

Classic Poetry Series

Mary Colborne-Veel

- poems -

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Mary Colborne-Veel()

'resurgam'

(Autumn Song)

 Chill breezes moaning are
 Where leaves hang yellow:
 O'er the grey hills afar
 Flies the last swallow;
To come again, my love, to come again
 Blithe with the summer.
But Ah! the long months ere we welcome then
 That bright new comer.

 Cold lie the flowers and dead
 Where leaves are falling.
 Meekly they bowed and sped
 At Autumn's calling.

To come again, my love, to come again
 Blithe with the swallow.
Ah! might I dreaming lie at rest till then,
 Or rise and follow!

 The summer blooms are gone,
 And bright birds darting;
 Cold lies the earth forlorn;
 And we are parting.
To meet again, my love, to meet again
 In deathless greeting,
But ah! what wintry bitterness of pain
 Ere that far meeting!

Mary Colborne-Veel

'what Look Hath She?'

What look hath she,
 What majestie,
 That must so high approve her?
 What graces move
 That I so love,
 That I so greatly love her?

 No majestie
 But Truth hath She;
Thoughts sweet and gracious move her;
 That straight approve
 My heart to love,
And all my life to love her!

Mary Colborne-Veel

Distant Authors

"Aquí esta encerrada el alma licenciado Pedro Garcias."

Dear books! and each the living soul,
 Our hearts aver, of men unseen,
 Whose power to strengthen, charm, control,
 Surmounts all earth's green miles between.

For us at least the artists show
 Apart from fret of work-day jars:
 We know them but as friends may know,
 Or they are known beyond the stars.

Their mirth, their grief, their soul's desire,
 When twilight murmuring of streams,
 Or skies far touched by sunset fire,
 Exalt them to pure worlds of dreams;

[illegible]

All these are truths. And if as true
 More graceless scrutiny that reads,
 "These fruits amid strange husking grew;"
 "These lilies blossomed amongst weeds;"

Here no despoiling doubts shall blow,
 No fret of feud, of work-day jars.
 We know them but as friends may know,
 Or they are known beyond the stars.

Mary Colborne-Veel

Empty Houses

I

THERE'S not a person in the street,
This merry-making summer day!
The houses stand in dull array;
No profit on their doors to beat,
For all their owners are away.

The gardens blossom white and red
All solitary in the sun,
Save where some timid creatures run;
Secure across the lawns to tread,
No human dangers here to shun,—

Since men have gone on holiday;
Have left the still, suburban street
For that wide park, where people meet
In pleasures till the eve is grey.
Oh, but the home-coming is sweet!

II

There's not a person in the street
Where wandering in grief I go.
These strange small houses, set in row,
Send out no human form to greet,
No busy footfalls to and fro.

Tall poplars raise their shafts beside;
And mingled shades and sunbeams bless
God's Acre, in its quietness—
God's town, where men are drawn to bide
Untroubled by the world's distress.

There comes no opening of the gate,
Though to my friend I plead and pray.
'Patience!' the trees and sunbeams say.
'Here only empty houses wait,
While souls are keeping holiday.'

Mary Colborne-Veel

Resurgam

(Autumn Song)

Chill breezes moaning are
Where leaves hang yellow:
O'er the grey hills afar
Flies the last swallow;
To come again, my love, to come again
Blithe with the summer.
But Ah! the long months ere we welcome then
That bright new comer.

Cold lie the flowers and dead
Where leaves are falling.
Meekly they bowed and sped
At Autumn's calling.
To come again, my love, to come again
Blithe with the swallow.
Ah! might I dreaming lie at rest till then,
Or rise and follow!

The summer blooms are gone,
And bright birds darting;
Cold lies the earth forlorn;
And we are parting.
To meet again, my love, to meet again
In deathless greeting,
But ah! what wintry bitterness of pain
Ere that far meeting!

Mary Colborne-Veel

Saturday Night

Saturday night in the crowded town;
Pleasure and pain going up and down,
Murmuring low on the ear there beat
Echoes unceasing of voice and feet.
Withered age, with its load of care,
Come in this tumult of life to share,
Childhood glad in its radiance brief,
Happiest-hearted or bowed with grief,
Meet alike, as the stars look down
Week by week on the crowded town.

~And in a kingdom of mystery,
Rapt from this weariful world to see
Magic sights in the yellow glare,
Breathing delight in the gas-lit air,
Careless of sorrow, of grief or pain,
Two by two, again and again,
Strephon and Chloe together move,
Walking in Arcady, land of love.~

What are the meanings that burden all
These murmuring voices that rise and fall?
Tragedies whispered of, secrets told,
Over the baskets of bought and sold;
Joyous speech of the lately wed;
Broken lamentings that name the dead:
Endless runes of the gossip's rede,
And gathered home with the weekly need,
Kindly greetings as neighbours meet
There in the stir of the busy street.

Then is the glare of the gaslight ray
Gifted with potency strange to-day,
Records of time-written history
Flash into sight as each face goes by.
There, as the hundreds slow moving go,
Each with his burden of joy or woe,
Souls, in the meeting of stranger's eyes,
Startled this kinship to recognise, --

Meet and part, as the stars look down,
Week by week on the crowded town.

~And still, in the midst of the busy hum,
Rapt in their dream of delight they come.
Heedless of sorrow, of grief or care,
Wandering on in enchanted air,
Far from the haunting shadow of pain:
Two by two, again and again,
Strephon and Chloe together move,
Walking in Arcady, land of love.~

Mary Colborne-Veel

Song Of The Trees

1

WE are the Trees.
Our dark and leafy glade
Bands the bright earth with softer mysteries.
Beneath us changed and tamed the seasons run:
In burning zones, we build against the sun
Long centuries of shade.

2

We are the Trees,
Who grow for man's desire,
Heat in our faithful hearts, and fruits that please.
Dwelling beneath our tents, he lightly gains
The few sufficiencies his life attains—
Shelter, and food, and fire.

3

We are the Trees
That by great waters stand,
By rills that murmur to our murmuring bees.
And where, in tracts all desolate and waste,
The palm-foot stays, man follows on, to taste
Springs in the desert sand.

4

We are the Trees
Who travel where he goes
Over the vast, inhuman, wandering seas.
His tutors we, in that adventure brave—
He launched with us upon the untried wave,
And now its mastery knows.

5

We are the Trees

Who bear him company
In life and death. His happy sylvan ease
He wins through us; through us, his cities spread
That like a forest guard his unfenced head
'Gainst storm and bitter sky.

6

We are the Trees.
On us the dying rest
Their strange, sad eyes, in farewell messages.
And we, his comrades still, since earth began,
Wave mournful boughs above the grave of man,
And coffin his cold breast.

Mary Colborne-Veel

The Blessing

THE MASTER He was hungry:
'Shall we not dine,' said He,
'On the good fruit amongst the leaves
Of this delightful tree?'
But oh! the fig-tree bore no fruit.
'Wither,' He bade it, 'to the root,
For thus deceiving me.'

The Master He was hungry.
He plucked the grains so red
Of wheat that grew beside the way,
And He was bravely fed.
'For this,' He said, 'I guerdon thee,
Through all the years, a type to be
Of Christ, the Living Bread.'

The Master He was thirsty.
He raised His hand on high,
And crushed the good red grapes that grew
The nearest to the sky.
'And as thou gavest me drink of thine,
So must I pour my blood, O Vine,
When I for man shall die.'

The Master He was passing
From men He held so dear.
The feast with bread and wine was made;
The Friday Cross was near.
'Droop not!' He spoke, and blessed their food:
'The broken Body and the Blood
Sustain you year by year.'
And corn and wine thenceforth have stood
His symbols everywhere.

Mary Colborne-Veel

We Go No More To The Forest

WE go no more to the forest,
The rimus are all cut down.
They are built into roof and sill and wall,
Into floors that thrill to the last foot-fall
In the dancing of the town.

We go no more to the forest,
The kauris are all cut down.
They are built into ships so stout and strong,
Bearing their cargoes safe along,
Sailing from town to town.

We go no more to the forest,
The ratas are all cut down.
There are cornfields, golden and green and wide,
For the tangled depths where a world might hide,
And our lawns lie smooth in town.

We go no more to the forest:
Young, wild things are all cut down.
We are buying and selling and making love,
As the grown folk do, with a roof above,
And our hearts are at home in town.

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What Look Hath She

What look hath she,
What majestie,
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