

Classic Poetry Series

William Henry Drummond

- poems -

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William Henry Drummond (1854-1907)

William Drummond was born at Hawthornden Manor into a wealthy Scots family. He attended Edinburgh University and went on to study law in France. When his father died in 1610 he became laird of Hawthornden and settled into the life of a wealthy man of letters, in the manor he was to occupy until his death.

He was engaged to marry Mary Cunningham of Barns, but she died in 1615, shortly before the wedding was due to take place. In his *Poems*, published the following year, he included several laments for her death. Drummond was the first significant Scottish poet to write in English rather than Scots. His library was well stocked with continental literature and he was an able translator of French, Italian and Spanish poetry. His fondness for foreign poetry can be seen in his introduction of the canzone, an Italian form, to English verse.

Ben Jonson's visit to Hawthornden in 1618-19 is documented in the notes Drummond took on their conversation. These notes provide a fascinating insight into Jonson's opinions, and they are the only detailed record we have of a poet's views on his fellow writers from this period. Jonson admired Drummond's poems but felt that they 'smelled too much of the Schools, and were not after the fancy of the time'.

Drummond was a keen supporter of the monarchy, writing poems on the occasion of James I's visit to Edinburgh in 1617, and for the Scottish coronation of Charles I in 1633. His royalist sympathies are evident in his historical writings as well as in his political pamphlets, and his death in 1649 is said to have been hastened by grief for the execution of King Charles.

A Lament

My thoughts hold mortal strife;
I do detest my life,
And with lamenting cries
Peace to my soul to bring
Oft call that prince which here doth monarchize:
But he, grim grinning King,
Who caitiffs scorns, and doth the blest surprise,
Late having decked with beauty's rose his tomb,
Disdains to crop a weed, and will not come.

William Henry Drummond

Change should breed Change

NEW doth the sun appear,
The mountains' snows decay,
Crown'd with frail flowers forth comes the baby year.
My soul, time posts away;
And thou yet in that frost
Which flower and fruit hath lost,
As if all here immortal were, dost stay.
For shame! thy powers awake,
Look to that Heaven which never night makes black,
And there at that immortal sun's bright rays,
Deck thee with flowers which fear not rage of days!

William Henry Drummond

De Nice Leetle Canadienne

1 You can pass on de worl' w'erever you lak,
2 Tak' de steamboat for go Angleterre,
3 Tak' car on de State, an' den you come back,
4 An' go all de place, I don't care--
5 Ma frien' dat 's a fack, I know you will say,
6 W'en you come on dis contree again,
7 Dere 's no girl can touch, w'at we see ev'ry day,
8 De nice leetle Canadienne.

9 Don't matter how poor dat girl she may be,
10 Her dress is so neat ab' so clean,
11 Mos' ev'rywan t'ink it was mak' on Paree
12 An' she wear it, wall! jus' lak de Queen.
13 Den come for fin' out she is mak' it herse'f,
14 For she ain't got moche monee for spen',
15 But all de sam' tam, she was never get lef',
16 Dat nice leetle Canadienne.

17 W'en 'un vrai Canayen' is mak' it mariée,
18 You t'ink he go leev on beeg flat
19 An' bodder hese'f all de tam, night an' day,
20 Wit' housemaid, an' cook, an' all dat?
21 Not moche, ma dear frien', he tak' de maison,
22 Cos' only nine dollar or ten,
23 W'ere he leev lak blood rooster, an' save de l'argent,
24 Wit' hees nice leetle Canadienne.

25 I marry ma famme w'en I 'm jus' twenty year,
26 An' now we got fine familiee,
27 Dat skip roun' de place lak leetle small deer,
28 No smarter crowd you never see--
29 An' I t'ink as I watch dem all chasin' about,
30 Four boy an' six girl, she mak' ten,
31 Dat 's help mebbe kip it, de stock from run out,
32 Of de nice leetle Canadienne.

33 O she 's quick an' she 's smart, an' got plaintee heart,
34 If you know correc' way go about,
35 An' if you don't know, she soon tole you so
36 Den tak' de firs' chance an' get out;
37 But if she love you, I spik it for true,
38 She will mak' it more beautiful den,
39 An' sun on de sky can't shine lak de eye
40 Of dat nice leetle Canadienne.

William Henry Drummond

Doth Then The World Go Thus?

Doth then the world go thus? doth all thus move?
Is this the justice which on earth we find?
Is this that firm decree which all doth bind?
Are these your influences, Powers above?
Those souls, which vice's moody mists most blind,
Blind Fortune, blindly, most their friend doth prove;
And they who thee, poor idol Virtue! love,
Ply like a feather tossed by storm and wind.
Ah! if a Providence doth sway this all,
Why should best minds groan under most distress?
Or why should pride humility make thrall,
And injuries the innocent oppress?
Heavens! hinder, stop this fate; or grant a time
When good may have, as well as bad, their prime!

William Henry Drummond

Her Passing

THE beauty and the life
Of life's and beauty's fairest paragon
--O tears! O grief!--hung at a feeble thread
To which pale Atropos had set her knife;
The soul with many a groan
Had left each outward part,
And now did take his last leave of the heart:
Naught else did want, save death, ev'n to be dead;
When the afflicted band about her bed,
Seeing so fair him come in lips, cheeks, eyes,
Cried, 'Ah! and can Death enter Paradise?'

William Henry Drummond

How Bateese Came Home

1 W'en I was young boy on de farm, dat 's twenty year ago
2 I have wan frien' he 's leev near me, call Jean Bateese Trudeau
3 An offen w'en we are alone, we lak for spik about
4 De tam w'en we was come beeg man, wit' moustache on our mout'.

5 Bateese is get it on hees head, he 's too moche educate
6 For mak' de habitant farmerre--he better go on State--
7 An' so wan summer evening we 're drivin' home de cow
8 He 's tole me all de whole beez-nesse--jus' lak you hear me now.

9 'W'at 's use mak' foolish on de farm? dere 's no good chances lef'
10 An' all de tam you be poor man--you know dat 's true you'se'f;
11 We never get no fun at all--don't never go on spree
12 Unless we pass on 'noder place, an' mak' it some monee.

13 'I go on Les Etats Unis, I go dere right away
14 An' den mebbe on ten-twelve year, I be riche man some day,
15 An' w'en I mak' de large fortune, I come back I s'pose
16 Wit' Yankee famme from off de State, an' monee on my clothes.

17 'I tole you somet'ing else also--mon cher Napoleon
18 I get de grande majorité, for go on parlement
19 Den buil' fine house on borde l'eau--near w'ere de church is stand
20 More finer dan de Presbytere, w'en I am come riche man!'

21 I say 'For w'at you spik lak dat? you must be gone crazee
22 Dere 's plaintee feller on de State, more smarter dan you be,
23 Beside she 's not so healtee place, an' if you mak' l'argent,
24 You spen' it jus' lak Yankee man, an' not lak habitant.

25 'For me Bateese! I tole you dis: I 'm very satisfy--
26 De bes' man don't leev too long tam, some day Ba Gosh! he die--
27 An' s'pose you got good trotter horse, an' nice famme Canadienne
28 Wit' plaintee on de house for eat--W'at more you want ma frien'?'

29 But Bateese have it all mak' up, I can't stop him at all
30 He 's buy de seconde classe tiquette, for go on Central Fall--
31 An' wit' two-t'ree some more de boy,--w'at t'ink de sam' he do
32 Pass on de train de very nex' wick, was lef' Rivière du Loup.

33 Wall! mebbe fifteen year or more, since Bateese go away
34 I fin' mesef Rivière du Loup, wan cole, cole winter day
35 De quick express she come hooraw! but stop de soon she can
36 An' beeg swell feller jomp off car, dat 's boss by nigger man.

37 He 's dressim on de première classe, an' got new suit of clothes
38 Wit' long moustache dat 's stickim out, de 'noder side hees nose
39 Fine gol' watch chain--nice portmanteau--an' long, long overcoat
40 Wit' beaver hat--dat 's Yankee style--an' red tie on hees t'roat--

41 I say 'Helloe Bateese! Hello! Comment ça va mon vieux?'
42 He say 'Excuse to me, ma frien' I t'ink I don't know you.'

43 I say, 'She 's very curis t'ing, you are Bateese Trudeau,
 44 Was raise on jus' sam' place wit' me, dat 's fifteen year ago?'

45 He say, 'Oh yass dat 's sure enough--I know you now firs' rate,
 46 But I forget mos' all ma French since I go on de State.
 47 Dere 's 'noder t'ing kip on your head, ma frien' dey mus' be tole
 48 Ma name 's Bateese Trudeau no more, but John B. Waterhole!'

49 'Hole on de water 's' fonny name for man w'at 's call Trudeau
 50 Ma frien's dey all was spik lak dat, an' I am tole heem so--
 51 He say 'Trudeau an' Waterhole she 's jus' about de sam'
 52 An' if you go for leev on State, you must have Yankee nam'.'

53 Den we invite heem come wit' us, 'Hotel du Canadaw'
 54 W'ere he was treat mos' ev'ry tam, but can't tak' w'isky blanc,
 55 He say dat 's leetle strong for man jus' come off Central Fall
 56 An' 'tabac Canayen' bedamme! he won't smoke dat at all!--

57 But fancy drink lak 'Collins John' de way he put it down
 58 Was long tam since I don't see dat--I t'ink he 's goin' drown!--
 59 An' fine cigar cos' five cent each, an' mak' on Trois-Rivières
 60 L'enfant! he smoke beeg pile of dem--for monee he don't care!

61 I s'pose meseff it 's t'ree o'clock w'en we are t'roo dat night
 62 Bateese, hees fader come for heem, an' tak' heem home all right
 63 De ole man say Bateese spik French, w'en he is place on bed--
 64 An' say bad word--but w'en he wake--forget it on hees head--

65 Wall! all de winter w'en we have soirée dat 's grande affaire
 66 Bateese Trudeau, dit Waterhole, he be de boss man dere--
 67 You bet he have beeg tam, but w'en de spring is come encore
 68 He 's buy de première classe tiquette for go on State some more.

69 You 'member w'en de hard tam come on Les Etats Unis
 70 An' plaintee Canayens go back for stay deir own contrée?
 71 Wall! jus' about 'dat tam again I go Rivière du Loup
 72 For sole me two t'ree load of hay--mak' leetle visit too--

73 De freight train she is jus' arrive--only ten hour delay--
 74 She 's never carry passengaire--dat 's w'at dey always say--
 75 I see poor man on char caboose--he 's got heem small valise
 76 Begosh! I nearly tak' de fit,--It is--it is Bateese!

77 He know me very well dis tam, an' say 'Bon jour, mon vieux
 78 I hope you know Bateese Trudeau was educate wit' you
 79 I 'm jus' come off de State to see ma familiee encore
 80 I bus' mesef on Central Fall--I don't go dere no more.'

81 'I got no monee--not at all--I 'm broke it up for sure--
 82 Dat 's locky t'ing, Napoleon, de brakeman Joe Latour
 83 He 's cousin of wan frien' of me call Camille Valiquette,
 84 Conductor too 's good Canayen--don't ax me no tiquette.'

85 I tak' Bateese wit' me once more 'Hotel du Canadaw'
86 An' he was glad for get de chance drink some good w'isky blanc!
87 Dat 's warm heem up, an den he eat mos' ev'ryt'ing he see,
88 I watch de w'ole beez-nesse mese'f--Monjee! he was hongree!

89 Madame Charette wat 's kip de place get very much excite
90 For see de many pork an' bean Bateese put out of sight
91 Du pain doré--potate pie--an' 'noder t'ing be dere
92 But w'en Bateese is get heem t'roo--dey go I don't know w'ere.

93 It don't tak' long for tole de news 'Bateese come off de State'
94 An' purty soon we have beeg crowd, lak village she 's en fête
95 Bonhomme Maxime Trudeau hese'f, he 's comin' wit' de pries'
96 An' pass' heem on de 'Room for eat' w'ere he is see Bateese.

97 Den ev'rybody feel it glad, for watch de embrasser
98 An' bimeby de ole man spik 'Bateese you here for stay?'
99 Bateese he 's cry lak beeg bebè, 'Bâ j'eux rester ici.
100 An if I never see de State, I 'm sure I don't care--me.'

101 'Correc',' Maxime is say right off, ' I place you on de farm
102 For help your poor ole fader, won't do you too moche harm
103 Please come wit' me on Magasin, I feex you up--bâ oui
104 An' den you 're ready for go home an' see de familiee.'

105 Wall! w'en de ole man an' Bateese come off de Magasin
106 Bateese is los' hees Yankee clothes--he 's dress lak Canayen
107 Wit' bottes sauvages--ceinture fléché--an' coat wit' capuchon
108 An' spik Français au naturel, de sam' as habitant.

109 I see Bateese de oder day, he 's work hees fader's place
110 I t'ink mese'f he 's satisfy--I see dat on hees face
111 He say 'I got no use for State, mon cher Napoleon
112 Kebeck she 's good enough for me--Hooraw pour Canadaw.'

William Henry Drummond

Inexorable

MY thoughts hold mortal strife;
I do detest my life,
And with lamenting cries
Peace to my soul to bring
Oft call that prince which here doth monarchise:
--But he, grim-grinning King,
Who caitiffs scorns, and doth the blest surprise,
Late having deck'd with beauty's rose his tomb,
Disdains to crop a weed, and will not come.

William Henry Drummond

Invocation

PHOEBUS, arise!

And paint the sable skies
With azure, white, and red;
Rouse Memnon's mother from her Tithon's bed,
That she thy career may with roses spread;
The nightingales thy coming each-where sing;
Make an eternal spring!
Give life to this dark world which lieth dead;
Spread forth thy golden hair
In larger locks than thou wast wont before,
And emperor-like decore
With diadem of pearl thy temples fair:
Chase hence the ugly night
Which serves but to make dear thy glorious light.
This is that happy morn,
That day, long wished day
Of all my life so dark
(If cruel stars have not my ruin sworn
And fates not hope betray),
Which, only white, deserves
A diamond for ever should it mark:
This is the morn should bring into this grove
My Love, to hear and recompense my love.
Fair King, who all preserves,
But show thy blushing beams,
And thou two sweeter eyes
Shalt see than those which by Peneus' streams
Did once thy heart surprise:
Nay, suns, which shine as clear
As thou when two thou did to Rome appear.
Now, Flora, deck thyself in fairest guise:
If that ye, winds, would hear
A voice surpassing far Amphion's lyre,
Your stormy chiding stay;
Let zephyr only breathe
And with her tresses play,
Kissing sometimes these purple ports of death.

The winds all silent are;
And Phoebus in his chair
Ensafroning sea and air
Makes vanish every star:
Night like a drunkard reels
Beyond the hills to shun his flaming wheels:
The fields with flowers are deck'd in every hue,
The clouds bespangle with bright gold their blue:
Here is the pleasant place--
And everything, save Her, who all should grace.

William Henry Drummond

Le Vieux Temps

1 Venez ici, mon cher ami, an' sit down by me--so
2 An' I will tole you story of old tam long ago--
3 W'en ev'ryt'ing is happy--w'en all de bird is sing
4 An' me!--I'm young an' strong lak moose an' not afraid no t'ing.

5 I close my eye jus' so, an' see de place w'ere I am born--
6 I close my ear an' lissen to musique of de horn,
7 Dat 's horn ma dear ole moder blow--an only t'ing she play
8 Is 'viens donc vite Napoléon--'peche toi pour votre souper.'--

9 An' w'en he 's hear dat nice musique--ma leetle dog 'Carleau'
10 Is place hees tail upon hees back--an' den he 's let heem go--
11 He 's jomp on fence--he 's swimmin' crik--he 's ronne two forty gait,
12 He say 'dat 's somet'ing good for eat--Carleau mus' not be late.'

13 O dem was pleasure day for sure, dem day of long ago
14 W'en I was play wit' all de boy, an' all de girl also;
15 An' many tam w'en I 'm alone an' t'ink of day gone by
16 An' pull latire an' spark de girl, I cry upon my eye.

17 Ma fader an' ma moder too, got nice, nice familiee,
18 Dat 's ten garçon an' t'orteen girl, was mak' it twenty t'ree
19 But fonny t'ing de Gouvernement don't geev de firs' prize den
20 Lak w'at dey say dey geev it now, for only wan douzaine.

21 De English peep dat only got wan familiee small size
22 Mus' be feel glad dat tam dere is no honder acre prize
23 For fader of twelve chil'ren--dey know dat mus' be so,
24 De Canayens would boss Kebeck--mebbe Ontario.

25 But dat is not de story dat I was gone tole you
26 About de fun we use to have w'en we leev a chez nous
27 We 're never lonesome on dat house, for many cavalier
28 Come at our place mos' every night--especially Sun-day.

29 But tam I 'member bes' is w'en I 'm twenty wan year--me--
30 An' so for mak' some pleasement--we geev wan large soirée
31 De whole paroisse she be invite--de Curé he 's come too--
32 Wit plaintee peep from 'noder place--dat 's more I can tole you.

33 De night she 's cole an' freeze also, chemin she 's fill wit snow
34 An' on de chimley lak phantome, de win' is mak' it blow--
35 But boy an' girl come all de sam an' pass on grande parloir
36 For warm itself on beeg box stove, was mak' on Trois Rivières--

37 An' w'en Bonhomme Latour commence for tune up hees fidelle
38 It mak' us all feel very glad--l'enfant! he play so well,
39 Musique suppose to be firs' class, I offen hear, for sure
40 But mos' bes' man, beat all de res', is ole Bateese Latour--

41 An' w'en Bateese play Irish jeeg, he 's learn on Mattawa
42 Dat tam he 's head boss cook Shaintee--den leetle Joe Leblanc

43 Tak' hole de beeg Marie Juneau an' dance upon de floor
 44 Till Marie say 'Excuse to me, I cannot dance no more.'--

 45 An' den de Curé 's mak' de speech--ole Curé Ladouceur!
 46 He say de girl was spark de boy too much on some cornerre--
 47 An' so he 's tole Bateese play up ole fashion reel a quatre
 48 An' every body she mus' dance, dey can't get off on dat.

 49 Away she go--hooraw! hooraw! plus fort Bateese, mon vieux
 50 Camille Bisson, please watch your girl--dat 's bes' t'ing you can do.
 51 Pass on de right an' tak' your place Mamzelle Des Trois Maisons
 52 You 're s'pose for dance on Paul Laberge, not Telesphore Gagnon.

 53 Mon oncle Al-fred, he spik lak' dat--'cos he is boss de floor,
 54 An' so we do our possibill an' den commence encore.
 55 Dem crowd of boy an' girl I'm sure keep up until nex' day
 56 If ole Bateese don't stop heseff, he come so fatigué.

 57 An' affer dat, we eat some t'ing, tak' leetle drink also
 58 An' de Curé, he 's tole story of many year ago--
 59 W'en Iroquois sauvage she 's keel de Canayens an' steal deir hair,
 60 An' say dat 's only for Bon Dieu, we don't be here--he don't be dere.

 61 But dat was mak' de girl feel scare--so all de cavalier
 62 Was ax hees girl go home right off, an' place her on de sleigh,
 63 An' w'en dey start, de Curé say, 'Bonsoir et bon voyage
 64 Menagez-vous--tak' care for you--prenez-garde pour les sauvages.'

 65 An' den I go meseff also, an' tak' ma belle Elmire--
 66 She 's nicer girl on whole Comté, an' jus' got eighteen year--
 67 Black hair--black eye, an' chick rosée dat 's lak wan fameuse on de fall
 68 But don't spik much--not of dat kin', I can't say she love me at all.

 69 Ma girl--she's fader beeg farmeur--leev 'noder side St. Flore
 70 Got five-six honder acre--mebbe a leetle more--
 71 Nice sugar bush--une belle maison--de bes' I never see--
 72 So w'en I go for spark Elmire, I don't be mak' de foolish me--

 73 Elmire!--she 's pass t'ree year on school--Ste. Anne de la Perade
 74 An' w'en she 's tak' de firs' class prize, dat 's mak' de ole man glad;
 75 He say 'Ba gosh--ma girl can wash--can keep de kitchen clean
 76 Den change her dress--mak' politesse before God save de Queen.'

 77 Dey 's many way for spark de girl, an' you know dat of course,
 78 Some way dey might be better way, an' some dey might be worse
 79 But I lak' sit some cole night wit' my girl on ole burleau
 8080 Wit' lot of hay keep our foot warm--an' plaintee buffalo--

 81 Dat 's geev good chances get acquaint--an' if burleau upset
 82 An' t'row you out upon de snow--dat 's better chances yet--
 83 An' if you help de girl go home, if horse he ron away
 84 De girl she 's not much use at all--don't geev you nice baiser!

85 Dat 's very well for fun ma frien', but w'en you spark for keep
86 She 's not sam t'ing an' mak' you feel so scare lak' leetle sheep
87 Some tam you get de fever--some tam you 're lak' snowball
88 An' all de tam you ack lak' fou--can't spik no t'ing at all.

89 Wall! dat 's de way I feel meseff, wit Elmire on burleau,
90 Jus' lak' small dog try ketch hees tail--roun' roun' ma head she go
91 But bimeby I come more brave--an' tak' Elmire she's han'
92 'Laisee-moi tranquille' Elmire she say 'You mus' be crazy man.'

93 'Yass--yass I say ' mebbe you t'ink I 'm wan beeg loup garou,
94 Dat 's forty t'ousand 'noder girl, I lef' dem all for you,
95 I s'pose you know Polique Gauthier your frien' on St. Cesaire
96 I ax her marry me nex' wick--she tak' me--I don't care.'

97 Ba gosh; Elmire she don't lak' dat--it mak' her feel so mad--
98 She commence cry, say "Poleon you treat me very bad--
99 I don't lak' see you t'row you'seff upon Polique Gauthier,
100 So if you say you love me sure--we mak' de marieé'--

101 Oh it was fine tam affer dat--Castor I t'ink he know,
102 We 're not too busy for get home--he go so nice an' slow,
103 He 's only upset t'ree--four tam--an' jus' about daylight
104 We pass upon de ole man's place--an' every t'ing 's all right.

105 Wall! we leev happy on de farm for nearly fifty year,
106 Till wan day on de summer tam--she die--ma belle Elmire
107 I feel so lonesome lef' behin'--I tink 't was bes' mebbe--
108 Dat w'en le Bon Dieu tak' ma famme--he should not forget me.

109 But dat is hees biz-nesse ma frien'--I know dat 's all right dere
110 I 'll wait till he call "Poleon' den I will be prepare--
111 An' w'en he fin' me ready, for mak' de longue voyage
112 He guide me t'roo de wood hesef upon ma las' portage.

William Henry Drummond

Little Bateese

1 You bad leetle boy, not moche you care
2 How busy you 're kipin' your poor gran'pere
3 Tryin' to stop you ev'ry day
4 Chasin' de hen aroun' de hay--
5 W'y don't you geev' dem a chance to lay?
6 Leetle Bateese!

7 Off on de fiel' you foller de plough
8 Den w'en you 're tire you scare the cow
9 Sickin' de dog till dey jomp the wall
10 So de milk ain't good for not'ing at all--
11 An' you 're only five an' a half dis fall,
12 Leetle Bateese!

13 Too sleepy for sayin' de prayer to-night?
14 Never min' I s'pose it 'll be all right
15 Say dem to-morrow--ah! dere he go!
16 Fas' asleep in a minute or so--
17 An' he 'll stay lak dat till de rooster crow,
18 Leetle Bateese!

19 Den wake us up right away toute suite
20 Lookin' for somet'ing more to eat,
21 Makin' me t'ink of dem long leg crane
22 Soon as dey swaller, dey start again,
23 I wonder your stomach don't get no pain,
24 Leetle Bateese!

25 But see heem now lyin' dere in bed,
26 Look at de arm onderneat' hees head;
27 If he grow lak dat till he 's twenty year
28 I bet he 'll be stronger dan Louis Cyr
29 An' beat all de voyageurs leevin' here,
30 Leetle Bateese!

31 Jus' feel de muscle along hees back,
32 Won't geev' heem moche bodder for carry pack
33 On de long portage, any size canoe,
34 Dere 's not many t'ing dat boy won't do
35 For he 's got double-joint on hees body too,
36 Leetle Bateese!

37 But leetle Bateese! please don't forget
38 We rader you 're stayin' de small boy yet,
39 So chase de chicken an' mak' dem scare
40 An' do w'at you lak wit' your ole gran'pere
41 For w'en you 're beeg feller he won't be dere--
42 Leetle Bateese!

William Henry Drummond

Madrigal

LIKE the Idalian queen,
Her hair about her eyne,
With neck and breast's ripe apples to be seen,
At first glance of the morn
In Cyprus' gardens gathering those fair flow'rs
Which of her blood were born,
I saw, but fainting saw, my paramours.
The Graces naked danced about the place,
The winds and trees amazed
With silence on her gazed,
The flowers did smile, like those upon her face;
And as their aspen stalks those fingers band,
That she might read my case,
A hyacinth I wish'd me in her hand.

William Henry Drummond

Saint John Baptist

THE last and greatest Herald of Heaven's King,
Girt with rough skins, hies to the deserts wild,
Among that savage brood the woods forth bring,
Which he than man more harmless found and mild.
His food was locusts, and what young doth spring
With honey that from virgin hives distill'd;
Parch'd body, hollow eyes, some uncouth thing
Made him appear, long since from earth exiled.
There burst he forth: 'All ye, whose hopes rely
On God, with me amidst these deserts mourn;
Repent, repent, and from old errors turn!'
--Who listen'd to his voice, obey'd his cry?
Only the echoes, which he made relent,
Rung from their marble caves 'Repent! Repent!'

William Henry Drummond

Spring Bereaved 1

THAT zephyr every year
So soon was heard to sigh in forests here,
It was for her: that wrapp'd in gowns of green
Meads were so early seen,
That in the saddest months oft sung the merles,
It was for her; for her trees dropp'd forth pearls.
That proud and stately courts
Did envy those our shades and calm resorts,
It was for her; and she is gone, O woe!
Woods cut again do grow,
Bud doth the rose and daisy, winter done;
But we, once dead, no more do see the sun.

William Henry Drummond

Spring Bereaved 2

SWEET Spring, thou turn'st with all thy goodly train,
Thy head with flames, thy mantle bright with flow'rs:
The zephyrs curl the green locks of the plain,
The clouds for joy in pearls weep down their show'rs.
Thou turn'st, sweet youth, but ah! my pleasant hours
And happy days with thee come not again;
The sad memorials only of my pain
Do with thee turn, which turn my sweets in sours.
Thou art the same which still thou wast before,
Delicious, wanton, amiable, fair;
But she, whose breath embalm'd thy wholesome air,
Is gone--nor gold nor gems her can restore.
 Neglected virtue, seasons go and come,
 While thine forgot lie closed in a tomb.

William Henry Drummond

Spring Bereaved 3

ALEXIS, here she stay'd; among these pines,
Sweet hermitress, she did alone repair;
Here did she spread the treasure of her hair,
More rich than that brought from the Colchian mines.
She set her by these musked eglantines,
--The happy place the print seems yet to bear:
Her voice did sweeten here thy sugar'd lines,
To which winds, trees, beasts, birds, did lend their ear.
Me here she first perceived, and here a morn
Of bright carnations did o'erspread her face;
Here did she sigh, here first my hopes were born,
And I first got a pledge of promised grace:
 But ah! what served it to be happy so?
 Sith passed pleasures double but new woe?

William Henry Drummond

Summons To Love

Phoebus, arise!
And paint the sable skies
With azure, white, and red:
Rouse Memnon's mother from her Tithon's bed
That she may thy career with roses spread:
The nightingales thy coming each-where sing:
Make an eternal spring!
Give life to this dark world which lieth dead;
Spread forth thy golden hair
In larger locks than thou wast wont before,
And emperor-like decore
With diadem of pearl thy temples fair:
Chase hence the ugly night
Which serves but to make dear thy glorious light.

This is that happy morn,
That day, long-wished day,
Of all my life so dark,
(If cruel stars have not my ruin sworn,
And fates my hopes betray),
Which, purely white, deserves
An everlasting diamond should it mark.
This is the morn should bring unto this grove
My Love, to hear and recompense my love.
Fair King, who all preserves,
But show thy blushing beams
And thou two sweeter eyes
Shalt see than those which by Peneus' streams
Did once thy heart surprise.
Now, Flora, deck thyself in fairest guise:
If that ye winds would hear
A voice surpassing far Amphion's lyre,
Your furious chiding stay;
Let Zephyr only breathe,
And with her tresses play.
The winds all silent are,
And Phoebus in his chair
Ensaffroning sea and air
Makes vanish every star:
Night like a drunkard reels
Beyond the hills, to shun his flaming wheels:
The fields with flowers are decked in every hue,
The clouds with orient gold spangle their blue;
Here is the pleasant place,
And nothing wanting is, save She, alas!

William Henry Drummond

The Log Jam

1 Dere 'a s beeg jam up de reever, w'ere rapide is runnin' fas',
2 An' de log we cut las' winter is takin' it all de room;
3 So boss of de gang is swearin', for not'ing at all can pass
4 An' float away down de current till somebody break de boom.

5 'Here 's for de man will tak' de job, holiday for a week
6 Extra monee w'en pay day come, an' ten dollar suit of clothes.
7 'T is n't so hard work run de log, if only you do it quick--
8 W'ere 's de man of de gang den is ready to say, ` Here goes?"

9 Dere was de job for a feller, handy an' young an' smart,
10 Willin' to tak' hees chances, willin' to risk hees life.
11 'Cos many a t'ing is safer, dan tryin' de boom to start,
12 For if de log wance ketch you, dey 're cuttin' you lak a knife.

13 Aleck Lachance he lissen, an' answer heem right away
14 'Marie Louise dat 's leevin' off on de shore close by
15 She 's sayin' de word was mak' me mos' happies' man to-day
16 An' if you ax de reason I 'm ready to go, dat 's w'y.'

17 Pierre Delorme he 's spikin' den, an' O! but he 's lookin' glad.
18 'Dis morning de sam' girl tole me, she mus' say to me, ` Good-bye Pierre.'
19 So no wan can stop me goin', for I feel I was comin' mad
20 An' wedder I see to-morrow, dat 's not'ing, for I don't care.'

21 Aleck Lachance was steady, he 's bully boy all aroun',
22 Alway sendin' de monee to hees moder away below,
23 Now an' den savin' a leetle for buyin' de house an' groun',
24 An' never done t'inkin', t'inkin' of Marie Louise Lebeau.

25 Pierre was a half-breed feller, we call heem de grand Nor' Wes'--
26 Dat is de place he 's leevin' w'en he work for de Compagnie,
27 Dey say he 's marry de squaw dere, never min' about all de res'--
28 An' affer he get hees monee, he 's de boy for de jamboree!

29 Ev'ry wan start off cheerin' w'en dey pass on de log out dere
30 Jompin' about lak monkey, Aleck an' Pierre Delorme.
31 Workin' de sam' as twenty, an' runnin' off ev'ryw'ere,
32 An' busy on all de places, lak beaver before de storm.

33 Den we hear some wan shoutin', an' dere was dat crazy girl,
34 Marie Louise, on de hillside, cryin' an' raisin' row.
35 Could n't do not'ing worsen! mos' foolish t'ing on de worl'
36 For Pierre Delorme an' Aleck was n't workin' upon de scow.

37 Bote of dem turn aroun' dere w'en girl is commencin' cry,
38 Lak woman I wance remember, got los' on de bush t'ree day,
39 'Look how de log is movin'! I 'm seein' it wit' ma eye,
40 Come back out of all dem danger!' an' den she was faint away.

41 Ten year I been reever driver, an' mebbe know somet'ing too,
42 An' dere was n't a man don't watch for de minute dem log she go;

43 But never a word from de boos dere, stannin' wit' all hees crew,
44 So how she can see dem movin' don't ax me, for I dunno.

45 Hitch dem all up togeder, t'ousan' horse crazy mad--
46 Only a couple of feller for han'le dem ev'ry wan,
47 Scare dem wit' t'onder an' lightning, an' den 't is n't half so bad
48 As log runnin' down de rapide, affer de boom she 's gone.

49 See dem nex' day on de basin, you t'ink dey was t'roo de fight
50 Cut wit' de sword an' bullet, lyin' along de shore
51 You 'd pity de log, I 'm sure, an' say 't was terrible sight
52 But man goin' t'roo de sam' t'ing, you 'd pity dat man some more.

53 An' Pierre w'en he see dem goin' an' log jompin' up an' down
54 De sign of de cross he 's makin' an' dive on de water dere,
55 He know it 's all up hees chances, an' he rader be goin' drown
56 Dan ketch by de rollin' timber, an' dat 's how he go, poor Pierre.

57 Aleck's red shirt is blazin' off w'ere we hear de log
58 Crackin' away an' bangin', sam' as a honder gun,
59 Lak' sun on de morning tryin' to peep t'roo de reever fog--
60 But Aleck's red shirt is redder dan ever I see de sun.

61 An' w'en dey 're tryin' wake her: Marie Louise Lebeau,
62 On her neck dey fin' a locket, she 's kipin' so nice an' warm,
63 An' dey 're tolin' de funny story, de funnies' I dunno--
64 For de face, Baptême! dey see dere, was de half-breed Pierre Delorme!

William Henry Drummond

The Wreck of the "Julie Plante": A Legend of Lac St. Pierre

1 On wan dark night on Lac St. Pierre,
2 De win' she blow, blow, blow,
3 An' de crew of de wood scow "Julie Plante"
4 Got scar't an' run below—
5 For de win' she blow lak hurricane,
6 Bimeby she blow some more,
7 An' de scow bus' up on Lac St. Pierre
8 Wan arpent from de shore.

9 De captinne walk on de fronte deck,
10 An' walk de hin' deck too—
11 He call de crew from up de hole,
12 He call de cook also.
13 De cook she 's name was Rosie,
14 She come from Montreal,
15 Was chambre maid on lumber barge,
16 On de Grande Lachine Canal.

17 De win' she blow from nor' -eas' -wes',--
18 De sout' win' she blow too,
19 W'en Rosie cry, "Mon cher captinne,
20 Mon cher, w'at I shall do?"
21 Den de captinne t'row de beeg ankerre,
22 But still de scow she dreef,
23 De crew he can't pass on de shore,
24 Becos' he los' hees skeef.

25 De night was dark lak wan black cat,
26 De wave run high an' fas',
27 W'en de captinne tak' de Rosie girl
28 An' tie her to de mas'.
29 Den he also tak' de life preserve,
30 An' jomp off on de lak',
31 An' say, "Good-bye, ma Rosie dear,
32 I go drown for your sak'."

33 Nex' morning very early
34 'Bout ha'f-pas' two—t'ree—four—
35 De captinne—scow—an' de poor Rosie
36 Was corpses on de shore,
37 For de win' she blow lak hurricane,
38 Bimeby she blow some more,
39 An' de scow bus' up on Lac St. Pierre,
40 Wan arpent from de shore.

MORAL

41 Now all good wood scow sailor man
42 Tak' warning by dat storm
43 An' go an' marry some nice French girl
44 An' leev on wan beeg farm.
45 De win' can blow lak hurricane

46 An' s'pose she blow some more,
47 You can't get drown on Lac St. Pierre
48 So long you stay on shore.

William Henry Drummond

This Life Which Seems So Fair

This Life, which seems so fair,
Is like a bubble blown up in the air
By sporting children's breath,
Who chase it everywhere
And strive who can most motion it bequeath.
And though it sometimes seem of its own might
Like to an eye of gold to be fixed there,
And firm to hover in that empty height,
That only is because it is so light.
But in that pomp it doth not long appear;
For when 'tis most admired, in a thought,
Because it erst was nought, it turns to nought.

William Henry Drummond

To His Lute

My lute, be as thou wert when thou didst grow
With thy green mother in some shady grove,
When immelodious winds but made thee move,
And birds their ramage did on thee bestow.
Since that dear Voice which did thy sounds approve,
Which wont in such harmonious strains to flow,
Is reft from Earth to tune those spheres above,
What art thou but a harbinger of woe?
Thy pleasing notes be pleasing notes no more,
But orphans' wailings to the fainting ear;
Each stroke a sigh, each sound draws forth a tear;
For which be silent as in woods before:
Or if that any hand to touch thee deign,
Like widowed turtle, still her loss complain.

William Henry Drummond

To The 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 lours,
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.

William Henry Drummond