

**ŒDIPUS.**

Kingdom and spouse me prompted less than thought  
Of that mysterious One whose image, fell  
But beautiful, drew me as Amphion's lyre  
The steadfast stones. But most herself, herself,  
And not her fatal riddle, vexed my peace.  
Cruel and sweet and strong, the subtle spell  
Of mingled potencies, love, wonder, fear,  
Forever stirring my unquiet heart,  
Tangled my fate with hers. For, looking deep  
In my own mind, seeking the plummet-line  
To sound her mystery, I startled, found,  
Instead of my own stature, safe and small,  
A lengthened, wavering shadow, dimly cast  
By flickering lamp upon dissolving mists  
From unknown shape,—nothing, or anything,  
Or all. My own familiar being slipped  
From my sure grasp and faded into air.  
But ever, as it vanished, seemed to blend  
In one long thrill of shifting bliss and pain  
With hers, as shadow into substance melts,  
Strange, strange the bond that mocked, yet held me  
fast.  
Me, whom prophetic fingers from my birth  
Beckon or warn; me, omniscious to myself,  
Vainly by day and night my bathed thought  
Pondered the import of this prodigy.  
Till, 'twixt the life that filled my throbbing breast  
And that half hint of complex life, I hung  
Most like the dim reflection of a bridge  
Spanning the stream that parts our literal world  
From shores unmindful of us. Gradually  
I felt the presence of another life,  
Wide, rich, and strong, and tranquil, of which mine  
Was but a faint, inconstant echo, fill  
All height and depth and distance: drinking up  
My drop of separate being, nevertheless  
Rounded in small completeness,—my former  
Self-centred, whole. Thenceforth my pulses beat  
In the large measure of my stretched sense.  
Visions and sounds not meant for me disturbed  
The easy rhythm of youth's unheeding tread,  
And I fell out of step with man, because  
I listened for the wide pace of the gods:  
Yet heard them not, but only seemed to hear:  
And seemed to know that their full meaning broke  
Just where, on the far edge of human thought,  
That being sat, and drew me to her, thrilled  
With something that made music in my heart,  
Yet filled me with immeasurable dread,  
Shaming my manhood. For the jealous gods,  
Though they may use us for their pastime, still  
Cannot recall the gifts themselves bestow,—  
Courage, and scorn of pain, and thirst for fame.  
So, whether I had stumbled on their snare  
Or stumbled on their secret, whether I  
Tossed in the wind of my own fantasy,  
Floated in limbo of immortal thoughts,  
Or on the breath of divine traffic rocked,  
That which I was, I was,—man capable  
To act man's part, and let what must be, be.  
So grew the strong desire to understand  
The whither, whence, and why of man or sphinx:  
Till, arming my weak fears with fortitude,  
I dared confront my Terror: dared behold  
Near what far off was terrible and fair—  
More fair, more terrible now to my faint heart,  
Pierced with a power that made me long to yield,  
Yet constant to destroy. Time stopped his flight,  
Expectant, while I looked through eyes that blazed  
Scornful and ravenous, down to a soul  
Doubting and dark and void, though now made big  
And insolent with triumph, yet beneath  
The front of pride, and o'er the lion heart,  
The tender refuge of her woman's breast,  
In protest mute, lay pitiful and mild.  
Slowly the balance of our beings swung  
In that long gaze, and all my passionate fears  
Drained to her lower level. Then a voice  
Came like low thunder from reluctant lips,  
And one by one words dropped upon my ear,  
Falling like stones, but changing as they fell,  
In my foreboding mind, to winged thoughts,  
Their meaning, slow and clear, broke like the dawn  
Across the desert's farthest, vanishing rim.  
Wide open swung the gates of prophecy:  
Waves of a mighty ocean suddenly  
Broke on my inward sense: I felt the wind  
Blow on my cheek from Hades' opened door.  
But she, that riddle, read within my eyes—  
My answer true, and her imperious gaze  
Faltering and faded. From her visage bold  
Fled its late spell of mystery and dread,  
With blank astonishment and horror froze  
Its shame and rage to stone. Then, frantic, she  
Dashed at despair, as I, crow-while, at fate,  
Her triumph, doubt, and doom all merged in mine.  
So Œdipus, in his seven-gated Thebes,  
When, in deep sleep, out of the gathering gloom  
Of thickly crowding portents, sudden flashed  
A vision of the Sphinx, cleaving the night,—re-  
hearsed  
That obscure page, traced by his proper hand  
Though not in his own character, while the curse  
Close creeping, darkened all his laboring mind,  
And o'er his star his baleful shadow hung.

AGNES PATON.

**THE LOVE POETRY OF SHAKESPEARE'S AGE.**

Very few people of this generation know anything of the poetry of Shakespeare, except that of his dramatic works, which are generally supposed so far to outshine his miscellaneous poetry that very little desire has been felt to form an acquaintance with the lesser productions of his muse.

But it is nevertheless true, that these minor efforts of the great poet are full of an excellent beauty and sweetness, which prove that he was quite as much a master hand in sweeping the lyre of love as he was in dealing with the terrible passions of the tragic muse. Among the most charming of his love poems are to be named, "Venus and Adonis," "Mars and Venus," "The Amorous Epistle of Paris to Helen," "Achilles' Concealment of his Sex in the Court of Lycomedes," "The Passionate Shepherd," and "Cupid's Treachery." In this last exquisite poem we have these matchless lines:

Take, oh take those lips away,  
That so sweetly were forsworn:  
And those eyes, the break of day,  
Lights which do mislead the morn.  
Hide, oh hide those hills of snow,  
Which thy frozen bosom bears,  
On whose tops the pinks that grow,  
Are of those that April wears.

We are aware that these verses appear in the play of "Rollo" by Beaumont and Fletcher, with an addition of two lines to each verse. To the first verse is added:

But my kisses bring again,  
Seals of love, though sealed in vain,

And to the second verse these:

But first set my poor heart free,  
Bound in those icy chains by thee.

These lines are evidently patches to the original verses by Shakespeare. Beaumont and Fletcher's "Rollo" was not published earlier than 1647, whereas "Cupid's Treachery," by Shakespeare, must have been published as early as 1609. In a book entitled: "The Lives and Characters of the English Poets," by Giles Jacobs, published in 1710, the verses are attributed to Shakespeare, where they are quoted from his "Cupid's Treachery." That settles it, even if the ear-mark of the added lines did not do it. But the dates remove all doubts.

Among the love poems of Shakespeare, are many epigrams perfect of their kind, and yet we doubt if there are five hundred people in this country who know that the immortal poet ever produced anything considerable in this line.

The age of Shakespeare was an intellectual soil in which true love poetry flourished as never before nor since, either in the English or any other of the modern languages. Edmund Waller, whose inimitable love poetry belongs to that age, is a fountain from which love-love writers and postasters have sought inspiration ever since his time. What can be more exquisite than the following lines:

Go lovely rose!  
Tell her that wastes her time and me,  
That now she knows,  
When I resemble her to thee,  
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,  
And shun to have her graces spied,  
That hadst thou sprung  
In deserts, where no men abide,  
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is thy worth,  
Of beauty from the light retir'd:  
Bid her come forth,  
Suffer herself to be desired.

Then die! that she  
The common fate of all things rare  
May read in thee.  
How small a part of time they share  
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

The love poetry of that age never came forth on stilts, like the love verse of the present generation, which is loaded with wordy imagery borrowed from the frothy poetry of eastern nations, but it simply sung itself out of the heart, and was as unnumbered by imagery as Venus was of drapery at her bath, or as when she first stepped forth into being out of the foam of the sea. We may illustrate what we mean by the following extract from Waller:

Phyllis, why should we delay!  
Pleasure is shorter than the day,  
Could we (which we never can)  
Stretch our lives beyond their span,  
Beauty like a shadow flies,  
And our youth before us dies;  
Or would youth and beauty stay,  
Youth hath wings and will away.

That is certainly the heart's own simple or unadorned eloquence pleading against the ravages of time and procrastination. What can be more beautiful than these lines from the same poet:

All that the angels do above,  
Is that they sing and that they love.

The following well-known lines of Ben Jonson are an excellent specimen of the love-verse of that age:

Drink to me only with thine eyes,  
And I will pledge with mine;  
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,  
And I'll not look for wine.

The thirst that from the soul doth rise,  
Doth ask a drink divine:  
But might I of Joy's nectar sup,  
I would not change for thine.

Sir John Suckling was not only one of the most accomplished of wits, but some of the sweetest love poetry of his time came from his muse. His "Ballad Upon a Wedding," has rarely been excelled, as the following well-known verse may convince the reader:

Her feet beneath her petticoat,  
Like little mice stole in and out,  
As if they fear'd the light:

But oh! she dances such a way,  
No sun upon an April day  
Is half so fine a sight.

Much after the same vein was the poetry of Robert Herrick, who for a long time occupied the holy place of Vicarage of Dean Prior in Devonshire. He was the author of the words of that charming little song, sung with so much effect in concerts in this country by Mrs. Horn fifty years ago, "Cherry Ripe."

Cherry ripe, ripe, ripe, I cry,  
Full and fair ones, come and buy:  
If so be you ask me where  
They do grow? I answer, there  
Where my Julia's lips do smile,  
There's the land, or Cherry-isle:  
Whose plantations fully show  
All the year where cherries grow.

The dean wrote another song to this fair and fascinating Julia, as follows:

Some asked me where the rubies grew,  
And nothing did I say,  
But with my finger pointed to  
The lips of Julia.

Some asked how pearls did grow, and where,  
Then spake I to my girl,  
To part her lips, and show me there  
The quarelets of pearl.

One asked me where the roses grew,  
I bade him not go seek:  
But forthwith bade my Julia show  
A bud in either cheek.

Richard Lovelace must be classed with Suckling and Herrick, as one of the most charming of the love-poets.

The historian says: "He deserved what was writ on Sir Philip Sydney, in an epitaph, viz., the reputation of a soldier, scholar, lover, and saint." Byron has been accused of borrowing a line from Lovelace in his *Bride of Heydes*, which is the following:

The mind, the music breathing from her face.

The line which the noble poet is accused of taking from Lovelace is found in the third line of the following verse of his song to Orpheus, lamenting on the death of his wife:

Oh, could you view the melody  
Of every grace,  
And music of her face,  
You'd drop a tear:  
Seeing more harmony  
In her bright eye,  
Than now you hear.

The following two verses of a song by Lovelace must be deemed of the greatest heresy in love:

Why should you swear I am foresworn,  
Since thine I vow'd to be?  
Lady, it is already morn,  
And 'twas last night I swore to thee  
That fond impossibility.

Have I not lov'd thee much and long,  
A tedious twelve hours' space?  
I must all other beauties wrong,  
And rob thee of a new embrace,  
Could I still dote upon thy face.

But the following is more orthodox in love. It must have been written at a time when he was about to join his army, for we are told that he was a colonel:

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,  
That from the nunnery  
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind,  
To war and arms I fly.

True a new mistress now I chase,  
The first foe in the field;  
And with a stronger faith embrace  
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such  
As you, too, shall adore;  
I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Loved I not honor more.

We must not forget to notice Thomas Lodge as one of the sweetest singers of the charms of love. It was from a novel written by him, entitled "Rosalind," that Shakespeare constructed his "As You Like It." The following is the opening verse of a madrigal in Lodge's "Rosalind":

Love in my bosom, like a bee,  
Doth suck his sweets:  
Now with his wings he plays with me,  
Now with his feet.

Within mine eyes he makes his nest,  
His bed amidst my tender breast:  
My kisses are his daily feast,  
And yet he robs me of my rest.

Sir Charles Sidley, who was an excellent poet, as well as a man of great learning and wit, wrote some of the best love-poetry of his time. His lines to a fair but cold lady, whom he loved, ends with this verse:

In losing me, proud Nymph, you lose  
The humblest slave your beauty knows:  
In losing you, I but throw down  
A cruel tyrant from her throne.

Of course, love was a tyrant in those days, as it is in all days. But in the Shakesperian time its poetry wore very little clothing. And it was all the more beautiful and charming for that. The love-poetry of our time is a different thing altogether. It is love in masquerade, as compared with the open, undisguised, glowing face it wore two hundred years ago. The literature of love-making then was wrestling at side hugs; whereas, in our time, it is more like a studied practice of the heart's strength at arm's length. If it uses the rapier at all, it is with cork upon its points. Are the days of chivalry and knight-hood in love, then gone forever? Shall we never again see the bold Cupid, that busy quartermaster of the gods, riding down among our cunning, calculating, money-worshipping hearts, giving his commands, as in the middle of the Shakesperian age, after this roving fashion?

Look out, bright eyes, and bless the air!  
Even in shadows you are fair,  
Shut-up beauty's like fire  
That breaks out clearer, still, and higher,  
Though your beauty be confin'd,  
And soft love a prisoner bound,  
Yet the beauty of your mind,  
Neither check nor chain hath found.  
Look out, nobly, then, and dare  
Even the fetters that you wear!

C. CHAUNCEY BERR.

**ECHOES FROM PARIS.**

Paris, January 12.

SHOOTING in France is short lived. It will be closed by legal edict on the 21st of January.

It has been decided to collect the speeches of the great criminal lawyer, M. Lachaud, who died in the early part of last month, and publish them in the course of the year.

THE French Government have determined to take very stringent measures against the gambling houses. The evil has become a crying one, and it is high time that something was done.

THE Parisians assure us that the latest arrival in the capital is Arabi's legitimate wife, who is accompanied by two servants. Of course she has come to buy New Year's gifts, or to see *Fedora*.

A MEMBER of the Rothschild family, a well-known collector of autographs, recently applied for one to the great German *feuilletoniste* and dramatic writer, Paul Lindau, and received the following: "Riches are no disgrace. Paul Lindau."

THE Prince and Princess of Saxe-Coburg have been in Paris doing the theatres with diligence and delight. They have likewise warmed the hearts of the shopkeepers towards them by the numerous and costly purchases they have made.

THE Baroness Nathaniel de Rothschild will not remain in Paris this winter, but has sought seclusion in her villa, *Parre del Greel*, in the Bay of Naples. The memory of the loss of her son is still too fresh and her grief too poignant to permit her to enter society.

M. WERTHEIMER, an artist of great talent, has just completed two pictures which have been ordered by the Empress of Austria. The first represents Bacchus meeting a troupe of nymphs in a forest, and the second, Antony and Cleopatra on the sea-shore, where several nude girls are presenting her jewels in sea shells.

THE Empress Eugénie's offer of the Château of Pharo at Marseilles has been coldly enough received by the municipality of that city. They had a meeting the other day to discuss whether it would be consistent with the dignity of the council to accept the gift. It was suggested that the appeal should be taken to another court.

THE pompon is the rage in Paris to-day. They are as large as dabbias. Spread upon the lace-work of the skirts they give to the toilette the original touch of the costume designed by Beaudin and Moreau when they tried to copy from the Chinese. The lace-work that covers the new skirts is thick, a sort of point de Venise, embroidered in gold and re-embroidered in gold. It is called *Persuans*.

MENTONE this season is making great efforts not to be in the background with regard to its Carnival. A very liberal subscription has been raised which has enabled the managers to offer a prize of 3,000fr. for the best car, in lieu of 2,000fr., the sum given last year. The fête will extend over three days, the first being devoted to the *Bataille des Fleurs*. The last published list of subscriptions exceeds 10,000fr.

It is very doubtful whether the hideous tales of Edgar Allan Poe and other writers concerning premature burial are really as fanciful as has generally been believed. It appears that of late years proof has been obtained of numerous inhumations before life was entirely extinct, and that the Academy of Sciences has determined on this account to award a prize of 2,500fr., to the author of the best work on the positive symptoms of death, and on the most efficacious means of preventing hasty burials.

A PRIZE was the event of the New Year's Day in Paris. The belligerents were Englishmen, and the ceremony of the ring was conducted according to Britannic rule. The performance was received with strong demonstrations of delight by the French brigade present. There have been, be it remarked, some splendid amateur boxers in Paris high life, and the young men express a desire to go in for it again; it is perhaps necessary, now that blows are so frequently resorted to by members of society.

THE minuet and gavotte are to be danced in fashionable society in Paris this winter, in imitation of Italian, Spanish and Greek society, where they dance the tarantella, the bolero, and the cirto in the midst of a ball or a reception. A number of ladies of the best society have organized, while awaiting the official openings of their salons, some "general rehearsals," or dancing lessons, to which only intimate friends are invited. At these reunions one of the character dances is rehearsed with all the Parisian grace united to the haughty attitudes so much affected by the grand signiors of the last century. For the forthcoming soirées some splendid toilettes are being prepared. Among them is a robe de minuet in brocade, trimmed with large flowers; a long, square train reaching from the corsage, which is décolleté en rond, with a satin barette, or bib, embroidered in pearls like the tablier. A good many diamonds will be worn with this costume. The hair will be dressed in waves, through which will peep a few curls. A bunch of feathers of different shades attached with a diamond clasp will complete this head-dress. A robe de gavotte consists of a short skirt in faille, ottoman velvet or figured damask, edged with a large ruche. The Camargo corsage is of Byzantine red or topaz, covered with lace and waves of ribbons, which fall upon the skirt; brooches and yellow steel or gold pins are strewn in the vaporous confusion of the corsage; a band of velvet at the neck, with a square buckle in diamonds in front. The hair will be combed up on the back of the head à la Cythèse, with a little bunch of flowers placed at the side on the head-band, from which will flash forth a number of diamond tufts.