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TO CAROLA IN SORROW.

How often in the dusky twilight hour, dear friend,
When day grew faint and slowly yielded to the night,
I've sat where I could see thy winsome face
Lit in the gloom by starlight of thine eyes.
Then, as thy fair fleet fingers struck from ivory keys
Strains of that music that will ever heartward go—
"Songs without words," that yet so plainly speak—
How trouble fled and care obeyed the charm.
To-day, as dark of sorrow closes round thy life,
No witching music can I make to comfort thee :
This simple rhyme, to speak a thought that's true
And breathe a prayer, I send thee with my love.

Not pleasure's treble trilling on alone
Could make the music of thy life complete ;
And now comes mingling sorrow's minor tone
With deeper strains and chords more grandly sweet.

While thus the player makes full harmony,
With slow, sad movement following close the gay,
May one bright theme flow through it all for thee—
A peace the world can never take away.

Riverside, N. B.

R. H.

MR. STEWART'S VOLUME OF POEMS.*

It is as inspiring as it is unusual nowadays that a young poet, in his first book of poems, setting himself resolutely to disregard readers who "consider poetry a diversion," should devote all to the hazard of song instinct with imaginative vitality. Mr. Stewart's work gives evidence of a notable restraint from artifices of mere technique ; having within him the consciousness of a message to deliver, he will venture the lonely heights, and lift up his voice with at least a lofty purpose in his singing. There is not a line of *vers de société* in his book ; not a ballade, not a rondeau ; none of the sparkling, delightful, metrical trifles we have come to look for in new volumes of verse ; not the faintest echo suggestive of Swinburne either in form or theme.

Mr. Stewart's inclination is largely towards the classical, his singing most often a minor strain of sadness and melancholy. The first of the present collection of poems, the blank verse "Lines to my Mother," a train of musings in the shadow of past years, is marked by a fine union of intellectuality and delicate beauty. The characteristic harmonies of which suggestions comes to one's inner sense from all the poems, the chords which recur again and again to the last stanza of the "After-song," are in this prelude modulated up to and held by the poet's intense subjectivity. Of the succeeding poems, "Good Night," "De Profundis,"—the title of which was originally "Ocean Thoughts,"—"Keats" and "To a Winter Bird" are reprinted from THE VARSITY of last year. "At Sea," "Fame," "Morn," and "Home" will be familiar to those who remember the poem which won for Mr. Stewart the College prize three years ago.

The longest poem in the volume, "Corydon and Amaryllis," which is in blank verse, is taken up almost too largely with melancholy introspection. While certain conventions will always

be indispensable to art, it may well be doubted whether pastoral and descriptive poetry is not a form that has become outworn. Turner and Cimabue are not to be judged from quite the same standpoint, nor Wagner and Palestrina ; all art must take up with its life its line of advance, assuming what has been done in the past. Even in landscape "we have reached the stage where human feeling," as Stedman points out, "pervades the most favoured work." We want the objective portrayal and illumination of life ; individuals, men and women, various and real, striving for intense sensations and continuous development must be set before us in being and action,—above all in that mutual play on one another's destinies which results from what has been termed "the dramatic purport of life." As I have said, Mr. Stewart's work does not seem to have been envired by the conditions most favourable and helpful towards this. He is at all times supremely subjective.

But the springs of poetry are indeed perennial, and subject to no law ; and our poet's melancholy, in such lines as the following, moves the heart like the gathered grieving of Beethoven :—

"And thou,
O robin, with the mellow flute so full
Of melody, 'twas almost to forget
That this fair world of ours could know one pang
Or tear, it was so beautiful, so full
Of joy. How my young heart did wildly bound
With thee in warbling greenness of glad spring !
My youth hath been attuned to thy sweet song ;
We have together roamed by mossy streams
Whose gladness mingled with our own, through fields
Where buds and berries ripened into bloom,
And by the leafy greenness of cool woods.
Our lives were like a merry dream, serene
And shadowless ; passion and apathy
Were far away, when thou wert breathing forth
Thine ecstasy. With thee I drove the kine
Howard along the lane, whose winding way
Left far behind the tangled trees and gloom—
That daisied lane, how like the tender thought
Of early home ! Then did the brown-armed maids
Come tripping with their ample pails, calling
The kine with simple names, until they drowed
In girlish laughter and low, sweet-lipped rifts
Of song. In happy rivalry we stood
With eager eyes, and linked our childish dreams
Unto the first-born star. The moonlight brought
Dim fairy tales and June's rose-heavy wreaths
By fragrant doors, and lingering good nights.
Thy merry song was wont to wake the morn
To eager-footed play and careless joy :
But time hath brought a spiritual change,
The light of sadder thought. Now, when I leave
The dream-paved palaces of sleep, thou art
A Dorian flute of wordless grief and pain,
A feathered memory of the vanished years.
One night I could not sleep, but knelt beside
The window sill. The red sun rose behind
The hedge ; thy song became an elegy
Of dying love. O God, how little do
We cling to what we have, how much to dreams !

Pale melancholy, faithfully thou lov'st
The human soul when youth and passion fail,
How precious all things grow beneath thy smile !
Sad sister of the poet's lonely hours,
Thy clinging arms embrace us all, thy feet
Are in all paths, and nature saddens 'neath
Thine eyes. The lotus and the poppy have
Thee in their dreamy veins, thine image dwells
For ever in the jewelled wine ; thou art
The hungry beauty of Love's crescent eyes,

* Poems. Phillips Stewart. London : Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.