

return. When his art became popular the world began to claim him, and the wit and brilliancy of his conversation, his gay sallies and sudden touches of pathos, soon made him a great favourite in society. Whatever he said or did, if he wrote to make an appointment or to refuse an invitation, if he welcomed a friend of long standing or escorted a chance guest to the door, it was done with a grace of manner and a charming smile that men and women alike found irresistible. The late W. E. Henley, who had always expressed his deep-rooted antipathy to the art of Burne-Jones, and often quarrelled over it with me, happened to meet the painter at dinner one day and was completely captivated by that single interview. "I must take care not to see Burne-Jones too often," he said the next morning, "or I shall end by liking his pictures." But it was not only in society that the painter shone. He was just as brilliant and amusing, his conversation was every bit as fascinating, when he sat at work in his studio with a single friend, as when he was surrounded by an admiring company. To sit at his side and listen, while he painted the bosses of Melchior's armour or the shot blues and purples in Caspar's robe, and the sunlight fell on the lawn outside, was a rare and delightful experience. Then he would pour out his ideas on all things in heaven and earth and talk freely of art, literature, and philosophy. He would recall the dreams and struggles of his youth, the friends he had known and loved, the books he had read and believed. Few men were more deeply versed in the folk-lore of all ages or took more delight in Celtic legends and mediæval myths, above all, in everything connected with his favourite romance of the *Morte d'Arthur*. The wealth of colour in Celtic literature, he once remarked, was like a raw umber tree under a sky of summer blue, but in most cases it was a shapeless mass, utterly lacking any sense of form. Among living authors, Stevenson attracted him greatly, but the writer with whom he felt most sympathy was Maeterlinck, whose "*Trésor des humbles*," he said, exactly expressed his own philosophy of life, saving that the young Belgian took a more