Classic Poetry Series

Sydney Elliott Napier

- poems -

Publication Date:

2012

Publisher:

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

Sydney Elliott Napier (25 December 1870 – 3 May 1940)

Sydney Napier Elliott was an Australian writer and poet

Biography

Napier was born in Sydney, New South Wales and educated at Newington College and Sydney University.

He began his working life as a bank clerk with the AJS Bank in Burwood, New South Wales. From 1893 he was a jackeroo in Manilla, New South Wales, until he was articled to a solicitor in Tamworth in 1894. After 1899 he worked as a solicitor in Sydney.

During World War I, Napier served with the 41st Battalion of the AIF as a sergeant.

In 1925, Napier joined the Sydney Morning Herald. He subsequently became assistant editor of The Sydney Mail and leader-writer of the Sydney Morning Herald where in 1931 he compiled, with P S Allen, A Century of Journalism: The Sydney Morning Herald and Its Record of Australian Life 1831-1931. He contributed prose and verse to numerous English and Australian journals and newspapers, and published a collection of essays, The Magic Carpet in 1932.

Eserleri:

Underneath the bough [Sydney: Penfold, 1937]

The book of the Anzac memorial, New South Wales [Sydney, 1934]

On the Barrier Reef: Notes from a no-ologist's pocket-book [Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1928]

Walks abroad: Two Australians in the wilds of England, Scotland and Ireland [Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1933]

The Sydney Repertory Theatre : its history and significance; a criticism [Sydney :
Sydney Repertory Theatre Society, 1927]

Potted biographies [Sydney : Dymocks Book Arcade, 1930]

Great lovers [Sydney : Angus & Robertson, 1934]

The genesis and growth of solicitors' associations in New South Wales:

Together with a brief history of the Incorporated Law Institute of New South Wales [Sydney: Law Book Co., 1937]

The magic carpet and other essays and adventures [Sydney : Angus & Robertson, 1932]

Walks abroad: Being the record of the experiences of two Australians in the wilds of the United Kingdom [Sydney : Angus & Robertson, 1929]

Men and cities: Being the journeyings of a journalist [Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1938]

Underneath the bough : a book of verses / by S. Elliott Napier

On the Barrier Reef : a story of Australia's coral wonderland [Sydney : Angus & Robertson, 1932]

All Men Are Free

‘ALL men are free and equal born
 Before the Law!’ So runs the worn
 And specious, lying, parrot-cry.
 All men are free—to starve or sigh;
But few to feed on Egypt’s corn.

There toils the sweated slave, forlorn;
There weeps the babe with hunger torn;
 Dear God! Forgive us for the lie—
   ‘All men are free!’

That man may laugh while this must mourn;
One’s heir to honour, one to scorn—
 Were they born free? Were you? Was I?
 No! Not when born, but when they die
And of their robes—or rags—are shorn,
   All men are free!

Sydney Elliott Napier

France

OH, golden-lilied Queen—immortal France!
 Thou heritress of storied name and deed,
 As thou hast pluck'd, so oft, from cumb'ring weed
The fragrant flow'rs of Freedom and Romance,
So shalt thou seize to-day the fateful chance
 That comes to thee in this thy hour of need,
 When once again thy sacred frontiers bleed
Beneath the thrust of the Invader's lance.

For, with the hour, hath also come again
 The pure and splendid spirit of the Maid
   To nerve they sons and wipe away thy tears,
Till, sanctified by Sorrow, purged by pain,
 Thou shalt arise, unfettered, unafraid,
   And walk in honour down the deathless years.

Sydney Elliott Napier

Mater Dolorosa

JUST as of yore the friendly rain
 Patters its old and frank refrain;
 Just as of yore the world swings by
 The little window where I lie
Watching the shadows wax and wane.

I see, beyond the Aegean main,
His cross upon the grave-scarred plain—
 Yet still the dawn-flush climbs the sky,
   Just as of yore!

His cross—and mine! They try in vain
With careful phrase to stanch the pain;
 They say, ‘A hero’s death!’ But I
 Long only for his footstep nigh;
Long only for my boy again,
   Just as of yore!

Sydney Elliott Napier

Russia

IMPLACABLE as are thy arctic floes;
 Grim and gigantic as thy mountain height;
 Girt with thy pines for spindles and the light
Of pale auroras for thy stars; to those
Who know thee not thou seem’st as one who goes
 Unvex’d by Wrong, nor swerves to help the Right,
 A grey Lachesis of the Northern night,
Stark as thy steppes and colder than thy snows.

But we—we know thee now, Ally and Friend!
 True as thy Baltic Spars and tried by fire,
   Thy seeming coldness hides a courage high,
   A stern resolve to do, endure and die,
 So that the holy cause of thy desire—
Thy cause and ours—shall triumph in the end.

Sydney Elliott Napier