

**Classic Poetry Series**

**Francis William Lauderdale  
Adams  
- poems -**

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## **Dai Butsu**

He sits. Upon the kingly head doth rest  
The round-balled wimple, and the heavy rings  
Touch on the shoulders where the swallow clings;  
The downward garment shows the ambiguous breast;  
The Face--that Face one scarce can look on, lest  
One learn the secret of unspeakable things;  
But the dread gaze descends with shudderings  
To the veiled couched knees, the hands and thumbs close-pressed.  
O lidded downcast eyes that bear the weight  
Of all our woes and terrible wrongs increase,  
Proud nostrils, lips proud-perfecter than these,  
With what a soul within you do you wait--  
Disdain and pity, love late-born of hate,  
Passion eternal, patience, pride and peace!

Francis William Lauderdale Adams

## **Gordon's Grave**

All the heat and the glow and the hush  
of the summer afternoon;  
the scent of the sweet-briar bush  
over bowing grass-blades and broom;

the birds that flit and pass;  
singing the song he knows,  
the grass-hopper in the grass;  
the voice of the she-oak boughs.

Ah, and the shattered column  
crowned with the poet's wreath.  
Who, who keeps silent and solemn  
his passing place beneath?

~This was a poet that loved God's breath;  
his life was a passionate quest;  
he looked down deep in the wells of death,  
and now he is taking his rest.~

Francis William Lauderdale Adams

## Love and Death

Death? is it death you give? So be it! O Death,  
thou hast been long my friend, and now thy pale  
cool cheek shall have my kiss, while the faint breath  
expires on thy still lips, O lovely Death!

Come then, loose hands, fair Life, without a wail!  
We've had good hours together, and you were sweet  
what time love whispered with the nightingale,  
tho' ever your music by the lark's would fail.

Come then, loose hands! Our lover time is done.  
Now is the marriage with the eternal sun.  
The hours are few that rest, are few and fleet.  
Good-bye! The game is lost: the game is won.

Francis William Lauderdale Adams

## Something

It is something in this darker dream demented  
to have wrestled with its pleasure and its pain:  
it is something to have sinned, and have repented:  
it is something to have failed, and tried again!

It is something to have loved the brightest Beauty  
with no hope of aught but silence for your vow:  
it is something to have tried to do your duty:  
it is something to be trying, trying now!

And, in the silent solemn hours,  
when your soul floats down the far faint flood of time --  
to think of Earth's lovers who are ours,  
of her saviours saving, suffering, sublime:

And that you with THESE may be her lover,  
with THESE may save and suffer for her sake --  
IT IS JOY TO HAVE LIVED, SO TO DISCOVER  
YOU'VE A LIFE YOU CAN GIVE AND SHE CAN TAKE!

Francis William Lauderdale Adams

## **To A. L. Gordon**

In night-long days, in aeons  
    where all Time's nights are one;  
where life and death sing paeans  
as of Greeks and Galileans,  
    never begun or done;

where fate, the slow swooping condor,  
    comes glooming all the sky --  
as you have pondered I ponder,  
as you have wandered I wander,  
    as you have died, shall I die?

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