

yearning, haunting melody the lyric of the fourth book is unsurpassable. And nearly every page is redolent of the magic of nature.

If some one would cull out the fine passages of these first poems of Keats and have them bound in a separate volume he would do a great service to their author and to the kingdom of poetry.

Two years later than *Endymion* the volume appeared that has given Keats his rank among English men of letters. The poet now has his sensations under control. His is the life of thoughts rather than sensations. Formerly he sang: "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." Now he sings: "Beauty is truth." He is submissively bowed down under a beautiful restraint. Formerly he could say: "Heard melodies are sweet;" now: "But those unheard are sweeter; therefore ye soft pipes play on; *not to the sensual ear; but more endear'd, pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone.*"

He had changed his conception of poetry since his *Endymion* days. Then he thought that it should surprise by a fine excess.

Now he has learned to pare away all excess and to revel in the beauty of simplicity and suggestion rather than in that of the over-wrought and descriptive. And he is the poet now, not of cloying sweetness but of exquisite relish and witchery. He has been born again, born into a higher world of the intellect, he holds fellowship now with wit and makes us realize the mighty *abstract idea* of beauty. As he says of the actor Kean, so he himself seems to have "robbed the Hybla bees and left them honeyless." *Hyperion* moves in an atmosphere of elemental grandeur, but Keats was not quite ready yet for such a noble undertaking. It is therefore not as satisfyingly perfect as his short pieces of this period. In these Keats has us wholly at his will. The *Eve of St. Agnes* is an absolute self-abandonment and sinking into nature. In it the two qualities of Keats' mature work are supreme—*gusto* and *glamour*. It is practically devoid of incident and human interest. These are only the background to the nature touches which constitute the soul of the poem. We in this