

Classic Poetry Series

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch
- poems -

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Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch(21 November 1863 – 12 May 1944)

Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch was born on November 21, 1863 in Cornwall. He was a British writer, who published under the pen name of "Q". Quiller-Couch received a degree from Trinity College, Oxford and later became a lecturer there.

While he was at Oxford he published *Dead Man's Rock* (1887), and followed this with the 1888 publication of *Troy Town* and in 1889, *The Splendid Spur*. His later novels included *The Blue Pavilions* (1891), *The Ship of Stars* (1899), *Hetty Wesley* (1903), *The Adventures of Harry Revel* (1903), *Fort Amity* (1904), *The Shining Ferry* (1905), and *Sir John Constantine* (1906).

In 1898 he completed Robert Louis Stevenson's unfinished novel, *St Ives*. While in Oxford he was known as a writer of excellent verse. His poetical work is contained in *Poems and Ballads* (1896). In 1895 he published an anthology from the 16th and 17th-century English lyrists, *The Golden Pomp*, followed in 1900 by an equally successful *Oxford Book of English Verse, 1250—1900* (1900).

He was knighted in 1910, also that year publishing *The Sleeping Beauty* and other *Fairy Tales from the Old French*. He received a professorship of English at The University of Cambridge in 1912, which he retained for the rest of his life, later becoming *Chair of English*.

A Letter

After W. M. P.

Dear Kitty,
At length the term's ending;
I 'm in for my Schools in a week;
And the time that at present I'm spending
On you should be spent upon Greek:
But I'm fairly well read in my Plato,
I'm thoroughly red in the eyes,
And I've almost forgotten the way to
Be healthy and wealthy and wise.
So 'the best of all ways'—why repeat you
The verse at 2.30 a.m.,
When I 'm stealing an hour to entreat you
Dear Kitty, to come to Commem.?
Oh, come! You shall rustle in satin
Through halls where Examiners trod:
Your laughter shall triumph o'er Latin
In lecture-room, garden, and quad.
They stand in the silent Sheldonian—
Our orators, waiting—for you,
Their style guaranteed Ciceronian,
Their subject—'the Ladies in Blue.'
The Vice sits arrayed in his scarlet;
He's pale, but they say he dissem-
-bles by calling his Beadle a 'varlet'
Whenever he thinks of Commem.
There are dances, flirtations at Nuneham,
Flower-shows, the procession of Eights:
There's a list stretching usque ad Lunam
Of concerts, and lunches, and fetes:
There's the Newdigate all about 'Gordon,'
—So sweet, and they say it will scan.
You shall flirt with a Proctor, a Warden
Shall run for your shawl and your fan.
They are sportive as gods broken loose from
Olympus, and yet very em-
-inent men. There are plenty to choose from,
You'll find, if you come to Commem.
I know your excuses: Red Sorrel

Has stumbled and broken her knees;
Aunt Phoebe thinks waltzing immoral;
And 'Algy, you are such a tease;
It's nonsense, of course, but she is strict';
And little Dick Hodge has the croup;
And there's no one to visit your 'district'
Or make Mother Tettleby's soup.
Let them cease for a se'nnight to plague you;
Oh, leave them to manage pro tem.
With their croups and their soups and their ague)
Dear Kitty, and come to Commem.
Don't tell me Papa has lumbago,
That you haven't a frock fit to wear,
That the curate 'has notions, and may go
To lengths if there's nobody there,'
That the Squire has 'said things' to the Vicar,
And the Vicar 'had words' with the Squire,
That the Organist's taken to liquor,
And leaves you to manage the choir:
For Papa must be cured, and the curate
Coerced, and your gown is a gem;
And the moral is—Don't be obdurate,
Dear Kitty, but come to Commem.
'My gown? Though, no doubt, sir, you're clever,
You 'd better leave fashions alone.
Do you think that a frock lasts for ever?'
Dear Kitty, I'll grant you have grown;
But I thought of my 'scene' with McVittie
That night when he trod on your train
At the Bachelor's Ball. 'Twas a pity,'
You said, but I knew 'twas Champagne.
And your gown was enough to compel me
To fall down and worship its hem—
(Are 'hems' wearing? If not, you shall tell me
What is, when you come to Commem.)
Have you thought, since that night, of the Grotto?
Of the words whispered under the palms,
While the minutes flew by and forgot to
Remind us of Aunt and her qualms?
Of the stains of the old Journalisten?
Of the rose that I begged from your hair?
When you turned, and I saw something glisten—

Dear Kitty, don't frown; it was there!
But that idiot Delane in the middle
Bounced in with 'Our dance, I—ahem!'
And—the rose you may find in my Liddell
And Scott when you come to Commem.
Then, Kitty, let 'yes' be the answer.
We'll dance at the 'Varsity Ball,
And the morning shall find you a dancer
In Christ Church or Trinity hall.
And perhaps, when the elders are yawning
And rafters grow pale overhead
With the day, there shall come with its dawning
Some thought of that sentence unsaid.
Be it this, be it that—'I forget,' or
'Was joking'—whatever the fem-
-inine fib, you'll have made me your debtor
And come,—you will come? to Commem.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

A Triolet

To commemorate the virtue of Homoeopathy in restoring one apparently drowned.

Love, that in a tear was drown'd,
Lives revived by a tear.
Stella heard them mourn around
Love that in a tear was drown'd,
Came and coax'd his dripping swound,
Wept 'The fault was mine, my dear!'
Love, that in a tear was drown'd,
Lives, revived by a tear.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Almer Mater

Know you her secret none can utter?
Hers of the Book, the tripled Crown?
Still on the spire the pigeons flutter,
Still by the gateway flits the gown;
Still on the street, from corbel and gutter,
Faces of stone look down.

Faces of stone, and stonier faces—
Some from library windows wan
Forth on her gardens, her green spaces,
Peer and turn to their books anon.
Hence, my Muse, from the green oases
Gather the tent, begone!
Nay, should she by the pavement linger
Under the rooms where once she played,
Who from the feast would rise to fling her
One poor sou for her serenade?
One short laugh for the antic finger
Thrumming a lute-string frayed?
Once, my dear—but the world was young then—
Magdalen elms and Trinity limes—
Lissom the blades and the backs that swung then,
Eight good men in the good old times—
Careless we, and the chorus flung then
Under St Mary's chimes!

Reins lay loose and the ways led random—
Christ Church meadow and Iffley track,
'Idleness horrid and dog-cart' (tandem),
Aylesbury grind and Bicester pack—
Pleasant our lines, and faith! we scanned 'em:
Having that artless knack.
Come, old limmer, the times grow colder;
Leaves of the creeper redden and fall.

Was it a hand then clapped my shoulder?—
Only the wind by the chapel wall!
Dead leaves drift on the lute... So, fold her
Under the faded shawl.

Never we wince, though none deplore us,
We who go reaping that we sowed;
Cities at cock-crow wake before us—
Hey, for the lilt of the London road!
One look back, and a rousing chorus!
Never a palinode!

Still on her spire the pigeons hover;
Still by her gateway haunts the gown.
Ah! but her secret? You, young lover,
Drumming her old ones forth from town,
Know you the secret none discover?
Tell it—when you go down.
Yet if at length you seek her, prove her,
Lean to her whispers never so nigh;

Yet if at last not less her lover
You in your hansom leave the High;
Down from her towers a ray shall hover—
Touch you, a passer-by!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

An Oath

A month ago Lysander pray'd
To Jove, to Cupid, and to Venus,
That he might die if he betray'd
A single vow that pass'd between us.
Ah, careless gods, to hear so ill
And cheat a maid on you relying!
For false Lysander's thriving still,
And 'tis Corinna lies a-dying.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Anecdote For Fathers

By the late W. W. (of H.M. Inland Revenue Service).

And is it so? Can Folly stalk
And aim her unrespecting darts
In shades where grave Professors walk
And Bachelors of Arts?
I have a boy, not six years old,
A sprite of birth and lineage high:
His birth I did myself behold,
His caste is in his eye.
And oh! his limbs are full of grace,
His boyish beauty past compare:
His mother's joy to wash his face,
And mine to brush his hair!
One morn we strolled on our short walk,
With four goloshes on our shoes,
And held the customary talk
That parents love to use.
(And oft I turn it into verse,
And write it down upon a page,
Which, being sold, supplies my purse
And ministers to age.)
So as we paced the curving High,
To view the sights of Oxford town
We raised our feet (like Nelly Bly),
And then we put them down.
'Now, little Edward, answer me'—
I said, and clutched him by the gown—
'At Cambridge would you rather be,
Or here in Oxford town?'
My boy replied with tiny frown
(He'd been a year at Cavendish),
'I'd rather dwell in Oxford town,
If I could have my wish.'
'Now, little Edward, say why so;
My little Edward, tell me why.'
'Well, really, Pa, I hardly know.'
'Remarkable!' said I:
'For Cambridge has her 'King's Parade,'
And much the more becoming gown;

Why should you slight her so,' I said,
'Compared with Oxford town?'
At this my boy hung down his head,
While sterner grew the parent's eye;
And six-and-thirty times I said,
'Come, Edward, tell me why?'
For I loved Cambridge (where they deal—
How strange!—in butter by the yard);
And so, with every third appeal,
I hit him rather hard.
Twelve times I struck, as may be seen
(For three times twelve is thirty-six),
When in a shop the Magazine
His tearful sight did fix.
He saw it plain, it made him smile,
And thus to me he made reply:—
'At Oxford there's a Crocodile;
And that's the reason why.'
Oh, Mr. Editor! my heart
For deeper lore would seldom yearn,
Could I believe the hundredth part
Of what from you I learn.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

As I Laye A-Dreamynge

After T. I.

As I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
O softlye moaned the dove to her mate within the tree,
And meseemed unto my syghte
Came rydynge many a knyghte
All cased in armoure bryghte
Cap-a-pie,
As I laye a-dreamynge, a goodlye companye!
As I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
O sadlye mourned the dove, callynge long and callynge lowe,
And meseemed of alle that hoste
Notte a face but was the ghoste
Of a friend that I hadde loste
Long agoe.
As I laye a-dreamynge, oh, bysson teare to flowe!
As I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
O sadlye sobbed the dove as she seemed to despayre,
And laste upon the tracke
Came one I hayled as 'Jacke!'
But he turned mee his backe
With a stare:
As I laye a-dreamynge, he lefte mee callynge there.
Stille I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
And gentler sobbed the dove as it eased her of her payne,
And meseemed a voyce yt cry'd—
'They shall ryde, and they shall ryde
'Tyll the truce of tyme and tyde
Come agayne!
Alle for Eldorado, yette never maye attayne!
Stille I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
And scarcelye moaned the dove, as her agonye was spente:
'Shalle to-morrowe see them nygher
To a golden walle or spyre?
You have better in yr fyre,
Bee contente.'
As I laye a-dreamynge, it seem'd smalle punyshment.
But I laye a-wakyng, and loe! the dawne was breakynge
And rarely pyped a larke for the promyse of the daye:
'Uppe and sette yr lance in reste!

Uppe and followe on the queste!
Leave the issue to be guessed
At the endyng of the waye'—
As I laye a-wakyng, 'twas soe she seemed to say—
'Whatte and if it alle be feynyng?
There be better thynges than gaynyng,
Rycher pryzes than attaynyng.'—
And 'twas truthe she seemed to saye.
Whyles the dawne was breakyng, I rode upon my waye.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Behold! I Am Not One That Goes To Lectures...

Behold! I am not one that goes to Lectures or the pow-wow of Professors.

The elementary laws never apologise: neither do I apologise. I find letters from the Dean dropt on my table—and every one is signed by the Dean's name—

And I leave them where they are; for I know that as long as I stay up

Others will punctually come for ever and ever.

I am one who goes to the river,

I sit in the boat and think of 'life' and of 'time.'

How life is much, but time is more; and the beginning is everything,

But the end is something.

I loll in the Parks, I go to the wicket, I swipe.

I see twenty-two young men from Foster's watching me, and the trousers of the twenty-two young men,

I see the Balliol men en masse watching me.—The Hottentot that loves his mother, the untutored Bedowee, the Cave-man that wears only his certificate of baptism, and the shaggy Sioux that hangs his testamur with his scalps.

I see the Don who ploughed me in Rudiments watching me: and the wife of the Don who ploughed me in Rudiments watching me.

I see the rapport of the wicket-keeper and umpire. I cannot see that I am out.

Oh! you Umpires!

I am not one who greatly cares for experience, soap, bull-dogs, cautions, majorities, or a graduated Income-Tax,

The certainty of space, punctuation, sexes, institutions, copiousness, degrees, committees, delicatessen, or the fetters of rhyme—

For none of these do I care: but least for the fetters of rhyme.

Myself only I sing. Me Imperturbe! Me Prononce!

Me progressive and the depth of me progressive,

And the bathos, Anglice bathos

Of me chanting to the Public the song of Simple Enumeration.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Caliban Upon Rudiments Or Autoschediastic Theology In A Hole

Rudiments, Rudiments, and Rudiments!
'Thinketh one made them i' the fit o' the blues.
'Thinketh one made them with the 'tips' to match,
But not the answers; 'doubteth there be none,
Only Guides, Helps, Analyses, such as that:
Also this Beast, that groweth sleek thereon,
And snow-white bands that round the neck o' the same.
'Thinketh, it came of being ill at ease.
'Hath heard that Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands, and the rest o' 't. That's the case.
Also 'hath heard they pop the names i' the hat,
Toss out a brace, a dozen stick inside;
Let forty through and plough the sorry rest.
'Thinketh, such shows nor right nor wrong in them,
Only their strength, being made o' sloth i' the main—
'Am strong myself compared to yonder names
O' Jewish towns i' the paper. Watch th' event—
'Let twenty pass, 'have a shot at twenty-first,
'Miss Ramoth-Gilead, 'take Jehoiakim,
'Let Abner by and spot Melchizedek,
Knowing not, caring not, just choosing so,
As it likes me each time, I do: so they.
'Saith they be terrible: watch their feats i' the Viva!
One question plays the deuce with six months' toil.
Aha, if they would tell me! No, not they!
There is the sport: 'come read me right or die!
All at their mercy,—why they like it most
When—when—well, never try the same shot twice!
'Hath fled himself and only got up a tree.
'Will say a plain word if he gets a plough.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Chant Royal Of High Virtue

Who lives in suit of armour pent
And hides himself behind a wall,
For him is not the great event,
The garland nor the Capitol.
And is God's guerdon less than they?
Nay, moral man, I tell thee Nay:
Nor shall the flaming forts be won
By sneaking negatives alone,
By Lenten fast or Ramazàn;
But by the challenge proudly thrown--
Virtue is that becrowns a Man!
God, in His Palace resident
Of Bliss, beheld our sinful ball,
And charged His own Son innocent
Us to redeem from Adam's fall.
'Yet must it be that men Thee slay.'
'Yea, tho' it must, must I obey,'
Said Christ; and came, His royal Son,
To die, and dying to atone
For harlot, thief, and publican.
Read on that rood He died upon--
Virtue is that becrowns a Man!
Beneath that rood where He was bent
I saw the world's great captains all
Pass riding home from tournament
Adown the road from Roncesvalles--
Lord Charlemagne, in one array
Lords Caesar, Cyrus, Attila,
Lord Alisaundre of Macedon ...
With flame on lance and habergeon
They passed, and to the rataplan
Of drums gave salutation--
_'Virtue is that becrowns a Man!'
Had tall Achilles lounged in tent
For aye, and Xanthus neigh'd in stall,
The towers of Troy had ne'er been shent,
Nor stay'd the dance in Priam's hall.
Bend o'er thy book till thou be grey,
Read, mark, perpend, digest, survey,

Instruct thee deep as Solomon,
One only chapter thou canst con,
One lesson learn, one sentence scan,
One title and one colophon--
Virtue is that becrowns a Man!
High Virtue's best is eloquent
With spur and not with martingall:
Swear not to her thou'rt continent:
BE COURTEOUS, BRAVE, AND LIBERAL.
God fashion'd thee of chosen clay
For service, nor did ever say,
'Deny thee this,' 'Abstain from yon,'
But to inure thee, thew and bone.
To be confirmed of the clan
That made immortal Marathon--
Virtue is that becrowns a Man!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Christmas Eve

Friend, old friend in the Manse by the fireside sitting,
Hour by hour while the grey ash drips from the log;
You with a book on your knee, your wife with her knitting,
Silent both, and between you, silent, the dog.

Silent here in the south sit I; and, leaning,
One sits watching the fire, with chin upon hand;
Gazes deep in its heart--but ah! its meaning
Rather I read in the shadows and understand.

Dear, kind she is; and daily dearer, kinder,
Love shuts the door on the lamp and our two selves:

Not my stirring awakened the flame that behind her
Lit up a face in the leathern dusk of the shelves.

Veterans are my books, with tarnished gilding:
Yet there is one gives back to the winter grate
Gold of a sunset flooding a college building,
Gold of an hour I waited--as now I wait--

For a light step on the stair, a girl's low laughter,
Rustle of silk, shy knuckles tapping the oak,
Dinner and mirth upsetting my rooms and, after,
Music, waltz upon waltz, till the June day broke.

Where is her laughter now? Old tarnished covers--
You that reflect her with fresh young face unchanged--
Tell that we met, that we parted, not as lovers;
Time, chance, brought us together, and these estranged.

Loyal were we to the mood of the moment granted,
Bruised not its bloom, but danced on the wave of its joy;
Passion--wisdom--fell back like a fence enchanted,
Ringing a floor for us both--whole Heaven for the boy!

Where is she now? Regretted not, though departed,
Blessings attend and follow her all her days!
--Look to your hound: he dreams of the hares he started,

Whines, and awakes, and stretches his limbs to the blaze.

Far old friend in the Manse, by the green ash peeling
Flake by flake from the heat in the Yule log's core,
Look past the woman you love. On wall and ceiling
Climbs not a trellis of roses--and ghosts--of yore?

Thoughts, thoughts! Whistle them back like hounds returning--
Mark how her needles pause at a sound upstairs.
Time for bed, and to leave the log's heart burning!
Give ye good-night, but first thank God in your prayers!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Coronation Hymn

Tune--Luther's Chorale
'Ein' feste burg ist unser Gott'

I
Of old our City hath renown.
Of God are her foundations,
Wherein this day a King we crown
Elate among the nations.
Acknowledge, then, thou King--
And you, ye people, sing--
What deeds His arm hath wrought:
Yea, let their tale be taught
To endless generations.

II
So long, so far, Jehovah guides
His people's path attending,
By pastures green and water-sides
Toward His hill ascending;
Whence they beneath the stars
Shall view their ancient wars,
Their perils, far removed.
O might of mercy proved!
O love past comprehending!

III
He was that God, for man which spake
From Sinai forth in thunder;
He was that Love, for man which brake
The dreadful grave asunder.
Lord over every lord,
His consecrating word
An earthly prince awaits;
Lift then your heads, ye gates!
Your King comes riding under.

IV
Be ye lift up, ye deathless doors;
Let wave your banners o'er Him!

Exult, ye streets; be strewn, ye floors,
With palm, with bay, before Him!
With transport fetch Him in,
Ye ransom'd folk from sin--
Your Lord, return'd to bless!
O kneeling king, confess--
O subject men, adore Him!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

De Tea Fabula

Do I sleep? Do I dream?
Am I hoaxed by a scout?
Are things what they seem,
Or is Sophists about?
Is our 'to ti en einai' a failure, or is Robert Browning played
out?
Which expressions like these
May be fairly applied
By a party who sees
A Society skied
Upon tea that the Warden of Keble had biled with legitimate
pride.
'Twas November the third,
And I says to Bill Nye,
'Which it's true what I've heard:
If you're, so to speak, fly,
There's a chance of some tea and cheap culture, the sort
recommended as High.'
Which I mentioned its name,
And he ups and remarks:
'If dress-coats is the game
And pow-wow in the Parks,
Then I 'm nuts on Sordello and Hohenstiel-Schwangau and similar
Snarks.'
Now the pride of Bill Nye
Cannot well be express'd;
For he wore a white tie
And a cut-away vest:
Says I, 'Solomon's lilies ain't in it, and they was reputed well
dress'd.'
But not far did we wend,
When we saw Pippa pass
On the arm of a friend
—Doctor Furnivall 'twas,
And he wore in his hat two half-tickets for London, return,
second-class.
'Well,' I thought, 'this is odd.'
But we came pretty quick
To a sort of a quad

That was all of red brick,
And I says to the porter,—'R. Browning: free passes; and kindly
look slick.'
But says he, dripping tears
In his check handkerchief,
'That symposium's career's
Been regrettably brief,
For it went all its pile upon crumpets and busted on
gunpowder-leaf!'
Then we tucked up the sleeves
Of our shirts (that were biled),
Which the reader perceives
That our feelings were riled,
And we went for that man till his mother had doubted the traits
of her child.
Which emotions like these
Must be freely indulged
By a party who sees
A Society bulged
On a reef the existence of which its prospectus had never
divulged.
But I ask,—Do I dream?
Has it gone up the spout?
Are things what they seem,
Or is Sophists about?
Is our 'to ti en einai' a failure, or is Robert Browning played
out?

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Envoy

Young Knight, the lists are set to-day!
Hereafter shall be time to pray
In sepulture, with hands of stone.
Ride, then! outride the bugle blown!
And gaily dinging down the van,
Charge with a cheer--'Set on! Set on!
Virtue is that becrowns a Man!'

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Epilogue: To A Mother

On seeing her smile repeated in her daughter's eyes

A thousand songs I might have made
Of You, and only You;
A thousand thousand tongues of fire
That trembled down a golden wire
To lamp the night with stars, to braid
The morning bough with dew.
Within the greenwood girl and boy
Had loiter'd to their lure,
And men in cities closed their books
To dream of Spring and running brooks
And all that ever was of joy
For manhood to abjure.
And I'd have made them strong, so strong
Outlasting towers and towns--
Millennial shepherds 'neath the thorn
Had piped them to a world reborn,
And danced Delight the dale along
And up the daisied downs.
A thousand songs I might have made...
But you required them not;
Content to reign your little while
Ere, abdicating with a smile,
You pass'd into a shade, a shade
Immortal--and forgot!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Exmoor Verses

I. VASHTI'S SONG

Over the rim of the Moor,
And under the starry sky,
Two men came to my door
And rested them thereby.

Beneath the bough and the star,
In a whispering foreign tongue,
They talked of a land afar
And the merry days so young!

Beneath the dawn and the bough
I heard them arise and go:
And my heart it is aching now
For the more it will never know.

Why did they two depart
Before I could understand?
Where lies that land, O my heart?
-O my heart, where lies that land?

II. SATURN

From my farm, from hère farm
Furtively we came.
In either home a hearth was warm:
We nursed a hungrier flame.

Our feet were foul with mire,
Our faces blind with mist;
But all the night was naked fire
About us where we kiss'd.

To her farm, to my farm,
Loathing we returned;
Pale beneath a gallow's arm

The planet Saturn burned.

III. DERELICTION

O'er the tears that we shed, dear
The bitter vines twist,
And the hawk and the red deer
They keep where we kiss'd:
All broken lies the shieling
That sheltered from rain,
With a star to pierce the ceiling,
And the dawn an empty pane.

Thro' the mist, up the moorway,
Fade hunters and pack;
From the ridge to thy doorway
Happy voices float back...
O, between the threads o' mist, love,
Reach your hands from the house.
Only mind that we kiss'd, love,
And forget the broken vows!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Fire!

By Sir W. S.

I.

St. Giles's street is fair and wide,
St. Giles's street is long;
But long or wide, may naught abide
Therein of guile or wrong;
For through St. Giles's, to and fro,
The mild ecclesiastics go
From prime to evensong.
It were a fearsome task, perdie!
To sin in such good company.

II.

Long had the slanting beam of day
Proclaimed the Thirtieth of May
Ere now, erect, its fiery heat
Illumined all that hallowed street,
And breathing benediction on
Thy serried battlements, St. John,
Suffused at once with equal glow
The cluster'd Archipelago,
The Art Professor's studio
And Mr. Greenwood's shop,
Thy building, Pusey, where below
The stout Salvation soldiers blow
The cornet till they drop;
Thine, Balliol, where we move, and oh!
Thine, Randolph, where we stop.

III.

But what is this that frights the air,
And wakes the curate from his lair
In Pusey's cool retreat,
To leave the feast, to climb the stair,
And scan the startled street?
As when perambulate the young
And call with unrelenting tongue
On home, mamma, and sire;
Or voters shout with strength of lung
For Hall & Co's Entire;
Or Sabbath-breakers scream and shout—

The band of Booth, with drum devout,
Eliza on her Sunday out,
Or Farmer with his choir:—
IV.

E'en so, with shriek of fife and drum
And horrid clang of brass,
The Fire Brigades of England come
And down St. Giles's pass.
Oh grand, methinks, in such array
To spend a Whitsun Holiday
All soaking to the skin!
(Yet shoes and hose alike are stout;
The shoes to keep the water out,
The hose to keep it in.)

V.
They came from Henley on the Thames,
From Berwick on the Tweed,
And at the mercy of the flames
They left their children and their dames,
To come and play their little games
On Morrell's dewy mead.
Yet feared they not with fire to play—
The pyrotechnics (so they say)
Were very fine indeed.

VI.
(P.S. by Lord Macaulay).
Then let us bless Our Gracious Queen and eke the Fire Brigade,
And bless no less the horrid mess they've been and gone
and made;
Remove the dirt they chose to squirt upon our best attire,
Bless all, but most the lucky chance that no one
shouted 'Fire!'

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Hesperus

Down in the street the last late hansoms go
Still westward, but with backward eyes of red
The harlot shuffles to her lonely bed;
The tall policeman pauses but to throw
A flash into the empty portico;
Then he too passes, and his lonely tread
Links all the long-drawn gas-lights on a thread
And ties them to one planet swinging low.
O Hesperus! O happy star! to bend
O'er Helen's bosom in the trancèd west--
To watch the hours heave by upon her breast
And at her parted lip for dreams attend:
If dawn defraud thee, how shall I be deem'd.
Who house within that bosom, and am dreamed?

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

In A College Garden

Senex. Saye, cushat, callynge from the brake,
What ayles thee soe to pyne?
Thy carefull heart shall cease to ake
When dayes be fyne
And greene thynges twyne:
Saye, cushat, what thy griefe to myne?
Turtur. Naye, gossyp, loyterynges soe late,
What ayles thee thus to chyde?
My love is fled by garden-gate;
Since Lammas-tyde
I wayte my bryde.
Saye, gossyp, whom dost thou abyde?
Senex. Loe! I am he, the 'Lonelie Manne,'
Of Time forgotten quite,
That no remembered face may scanne—
Sadde eremyte,
I wayte tonyghte
Pale Death, nor any other wyghte.
O cushat, cushat, callynge lowe,
Goe waken Time from sleepe:
Goe whysper in his ear, that soe
His besom sweepe
Me to that heape
Where all my recollections keepe.
Hath he forgott? Or did I viewe
A ghostlye companye
This even, by the dismalle yewe,
Of faces three
That beckoned mee
To land where no repynynges bee?
O Harrye, Harrye, Tom and Dicke,
Each lost companion!
Why loyter I among the quicke,
When ye are gone?
Shalle I alone
Delayinge crye 'Anon, Anon'?
Naye, let the spyder have my gowne,
To brayde therein her veste.
My cappe shal serve, now I 'goe downe,'

For mouse's neste.
Loe! this is best.
I care not, soe I gayne my reste.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Jenifer's Love

Small is my secret-let it pass-
Small in your life the share I had,
Who sat beside you in the class,
Awed by the bright superior lad:
Whom yet with hot and eager face
I prompted when he missed his place.

For you the call came swift and soon:
But sometimes in your holidays
You meet me trudging home at noon
To dinner through the dusty ways,
And recognized, and with a nod
Passed on, but never guessed-thank God!

Truly our ways were separate.
I bent myself to hoe and drill,

Yea, with an honest man to mate,
Fulfilling God Almighty's will;
And bore him children. But my prayers
Were yours-and, only after, theirs.

While you-still loftier, more remote,
You sprang from stair to stair of fame,
And you've a riband on your coat,
And you've a title to your name;
But have you yet a star to shine
Above your bed, as I o'er mine?

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Kenmare River

'Tis pretty to be in Ballinderry,
'Tis pretty to be in Ballindoon,
But 'tis prettier far in County Kerry
Coortin' under the bran' new moon,
Aroon, Aroon!

'Twas there by the bosom of blue Killarney
They came by the hundther' a-coortin' me;
Sure I was the one to give back their blarney,
An' merry was I to be fancy-free.
But niver a step in the lot was lighter,
An' divvle a boulder among the bhoys,
Than Phelim O'Shea, me dynamither,
Me illigant arthist in clock-work toys.

'Twas all for love he would bring his figgers
Of imminent statesmen, in toy machines,
An' hould me hand as he pulled the thriggers
An' scattered the thraytors to smithereens.
An' to see the Queen in her Crystal Pallus
Fly up to the roof, an' the windeys broke!
And all with divvle a trace of malus,—
But he was the bhoy that enjoyed his joke!
Then O, but his cheek would flush, an' 'Bridget,'
He 'd say, 'Will yez love me?' But I 'd be coy
And answer him, 'Arrah now, dear, don't fidget!'
Though at heart I loved him, me arthist bhoy!

One night we stood by the Kenmare river,
An' 'Bridget, creina, now whist,' said he,
'I'll be goin' to-night, an' may be for iver;
Open your arms at the last to me.'

'Twas there by the banks of the Kenmare river
He took in his hands me white, white face,
An' we kissed our first an' our last for iver—
For Phelim O'Shea is disparsed in space.

'Twas pretty to be by blue Killarney,
'Twas pretty to hear the linnets's call,
But whist! for I cannot attind their blarney,
Nor whistle in answer at all, at all.
For the voice that he swore 'ud out-call the linnet's
Is cracked intoirely, and out of chune,

Since the clock-work missed it by thirteen minutes
An' scattered me Phelim around the moon,
Aroon, Aroon!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Lady Jane

Sapphics.

Down the green hill-side fro' the castle window
Lady Jane spied Bill Amaranth a-workin';
Day by day watched him go about his ample
Nursery garden.

Cabbages thriv'd there, wi' a mort o' green-stuff—
Kidney beans, broad beans, onions, tomatoes,
Artichokes, seakale, vegetable marrows,
Early potatoes.

Lady Jane cared not very much for all these:
What she cared much for was a glimpse o' Willum
Strippin' his brown arms wi' a view to horti-
—Cultural effort.

Little guessed Willum, never extra-vain, that
Up the green hill-side, i' the gloomy castle,
Feminine eyes could so delight to view his
Noble proportions.

Only one day while, in an innocent mood,
Moppin' his brow ('cos 'twas a trifle sweaty)
With a blue kerchief—lo, he spies a white 'un
Coyly responding.

Oh, delightsome Love! Not a jot do you care
For the restrictions set on human inter-
-course by cold-blooded social refiners;
Nor do I, neither.

Day by day, peepin' fro' behind the bean-sticks,
Willum observed that scrap o' white a-wavin',
Till his hot sighs out-growin' all repression
Busted his weskit.

Lady Jane's guardian was a haughty Peer, who
Clung to old creeds and had a nasty temper;
Can we blame Willum that he hardly cared to
Risk a refusal?

Year by year found him busy 'mid the bean-sticks,
Wholly uncertain how on earth to take steps.
Thus for eighteen years he beheld the maiden
Wave fro' her window.

But the nineteenth spring, i' the Castle post-bag,
Came by book-post Bill's catalogue o' seedlings

Mark'd wi' blue ink at 'Paragraphs relatin'
Mainly to Pumpkins.'
'W. A. can,' so the Lady Jane read,
'Strongly commend that very noble Gourd, the
Lady Jane, first-class medal, ornamental;
Grows to a great height.'
Scarce a year arter, by the scented hedgerows—
Down the mown hill-side, fro' the castle gateway—
Came a long train and, i' the midst, a black bier,
Easily shouldered.
'Whose is yon corse that, thus adorned wi' gourd-leaves,
Forth ye bear with slow step?' A mourner answer'd,
'Tis the poor clay-cold body Lady Jane grew
Tired to abide in.'
'Delve my grave quick, then, for I die to-morrow.
Delve it one furlong fro' the kidney bean-sticks,
Where I may dream she's goin' on precisely
As she was used to.'
Hardly died Bill when, fro' the Lady Jane's grave,
Crept to his white death-bed a lovely pumpkin:
Climb'd the house wall and over-arched his head wi'
Billowy verdure.
Simple this tale!—but delicately perfumed
As the sweet roadside honeysuckle. That's why,
Difficult though its metre was to tackle,
I'm glad I wrote it.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Mary Leslie

O Mary Leslie, blithe and shrill
The bugles blew for Spain:
And you below the Castle Hill
Stood in the crowd your lane.
Then hearts were wild to watch us pass,
Yet laith to let us go!
While mine said, 'Fare-ye-well, my lass!'
And yours, 'God keep my Jo!'

Here by the bivouac fire, above
These fields of savage play,
I'll lift my love to meet thy love
Twa thousand miles away,

Where yonder, yonder by the stars,
Nightlong there rins a burn,
And maids with lovers at the wars
May list their wraiths' return.

More careless yet my spirit grows
Of fame, more sick of blood:
But I can think of Badajoz,
And yet that God is good.
Beyond the siege, beyond the stour,
Beyond the sack of towns,
I reach to pluck ae lily-floo'r
Where leaders press for crowns.

O Mary! lily! bow'd and wet
With mair than mornin's rain!
The bugles up the Lawnmarket
Shall sound us home again.

Then fare-ye-well, these foreign lands,
And be damn'd their bitter drouth.
With your dear face between my hands
And the cup held to my mouth,
My love,
It's clean cup to my mouth!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Measure For Measure

By O—r K—m.

Wake! for the closed Pavilion doors have kept
Their silence while the white-eyed Kaffir slept,
And wailed the Nightingale with 'Jug, jug, jug!'
Whereat, for empty cup, the White Rose wept.
Enter with me where yonder door hangs out
Its Red Triangle to a world of drought,
Inviting to the Palace of the Djinn,
Where Death, Aladdin, waits as Chuckerout.
Methought, last night, that one in suit of woe
Stood by the Tavern-door and whispered, 'Lo,
The Pledge departed, what avails the Cup?
Then take the Pledge and let the Wine-cup go.'
But I: 'For every thirsty soul that drains
This Anodyne of Thought its rim contains—
Free-will the can, Necessity the must,
Pour off the must, and, see, the can remains.
'Then, pot or glass, why label it 'With Care'?
Or why your Sheepskin with my Gourd compare?
Lo! here the Bar and I the only Judge:—
O, Dog that bit me, I exact an hair!'
We are the Sum of things, who jot our score
With Caesar's clay behind the Tavern door:
And Alexander's armies—where are they,
But gone to Pot—that Pot you push for more?
And this same Jug I empty, could it speak,
Might whisper that itself had been a Beak
And dealt me Fourteen Days 'without the Op.'—
Your Worship, see, my lip is on your cheek.
Yourself condemned to three score years and ten,
Say, did you judge the ways of other men?
Why, now, sir, you are hourly filled with wine,
And has the clay more licence now than then?
Life is a draught, good sir; its brevity
Gives you and me our measures, and thereby
Has docked your virtue to a tankard's span,
And left of my criterion—a Cri'!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Nuptial Night

Hush! and again the chatter of the starling
Athwart the lawn!
Lean your head close and closer. O my darling!--
It is the dawn.
Dawn in the dusk of her dream,
Dream in the hush of her bosom, unclose!
Bathed in the eye-bright beam,
Blush to her cheek, be a blossom, a rose!
Go, nuptial night! the floor of Ocean tressing
With moon and star;
With benediction go and breathe thy blessing
On coasts afar.
Hark! the theorbos thrum
O'er the arch'd wave that in white smother booms
'Mother of Mystery, come!
Fain for thee wait other brides, other grooms!'
Go, nuptial night, my breast of hers bereaving!
Yet, O, tread soft!
Grow day, blithe day, the mountain shoulder heaving
More gold aloft!
Gold, rose, bird of the dawn,
All to her balcony gather unseen--
Thrill through the curtain drawn,
Bless her, bedeck her, and bathe her, my Queen!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Of Three Children

OF THREE CHILDREN CHOOSING
A CHAPLET OF VERSE

You and I and Burd so blithe—
Burd so blithe, and you, and I—

The Mower he would whet his scythe
Before the dew was dry.

And he woke soon, but we woke soon
And drew the nursery blind,

All wondering at the waning moon
With the small June roses twined:

Low in her cradle swung the moon
With an elfin dawn behind.

In whispers, while our elders slept,
We knelt and said our prayers,

And dress'd us and on tiptoe crept
Adown the creaking stairs.

The world's possessors lay abed,
And all the world was ours—

'Nay, nay, but hark! the Mower's tread!
And we must save the flowers!'

The Mower knew not rest nor haste—
That old unweary man:

But we were young. We paused and raced
And gather'd while we ran.

O youth is careless, youth is fleet,
With heart and wing of bird!

The lark flew up beneath our feet,
To his copse the pheasant whirr'd;

The cattle from their darkling lairs
Heaved up and stretch'd themselves;

Almost they trod at unawares
Upon the busy elves

That dropp'd their spools of gossamer,
To dangle and to dry,

And scurried home to the hollow fir
Where the white owl winks an eye.

Nor you, nor I, nor Burd so blithe
Had driven them in this haste;

But the old, old man, so lean and lithe,
That afar behind us paced;

So lean and lithe, with shoulder'd scythe,
And a whetstone at his waist.

Within the gate, in a grassy round
Whence they had earliest flown,

He upside-down'd his scythe, and ground
Its edge with careful hone.

But we heeded not, if we heard, the sound,
For the world was ours alone;

The world was ours!—and with a bound
The conquering Sun upshone!

And while as from his level ray
We stood our eyes to screen.

The world was not as yesterday
Our homelier world had been—

So grey and golden-green it lay
All in his quiet sheen,

That wove the gold into the grey,
The grey into the green.

Sure never hand of Puck, nor wand
Of Mab the fairies' queen,

Nor prince nor peer of fairyland
Had power to weave that wide riband
Of the grey, the gold, the green.

But the Gods of Greece had been before
And walked our meads along,

The great authentic Gods of yore
That haunt the earth from shore to shore
Trailing their robes of song.

And where a sandall'd foot had brush'd,
And where a scarfed hem,

The flowers awoke from sleep and rush'd
Like children after them.

Pell-mell they poured by vale and stream,
By lawn and steepy brae—

'O children, children! while you dream,
Your flowers run all away!'

But afar and abed and sleepily
The children heard us call;

And Burd so blithe and you and I
Must be gatherers for all.

The meadow-sweet beside the hedge,
The dog-rose and the vetch,

The sworded iris 'mid the sedge,

The mallow by the ditch—

With these, and by the wimpling burn,
Where the midges danced in reels,

With the watermint and the lady fern
We brimm'd out wicker creels:

Till, all so heavily they weigh'd,
On a bank we flung us down,

Shook out our treasures 'neath the shade
And wove this Triple Crown.

Flower after flower—for some there were
The noonday heats had dried,

And some were dear yet could not bear
A lovelier cheek beside,

And some were perfect past compare—
Ah, darlings! what a world of care
It cost us to decide!

Natheless we sang in sweet accord,
Each bending o'er her brede—

'O there be flowers in Oxenford,
And flowers be north of Tweed,

And flowers there be on earthly sward
That owe no mortal seed!

And these, the brightest that we wove,
Were Innocence and Truth,

And holy Peace and angel Love,
Glad Hope and gentle Ruth.

Ah, bind them fast with triple twine
Of Memory, the wild woodbine
That still, being human, stays divine,

And alone is age's youth!...

But hark! but look! the warning rook
Wings home in level flight;

The children tired with play and book
Have kiss'd and call'd Good-night!

Ah, sisters, look! What fields be these
That lie so sad and shorn?

What hand has cut our coppices,
And thro' the trimm'd, the ruin'd, trees
Lets wail a wind forlorn?

'Tis Time, 'tis Time has done this crime
And laid our meadows waste—

The bent unwearied tyrant Time,
That knows nor rest nor haste.

Yet courage, children; homeward bring
Your hearts, your garlands high;

For we have dared to do a thing
That shall his worst defy.

We cannot nail the dial's hand;
We cannot bind the sun

By Gibeon to stay and stand,
Or the moon o'er Ajalon;

We cannot blunt th' abhorred shears,
Nor shift the skeins of Fate,

Nor say unto the posting years
'Ye shall not desolate.'

We cannot cage the lion's rage,
Nor teach the turtle-dove

Beside what well his moan to tell
Or to haunt one only grove;

But the lion's brood will range for food
As the fledged bird will rove.

And east and west we three may wend—
Yet we a wreath have wound

For us shall wind withouten end
The wide, wide world around:

Be it east or west, and ne'er so far,
In east or west shall peep no star,
No blossom break from ground,
But minds us of the wreath we wove
Of innocence and holy love
That in the meads we found,

And handsell'd from the Mower's scythe,
And bound with memory's living withe—
You and I and Burd so blithe—
Three maidens on a mound:

And all of happiness was ours
Shall find remembrance 'mid the flowers,
Shall take revival from the flowers
And by the flowers be crown'd.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Retrospection

After C. S. C.

When the hunter-star Orion
(Or, it may be, Charles his Wain)
Tempts the tiny elves to try on
All their little tricks again;
When the earth is calmly breathing
Draughts of slumber undefiled,
And the sire, unused to teething,
Seeks for errant pins his child;
When the moon is on the ocean,
And our little sons and heirs
From a natural emotion
Wish the luminary theirs;
Then a feeling hard to stifle,
Even harder to define,
Makes me feel I 'd give a trifle
For the days of Auld Lang Syne.
James—for we have been as brothers
(Are, to speak correctly, twins),
Went about in one another's
Clothing, bore each other's sins,
Rose together, ere the pearly
Tint of morn had left the heaven,
And retired (absurdly early)
Simultaneously at seven—
James, the days of yore were pleasant.
Sweet to climb for alien pears
Till the irritated peasant
Came and took us unawares;
Sweet to devastate his chickens,
As the ambush'd catapult
Scattered, and the very dickens
Was the natural result;
Sweet to snare the thoughtless rabbit;
Break the next-door neighbour's pane;
Cultivate the smoker's habit
On the not-innocuous cane;
Leave the exercise unwritten;
Systematically cut

Morning school, to plunge the kitten
In his bath, the water-butt.
Age, my James, that from the cheek of
Beauty steals its rosy hue,
Has not left us much to speak of:
But 'tis not for this I rue.
Beauty with its thousand graces,
Hair and tints that will not fade,
You may get from many places
Practically ready-made.
No; it is the evanescence
Of those lovelier tints of Hope—
Bubbles, such as adolescence
Joys to win from melted soap—
Emphasizing the conclusion
That the dreams of Youth remain
Castles that are An delusion
(Castles, that's to say, in Spain).
Age thinks 'fit,' and I say 'fiat.'
Here I stand for Fortune's butt,
As for Sunday swains to shy at
Stands the stoic coco-nut.
If you wish it put succinctly,
Gone are all our little games;
But I thought I 'd say distinctly
What I feel about it, James.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Solivitur Acris Hiemps

My Juggins, see: the pasture green,
Obeying Nature's kindly law,
Renews its mantle; there has been
A thaw.

The frost-bound earth is free at last,
That lay 'neath Winter's sullen yoke
'Till people felt it getting past
A joke.

Now forth again the Freshers fare,
And get them tasty summer suits
Wherein they flaunt afield and scare
The brutes.

Again the stream suspects the keel;
Again the shrieking captain drops
Upon his crew; again the meal
Of chops

Divides the too-laborious day;
Again the Student sighs o'er Mods,
And prompts his enemies to lay
Long odds.

Again the shopman spreads his wiles;
Again the organ-pipes, unbound,
Distract the populace for miles
Around.

Then, Juggins, ere December's touch
Once more the wealth of Spring reclaim,
Since each successive year is much
The same;

Since too the monarch on his throne
In purple lapped and frankincense,
Who from his infancy has blown
Expense,

No less than he who barely gets
The boon of out-of-door relief,
Must see desuetude,—come let's
Be brief.

At those resolves last New Year's Day
The easy gods indulgent wink.

Then downward, ho!—the shortest way

Is drink.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

The Children In The Wood

I

NOW ponder well, you parents dear,□
These words which I shall write;□
A doleful story you shall hear,□
In time brought forth to light.□
A gentleman of good account□
In Norfolk dwelt of late,□
Who did in honour far surmount□
Most men of his estate.□

II

Sore sick he was and like to die,□
No help his life could save;□
His wife by him as sick did lie,□
And both possest one grave.□
No love between these two was lost,□
Each was to other kind;□
In love they lived, in love they died,□
And left two babes behind:□

III

The one a fine and pretty boy□
Not passing three years old,□
The other a girl more young than he,□
And framed in beauty's mould.□
The father left his little son,□
As plainly did appear,□
When he to perfect age should come,□
Three hundred pounds a year;□

IV

And to his little daughter Jane□
Five hundred pounds in gold,□
To be paid down on marriage-day,□
Which might not be controll'd.□
But if the children chanced to die□
Ere they to age should come,□
Their uncle should possess their wealth;□
For so the will did run.□

V

'Now, brother,' said the dying man,□
 'Look to my children dear;□
 Be good unto my boy and girl,□
 No friends else have they here:□
 To God and you I recommend□
 My children dear this day;□
 But little while be sure we have□
 Within this world to stay.□

VI

'You must be father and mother both,□
 And uncle, all in one;□
 God knows what will become of them□
 When I am dead and gone.'□
 With that bespake their mother dear:□
 'O brother kind,' quoth she,□
 'You are the man must bring our babes□
 To wealth or misery!□

VII

'And if you keep them carefully,□
 Then God will you reward;□
 But if you otherwise should deal,□
 God will your deeds regard.'□
 With lips as cold as any stone,□
 They kiss'd their children small:□
 'God bless you both, my children dear!'□
 With that the tears did fall.□

VIII

These speeches then their brother spake□
 To this sick couple there:□
 'The keeping of your little ones,□
 Sweet sister, do not fear;□
 God never prosper me nor mine,□
 Nor aught else that I have,□
 If I do wrong your children dear□
 When you are laid in grave!'□

IX

The parents being dead and gone,□
The children home he takes,□
And brings them straight unto his house,□
Where much of them he makes.□
He had not kept these pretty babes□
A twelvemonth and a day,□
But, for their wealth, he did devise□
To make them both away.□

X

He bargain'd with two ruffians strong,□
Which were of furious mood,□
That they should take these children young,□
And slay them in a wood.□
He told his wife an artful tale:□
He would the children send□
To be brought up in London town□
With one that was his friend.□

XI

Away then went those pretty babes,□
Rejoicing at that tide,□
Rejoicing with a merry mind□
They should on cock-horse ride.□
They prate and prattle pleasantly,□
As they ride on the way,□
To those that should their butchers be□
And work their lives' decay:□

XII

So that the pretty speech they had□
Made Murder's heart relent;□
And they that undertook the deed□
Full sore did now repent.□
Yet one of them, more hard of heart,□
Did vow to do his charge,□
Because the wretch that hirèd him□
Had paid him very large.□

XIII

The other won't agree thereto,□
So here they fall to strife;□

With one another they did fight□
About the children's life:□
And he that was of mildest mood□
Did slay the other there,□
Within an unfrequented wood.—□
The babes did quake for fear!□

XIV

He took the children by the hand,□
Tears standing in their eye,□
And bade them straightway follow him,□
And lo! they did not cry;□
And two long miles he led them on,□
While they for food complain:□
'Stay here,' quoth he; 'I'll bring you bread□
When I come back again.'□

XV

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,□
Went wandering up and down;□
But never more could see the man□
Approaching from the town.□
Their pretty lips with blackberries□
Were all besmear'd and dyed;□
And when they saw the darksome night,□
They sat them down and cried.□

XVI

Thus wander'd these poor innocents,□
Till death did end their grief;□
In one another's arms they died,□
As wanting due relief:□
No burial this pretty pair□
From any man receives,□
Till Robin Redbreast piously□
Did cover them with leaves.□

XVII

And now the heavy wrath of God□
Upon their uncle fell;□
Yea, fearful fiends did haunt his house,□
His conscience felt an hell:□

His barns were fired, his goods consumed,□
His lands were barren made,□
His cattle died within the field,□
And nothing with him stay'd.□

XVIII

And in a voyage to Portugal□
Two of his sons did die;□
And, to conclude, himself was brought□
To want and misery:□
He pawn'd and mortgaged all his land□
Ere seven years came about.□
And now at last his wicked act□
Did by this means come out.□

XIX

The fellow that did take in hand□
These children for to kill,□
Was for a robbery judged to die,□
Such was God's blessed will:□
Who did confess the very truth,□
As here hath been display'd:□
The uncle having died in jail,□
Where he for debt was laid.□

XX

You that executors be made,□
And overseers eke,□
Of children that be fatherless,□
And infants mild and meek,□
Take you example by this thing,□
And yield to each his right,□
Lest God with suchlike misery□
Your wicked minds requite.□

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

The Doom Of The Esquire Bedell

Adown the torturing mile of street
I mark him come and go,
Thread in and out with tireless feet
The crossings to and fro;
A soul that treads without retreat
A labyrinth of woe.
Palsied with awe of such despair,
All living things give room,
They flit before his sightless glare
As horrid shapes, that loom
And shriek the curse that bids him bear
The symbol of his doom.
The very stones are coals that bake
And scorch his fevered skin;
A fire no hissing hail may slake
Consumes his heart within.
Still must he hasten on to rake
The furnace of his sin.
Still forward! forward! For he feels
Fierce claws that pluck his breast,
And blindly beckon as he reels
Upon his awful quest:
For there is that behind his heels
Knows neither ruth nor rest.
The fiends in hell have flung the dice;
The destinies depend
On feet that run for fearful price,
And fangs that gape to rend;
And still the footsteps of his Vice
Pursue him to the end:—
The feet of his incarnate Vice
Shall dog him to the end.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

The Root

Deep, Love, yea, very deep.
And in the dark exiled,
I have no sense of light but still to creep
And know the breast, but not the eyes. Thy child
Saw ne'er his mother near, nor if she smiled;
But only feels her weep.

Yet clouds and branches green
There be aloft, somewhere,
And winds, and angel birds that build between,
As I believe--and I will not despair;
For faith is evidence of things not seen.
Love! if I could be there!

I will be patient, dear.
Perchance some part of me
Puts forth aloft and feels the rushing year
And shades the bird, and is that happy tree
Then were it strength to serve and not appear,
And bliss, though blind, to be.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

The Sair Stroke

O waly, waly, my bonnie crew
Gin ye maun bumpit be!
And waly, waly, my Stroke sae true,
Ye leuk unpleasauntlie!
O hae ye suppit the sad sherrie
That gars the wind gae soon;
Or hae ye pud o' the braw bird's-e'e,
Ye be sae stricken doun?
I hae na suppit the sad sherrie,
For a' my heart is sair;
For Keiller's still i' the bonnie Dundee,
And his is halesome fare.
But I hae slain our gude Captain,
That c'uld baith shout and sweer,
And ither twain put out o' pain—
The Scribe and Treasurere.
There's ane lies stark by the meadow-gate,
And twa by the black, black brig:
And waefu', waefu', was the fate
That gar'd them there to lig!
They waked us soon, they warked us lang,
Wearily did we greet;
'Should he abraide' was a' our sang,
Our food but butcher's-meat.
We hadna train'd but ower a week,
A week, but barely twa,
Three sonsie steeds they fared to seek,
That mightna gar them fa'.
They 've ta'en us ower the lang, lang coorse,
And wow! but it was wark;
And ilka coach he sware him hoorse,
That ilka man s'uld hark.
Then upped and spake our pawkie bow,
—O, but he wasna late!
'Now who shall gar them cry Enow,
That gang this fearsome gate?'
Syne he has ta'en his boatin' cap,
And cast the keevils in,
And wha but me to gae (God hap!)

And stay our Captain's din?
I stayed his din by the meadow-gate,
His feres' by Nuneham brig,
And waefu', waefu', was the fate
That gar'd them there to lig!
O, waly to the welkin's top!
And waly round the braes!
And waly all about the shop
(To use a Southron phrase).
Rede ither crews be debonair,
But we 've a weird to dree,
I wis we maun be bumpit sair
By boaties two and three:
Sing stretchers of yew for our Toggere,
Sith we maun bumpit be!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

The Splendid Spur

NOT on the neck of prince or hound
Nor on a woman's finger twin'd,
May gold from the deriding ground
Keep sacred that we sacred bind:
 Only the heel
 Of splendid steel
Shall stand secure on sliding fate,
When golden navies weep their freight.

The scarlet hat, the laurell'd stave
Are measures, not the springs, of worth;
In a wife's lap, as in a grave,
Man's airy notions mix with earth.
 Seek other spur
 Bravely to stir
The dust in this loud world, and tread
Alp-high among the whisp'ring dead.

Trust in thyself,—then spur amain:
So shall Charybdis wear a grace,
Grim AEtna laugh, the Libyan plain
Take roses to her shrivell'd face.
 This orb—this round
 Of sight and sound—
Count it the lists that God hath built
For haughty hearts to ride a-tilt.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

The Statues And The Tear

All night a fountain pleads,
Telling her beads,
Her tinkling beads monotonous 'neath the moon;
And where she springs atween,
Two statues lean--
Two Kings, their marble beards with moonlight strewn.
Till hate had frozen speech,
Each hated each,
Hated and died, and went unto his place:
And still inveterate
They lean and hate
With glare of stone implacable, face to face.
One, who bade set them here
In stone austere,
To both was dear, and did not guess at all:
Yet with her new-wed lord
Walking the sward
Paused, and for two dead friends a tear let all.
She turn'd and went her way.
Yet in the spray
The shining tear attempts, but cannot lie.
Night-long the fountain drips,
But even slips
Untold that one bead of her rosary:
While they, who know it would
Lie if it could,
Lean on and hate, watching it, eye to eye.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

The White Moth

IF a leaf rustled, she would start:
And yet she died, a year ago.
How had so frail a thing the heart
To journey where she trembled so?
And do they turn and turn in fright,
Those little feet, in so much night?

The light above the poet's head
Streamed on the page and on the cloth,
And twice and thrice there buffeted
On the black pane a white-winged moth:
'T was Annie's soul that beat outside
And "Open, open, open!" cried:

"I could not find the way to God;
There were too many flaming suns
For signposts, and the fearful road
Led over wastes where millions
Of tangled comets hissed and burned—
I was bewildered and I turned.

"O, it was easy then! I knew
Your window and no star beside.
Look up, and take me back to you!"
—He rose and thrust the window wide.
'T was but because his brain was hot
With rhyming; for he heard her not.

But poets polishing a phrase
Show anger over trivial things;
And as she blundered in the blaze
Towards him, on ecstatic wings,
He raised a hand and smote her dead;
Then wrote "That I had died instead!"

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Three Men Of Truro

I

E. W. B.

Archbishop of Canterbury: sometime the First Bishop
of Truro. October 1896

The Church's outpost on a neck of land
By ebb of faith the foremost left the last
Dull, starved of hope, we watched the driven sand
Blown through the hour-glass, covering our past,
Counting no hours to our relief—no hail
Across the hills, and on the sea no sail!
Sick of monotonous days we lost account,
In fitful dreams remembering days of old
And nights—th' erect Archangel on the Mount
With sword that drank the dawn; the Vase of Gold
The moving Grail athwart the starry fields
Where all the heavenly spearmen clashed their
shields.

In dereliction by the deafening shore
We sought no more aloft, but sunk our eyes,
Probing the sea for food, the earth for ore.
Ah, yet had one good soldier of the skies
Burst through the wrack reporting news of them,
How had we run and kissed his garment's hem!

Nay, but he came! Nay, but he stood and cried,
Panting with joy and the fierce fervent race,
'Arm, arm! for Christ returns!'—and all our pride,
Our ancient pride, answered that eager face:
'Repair His battlements!—Your Christ is near!'
And, half in dream, we raised the soldiers' cheer.
Far, as we flung that challenge, fled the ghosts—
Back, as we built, the obscene foe withdrew—
High to the song of hammers sang the hosts
Of Heaven—and lo! the daystar, and a new
Dawn with its chalice and its wind as wine;
And youth was hope, and life once more divine!

Day, and hot noon, and now the evening glow,
And 'neath our scaffolding the city spread
Twilit, with rain-wash'd roofs, and—hark!—below,
One late bell tolling. 'Dead? Our Captain dead?'
Nay, here with us he fronts the westering sun
With shaded eyes and counts the wide fields won.

Aloft with us! And while another stone
Swings to its socket, haste with trowel and hod!
Win the old smile a moment ere, alone,
Soars the great soul to bear report to God.
Night falls; but thou, dear Captain, from thy star
Look down, behold how bravely goes the war!

II

A. B. D.

Canon Residentiary and Precentor of Truro
December 1903

Many had builded, and, the building done,
Through our adorned gates with din
Came Prince and Priest, with pipe and clarion
Leading the right God in.

Yet, had the perfect temple quickened then
And whispered us between our song,
'Give God the praise. To whom of living men
Shall next our thanks belong?'

Then had the few, the very few, that wist
His Atlantean labour, swerved
Their eyes to seek, and in the triumph missed,
The man that most deserved.
He only of us was incorporate
In all that fabric; stone by stone
Had built his life in her, had made his fate
And her perfection one;

Given all he had; and now—when all was given—
Far spent, within a private shade,
Heard the loud organ pealing praise to Heaven,
And learned why man is made.—

To break his strength, yet always to be brave;
To preach, and act, the Crucified ...
Sweep by, O Prince and Prelate, up the nave,
And fill it with your pride!

Better than ye what made th' old temples great,
Because he loved, he understood;
Indignant that his darling, less in state,
Should lack a martyr's blood.
She hath it now. O mason, strip away
Her scaffolding, the flower disclose!
Lay by the tools with his o'er-wearied clay—
But She shall bloom unto its Judgment Day,
His ever-living Rose!

III

C. W. S.

The Fourth Bishop of Truro
May 1912

Prince of courtesy defeated,
Heir of hope untimely cheated,
Throned awhile he sat, and, seated,

Saw his Cornish round him gather;
'Teach us how to live, good Father!'
How to die he taught us rather:
Heard the startling trumpet sound him,
Smiled upon the feast around him,
Rose, and wrapp'd his coat, and bound him

When beyond the awful surges,
Bathed in dawn on Syrian verges,
God! thy star, thy Cross emerges.

And so sing we all to it—

Crux, in coelo lux superna,
Sis in carnis hac taberna
Mihi pedibus lucerna:

Quo vexillum dux cohortis
Sistet, super flumen Mortis,
Te, flammantibus in portis!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Tim The Dragoon

Be aisy an' list to a chune
That's sung of bowld Tim the Dragoon—
Sure, 'twas he'd niver miss
To be stalin' a kiss,
Or a brace, by the light of the moon—
Aroon—
Wid a wink at the Man in the Moon!
Rest his sowl where the daisies grow thick;
For he's gone from the land of the quick:
But he's still makin' love
To the leddies above,
An' be jabbers! he'll tache 'em the thrick—
Avick—
Niver doubt but he'll tache 'em the thrick!
'Tis by Tim the dear saints'll set sthore,
And 'ull thrate him to whisky galore:
For they 've only to sip
But the tip of his lip
An' bedad! they'll be askin' for more—
Asthore—
By the powers, they'll be shoutin' 'Ancore!'

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Titania

By Lord T-n.

So bluff Sir Leolin gave the bride away:
And when they married her, the little church
Had seldom seen a costlier ritual.
The coach and pair alone were two-pound-ten,
And two-pound-ten apiece the wedding-cakes;—
Three wedding-cakes. A Cupid poised a-top
Of each hung shivering to the frosted loves
Of two fond cushats on a field of ice,
As who should say 'I see you!'—Such the joy
When English-hearted Edwin swore his faith
With Mariana of the Moated Grange.
For Edwin, plump head-waiter at The Cock,
Grown sick of custom, spoilt of plenitude,
Lacking the finer wit that saith,
'I wait, They come; and if I make them wait, they go,'
Fell in a jaundiced humour petulant-green,
Watched the dull clerk slow-rounding to his cheese,
Flicked a full dozen flies that flecked the pane—
All crystal-cheated of the fuller air,
Blurting a free 'Good-day t'ye,' left and right,
And shaped his gathering choler to this head:—
'Custom! And yet what profit of it all?
The old order changeth yielding place to new,
To me small change, and this the Counter-change
Of custom beating on the self-same bar—
Change out of chop. Ah me! the talk, the tip,
The would-be-evening should-be-mourning suit,
The forged solicitude for petty wants
More petty still than they,—all these I loathe,
Learning they lie who feign that all things come
To him that waiteth. I have waited long,
And now I go, to mate me with a bride
Who is aweary waiting, even as I!
But when the amorous moon of honeycomb
Was over, ere the matron-flower of Love—
Step-sister of To-morrow's marmalade—
Swooned scentless, Mariana found her lord
Did something jar the nicer feminine sense

With usage, being all too fine and large,
Instinct of warmth and colour, with a trick
Of blunting 'Mariana's' keener edge
To 'Mary Ann'—the same but not the same:
Whereat she girded, tore her crisped hair,
Called him 'Sir Churl,' and ever calling 'Churl!'
Drove him to Science, then to Alcohol,
To forge a thousand theories of the rocks,
Then somewhat else for thousands dewy cool,
Wherewith he sought a more Pacific isle
And there found love, a duskier love than hers.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

To A Friend

Here in the fairway
Fetching--foul of keel,
Long-stray but fortunate--
Out of the fogs, the vast
Atlantic solitudes.
Shall, by the hawser-pin
Waiting the signal
Leave--go--anchor!
Scent the familiar,
The unforgettable
Fragrance of home;
So in a long breath
Bless us unknowing:
Bless them, the violets,
Bless me, the gardener,
Bless thee, the giver.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

To A Friend Who Sent Me A Box Of Violets

Nay, more than violets
These thoughts of thine, friend!
Rather thy reedy brook--
Taw's tributary--
At midnight murmuring,
Descried them, the delicate
Dark-eyed goddesses,
There by his cressy bed
Dissolved and dreaming
Dreams that distilled into dew
All the purple of night,
All the shine of a planet.

Whereat he whispered;
And they arising--

Of day's forget-me-nots
The duskiest sisters--
Descended, relinquished
The orchard, the trout-pool,
Torrige and Tamar,
The Druid circles,
Sheepfolds of Dartmoor,
Granite and sandstone;
By Roughtor, Dozmare,
Down the vale of the Fowey
Moving in silence,
Brushing the nightshade
By bridges cyclopean,
By Trevenna, Treverbyn,
Lawharne and Largin,
By Glynn, Lanhydrock,
Restormel, Lostwithiel,
Dark wood, dim water, dreaming town;
Down the vale of the Fowey
To the tidal water
Washing the feet
Of fair St Winnow--
Each, in her exile

Musing the message,
Passed, as the starlit
Shadow of Ruth from the land of the Moabite.

So they came,
Valley-born, valley-nurtured--
Came to the tideway
The jetties, the anchorage,
The salt wind piping,
Snoring in Equinox,
By ships at anchor,
By quays tormented,
Storm-bitten streets;
Came to the Haven
Crying, 'Ah, shelter us,
The strayed ambassadors,
Love's lost legation
On a comfortless coast!'

Nay, but a little sleep,
A little folding
Of petals to the lull
Of quiet rainfalls--
Here in my garden,
In angle sheltered
From north and east wind--
Softly shall recreate
The courage of charity,
Henceforth not to me only
Breathing the message.

Clean-breath'd Sirens!
Hencefore the mariner.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Twilight

By W—ll—m C—wp—r.

'Tis evening. See with its resorting throng
Rude Carfax teems, and waistcoats, visited
With too-familiar elbow, swell the curse
Vortiginous. The boating man returns,
His rawness growing with experience—
Strange union! and directs the optic glass
Not unresponsive to Jemima's charms,
Who wheels obdurate, in his mimic chaise
Perambulant, the child. The gouty cit,
Asthmatical, with elevated cane
Pursues the unregarding tram, as one
Who, having heard a hurdy-gurdy, girds
His loins and hunts the hurdy-gurdy-man,
Blaspheming. Now the clangorous bell proclaims
The Times or Chronicle, and Rauca screams
The latest horrid murder in the ear
Of nervous dons expectant of the urn
And mild domestic muffin.

To the Parks

Drags the slow Ladies' School, consuming time
In passing given points. Here glow the lamps,
And tea-spoons clatter to the cosy hum
Of scientific circles. Here resounds
The football-field with its discordant train,
The crowd that cheers but not discriminates,
As ever into touch the ball returns
And shrieks the whistle, while the game proceeds
With fine irregularity well worth
The paltry shilling.—
Draw the curtains close
While I resume the night-cap dear to all
Familiar with my illustrated works.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Two Duets

I

He.

Aglai-a! Aglai-a!

Sweet, awaken and be glad.

She.

Who is this that calls Aglaia?

Is it thou, my dearest lad?

He.

'Tis Arion, 'tis Arion,

Who calls thee from sleep-

From slumber who bids thee

To follow and number

His kids and his sheep.

She.

Nay, leave to entreat me!

If mother should spy on

Us twain, she would beat me.

He.

Then come, my love, come!

And hide with Arion

Where green woods are dumb!

She.

Ar-i-on! Ar-i-on!

Closer, list! I am afraid!

He.

Whisper, then, thy love Arion,

From thy window, lily maid.

She.

Yet Aglaia, yet Aglaia
Hath heard them debate
Of wooing repenting-
'Who trust to undoing,
Lament them too late.'

He.

Nay, nay, when I woo thee,
Thy mother might spy on
All harm I shall do thee.

She.

I come, then-I come!
To follow Arion
Where green woods be dumb.

SONG

Sparrow of Love, so sharp to peck,
Arrow of Love-I bare my neck
Down to the bosom. See, no fleck

Of blood! I have never a wound; I go
Forth to the greenwood. Yet, heigh-ho!
What 'neath my girdle flutters so?

'Tis not a bird, and yet hath wings,
'Tis not an arrow, yet it stings;
While in the wound it nests and sings-
Heigh-ho!

He.

Of Arion, of Arion
That wound thou shalt learn;
What nothings 'tis made of,
And soft pretty soothings
In shade of the fern.

She.

When maids have a mind to,
Man's word they rely on,
Old warning are blind to-
I come, then-I come
To walk with Arion
Where green woods are dumb!

II

He.

Dear my love, and O my love,
And O my love so lately!
Did we wander yonder grove
And sit awhile sedately?
For either you did there conclude
To do at length as I did,
Or passion's fashion's turn'd a prude,
And troth's an oath derided.

She.

Yea, my love-and nay, my love-
And ask me not to tell, love,
While I delay'd an idle day
What 'twixt us there befell, love.
Yet either I did sit beside
And do at length as you did,
Or my delight is lightly by
An idle lie deluded!

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Two Folk Songs

I. THE SOLDIER

(Roumanian)

When winter trees bestrew the path,
Still to the twig a leaf or twain
Will cling and weep, not Winter's wrath,
But that foreknown forlorn pain-
To fall when green leaves come again.

I watch'd him sleep by the furrow-
The first that fell in the fight.
His grave they would dig to-morrow:
The battle called them to-night.

They bore him aside to the trees, there,
By his undigg'd grave content
To lie on his back at ease there,
And hark how the battle went.

The battle went by the village,
And back through the night were borne
Far cries of murder and pillage,
With smoke from the standing corn.

But when they came on the morrow,
They talk'd not over their task,
As he listen'd there by the furrow;
For the dead mouth could not ask-

How went the battle, my brothers?

But that he will never know:
For his mouth the red earth smothers
As they shoulder their spades and go.

Yet he cannot sleep thereunder,
But ever must toss and turn.

How went the battle, I wonder?

-And that he will never learn!

When winter trees bestrew the path,
Still to the twig a leaf or twain
Will cling and weep, not Winter's wrath,
But that foreknown, forlorn pain-
To fall when green leaves come again!

II. THE MARINE

(
Poitevin
)

The bold Marine comes back from war,
So kind:
The bold Marine comes back from war,
So kind:
With a raggety coat and a worn-out shoe.
'Now, poor Marine, say, whence come you,
All so kind?'

I travel back from the war, madame,
So kind:
I travel back from the war, madame,
So kind:
For a glass of wine and a bowl of whey,
'Tis I will sing you a ballad gay,
All so kind.

The bold Marine he sips his whey,
So kind:
He sips and he sings his ballad gay,
So kind:
But the dame she turns toward the wall,
To wipe her tears that fall and fall,

All so kind.

What aileth you at my song, madame,
So kind?
I hope that I sing no wrong, madame,
So kind?

Or grieves it you a beggar should dine
On a bowl of whey and the good white wine,
All so kind?

It ails me not at your ballad gay,
So kind:
It ails me not for the wine and whey,
So kind:

But it ails me sore for the voice and eyes
Of a good man long in Paradise.-
Ah, so kind!

You have fair children five, madame,
So kind:
You have fair children five, madame,
So kind:

Your good man left you children three;
Whence came these twain for company,
All so kind?

'A letter came from the war, Marine,
So kind:
A letter came from the war, Marine,
So kind:
A while I wept for the good man dead,
But another good man in a while I wed,
All so kind.'

The bold Marine he drained his glass,
So kind:
The bold Marine he drained his glass,
So kind.
He said not a word, though the tears they flowed,

But back to his regiment took the road,
All so kind.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Unity Put Quarterly

By A. C. S.

The Centuries kiss and commingle,
Cling, clasp, and are knit in a chain;
No cycle but scorns to be single,
No two but demur to be twain,
'Till the land of the lute and the love-tale
Be bride of the boreal breast,
And the dawn with the darkness shall dovetail,
The East with the West.

The desire of the grey for the dun nights
Is that of the dun for the grey;
The tales of the Thousand and One Nights
Touch lips with 'The Times' of to-day.—
Come, chasten the cheap with the classic;
Choose, Churton, thy chair and thy class,
Mix, melt in the must that is Massic
The beer that is Bass!

Omnipotent age of the Aorist!
Infinitely freely exact!—
As the fragrance of fiction is fairest
If frayed in the furnace of fact—
Though nine be the Muses in number
There is hope if the handbook be one,—
Dispelling the planets that cumber
The path of the sun.

Though crimson thy hands and thy hood be
With the blood of a brother betrayed,
O Would-be-Professor of Would-be,
We call thee to bless and to aid.
Transmuted would travel with Er, see
The Land of the Rolling of Logs,
Charmed, chained to thy side, as to Circe
The Ithacan hogs.

O bourne of the black and the godly!
O land where the good niggers go.
With the books that are borrowed of Bodley,
Old moons and our castaway clo'!
There, there, till the roses be ripened
Rebuke us, revile, and review,

Then take thee thine annual stipend
So long over-due.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Upon Eckington Bridge, River Avon

O pastoral heart of England! like a psalm
Of green days telling with a quiet beat-
O wave into the sunset flowing calm!
O tired lark descending on the wheat!
Lies it all peace beyond the western fold
Where now the lingering shepherd sees his star
Rise upon Malvern? Paints an Age of Gold
Yon cloud with prophecies of linked ease-
Lulling this Land, with hills drawn up like knees,
To drowse beside her implements of war?

Man shall outlast his battles. They have swept
Avon from Naseby Field to Savern Ham;
And Evesham's dedicated stones have stepp'd
Down to the dust with Montfort's oriflamme.
Nor the red tear nor the reflected tower
Abides; but yet these elegant grooves remain,
Worn in the sandstone parapet hour by hour
By labouring bargemen where they shifted ropes;
E'en so shall men turn back from violent hopes
To Adam's cheer, and toil with spade again.

Ay, and his mother Nature, to whose lap
Like a repentant child at length he hies,
Nor in the whirlwind or the thunder-clap
Proclaims her more tremendous mysteries:
But when in winter's grave, bereft of light,
With still, small voice divinelier whispering
-Lifting the green head of the aconite,
Feeding with sap of hope the hazel-shoot-
She feels God's finger active at the root,
Turns in her sleep, and murmurs of the Spring.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Upon Graciosa, Walking And Talking

When as abroad, to greet the morn,
I mark my Graciosa walk,
In homage bends the whisp'ring corn,
Yet to confess
Its awkwardness
Must hang its head upon the stalk.
And when she talks, her lips do heal
The wounds her lightest glances give:—
In pity then be harsh, and deal
Such wounds that I
May hourly die,
And, by a word restored, live.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Why This Volume Is So Thin

In youth I dreamed, as other youths have dreamt,
Of love, and thrummed an amateur guitar
To verses of my own,—a stout attempt
To hold communion with the Evening Star
I wrote a sonnet, rhymed it, made it scan.
Ah me! how trippingly those last lines ran.—
O Hesperus! O happy star! to bend
O'er Helen's bosom in the tranced west,
To match the hours heave by upon her breast,
And at her parted lip for dreams attend—
If dawn defraud thee, how shall I be deemed,
Who house within that bosom, and am dreamed?
For weeks I thought these lines remarkable;
For weeks I put on airs and called myself
A bard: till on a day, as it befell,
I took a small green Moxon from the shelf
At random, opened at a casual place,
And found my young illusions face to face
With this:—'Still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair Love's ripening breast
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest;
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever,—or else swoon to death.'
O gulf not to be crossed by taking thought!
O heights by toil not to be overcome!
Great Keats, unto your altar straight I brought
My speech, and from the shrine departed dumb.
—And yet sometimes I think you played it hard
Upon a rather hopeful minor bard.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Willaloo

By E. A. P.

In the sad and sodden street,
To and fro,
Flit the fever-stricken feet
Of the freshers as they meet,
Come and go,
Ever buying, buying, buying
Where the shopmen stand supplying,
Vying, vying
All they know,
While the Autumn lies a-dying
Sad and low
As the price of summer suitings when the winter breezes blow,
Of the summer, summer suitings that are standing in a row
On the way to Jericho.
See the freshers as they row
To and fro,
Up and down the Lower River for an afternoon or so—
(For the deft manipulation
Of the never-resting oar,
Though it lead to approbation,
Will induce excoriation)—
They are infinitely sore,
Keeping time, time, time
In a sort of Runic rhyme
Up and down the way to Iffley in an afternoon or so;
(Which is slow).
Do they blow?
'Tis the wind and nothing more,
'Tis the wind that in Vacation has a tendency to go:
But the coach's objurgation and his tendency to 'score'
Will be sated—nevermore.
See the freshers in the street,
The elite!
Their apparel how unquestionably neat!
How delighted at a distance,
Inexpensively attired,
I have wondered with persistence
At their butterfly existence!

How admired!
And the payment—O, the payment!
It is tardy for the raiment:
Yet the haberdasher gloats as he sells,
And he tells,
'This is best
To be dress'd
Rather better than the rest,
To be noticeably drest,
To be swells,
To be swells, swells, swells, swells,
Swells, swells, swells,
To be simply and indisputably swells.'
See the freshers one or two,
Just a few,
Now on view,
Who are sensibly and innocently new;
How they cluster, cluster, cluster
Round the rugged walls of Worcester!
See them stand,
Book in hand,
In the garden ground of John's!
How they dote upon their Dons!
See in every man a Blue!
It is true
They are lamentably few;
But I spied
Yesternight upon the staircase just a pair of boots outside
Upon the floor,
Just a little pair of boots upon the stairs where I reside,
Lying there and nothing more;
And I swore
While these dainty twins continued sentry by the chamber door
That the hope their presence planted should be with me evermore,
Should desert me—nevermore.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

Written Upon Love's Frontier-Post

Toiling love, loose your pack,
All your sighs and tears unbind:
Care's a ware will break a back,
Will not bend a maiden's mind.
In this State a man shall need
Neither priest nor law giver:
Those same lips that are his creed
Shall confess their worshipper.
All the laws he must obey,
Now in force and now repeal'd,
Shift in eyes that shift as they,
Till alike with kisses seal'd.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch