

Classic Poetry Series

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

- poems -

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Johan Ludvig Heiberg(1791-1860)

Johan Ludvig Heiberg (December 14, 1791 – August 25, 1860), Danish poet and critic, son of the political writer Peter Andreas Heiberg (1758–1841), and of the novelist, afterwards the Baroness Gyllembourg-Ehrensvärd, was born in Copenhagen.

In 1800 his father was exiled and settled in Paris, where he was employed in the French foreign office, retiring in 1817 with a pension. His political and satirical writings continued to exercise great influence over his fellow-countrymen. Johan Ludvig Heiberg was taken by K.L. Rahbek and his wife into their house, Bakkehuset (now part of the Danish Maritime Safety Administration). He was educated at the University of Copenhagen, and his first publication, entitled *The Theatre for Marionettes* (1814), included two romantic dramas. This was followed by *Christmas Jokes and New Years Tricks* (1816), *The Initiation of Psyche* (1817), and *The Prophecy of Tycho Brahe*, a satire on the eccentricities of the Romantic writers, especially on the sentimentality of Ingemann. These works attracted attention at a time when Baggesen, Oehlenschläger and Ingemann possessed the popular ear, and were understood at once to be the opening of a great career.

In 1817 Heiberg took his degree, and in 1819 went abroad with a grant from government. He proceeded to Paris, and spent the next three years there with his father. In 1822 he published his drama *Nina* and was made professor of the Danish language at the University of Kiel, where he delivered a course of lectures, comparing the Scandinavian mythology as found in the Edda with the poems of Oehlenschläger. These lectures were published in German in 1827.

In 1825 Heiberg came back to Copenhagen for the purpose of introducing the vaudeville on the Danish stage. He composed a great number of these vaudevilles, of which the best known are *King Solomon and George the Hatmaker* (1825); *April Fools* (1826); *A Story in Rosenborg Garden* (1827); *Kjøge Huskors* (1831); *The Danes in Paris* (1833); *No* (1836); and *Yes* (1839). He took his models from the French theatre, but showed extraordinary skill in blending the words and the music; but the subjects and the humour were essentially Danish and even topical.

Meanwhile he was producing dramatic work of a more serious kind; in 1828 he brought out the national drama of *Elves' Hill* (Danish: *Elverhøi*); in 1830 *The Inseparables*; in 1835 the fairy comedy of *The Elves*, a dramatic version of Tieck's *Elfin*; and in 1838 *Fata Morgana*. In 1841 Heiberg published a volume of

New Poems containing A Soul after Death, a comedy which is perhaps his masterpiece, The Newly Wedded Pair, and other pieces.

He edited from 1827 to 1830 the famous weekly, the Flyvende Post (The Flying Post), and subsequently the Interimsblade (1834–1837) and the Intelligensblade (1842–1843). In his journalism he carried on his warfare against the excessive pretensions of the Romanticists, and produced much valuable and penetrating criticism of art and literature. In 1831 he married the great actress Johanne Luise Pätges (1812–1890), herself the author of some popular vaudevilles.

Heiberg's scathing satires, however, made him very unpopular; and this antagonism reached its height when, in 1845, he published his malicious little drama of The Nut Crackers. Nevertheless he became in 1849 director of the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen. He filled the post for seven years, working with great zeal and conscientiousness, but was forced by intrigues from without to resign it in 1856. Heiberg died at Bonderup Manor, near Ringsted, on 25 August 1860.

His influence upon taste and critical opinion was greater than that of any writer of his time, and can only be compared with that of Holberg in the 18th century. Most of the poets of the Romantic movement in Denmark were very grave and serious; Heiberg added the element of humour, elegance and irony. He had the genius of good taste, and his witty and delicate productions stand almost unique in the literature of his country. First of all he created a Danish critical tradition based upon firm and consequent principles of aesthetics breaking with the often extremely subjective and occasional value judgements of his predecessors. In return he has not avoided being regarded a conservative formalist and elitist by posterity and the reaction against his line was already started by Georg Brandes who was, however, affected by his school too. At any rate most of later Danish critics had to make up their mind about his ideas.

The poetical works of Heiberg were collected, in 11 vols, in 1861–1862, and his prose writings (11 vols) in the same year. The last volume of his prose works contains some fragments of autobiography. See also Georg Brandes, Essays (1889). For the elder Heiberg see monographs by Thaarup (1883) and by Schwanenflügel (1891).

À L'Aarestrup

Gud give, jeg var en Hest!
Da skulde jeg med min Hale,
Alt som jeg kunde bedst,
I Sommerheden dig svale,
Og vifte de mange Fluer
Bort fra din Purpurkind,
Og jage de andre Fruer
Dem i Haarfrisuren ind.

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Adelaide Grevinde Af Bombelles

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Afreisen

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Aftensmaaltidet

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Aftenvandring

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Amor Hos Bacchus

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Ankomsten

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Barcarole

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Barcarole

Calm the night, unstirring,
And the air so clear
Pearls of dew uncurling,
Moonlight rays unfurling
'Cross the glassy mere.

Dulcet waves appeasing
Heart that yearns for rest,
Sighs and sorrows ceasing,
Breath of wind releasing
Mind so long oppressed.

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Cantate

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Charlottenlund

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Clara Og Hendes Søster

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Claras Eensomhed

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Den Frivillige I Indkvartering

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Den Hellige Anders

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Den Sidste Prøve

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Den Yngre Digterskole

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Der Er I Himlen En Dreng Saa Smuk

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Der Vanker En Ridder Mellem Grønne Træer

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Det Banker Paa Døren. Kom Ind!

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Det Danske Flag

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Det Er En Gammel Sandhed, Ofte Prøvet

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Det Er Lystigt Nok At Staae

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Det, Som Min Læbe

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Eensomhed

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Efteraarsfølelse

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

En Elskovserklæring? Hvad Er Det Saa Meer?

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

En Værdig Mand Er Død! I Kraftig Alder

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Epilog

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Erindrer De, Det Var I Kongenshave

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Færgemanden

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Foraar Om Vinteren

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Fredrik Og Clara

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Gjæstekammeret

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Gravskrift Over Kgl. Skuespiller N. P. Nielsen

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Gudstjeneste

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Guldvaskeren

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Herligt, En Sommernat

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Himmelsk Kjærlighed

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Hjemkomst

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Høit Paa En Green En Krage

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

I Dandsen Du Mig Møder

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

I Et Exemplar Af Min Psyche

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Konning Volmer

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Kronborg

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Liden Kirsten

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Man Sig Forlover, Bytter Sin Ring

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Moder Og Søn

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Morgen

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Naar Aftenglands Og Morgenrøde

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Nattetanker

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Nu Løvsalen Skygger

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Nu Tordenskyen Trækker

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

O Fly For Amors Snare

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Paa Kirkegaarden

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Panisk Skræk

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Promenaden

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Protestantismen I Naturen

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Qvartcordium

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Rosenborg

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Ryssensteens Bade

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

See Saa! Nu Er Vi Her Tilbage

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Slutningssang

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Soldaten Paa Hjemvandring

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Solen Sank Bag Grønne Lund

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Storstuen

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Til Johan Welhaven

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Til Lærken

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Til Lanterna-Magica-Doublanten I Sorø

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Til Legationsraad Gierlew

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Tilegnelse Af Elverhøi

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Tjenstagtighed

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Uranienborg

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Vaaren Og Freden

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Vallø

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Vor Gamle Caro Holdt En Støi

Johan Ludvig Heiberg

Weyse

Johan Ludvig Heiberg