

that ingenuous youth, if it be compounded of the true spirit of revolution, will ever prefer "The City of Dreadful Night" to "Paradise Lost," and will continue in the same sort of predilection till overtaken by that age of ice when rhetoric is an abhorrence, metre a study, wisdom a delight.

And if ingenuous youth be seeking sincerity rather than poetry, he may not have gone far from the path. In the throes of despair or passion the almost involuntary whispers of an imaginative mind are stray echoes of phrases we have loved, grotesquely blended with the stage-worn rhetoric of the occasion. Yet to imagine that these literal and personal transcriptions, however earnest, are likely to be valuable as literature is an obvious error. When the faculties of a writer are so concentrated, so technically supreme, that the sensations cannot become vilified by borrowed or inadequate or inharmonious language, then are worthy poems of experience written not less sincere and far more splendid.

Now, page after page of Laurence Hope's poetry is marred by lilt and jangling tunes and passages of sentimental prettiness that, so far from breathing of the East, savour of that most Occidental invention, the music-hall; so that she who knew the East so well can here remind us of nothing more sublime than that factitious Orient represented by the decorations on a Turkish bath. The most serious of feminine failings, that of taking prettiness for beauty and petulance for passion, spoils about two-thirds of her work. Though she makes some not unpleasant experiments in new metres, she is sadly failing in the most elementary knowledge of verse-structure, and she never attains to the stern and austere beauty of self-restraint. Yet take lines such as these:

They say that Love is a light thing,
A foolish thing and a slight thing,
A ripe fruit rotten at core:
They speak in this futile fashion
To me who am racked with passion,
Tormented beyond compassion
For ever and ever more.