

When you and I were boys, Adam,
In Queen Victoria's days,
Those guns that now so silent stand,
Where meet the rulers of our land,
With olive decked and bays,

Roared from the Russian ramparts grim,
Their muzzles all ablaze,
While old Todleben, with his back
Against the wall, foiled each attack
In Queen Victoria's days.

When you and I were young, Adam,
In good Victoria's time,
We stood together, side by side,
When Mewburn and Mackenzie died,
And Tempest, "ere their prime."

But say not "they have left no peer"—
That were unwelcome praise
To those three friends of ours long dead,
Whose blood for Fatherland was shed
In good Victoria's days.

In royal Edward's time, Adam,
Fresh prophecies were rife.
They told us nickel-pointed shot
And flat trajectories and what not
Could rid the world of strife.

But now that we are old, Adam,
We see with startled eyes
Quick-firing guns won't stop the Jap,
Nor Serb nor Bulgar care a rap
Who wins the Nobel prize.

When you and I were young, Adam,
There were no telephones;
There was no ultramicroscope;
And no X-rays for those who grope
And pry among the bones.