

Byron to write a song. Moore was justly proud of his lyric fame—proud almost to jealousy. Did he ask Byron to write for the purpose of raising a dangerous rival?—May we not rather think that Moore entertained some opinion about song-writing similar to my own, that a great poet may fail as a song-writer? and in that spirit of fun with which his Irish nature was so deeply imbued, have had a sly pleasure in tempting Byron to write a song, just to show his “noble friend” that it was not quite so easy a matter?

Even Shelley, whose ear was exquisitely sensitive to sweet sounds, and whose soul overflowed with poetry, is not successful in what he calls songs. For instance,

“I love that thou lovest,
 Spirit of delight!
 The fresh earth in new leaves drest,
 And the starry night;

 I love snow, and all the forms
 Of the radiant forest!
 I love waves, and winds, and storms,
 Everything almost
 Which is Nature's, and may be
 Untainted by man's misery.”

Here is great poetic sensitiveness, poetically expressed, but unfit for music. “The fresh earth in new leaves drest” is a sweet line, and gives a pleasant image to the mind, but I defy any one to sing it. Nearly every word shuts up the month instead of opening it, and therefore cannot be vocalized; and “radiant forest” and “everything almost” are also infelicitous for music.

I have purposely (and perhaps hazardously) put forward these great poets as examples that, with all their greatness,