king,
His zeal to God, and his just awe o'er
men:
They may, blood-shaken then,
Feel such a flesh-quake to possess their
powers;
As they shall cry, like ours,
In sound of peace or wars,
No harp e'er hit the stars,
In tuning forth the acts of his sweet
reign:
And raising Charles his chariot 'bove his
waine.

EPITAPH ON A LADY.

UNDERNEATH this stone doth lie
As much beauty as could die:
Which in life did harbour give
To more virtue than doth live.
If, at all, she had a fault,
Leave it buried in this vault.

WOMEN MEN'S SHADOWS.

FOLLOW a shadow, it still flies you,
Seem to fly it, it will pursue:
So court a mistress, she denies you;
Let her alone, she will court you.
Say are not women truly, then,
Styled but the shadows of us men.

[MICHAEL DRAYTON. 1563-1631.]

THE QUEST OF CYNTHIA.

WHAT time the groves were clad in green,
The fields drest all in flowers,
And that the sleek-hair'd nymphs were
seen
To seek them summer bowers.

Forth rovd I by the sliding rills,
To find where Cynthia sat,
Whose name so often from the hills
The echoes wonder'd at.

When me upon my quest to bring,
That pleasure might excel,
The birds strove which should sweetliest
sing,
The flow'rs which should sweetest
smell.

Long wand'ring in the wood, said I,
"O whither's Cynthia gone?"
When soon the echo doth reply
To my last word—"Go on."

At length upon a lofty fir
It was my chance to find,
Where that dear name most due to her
Was carv'd upon the rind.

Which whilst with wonder I beheld,
The bees their honey brought,
And up the carved letters fill'd,
As they with gold were wrought.

And near that tree's more spacious
root,
Then looking on the ground,
The shape of her most dainty foot
Imprinted there I found.

Which stuck there like a curious seal,
As though it should forbid
Us, wretched mortals, to reveal
What under it was hid.

Besides, the flowers which it had press'd,
Appeared to my view
More fresh and lovely than the rest,
That in the meadows grew.

The clear drops, in the steps that
stood
Of that delicious girl,
The nymphs, amongst their dainty food,
Drunk for dissolved pearl.

The yielding sand, where she had trod,
Untouch'd yet with the wind,
By the fair posture plainly shew'd
Where I might Cynthia find.

When on upon my wayless walk
As my desires me draw,
I like a madman fell to talk
With everything I saw.

I ask'd some lilies, "Why so white
They from their fellows were?"
Who answer'd me, "That Cynthia's sight
Had made them look so clear."

I ask'd a nodding violet, "Why
It sadly hung the head?"
It told me, "Cynthia late past by,"
Too soon from it that fled.

A bed of roses saw I there,
Bewitching with their grace,
Besides so wond'rous sweet they were,
That they perfum'd the place.

I of a shrub of those inquir'd,
From others of that kind,
Who with such virtue them inspir'd?
It answer'd (to my mind):

"As the base hemlock were we such,
The poisoned'st weed that grows,
Till Cynthia, by her godlike touch,
Transform'd us to the rose.

"Since when those frosts that winter
brings
Which candy every green,
Renew us like the teeming springs,
And we thus fresh are seen."

At length I on a fountain light,
Whose brim with pinks was platted,
The bank with daffodillies dight
With grass like sleeve was matted:

When I demanded of that well
What pow'r frequented there;
Desiring it would please to tell
What name it us'd to bear:

It told me, "It was Cynthia's own,
Within whose cheerful brims,
That curious nymph had oft been known
To bathe her snowy limbs;

"Since when that water had the pow'r
Lost maidenhoods to restore,

And make one twenty in an hour,
Of Æson's age before,"

And told me, "That the bottom clear,
Now lay'd with many a fett
Of seed pearl, e'er she bath'd her there
Was known as black as jet:

"As when she from the water came
Where first she touch'd the mould,
In balls the people made the same
For pomander, and sold."

When chance me to an arbour led,
Whereas I might behold;
Two blest elysiums in one sted,
The less the great infold;

The place which she had chosen out,
Herself in to repose:
Had they come down the gods no
doubt
The very same had chose.

The wealthy Spring yet never bore
That sweet, nor dainty flower,
That damask'd not the chequer'd floor
Of Cynthia's summer bower.

The birch, the myrtle, and the bay,
Like friends did all embrace;
And their large branches did display,
To canopy the place.

Where she like Venus doth appear
Upon a rosy bed;
As lilies the soft pillows were,
Whereon she lay'd her head.

Heav'n on her shape such cost bestow'd,
And with such bounties blest,
No limb of hers but might have made
A goddess at the least.

The flies by chance mesh'd in her hair,
By the bright radiance thrown
From her clear eyes, rich jewels were,
They so like diamonds shone.

The meanest weed the soil there bare,
Her breath did so refine,
That it with woodbine durst compare,
And eke the eglantine.

The dew which on the tender grass
The evening had distill'd,
To pure rose-water turned was,
The shades with sweets that fill'd.

The winds were hush'd, no leaf so small
At all was seen to stir:
Whilst tuning to the waters' fall
The small birds sing to her.

Where she too quickly me espies,
When I too plainly see
A thousand cupids from her eyes
Shoot all at once at me.

"Into these secret shades (quoth she)
How dar'st thou be so bold
To enter, consecrate to me,
Or touch this hallowed mould?"

"Those words (quoth she) I can pro-
nounce,
Which to that shape can bring
Thee, which that hunter had, who once
Saw Dian in the spring."

"Bright nymph (again I thus reply),
This cannot me afright:
I had rather in thy presence die,
Than live out of thy sight.

"I first upon the mountains high
Built altars to thy name,
And grav'd it on the rocks thereby,
To propagate thy fame.

"I taught the shepherds on the downs
Of thee to form their lays:
'Twas I that fill'd the neighbouring towns
With ditties of thy praise.

"Thy colours I devis'd with care,
Which were unknown before:
Which since that in their braided hair
The nymphs and sylvans wore.

"Transform me to what shape you can,
I pass not what it be:
Yea, what most hateful is to man,
So I may follow thee."

Which when she heard, full pearly floods
I in her eyes might view.

(Quoth she), "Most welcome to these
woods
Too mean for one so true.

"Here from the hateful world we'll live,
A den of mere despight:
To idiots only that doth give,
Which be for sole delight.

"To people the infernal pit,
That more and more doth strive;
Where only villany is wit,
And devils only thrive.

"Whose vileness us shall never awe:
But here our sports shall be
Such as the golden world first saw,
Most innocent and free.

"Of simples in these groves that grow,
We'll learn the perfect skill:
The nature of each herb to know,
Which cures and which can kill.

"The waxen palace of the bee,
We seeking will surprise,
The curious workmanship to see
Of her full-laden thighs.

"We'll suck the sweets out of the comb,
And make the gods repine,
As they do feast in Jove's great room,
To see with what we dine.

"Yet when there haps a honey fall,
We'll lick the syrup'd leaves,
And tell the bees that theirs is gall
To this upon the gravees.

"The nimble squirrel noting here,
Her mossy dray that makes,
And laugh to see the dusty deer
Come bounding o'er the brakes.

"The spider's web to watch we'll stand,
And when it takes the bee,
We'll help out of the tyrant's hand
The innocent to free.

"Sometime we'll angle at the brook,
The freckled trout to take,
With silken worms and bait the hooks
Which him our prey shall make.

"Of meddling with such subtle tools,
Such dangers that enclose,
The moral is, that painted fools
Are caught with silken shews.

"And when the moon doth once appear,
We'll trace the lower grounds,
When fairies in their ringlets there
Do dance their nightly rounds.

"And have a flock of turtle doves,
A guard on us to keep,
As witness of our honest loves,
To watch us till we sleep."

Which spoke, I felt such holy fires
To overspread my breast,
As lent life to my chaste desires,
And gave me endless rest.

By Cynthia thus do I subsist,
On earth heaven's only pride ;
Let her be mine, and let who list
Take all the world beside.

~~~~~  
THE TRENT.

NEAR to the silver Trent  
Sirena dwelleth,  
She to whom nature lent  
All that excelleth ;  
By which the Muses late,  
And the neat Graces,  
Have for their greater state  
Taken their places ;  
Twisting an Anadem,  
Wherewith to crown her,  
As it belong'd to them  
Most to renoun her.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

Tagus and Pactolus  
Are to thee debtor,  
Nor for their gold to us  
Are they the better ;  
Henceforth of all the rest,  
Be thou the river,

Which as the daintiest,  
Puts them down ever.  
For as my precious one  
O'er thee doth travel,  
She to pearl paragon  
Turneth thy gravel.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

Our mournful Philomel,  
That rarest tuner,  
Henceforth in April  
Shall wake the sooner ;  
And to her shall complain  
From the thick cover,  
Redoubling every strain  
Over and over :  
For when my love too long  
Her chamber keepeth ;  
As though it suffered wrong,  
The morning weepeth.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

Oft have I seen the Sun,  
To do her honour,  
Fix himself at his noon  
To look upon her,  
And hath gilt every grove,  
Every hill near her,  
With his flames from above,  
Striving to cheer her :  
And when she from his sight  
Hath herself turned,  
He, as it had been night,  
In clouds hath mourned.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

The verdant meads are seen,  
When she doth view them,  
In fresh and gallant green  
Strait to renew them,

And every little grass  
Broad itself spreadeth,  
Proud that this bonny lass  
Upon it treadeth ;  
Nor flower is so sweet  
In this large cincture,  
But it upon her feet  
Leaveth some tincture.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

The fishes in the flood  
When she doth angle,  
For the hook strive agood  
Them to entangle ;  
And leaping on the land  
From the clear water,  
Their scales upon the sand  
Lavishly scatter ;  
Therewith to pave the mold  
Whereon she passes,  
So herself to behold  
As in her glasses.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

When she looks out by night  
The stars stand gazing,  
Like comets to our sight  
Fearfully blazing ;  
As wond'ring at her eyes,  
With their much brightness,  
Which so amaze the skies,  
Dimming their lightness,  
The raging tempests are calm  
When she speaketh,  
Such most delightful balm  
From her lips breaketh.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

In all our Brittany  
There's not a fairer,

Nor can you fit any,  
Should you compare her.  
Angels her eye-lids keep,  
All hearts surprising ;  
Which look while she doth sleep  
Like the sun's rising :  
She alone of her kind  
Knoweth true measure,  
And her unmatched mind  
Is heaven's treasure.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

Fair Dove and Darwent clear,  
Boast ye your beauties,  
To Trent your mistress here  
Yet pay your duties,  
My love was higher born  
Tow'rd's the full fountains,  
Yet she doth moorland scorn  
And the Peak mountains ;  
Nor would she none should dream  
Where she abideth,  
Humble as is the stream,  
Which by her slideth.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

Yet my poor rustic Muse,  
Nothing can move her,  
Nor the means I can use,  
Though her true lover :  
Many a long winter's night  
Have I wak'd for her,  
Yet this my piteous plight  
Nothing can stir her.  
All thy sands, silver Trent,  
Down to the Humber,  
The sighs that I have spent  
Never can number.

*Chorus.—On thy bank  
In a rank  
Let thy swans sing her,  
And with their music  
Along let them bring her.*

## TO HIS COY LOVE.

I PRAY thee love, love me no more,  
Call home the heart you gave me,  
I but in vain that saint adore,  
That can, but will not save me :  
These poor half kisses kill me quite ;  
Was ever man thus served ?  
Amidst an ocean of delight,  
For pleasure to be starved.

Show me no more those snowy breasts,  
With azure rivers branched,  
Where whilst my eye with plenty feasts,  
Yet is my thirst not stanch'd.  
O Tantalus, thy pains ne'er tell,  
By me thou art prevented ;  
'T is nothing to be plagu'd in hell,  
But thus in heaven tormented.

Clip me no more in those dear arms,  
Nor thy life's comfort call me ;  
O, these are but too powerful charms,  
And do but more enthral me.  
But see how patient I am grown,  
In all this coyle about thee ;  
Come, nice thing, let thy heart alone,  
I cannot live without thee.

## THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.

FAIR stood the wind for France  
When we our sails advance,  
Nor now to prove our chance  
Longer will tarry ;  
But putting to the main,  
At Kaux, the mouth of Seine,  
With all his martial train,  
Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,  
Furnish'd in warlike sort  
March'd towards Agincourt  
In happy hour ;  
Skirmishing day by day  
With those that stop'd his way,  
Where the French gen'ral lay  
With all his power.

Which in his height of pride,  
King Henry to deride,

His ransom to provide  
To the King sending ;  
Which he neglects the while,  
As from a nation vile  
Yet with an angry smile,  
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,  
Quoth our brave Henry then,  
Though they to one be ten,  
Be not amazed.  
Yet, have we well begun,  
Battles so bravely won  
Have ever to the sun  
By fame been raised.

And for myself, quoth he,  
This my full rest shall be,  
England ne'er mourn for me.  
Nor more esteem me.  
Victor I will remain,  
Or on this earth lie slain,  
Never shall she sustain  
Loss to redeem me.

Poictiers and Cressy tell,  
When most their pride did swell,  
Under our swords they fell,  
No less our skill is,  
Than when our grandsire great,  
Claiming the regal seat,  
By many a warlike feat,  
Lop'd the French lilies.

The Duke of York so dread,  
The eager vanward led ;  
With the main Henry sped,  
Amongst his henchmen.  
Excester had the rear,  
A braver man not there,  
O Lord how hot they were  
On the false Frenchmen !

They now to fight are gone,  
Armour on armour shone,  
Drum now to drum did groan,  
To hear, was wonder ;  
That with cries they make,  
The very earth did shake,  
Trumpet to trumpet spake,  
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,  
O noble Erpingham,  
Which did the signal aim  
To our hid forces ;  
When from a meadow by,  
Like a storm suddenly,  
The English archery  
Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,  
Arrows a cloth-yard long,  
That like to serpents stung  
Piercing the weather ;  
None from his fellow starts,  
But playing manly parts,  
And like true English hearts,  
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw  
And forth their billbows drew,  
And on the French they flew ;  
Not one was tardy ;  
Arms were from shoulders sent,  
Scalps to the teeth were rent,  
Down the French peasants went,  
Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,  
His broad sword brandishing,  
Down the French host did ding,  
As to o'erwhelm it ;  
And many a deep wound lent,  
His arms with blood besprent  
And many a cruel dent  
Bruised his helmet.

Glo'ster, that duke so good,  
Next of the royal blood,  
For famous England stood,  
With his brave brother,  
Clarence, in steel so bright,  
Though but a maiden knight,  
Yet in that furious fight  
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,  
Oxford the foe invade,  
And cruel slaughter made,  
Still as they ran up ;  
Suffolk his axe did ply,  
Beaumont and Willoughby  
Bare them right doughtily,  
Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's day  
Fought was this noble fray,  
Which fame did not delay,  
To England to carry ;  
O when shall Englishmen  
With such acts fill a pen,  
Or England breed again  
Such a King Harry ?

## SONNET.

LOVE in a humour play'd the prodigal,  
And bad my senses to a solemn feast ;  
Yet more to grace the company withal,  
Invites my heart to be the chiefest guest :  
No other drink would serve this glutton's  
turn  
But precious tears distilling from mine  
eyne,  
Which with my sighs this epicure doth  
burn,  
Quaffing carouses in this costly wine ;  
Where, in his cups o'ercome with foul  
excess,  
Straightways he plays a swaggering ruf-  
fian's part,  
And at the banquet in his drunkenness,  
Slew his dear friend, my kind and truest  
heart :  
A gentle warning (friends) thus may  
you see,  
What 'tis to keep a drunkard company.

## SONNET.

If he, from heaven that filch'd that living  
fire,  
Condemn'd by Jove to endless torment be,  
I greatly marvel how you still go free,  
That far beyond Prometheus did aspire :  
The fire he stole, although of heavenly  
kind,  
Which from above he craftily did take,  
Of lifeless clods, us living men to make,  
He did bestow in temper of the mind :  
But you broke into heav'n's immortal  
store,  
Where virtue, honour, wit, and beauty  
lay ;  
Which taking thence you have escap'd  
away,

Yet stand as free as e'er you did before:  
 Yet old Prometheus punish'd for his  
 rape:  
 Thus poor thieves suffer, when the  
 greater 'scape.

KING HENRY TO FAIR  
 ROSAMOND.

THE little flow'rs dropping their honey'd  
 dew,  
 Which (as thou writ'st) do weep upon thy  
 shoe,  
 Not for thy fault (sweet Rosamond) do  
 moan,

Only lament that thou so soon art gone:  
 For if thy foot touch hemlock as it goes,  
 That hemlock's made far sweeter than the  
 rose.

My camp resounds with fearful shocks of  
 war,

Yet in my breast more dang'rous conflicts  
 are;

Yet is my signal to the battle's sound  
 The blessed name of beauteous Rosamond.  
 Accused be that heart, that tongue, that  
 breath,  
 Should think, should speak, or whisper  
 of thy death:

For in one smile or lower from thy sweet  
 eye

Consists my life, my hope, my victory.  
 Sweet Woodstock, where my Rosamond  
 doth rest,

Be blest in her, in whom thy king is blest:  
 For though in France awhile my body be,  
 My heart remains (dear paradise) in thee.

LOVE BANISHED HEAVEN.

SONNET.

LOVE banish'd heaven, in earth was held  
 in scorn,  
 Wand'ring abroad in need and beggary;  
 And wanting friends, though of a goddess  
 born,

Yet crav'd the alms of such as passed by:  
 I like a man devout and charitable,  
 Clothed the naked, lodg'd this wand'ring  
 guest,

With sighs and tears still furnishing his  
 table,  
 With what might make the miserable  
 blest;

But this ungrateful, for my good desert.  
 Entic'd my thoughts against me to con-  
 spire,

Who gave consent to steal away my heart,  
 And set my breast his lodging on a fire.

Well, well, my friends, when beggars  
 grow thus bold,  
 No marvel then though charity grow  
 cold.

[WILLIAM DRUMMOND. 1585-1649.]

TO A NIGHTINGALE.

SWEET bird, that sing'st away the early  
 hours

Of winters past, or coming, void of care,  
 Well pleased with delights which present  
 are,

Fair seasons, budding sprays, sweet-  
 smelling flowers:

To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy  
 bowers

Thou thy Creator's goodness dost declare,  
 And what dear gifts on thee he did not  
 spare,—

A stain to human sense in sin that lowers.  
 What soul can be so sick, which by thy  
 songs

(Attired in sweetness) sweetly is not  
 driven

Quite to forget Earth's turmoils, spites,  
 and wrongs,

And lift a reverend eye and thought to  
 Heaven?

Sweet, artless songster, thou my mind  
 dost raise

To airs of spheres, yes, and to angels'  
 lays.

A GOOD THAT NEVER SATISFIES  
 THE MIND.

A GOOD that never satisfies the mind,  
 A beauty fading like the April flow'rs,  
 A sweet with floods of gall, that runs  
 combin'd

[WILLIAM BROWNE. 1590-1645.]

WILLY, OR GLIDE SOFT YE  
 SILVER FLOODS.

GLIDE soft ye silver floods,  
 And every spring:  
 Within the shady woods,  
 Let no bird sing!  
 Nor from the grove a turtle dove  
 Be seen to couple with her love,  
 But silence on each dale and mountain  
 dwell,  
 Whilst Willy bids his friend and joy  
 farewell.

But (of great Thetis' train)  
 Ye mermaids fair,  
 That on the shores do plain  
 Your sea-green hair,  
 As ye in trammels knit your locks  
 Weep ye; and so enforce the rocks  
 In heavy murmurs through the broad  
 shores tell  
 How Willy bade his friend and joy fare-  
 well.

Cease, cease, ye murmuring winds  
 To move a wave;  
 But if with troubled minds  
 You seek his grave;  
 Know 'tis as various as yourselves,  
 Now in the deep, then on the shelves,  
 His coffin toss'd by fish and surges fell,  
 Whilst Willy weeps and bids all joy fare-  
 well.

Had he, Arion like,  
 Been judg'd to drown,  
 He on his lute could strike  
 So rare a swon;  
 A thousand dolphins would have  
 come,  
 And jointly strive to bring him  
 home.  
 But he on shipboard dy'd, by sickness fell,  
 Since when his Willy bade all joy farewell.

Great Neptune hear a swain!  
 His coffin take,  
 And with a golden chain  
 (For pity) make  
 It fast unto a rock near land!

A pleasure passing ere in thought made  
 ours,  
 An honour that more fickle is than  
 wind,  
 A glory at opinion's frown that low'rs,  
 A treasury which bankrupt time devours,  
 A knowledge than grave ignorance more  
 blind,  
 A vain delight our equals to command,  
 A style of greatness, in effect a dream,  
 A swelling thought of holding sea and  
 land,  
 A servile lot, deck'd with a pompous  
 name,  
 Are the strange ends we toil for here  
 below,  
 Till wisest death make us our errors  
 know.

[JOHN DONNE. 1573-1631.]

THE MESSAGE.

SEND home my long stray'd eyes to  
 me,  
 Which, oh! too long have dwelt on  
 thee;  
 But if they there have learn'd such ill,  
 Such forc'd fashions  
 And false passions,  
 That they be  
 Made by thee  
 Fit for no good sight, keep them still.

Send home my harmless heart again,  
 Which no unworthy thought could  
 stain;  
 But if it be taught by thine  
 To make jestings  
 Of protestings,  
 And break both  
 Word and oath,  
 Keep it still, 'tis none of mine.

Yet send me back my heart and eyes,  
 That I may know and see thy lies,  
 And may laugh and joy when thou  
 Art in anguish,  
 And dost languish  
 For some one  
 That will none,  
 Or prove as false as thou dost now.

Where ev'ry calmy morn I'll stand,  
And ere one sheep out of my fold I tell,  
Sad Willy's pipe shall bid his friend fare-  
well.

[ABRAHAM COWLEY. 1618—1667.]

#### ON THE DEATH OF CRASHAW.

POET and Saint! to thee alone are giv'n  
The two most sacred names of earth and  
heav'n,  
The hard and rarest union which can be,  
Next that of Godhead with humanity.  
Long did the Muses banish'd slaves abide,  
And built vain pyramids to mortal pride;  
Like Moses thou (tho' spells and charms  
withstand)  
Hast brought them nobly home back to  
their Holy Land.  
Ah, wretched We! poets of earth!  
but thou  
Wert living the same poet which thou'rt  
now.  
Whilst angels sing to thee their airs  
divine,  
And joy in an applause so great as thine,  
Equal society with them to hold,  
Thou need'st not make new songs, but  
say the old:  
And they, kind Spirits! Shall all rejoice  
to see  
How little less than they exalted man  
may be.

#### LIBERTY.

WHERE honour, or where conscience does  
not bind,  
No other law shall shackle me;  
Slave to myself I will not be:  
Nor shall my future actions be confin'd  
By my own present mind.  
Who by resolves and vows engag'd does  
stand  
For days that yet belong to Fate,  
Does, like an unthrift, mortgage his es-  
tate  
Before it falls into his hand.  
The bondman of the cloister so  
All that he does receive does always owe;

And still as time comes in, it goes away,  
Not to enjoy, but debts to pay.  
Unhappy slave! and pupil to a bell!  
Which his hour's work, as well as hours,  
does tell!  
Unhappy to the last, the kind releasing  
knell.

#### WHAT SHALL I DO?

WHAT shall I do to be for ever known,  
And make the age to come my own?  
I shall like beasts or common people  
die,  
Unless you write my elegy;  
Whilst others great by being born are  
grown,  
Their mother's labour, not their own.  
In this scale gold, in th' other fame does  
lie:  
The weight of that mounts this so high.  
These men are Fortune's jewels, moulded  
bright,  
Brought forth with their own fire and  
light.  
If I, her vulgar stone, for either look,  
Out of myself it must be strook.  
Yet I must on: What sound is't strikes  
mine ear?  
Sure I Fame's trumpet hear:  
It sounds like the last trumpet, for it can  
Raise up the bury'd man.  
Unpass'd Alps stop me, but I'll cut  
through all,  
And march, the Muse's Hannibal.  
Hence, all the flatt'ring vanities that lay  
Nets of roses in the way;  
Hence, the desire of honours or estate,  
And all that is not above Fate;  
Hence, Love himself, that tyrant of my  
days,  
Which intercepts my coming praise.  
Come, my best Friends! my books! and  
lead me on,  
'Tis time that I were gone.  
Welcome, great Stagirite! and teach me  
now  
All I was born to know:  
Thy scholar's vict'ries thou dost far out-  
do;  
He conquer'd the earth, the whole world  
you.

Welcome, learn'd Cicero! whose bless'd  
tongue and wit  
Preserves Rome's greatness yet:  
Thou art the first of orators; only he  
Who best can praise thee next must be.  
Welcome the Mantuan swan! Virgil the  
wise,  
Whose verse walks highest, but not flies;  
Who brought green Poesy to her perfect  
age,  
And made that art which was a rage.  
Tell me, ye mighty Three! what shall I do  
To be like one of you?  
But you have climb'd the mountain's top,  
there sit  
On the calm flourishing head of it,  
And whilst, with wearied steps, we up-  
ward go,  
See us and clouds below.

#### LOVE IN HER SUNNY EYES.

LOVE in her sunny eyes does basking  
play:  
Love walks the pleasant mazes of her  
hair;  
Love does on both her lips for ever  
stray,  
And sows and reaps a thousand kisses  
there;  
In all her outward parts Love's always  
seen,  
But, Oh! he never went within.

#### THE SOUL.

If mine eyes do e'er declare  
They've seen a second thing that's fair;  
Or ears that they have music found,  
Besides thy voice, in any sound;  
If my taste do ever meet,  
After thy kiss with ought that's sweet;  
If my abused touch allow  
Ought to be smooth or soft but thou!  
If what seasonable springs,  
Or the eastern summer brings,  
Do my smell persuade at all  
Ought perfume but thy breath to call;  
If all my senses objects be  
Not contracted into thee,  
And so through thee more pow'ful pass,

As beams do through a burning-glass;  
If all things that in nature are  
Either soft, or sweet, or fair,  
Be not in thee so epitomiz'd,  
That nought material's not compris'd,  
May I as worthless seem to thee,  
As all but thou appear to me.

#### THE WISH.

WELL, then, I now do plainly see,  
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree,  
The very honey of all earthly joy  
Does of all meats the soonest cloy:  
And they (methinks) deserve my pity  
Who for it can endure the stings,  
The crowd, and buz, and murmurings,  
Of this great hive, the City.

Ah! yet, e'er I descend to the grave,  
May I a small house and large garden  
have!  
And a few friends, and many books, both  
true,  
Both wise, and both delightful too!  
And since Love ne'er will from me flee,  
A mistress moderately fair,  
And good as guardian angels are,  
Only belov'd, and loving me!

#### AN IMPRECATION AGAINST CIVIL STRIFE.

CURS'D be the man (what do I wish? as  
though  
The wretch already were not so;  
But curs'd on let him be) who thinks it  
brave  
And great his country to enslave;  
Who seeks to overpoise alone  
The balance of a nation:  
Against the whole, but naked state,  
Who in his own light scale makes up with  
arms the weight.

Who of his nation loves to be the first,  
Though at the rate of being worst,  
Who would be rather a great monster,  
than  
A well proportion'd man;  
The sun of earth, with hundred hands,

Upon his three pil'd mountain stands,  
Till thunder strikes him from the sky,  
The son of Earth again in his earth's  
womb does lie.

What blood, confusion, ruin, to obtain  
A short and miserable reign?  
In what oblique and humble creeping  
wise

Does the mischievous serpent rise?  
But ev'n his forked tongue strikes dead,  
When he's rear'd up his wicked head;  
He murders with his mortal frown;  
A basilisk he grows if once he get a  
crown.

But no guards can oppose assaulting  
ears,  
Or undermining tears;  
No more than doors or close-drawn  
curtains keep  
The swarming dreams out when we  
sleep:

That bloody conscience, too, of his,  
(For oh! a rebel red-coat 't is)  
Does here his early hell begin;  
He sees his slaves without, his tyrant feels  
within.

Let, gracious God! let never more thine  
hand  
Lift up this rod against our land:  
A tyrant is a rod and serpent too,  
And brings worse plagues than Egypt  
knew.  
What rivers stain'd with blood have  
been?

What storm and hail-shot have we seen?  
What sores deform'd the ulcerous state?  
What darkness to be felt has bury'd us of  
late?

How has it snatch'd our flocks and herds  
away!  
And made even of our sons a prey!  
What croaking sects and vermin has it  
sent

The restless nation to torment!  
What greedy troops, what armed power  
Of flies and locusts, to devour  
The land, which ev'rywhere they fill!  
Nor fly they, Lord! away; no, they  
devour it still.

Come the eleventh plague rather than  
this should be,  
Come sink us rather in the sea:  
Come rather Pestilence, and reap us  
down;  
Come God's sword rather than our own:  
Let rather Roman come again,  
Or Saxon, Norman, or the Dane:  
In all the bonds we ever bore  
We griev'd, we sigh'd, we wept: we never  
blush'd before.

If by our sins the divine vengeance be  
Call'd to this last extremity,  
Let some denouncing Jonas first be sent  
To try if England can repent:  
Methinks, at least some prodigy,  
Some dreadful comet from on high,  
Should terribly forewarn the earth,  
As of good princes' deaths, so of a tyrant's  
birth.

[ROBERT SOUTHWELL. 1560—1595.]

#### TIMES GO BY TURNS.

THE lopp'd tree in time may grow again,  
Most naked plants renew both fruit and  
flower,  
The sorriest wight may find release of  
pain,  
The driest soil suck in some moistening  
shower;  
Time goes by turns, and chances change  
by course,  
From foul to fair, from better hap to  
worse.

The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow;  
She draws her favours to the lowest ebb;  
Her tides have equal times to come and  
go;  
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest  
web:  
No joy so great but runneth to an end,  
No hap so hard but may in time amend.

[CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE. 1564—1593.]

#### THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE.

COME live with me, and be my love,  
And we will all the pleasures prove,

That valleys, groves, or hill, or field,  
Or woods and steepy mountains yield;

Where we will sit upon the rocks,  
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,  
By shallow rivers, to whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,  
And then a thousand fragrant posies,  
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle,  
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool,  
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;  
Slippers, lined choicely for the cold,  
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,  
With coral clasps and amber studs:  
And if these pleasures may thee move,  
Come live with me and be my love.

Thy silver dishes, for thy meat,  
As precious as the gods do eat,  
Shall, on an ivory table, be  
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and  
sing  
For thy delight each May morning.  
If these delights thy mind may move,  
Come live with me and be my love.

#### ANSWER BY SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

If all the world and love were young,  
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,  
These pretty pleasures might me move  
To live with thee and be thy love,

But time drives flocks from field to fold,  
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold,  
Then Philomel becometh dumb,  
And age complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields  
To wayward winter reckoning yields;  
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,  
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,  
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,  
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten;  
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy-buds,  
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,  
All these in me no means can move,  
To come to thee and be thy love.

What should we talk of dainties, then,  
Of better meat than's fit for men?  
These are but vain: that's only good  
Which God hath bless'd and sent for food.

But could youth last, and love still breed,  
Had joys no date, nor age no need;  
Then those delights my mind might move,  
To live with thee and be thy love.

[EDMUND SPENSER. 1553—1599.]

#### THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

AND is there care in Heaven? And is  
there love  
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,  
That may compassion of their evils move?  
There is:—else much more wretched  
were the case  
Of men than beasts: but O! th' exceed-  
ing grace  
Of highest God, that loves his creatures  
so,  
And all his works with mercy doth em-  
brace,  
That blessed angels he sends to and fro,  
To serve to wicked man, to serve his  
foe!

How oft do they their silver bowers leave  
To come to succour us that succour want!  
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave  
The fitting skies, like flying pursuivant,  
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!  
They for us fight, they watch and duly  
ward,  
And their bright squadrons round about  
us plant;  
And all for love and nothing for reward:  
O, why should heavenly God to men have  
such regard?