

Snow had fallen, yet he had grudged enjoying its keen delights till Maurice came home. But then,

They brought him home; 'twas two days late
For Christmas day:
Wrapped in white, in solemn state,
A flower in his hand, all still and straight,
Our Maurice lay.

As may be judged from the quotations, the moods which Mr. Bridges expresses in these lyrics, so full of the scents and colours of Berkshire, are not violent. He never protests loudly his joy or sadness, but sings of them with an infinitely delicate wit. If one cannot feel the charm of pretty thoughts which just ripple the surface of the mind, then leave it quite still again, he will not like his poetry.

I have loved flowers that fade,
Within whose magic tents
Rich hues have marriage made
With sweet unmemoried scents:
A honeymoon delight—
A joy to love at sight,
That ages in an hour:
My song be like a flower.

That his song be like a flower, that he may catch the colour and fragrance of moments of passing feeling, and put them in verse without injuring in the least their airy bloom—that is his aim in lyric poetry. It was the aim, too, of the light Elizabethan carollers, whom, by the way, Mr Bridges more than any other modern poet resembles.

There is no want of variety in his moods. The ripples that play across his calm mind, are as varied as those which play across the sea on a summer day, some crested with jollity, some laid low, by gusts of sadness, some moving equably in the general sunshine of happiness. Here he is in a jolly mood!

Crown Winter with green,
And give him good drink
To physic his spleen
Or ever he think.
His mouth to the bowl,
His feet to the fire,
And let him, good soul
No comfort desire.
So merry he be
I bid him abide;
And merry be we
This good Yuletide.