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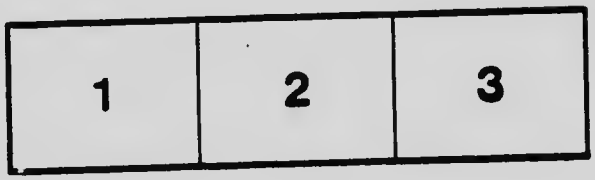
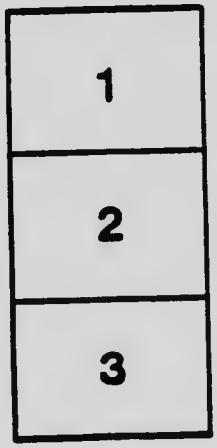
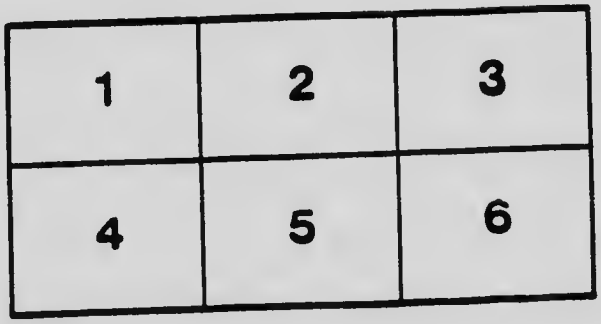




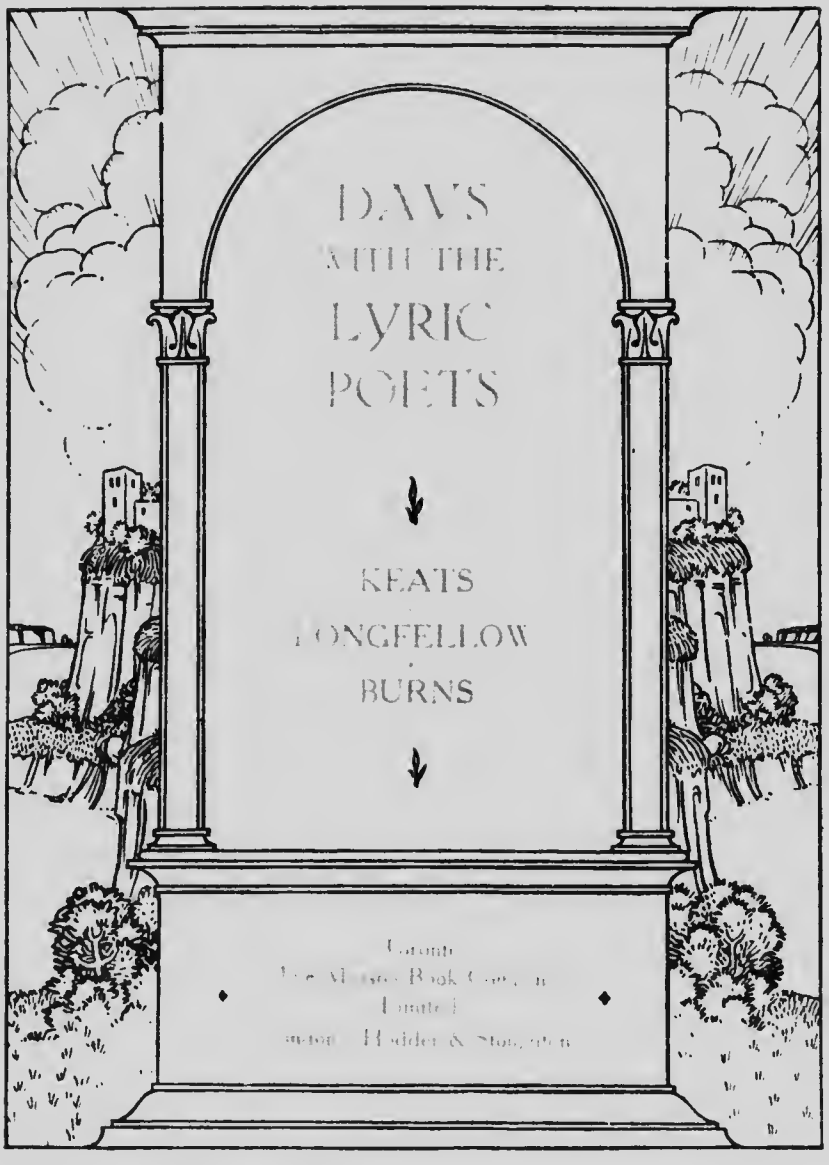



A Day
with
Keats

Painting by E. W. Haslehust.

KEATS' HOME AT HAMPSTEAD

"About eight o'clock one morning in early summer, a young man may be seen sauntering to and fro in the garden at Wentworth Place . . . The clean countrified air of Hampstead comes with sweet freshness through the garden."


DAYS
WITH THE
LYRIC
POETS
KEATS
LONGFELLOW
BURNS

A DAY WITH KEATS.

ABOUT eight o'clock one morning in early summer, a young man may be seen sauntering to and fro in the garden of Wentworth Place, Hampstead. Wentworth Place consists of two houses only; in the first, John Keats is established along with his friend Charles Armitage Brown. The second is inhabited by a Mrs. Brawne and her family. They are wooden houses, with festooning draperies of foliage: and the clean countrified air of Hampstead comes with sweet freshness through the gardens, and fills the young man with ecstatic delight. He gazes around him, with his weak dark eyes, upon the sky, the flowers, the various minutiæ of nature which mean so much to him: and although he has severely tried a never robust physique by sitting up half the night in study, a new exhilaration now throbs through his veins. For, in his own words, he loves the principle of beauty in all things: and he repeats to himself,

as he loiters up and down in the sunshine, the lines into which he has crystallized, for all time, sensations similar to those of the present:—

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet
breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darken'd ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:

An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.
Nor do we merely feel these essences
For one short hour; no, even as the trees
That whisper round a temple become soon
Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
The passion poesy, glories infinite,
Haunt us till they become a cheering light
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,
They alway must be with us, or we die.

Endymion.

Yet John Keats is in some respects out of keeping with the magnificent phraseology of which he is the mouthpiece. "Little Keats," as his fellow medical students termed him, is a small, undersized man, not over five feet high —the shoulders too broad, the legs too spare —"death in his hand," as Coleridge said, the slack moist hand of the incipient consumptive. The only "thing of beauty" about him is his face. "It is a face," to quote his friend Leigh Hunt, "in which energy and sensibility" (*i.e.*, sensitiveness) "are remarkably mixed up—an eager power, wrecked and made impatient by ill-health. Every feature at once strongly cut

and delicately alive." There is that femininity in the cast of his features, which Coleridge classed as an attribute of true genius. His beautiful brown hair falls loosely over those eyes, large, dark, glowing, which appeal to all observers by their mystical illumination of rapture—eyes which seem as though they had been dwelling on some glorious sight—which have, as Haydon said, "an inward look perfectly divine, like a Delphian priestess who saw visions."

And he *is* seeing visions all the while. Some chance sight or sound has wrapt him away from the young greenness of the May morning, and plunged him deep into the opulent colour of September. His prophetic eye sees all the apple-buds as golden orbs of fruit, and the swallows, that now build beneath the eaves, making ready for their departure. And these future splendours shape themselves into lines as richly coloured.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;

Painting by W. J. Neatby. AUTUMN

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies . . .

To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,

A DAY WITH KEATS

While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

Autumn.

The voice of Charles Brown at the open window, hailing him cheerily, breaks the spell; Keats goes in, and they sit down together to a simple breakfast-table, and Brown "quizzes" Keats, as the current phrase goes, on his inveterate abstractedness. The young man, with his sweet and merry laugh, defends himself by producing the result of his last-night's meditations, in praise of the selfsame wandering fancy.

"Ever let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,

Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let wingèd Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O, sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming:
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon. . .
Fancy, high-commission'd:—send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heapèd Autumn's wealth,

With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up,
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it. . . . .
Fancy.

Breakfast over, the business of the day begins: and that, with Keats, is poetry, and all that can foster poetic stimulus. He takes no real heed of anything else. A devoted son and brother, one ready to sacrifice himself and his slender resources to the uttermost farthing for his mother, brothers, sister and friends—yet he has no vital interest in other folks' affairs, nor in current events, nor in ordinary social topics. Other people's poetry does not appeal to him, except that of Shakespeare, and of Homer —whom he does not know in the original, but who, through the poor medium of translation, has filled his soul with Grecian fantasies.

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne:

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent upon a peak in Darien.

Sonnet.

This is what he wrote after sitting up one night till daybreak with his friend Cowden Clarke, shouting with delight over the vistas newly revealed to him. And from that time on, he has luxuriated in dreams of classic beauty, warmed to new life by the sorcery of Romance. Immortal shapes arise upon him from the "infinite azure of the past:" and he sees how

Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair;
Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer's day

Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.
A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more
By reason of his fallen divinity
Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Hyperion.

He is studying French, Latin, and especially Italian—all with a view of furthering his poetic ability: though no great reader, he has soaked himself in the atmosphere of old Italian tales, and the very spirit of mediæval Florence breathes from the story, borrowed from Boccaccio, "an echo in the north-wind sung," which narrates how the hapless Isabella hid away the head of her murdered lover.

Then in a silken scarf,—sweet with the dews
Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully,—
She wrapp'd it up; and for its tomb did choose
A garden pot, wherin she laid it by,
And covered it with mould, and o'er it set
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

Painting by W. J. Neatby. ISABELLA

And she forgot the stars, the moon, the sun,
And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
And the new moon she saw not: but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,
  And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
  And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
  And the new moon she saw not: but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

Isabella.

Keats has brought himself with difficulty, however, to the perusal of modern poets. His boyish enthusiasm for Leigh Hunt's work has long since evaporated: and after reading Shelley's *Revolt of Islam,* all he has found to say is, "Poor Shelley, I think he has his quota of good qualities!" But, for the rest, he is not attracted to any kind of knowledge which cannot be "made applicable and subservient to the purposes of poetry,"—his own poetry. For his one desire is to win an immortal name—and he has begun life "full of hopes, fiery, impetuous, and ungovernable, expecting the world to fall at once beneath his pen. Poor fellow!" (Haydon's diary).

But "men of genius," Keats himself has said, "are as great as certain ethereal chemicals,

operating in a mass of created matter: but they have not any determined character." That indefiniteness of literary aim—that want of will-power, without which genius is a curse, which have hampered the young man all along—are now still further emphasised by the restlessness of a passionate lover. John Keats cannot stay indoors this fine May morning, "fitting himself for verses fit to live," when the girl who is to him the incarnation of all poetry is visible in the next-door garden. He throws down his pen and hurries out to join her.

Contemporary portraits of Fanny Brawne have not succeeded in representing her as beautiful: and at first sight Keats has complained, that, although she "manages to make her hair look well," she "wants sentiment in every feature." Propinquity, however, has achieved the usual result; and now the young poet believes his *inamorata* to be the very apotheosis of loveliness: he is never weary of adoring her

Sweet voice, sweet lips, soft hand, and softer
breast,
Warm breath, light whisper, tender semitone,
Bright eyes, accomplished shape!

A DAY WITH KEATS

If the truth be told, Fanny Brawne is a fairly good-looking young woman, blue-eyed and long-nosed, her hair arranged with curls and ribbons over her brow: she has a curious but striking resemblance to the draped figure in Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love": and for the rest, she is by no means poetic or sentimental, but a voluminous reader, whose strong point is an extraordinary knowledge of the history of costume. She accepts the homage of Keats, much as she accepts the fact of their tacit betrothal, and the fact that her mother disapproves of it—without taking it too seriously in any sense. And now, though not particularly keen on open-air enjoyment, she accepts his daily suggestion of a walk with her; and they go out into the beautiful meadows which were part of Hampstead a hundred years ago.

Keats is in his glory in the fields. Always, the humming of a bee, the sight of a flower, the glitter of the sun, have "seemed to make his nature tremble: then his eyes flashed, his cheek glowed, his mouth quivered." Peculiarly sensitive, as he is, to external influences, his chief delight is to "think of green fields . . . I muse with the greatest affection on every flower I

have known from my infancy." The man who is so soon to "feel the daisies growing over him," takes one of his intensest pleasures in watching the growth of flowers; and now, as an exquisite music, "notes that pierce and pierce," descends through the young green oak-leaves, the poet seizes this golden moment of the May world and transmutes it into song.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
    My sense, as though of hemlock I had
        drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
    One minute past, and Lethe-wards had
        sunk:
'Tis not with envy of thy happy lot,
    But being too happy in thine happiness,—
        That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the
            trees,
            In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
    Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage, that hath been
    Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
    Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt
        mirth!

A DAY WITH KEATS

O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. . . .

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard

In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
That same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep?

Ode to a Nightingale.

The poet is recalled from these rapturous flights to the fugitive sweetness of the present: he is wandering in May meadows, young and impetuous, on fire with hopes, and his heart's beloved beside him. It is almost too good to be true. "I have never known any unalloyed

Painting by W. J. Neatby. THE NIGHTINGALE

Thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

happiness for many days together," he tells Fanny; "the death or sickness of someone has always spoilt my home. I almost wish we were butterflies, and lived but three summer days —three such days with you I could fill with more delight than fifty common years could ever contain." He talks to her earnestly of his dreams, his aspirations, his ambitions: and then the sordid facts of every-day life begin to cast a blighting shadow over his effulgent hopes. What has he, indeed, to offer, worth her taking? A young man of twenty-three, ex-dresser at a hospital, who has abandoned his surgical career without adopting any other: with slender resources, and no occupation beyond that of producing verses which are held up to absolute derision by the great reviews. "I would willingly have recourse to other means," he tells her again, as he has told his friend Dilke, "I cannot: I am fit for nothing else but literature." He talks of taking up journalism —but in his heart he feels unfit for any regular profession, by reason both of physical weakness and a certain lack of system in mental work. The future becomes blackly, blankly overcast; the *res augusta domi* descend like a curtain between the sublimity of Keats and the calm

commonsense of Fanny. They turn homewards in silence, the poet revolving melancholy musings.

"But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globèd peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips.
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

Ode to Melancholy.

A DAY WITH KEATS

Fanny Brawne enters her mother's house, and John Keats goes into his room and sits down, brooding, brooding. "O," he says, "that something fortunate had ever happened to me or my brothers! Then I might hope—but despair is forced upon me as a habit." And he is only too well aware, that although he is naturally "the very soul of courage and manliness," this habit of despair is growing upon him, and eating his energy away. A wintry chill settles down upon the May-time, and his misery finds vent in lovely lines—

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity:
The north cannot undo them,
With a sleety whistle through them;
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;

But with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writh'd not at passed joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbed sense to steal it,
Was never said in rhyme.

Yet Keats is young, and youth means buoyancy. With an effort—increasingly difficult—he is able to shake off this sombre fit for awhile; and he makes use of the simplest means to that end. "Whenever I feel vapourish," he has said, "I rouse myself, wash, and put on a clean shirt; brush my hair and clothes, tie my shoe-strings neatly, and in fact adonize as if I were going out: then, all clean and comfortable, I sit down to write." These very prosaic methods adopted, he abandons himself to the full flood of inspiration, and lets his mind suffuse itself in antique glory. As Endymion, he

Painting by W. J. Neatby. ENDYMION

As she spake, into her face there came
Light, as reflected from a silver flame,
. . . In her eyes a brighter day
Dawn'd blue and full of love.

receives the divine commands of the passionately bright Moon-Lady, as she stoops at last to bless him.

> And as she spake, into her face there came
> Light, as reflected from a silver flame:
> Her long black hair swelled ample, in display
> Full golden: in her eyes a brighter day
> Dawn'd blue and full of love.
>
> *Endymion.*

Or, as Lycius, he succumbs to the serpentine grace of Lamia; or as Porphyro, hidden in the silence, watches Madeline at prayer.

> A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
> All garlanded with carven imageries
> Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot grass,
> And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
> Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
> As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
> And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
> And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
> A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair
breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and
boon
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven: Porphyro grew
faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal
taint.

Eve of St. Agnes.

But the inspiration does not well up to-day: its flow is frustrated, in view of the mountainous difficulties which hedge him in. Ill-health, stinted means, hopeless love, and continual lack of success—these are calculated to give the bravest pause. And presently Keats, snatching a few hurried mouthfuls of lunch, is off to the studio of his friend, the painter Haydon—the one man among all his acquaintance who is capable of really understanding him. He sits down morbid and silent in the painting room: for a while nothing will evoke a word from him,

good or bad. But his keen interest in matters of art, and the entry of various friends one by one—Wentworth Dilke, Hamilton Reynolds, Bailey and Leigh Hunt—soon arouse him to animated conversation. Keats is shy and ill at ease in women's society: but a "delightful combination of earnestness and pleasantry distinguishes his intercourse with men." He says fine things finely, jokes with ready humour, and at the mention of any oppression or wrong rises "into grave manliness at once, seeming like a tall man." No wonder that his society is much sought after, and himself greatly beloved by these congenial spirits; no wonder that here, at least, he meets with that appreciation of which elsewhere his genius has been starved. In this young fellow of twenty-three, who unites winning, affectionate ways, and habitual gentleness of manner, with the loftiest and most nobly-worded ideals, few would discover that imaginary "Johnny Keats, the apothecary's assistant," upon whom the *Blackwood* reviewer had lavished such vials of vituperation. He is here openly acknowledged as one of the "bards of passion and of mirth," and his poems are each accepted, as

Not a senseless, tranced thing,
But divine melodies of truth,
Philosophic numbers smooth,
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries. . . .

"No one else in English poetry, save Shakespeare, has in expression quite the fascinating felicity of Keats, his perfection of loveliness." (Matthew Arnold). But only these few friends of his are able to recognise that perfection. Outside their charmed circle, lies an obstinately unappreciative world.

The afternoon wears on, and the friends disperse. Keats, returning to Wentworth Place flushed with hectic exhilaration, finds a veritable douche of cold water awaiting him, in the shape of a letter from his publishers. They refer to his unlucky first volume of poems, brought out in 1817. "By far the greater number of persons who have purchased it from us," they say, "have found fault with it in such plain terms, that we have in many cases offered to take the book back, rather than be annoyed with the ridicule which has time after time been show-

ered upon it. In fact, it was only on Sunday last that we were under the mortification of having our own opinion of its merits flatly contradicted by a gentleman who told us that he considered it 'no better than a take-in.'"

For a few minutes the pendulum swings back to despair. A man whose whole business in life is the creation of the best work, who "never wrote a line of poetry with the least shadow of public thought," who believes that after his death he will be among the English poets, and that if he only has time now, he will make himself remembered—that such a one should be merely the butt and laughing-stock of his readers! It is an unendurable position. Not that Keats attaches undue importance to popular applause. "Praise or blame," he says, "has but a momentary effect upon the man whose love of beauty in the abstract makes him a severe critic on his own works . . In *'Endymion'* I leaped headlong into the sea, and thereby have become better acquainted with the soundings, the quicksands, and the rocks, than if I had stayed upon the green shore and took tea and comfortable advice. I was never afraid of failure:

for I would sooner fail than not be among the greatest."

But what will Fanny think of such a letter? He falls to miserable meditation over the slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune, and the constant erection of new obstacles in the course of his luckless love. And of Fanny's love he always has had a smouldering doubt: yet he remains her vassal, from the first, as he has told her—irrevocably her slave. He conceives himself an outcast on the wintry hillside, exiled from all his heart's desires.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

Ah what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

Painting by W. J. Neatby.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

I met a lady in the meads
    Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
    And her eyes were wild.

A DAY WITH KEATS

I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
And sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me and she did love,
And made sweet moan.

She found me roots of relish swe
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
I love thee true.

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gaz'd and sighed deep,
And there I shut her wild sad eyes—
So kiss'd to sleep.

And there we slumber'd on the moss,
And there I dream'd, ah woe betide,
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cried—"La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

La Belle Dame sans merci.

And now he hears the voice of his Belle Dame ringing light across the garden; while he sits here, a prey to every distress, she is gaily gossiping with her next-door neighbour Brown. At once the unhappy Keats is tormented by a thousand jealous fears. Fanny is transferring her affection to Brown: of that he is quite certain. He rushes out: his black looks banish the much-amused Brown, and very nearly produce an immediate rupture between Fanny and himself. But after a few bitter words, he

permits himself to be reassured—or is it cajoled?—and tells her, "I must confess that I love you the more, in that I believe you have liked me for my own sake and for nothing else." The poor boy, from a worldly point of view, has "nothing else" to offer.

The lovers' quarrel is over for the nonce. Visitors begin to drop in for the evening; there is music and singing in Brown's little drawing room. Keats is very fond of music, and can himself, though possessing hardly any voice, "produce a pleasing musical effect." He will sit and listen for hours to a sympathetic performer: but his ear, like all his faculties, is abnormally sensitive: and a wrong note will drive him into a frenzy. As the room grows fuller, he becomes restive. "The poetical character," he has observed, "is not itself—it has no character. When I am in a room with people, the identity of everyone in the room begins to press upon me so that I am in a little time annihilated."

In the light chit-chat of small talk and badinage he has no part: it bewilders and annoys him. Those about him—especially the

women—seem to show up in their worst colours. Fanny herself appears, as he has described her at their first meeting, an absolute *minx*. And presently he contrives to slip stealthily away, and seats himself in some quiet chamber, alone with the darkness and the May-scents of leaf and blossom. "I hope I shall never marry," he groans once more; "the roaring wind is my wife, and the stars through the window-panes are my children: the mighty abstract idea of Beauty I have in all things, stifles the more divided and minute domestic happiness. I do not live in this world alone, but in a thousand worlds. No sooner am I alone, than shapes of epic greatness are stationed round me, and serve my spirit the office which is equivalent to a King's Bodyguard."

The young man now lights his candles, and takes up a familiar and favourite occupation;—the writing of a long letter to his brother George in America. This epistle is, as one might expect, almost entirely concerned with the art of poetry—what else has Keats to write about?—whether from the side of technique, or inspiration. He dwells on the adroit management of open and close vowels—he shows how "the

poetry of earth is never dead;" he discusses the need of constant application to work, and how "the genius of poetry must work out its own salvation in a man." And meanwhile, as fitful strains of song reach him from the distance, and his roving gaze rivets itself upon a Wedgwood copy of a Grecian vase—one of Brown's chief treasures—the fleeting wafts of sound, and the lovely symmetry of shape, and the golden chain of figures, blend themselves into one harmonious whole of word-music.

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? what maidens loath?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

A DAY WITH KEATS

Heard melodies are sweet, 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:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though hast not thou thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high sorrowful and cloy'd,

A DAY WITH KEATS

A burning forehead, and a parching
tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands
drest?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and trodden weed;
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of
thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other
woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou
say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to
know.

Ode to a Grecian Urn.

The "shapes of epic greatness" throng closer and mightier around him. The storm and stress of the day's thoughts have utterly drained his small reserve of strength. Outworn by the vehemence of his own conflicting emotions, John Keats lays his aching eyes and dark brown head upon his arm as it rests along the table, and sinks into a dreamless slumber of exhaustion; while, a

"Happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever singing songs for ever new,"

the nightingale chants on outside.

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A Day
with
Longfellow.

Painting by E. W. Haslehust. LONGFELLOW'S HOUSE.

"A large old-fashioned house . . . a place of grassy terraces, long verandahs, lilac bushes and shady trees."

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW.

HE expression of serious and tender thoughtfulness, which always characterized the quiet face of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, had deepened during his later years, into something akin to melancholy. The tragic loss of his beloved wife,—burned to death while she was sealing up in paper little locks of her children's hair,—had left its permanent and irrevocable mark upon his life. Still, he did not seclude himself with his sorrow: the professor of Modern Languages at Harvard could hardly do that. He remained the selfsame kindly, gentle, industrious man, welcoming with ready courtesy the innumerable visitors to the Craigie House.

This is a large old-fashioned house in Cambridge, Massachusetts—a place of grassy terraces, long verandahs, lilac bushes, and shady trees—a perfect dwelling for a man of cultured tastes, as the interior also testifies.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

From the Poet's study, a spacious, sunny room upon the ground floor, he could look across the meadows behind the house to the distant silver windings of the river Charles. It was a most orderly room. Every book and paper lay where he could put his hand on it in a moment. Book-cases full of valuable volumes—precious first editions—busts and portraits,—were to be seen on every side. A certain austere simplicity was noticeable all over Longfellow's house. "His private rooms," it has been said, "were like those of a German professor." But the attractiveness and delightfulness of Craigie House arose not from any intrinsic opulence of its contents, but from the personality of the man who lived there. "By his mere presence he rendered the sunshine brighter, and the place more radiant of kindness and peace."

The Poet began his day, so long as age and health permitted, by a brisk morning walk. He would be out and about by six, observing and enjoying the beauty of earth and air, and subsequently recording his exquisite impressions:

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

O Gift of God! O perfect day:
Whereon shall no man work, but play;
Whereon it is enough for me,
Not to be doing, but to be!

Through every fibre of my brain,
Through every nerve, through every vein,
I feel the electric thrill, the touch
Of life, that seems almost too much.

I hear the wind among the trees
Playing celestial symphonies;
I see the branches downward bent,
Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high
The splendid scenery of the sky,
Where through a sapphire sea the sun
Sails like a golden galleon,

Towards yonder cloud-land in the West,
Towards yonder Islands of the Blest,
Whose steep sierra far uplifts
Its craggy summits white with drifts.

Blow, winds! and waft through all the rooms
The snowflakes of the cherry-blooms!
Blow, winds! and bend within my reach
The fiery blossoms of the peach!

O Life and Love! O happy throng
Of thoughts, whose only speech is song!
O heart of man! canst thou not be
Blithe as the air is, and as free?

A Day of Sunshine.

The morning's post brought the first consignment of that enormous number of epistles which were at once an affliction and an amusement to him. The Poet was besieged by letters from ambitious aspirants seeking advice, and from self-styled failures, desirous of help. To these last he was peculiarly drawn, for he was distinguished by "a grace almost peculiar to himself at the time in which he lived—his tenderness towards the undeveloped artist, struggling towards individual expression." In short, his first desire was to help on people, and bring out the best in them.

Of apparent failure or success he recked little, believing, like Stevenson, that the true

success is labour,—that pursuit, and not attainment is the worthiest object of existence; and his philosophy is summed up in the well-known words of *The Ladder of Saint Augustine,*

Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

. . . . . .

The longing for ignoble things;
The strife for triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill; all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will;—

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern—unseen before—
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.

Constant requests for autographs formed the bulk of the day's budget, and these also never went unanswered—even when couched in terms the most *mal-a-propos*, much as those of the man who said that "he loved poetry in 'most any style,"—"and would you please copy your 'Break, break, break' for the writer?" Possibly the worst offenders, in this matter of autograph-hunting, were those multitudinous schoolgirls whom Longfellow humorously complained that he was always "kept busy answering." They ignored the fact of his professional duties, and his own unremitting work; anything to get a reply in the handwriting of the celebrity! But he had a special delight in budding womanhood, and had de-

picted it with magical insight and rare delicacy of touch, in lines which have never been excelled in their charm and purity.

Maiden! with the meek, brown eyes
In whose orbs a shadow lies,
Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run!

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar?

O, thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares!
Care and age come unawares!

Painting by W. H. Margetson.

MAIDENHOOD.

Maiden with the meek brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies,
Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run!

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the seal of truth.

O, that dew, like balm shall steal
Into wounds, that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

Maidenhood.

The early instalment of letters attended to, the Poet could devote himself to his own affairs. He believed in *working* at poetry, methodically, systematically : although inspiration might flow with sudden fervour, it was not to be waited for. "Regular, proportioned, resolute, incessant industry," was the secret of his success, and the erasures and substitutions in his MSS. bear witness to his care in craftsmanship. The least conspicuous word must be as perfect as he could make it. Longfellow's creed, as expounded in *The Builders*, allowed for no scamped work.

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time :
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.

The Builders.

Work, indeed, whether mental or physical, was his first instinct, and he has preached the gospel of honest work to the whole English-speaking world in some of the most familiar lines in the language.

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door:
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice.
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,--sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortune must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought!

The Village Blacksmith.

Not for long, however, might Longfellow remain undisturbed in his sunny room. Sometimes he welcomed the opening door that saw "a little figure stealing gently in, laying an arm round his neck as he bent over his work, and softly whispering some childish secret in his ear." For this was no obstacle to the current of his tranquil thoughts. "My little girls are flitting about my study," he wrote to a friend, "as blithe as two birds. They are preparing to celebrate the birthday of one of their dolls. . .

Painting by Dudley Tennant. THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door:
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor.

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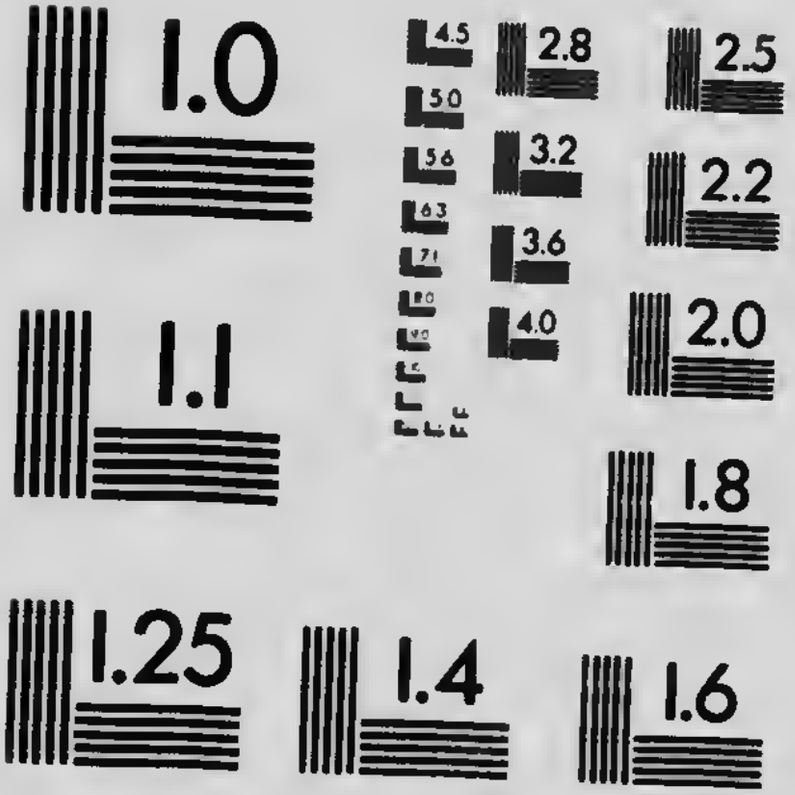

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What a beautiful world this child's world is! I take infinite delight in seeing it go on all around me."

It was with absolute sincerity that he had exclaimed:

Come to me, O ye children!
For I hear you at your play,
And the questions that perplexed me
Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,
That look towards the sun,
Where thoughts are singing swallows,
And the brooks of morning run.

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,
In your thoughts the brooklet's flow;
But in mine is the wind of Autumn,
And the first fall of the snow.

Ah! what would the world be to us,
If the children were no more?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air for food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood,—

That to the world are children ;
Through them it feels the glow
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children !
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and the winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books,
When compared with your caresses,
And the gladness of your looks ?

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said;
For ye are living poems,
And all the rest are dead.

Children.

But these were congenial moments. There were visitors much less desirable. "He was besieged," as one of his friends declares, "by every possible form of interruption which the ingenuity of the human brain could devise." For his admirers, whose name was legion, were not satisfied with hero-worship afar off: they must needs force themselves into his presence, and express their admiration *viva-voce*. Most amazing folks swooped suddenly down upon him, ruthless and unabashed.

Longfellow, always quick to see the comical side of a situation, would tell with great delight strange tales of his unexpected guests. "One man," he said, "a perfect stranger, came with an omnibus full of ladies. He introduced himself, then returning to the omnibus, took out all the ladies, one, two, three, four, five, with a little girl, and brought them in. I entertained them to the best of my ability, and they stayed an hour."

On another occasion, an English gentleman, with no letter of introduction, abruptly introduced himself, thus: "In other countries, you know, we go to see ruins, and the like—but you

have no ruins in your country, and I thought," growing embarrassed, "I would call and see *you*!" Another strange gentleman accosted him with great fervour, "Mr. Longfellow, I have long desired the honour of knowing you. I am one of *the few men* who have read your *Evangeline!*"

All these worshippers at his shrine were received by the Poet with his unfailing courtesy and patience; but he was invariably adroit in warding off compliments. To applause and flattery he was impervious—reference to his own works was distasteful to him. His perfect modesty was the reflex of his natural reticence.

Longfellow regarded life from the standpoint of eternity, and thus was one who, in the words of à Kempis, "careth little for the praise or dispraise of men." His gaze was riveted upon that "Land of the Hereafter," to which he was always more than ready to set out, and in the departure of Hiawatha he had imaged his longing for the "Happiest Land."

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

On the shore stood Hiawatha,
Turned and waved his hand at parting;
On the clear and luminous water
Launched his birch canoe for sailing,
From the pebbles of the margin
Shoved it forth into the water;
Whispered to it "Westward! westward!"
And with speed it darted forward.

And the evening sun descending
Set the clouds on fire with redness,
Burned the broad sky, like a prairie,
Left upon the level water
One long track and trail of splendour,
Down whose stream, as down a river,
Westward, westward Hiawatha
Sailed into the fiery sunset,
Sailed into the purple vapours,
Sailed into the dusk of evening.

And the people from the margin
Watched him floating, rising, sinking,
Till the birch canoe seemed lifted
High into that sea of splendour,
Till it sank into the vapours
Like the new moon slowly, slowly
Sinking in the purple distance.

And they said "Farewell for ever!"
Said "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"
And the forests, dark and lonely,
Moved through all their depths of darkness,
Sighed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"
And the waves upon the margin
Rising, rippling on the pebbles,
Sobbed "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
From her haunts among the fenlands,
Screamed "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"

Thus departed Hiawatha,
Hiawatha the Beloved,
In the glory of the sunset,
In the purple mists of evening,
To the regions of the home-wind,
Of the Northwest wind Keewaydin,
To the Islands of the Blessed,
To the kingdom of Ponemah,
To the land of the Hereafter!

Hiawatha.

Personal friends, of whom the Poet possessed many, would arrive in time for lunch, and be welcomed by the master of Craigie

Painting by J. Finnemore. HIAWATHA.

And the evening sun descending ....
Left upon the level water
One long track and trail of splendour,
Down whose stream as down a river,
Westward, westward Hiawatha
Sailed into the fiery sunset,
Sailed into the purple vapours,
Sailed into the dusk of evening.

House at the gate in the lilac hedge. He would bring them into the large, cheerful dining-room, and the children would sit at a little table on the verandah, while the host, with his own hands, set the copper kettle singing, and made tea in the antique silver pot.

It was a peaceful, happy hour for the guests. Longfellow, unlike Tennyson, was never much of a talker: he was a listener and observer, who dwelt in a speaking silence—in what has been defined as a heavenly unfathomableness. Ruskin had written: "You come as such a *calm* influence to me . . . you give me such a feeling of friendship and repose." And this feeling was enhanced by the man's natural dignity and grace, the refinement of his features, the perfect taste of his dress, and the exquisite simplicity of his manners. Many have alluded to his soft, musical voice, to his steady blue-gray eyes, to the "innate charm of tranquility," which gave a peculiar spiritual sweetness to his smile. But the man was even more, and better than the poet; so much so that a young enthusiast exclaimed "All the vulgar and pretentious people in the world

ought to be sent to Mr. Longfellow to show them how to behave!" Nor was this calm the outcome of natural placidity—it had been attained through bitter suffering: it was that gleam of a hero's armour which the "red planet Mars" unveils to a tear-dimmed sight, when

The night is come, but not too soon;
And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heaven,
But the cold light of stars;
And the first watch of night is given
To the red planet Mars.

Is it the tender star of love?
The star of love and dreams?
O no! from that blue tent above,
A hero's armour gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies,
The shield of that red star.

O star of strength! I see thee stand
And smile upon my pain;
Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand,
And I am strong again.

Within my breast there is no light,
But the cold light of stars;
I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will,
He rises in my breast,
Serene, and resolute, and still,
And calm and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art,
That readest this brief psalm,
As one by one thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm.

O fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

The Light of Stars.

After lunch, the guests would be taken round the house, and its various treasures pointed out: books in every corner, and on every wall pictures and portraits; antique furniture, interesting mementoes of every sort. It was a home well worth seeing: and an old-world air pervaded all, from the quaint drawing-room, with its old-fashioned, rose-festooned wall-paper, to the upper rooms with the Dutch-tiled hearths.

Later on, to those with whom he felt specially *en rapport*, Longfellow would read aloud some poems, new or old, his own, or those of other men. He was not a forcible or a dramatic reader; the simplicity which he loved "in all things," as he had said, "but specially in poetry," was evident also here. Yet perhaps no other man could have done equal justice to the lingering hexameters of his most successful poem—for such, by reason of its novelty, pathos, and beauty, *Evangeline* must always be considered. "It has become a purifying portion," says Rossetti, "of the experiences of the heart . . . a long-drawn sweetness and sadness"; and, though sixty years have elapsed

since *Evangeline* first appeared, the ideal maiden of this "idyll of the heart" has lost no fraction of her loveliness.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noon-tide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop
Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,

Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heir-loom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.
But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.

Evangeline.

In the course of the afternoon, some of the poet's guests taking leave, others would accompany him to a concert, organ recital, or any other musical function which might be available. Longfellow was passionately fond of good music, and lost no opportunity of hearing it. His own lyrics are singularly susceptible, as all composers know, of an adequate musical setting.

Few short poems in the world have been so often sung as "Stars of the summer night"—"Good-night, beloved"—"The rainy day"—

Painting by H. M. Brock. EVANGELINE.

But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.


H.M BROCK.

and other well-known verses. A most effective sense of sound and rhythm, joined with perfect simplicity of diction, evince the inherent artistry of a man who was no musician in the technical sense, but who could express himself in such lines as

The night is calm and cloudless,
And still as still can be,
And the stars come forth to listen
To the music of the sea.
They gather, and gather, and gather,
Until they crowd the sky,
And listen in breathless silence,
To the solemn litany.
It begins in rocky caverns,
As a voice that chants alone
To the pedals of the organ
In monotonous undertone;
And anon from shelving beaches
And shallow sands beyond,
In snow-white robes uprising
The ghostly choirs respond.
And sadly and unceasing
The mournful voice sings on,

And the snow-white choirs still answer
Christe eleison!

The Golden Legend.

After dinner, to which perhaps an intimate friend or two remained, the poet would remain awhile in his study: not actually at work, for his writing was only done in the morning hours, but considering and criticising work already accomplished, and carefully perusing that great translation of Dante which he considered, rightly or wrongly, as the most important work of his life. The twilight would slowly fade into the dusk of a "blindman's holiday," and then came the sweetest moment of the day.

Longfellow's intense affection for all little ones, his touching kindness to them, his sympathy with their most trivial joys or troubles, were focussed and centred in the love he bore to his own dear, motherless children.

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall-stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down in the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there I will keep you for ever,
Yes, for ever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

The Children's Hour.

Painting by A. E. Jackson. THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

. . . . . .

They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape they surround me,
They seem to be everywhere.

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A brief period of childish gaiety would rvene, to which the man of childlike heart nded readily; and when the little feet had red bedward, and the house was silent from merry little voices, the father would sit ntil midnight in his spacious empty room. vould occupy himself with letters—long, ant, pleasant gossips to his best and most iar friends at a distance: till midnight upon him unawares. "It is nearly one ck—I am the only person up in the house : candle is sinking in its socket."

And a double loneliness descended upon as his weary hand laid down the pen. He ined inert and brooding; the solitude was st tangible. But this solitude was present- eopled by visions, fraught with ineffable olation to a mind never out of touch with er-worldly" influences.

When the hours of Day are numbered,
And the voices of the Night
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,
To a holy, calm delight;

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,
And, like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful firelight
Dance upon the parlour wall;

Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The beloved, the true-hearted,
Come to visit me once more;

He, the young and strong, who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the roadside fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life!

They the holy ones and weakly,
Who the cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands so meekly,
Spake with us on earth no more!

And with them the Being Beauteous,
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,
Breathing from her lips of air.

O, though oft depressed and lonely
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died!

Footsteps of Angels.

"*Empty* is a horrid word," the Poet had written to a friend—but the room is no longer empty. It has become a habitation for other visitants than the motley throng of flatterers impelled by curiosity, who hindered his morning hours. Unspoken benedictions lie thick upon the air—the man's griefs are soothed away by the touch of invisible fingers. Patient, unselfish, indomitable, he resumes the burden of his daily life with new hope and courage for the morrow.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

As torrents in summer,
Half dried in their channels,
Suddenly rise, though the
Sky is still cloudless,
For rain has been falling
Far off at their fountains;

So hearts that are fainting
Grow full to o'erflowing,
And they that behold it
Marvel, and know not
That God at their fountains
Far off has been raining.

Tales of a Wayside Inn.

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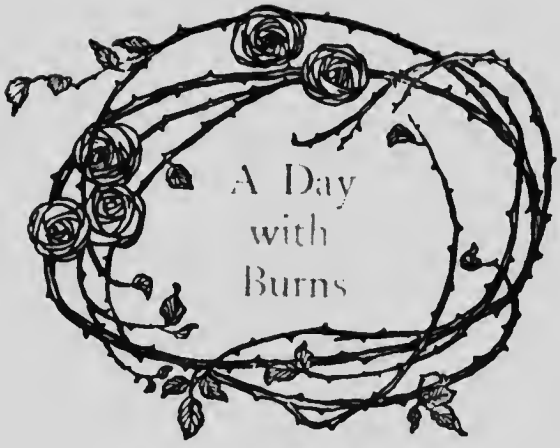
A Day
with
Burns

Painting by W. J. Neatby.

MY LUVE IS LIKE A RED, RED ROSE.

My Luve is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June:
My Luve is like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune

As fair thou art, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I:
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

A DAY WITH BURNS.

HERE are few figures which appeal more picturesquely to the imagination than that of the ploughman-poet—swarthy, stalwart, black-eyed,—striding along the furrow in the grey of a dreary dawn. Yet Burns was far from being a mere uncultured peasant, nor did he come of peasant stock. His forefathers were small yeoman farmers, who had risked themselves in the cause of the Young Pretender: they had a certain amount of family pride and family tradition. Robert Burns had been educated in small schools, by various tutors, and by his father, a man of considerable attainments. He had acquired some French and Latin, studied mensuration, and acquainted himself with a good deal of poetry and many theological and philosophical books.

So that the man who may be seen going out this dusky morning from his little farmstead of Ellisland near Dumfries—the dark and taciturn man in hodden grey and rough top boots—is not precisely a son of the soil. He is a hard worker in the field by dint of necessity, but his strenuous and impetuous mind is set upon other thoughts than the plough, as he drives his share along the Nithsdale uplands. It is exactly the season of the year that he delights in. "There is scarcely any earthly object," he has written, "which gives me more—I do not know if I should call it pleasure, but something that exalts me, something that enraptures me—than to walk in the sheltered side of a wood or high plantation on a cloudy winter's day, and hear the stormy wind howling among the trees, or raving over the plains. . . . .I take a peculiar pleasure in the season of winter, more than the rest of the year. . . . .There is something that raises the mind to a serious sublimity, favourable to everything great and noble." And there is also something secretly akin to the poet's wild and passionate soul. For this is not a happy man, but an embittered one, and ready to " rail on Lady Fortune in good

Painting by E. W. Haslehust. THE HOME OF BURNS.

The man in hodden grey and rough top boots who might be seen going out on dusky mornings from his little farmstead of Ellisland near Dumfries.


L.W. HASLEHUST

set terms." He takes the storm-wind for an interpreter:

'The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,'
The joyless winter day,
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May:
The tempest's howl, it soothes my soul,
My griefs it seems to join;
The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine!

Thou Power Supreme, whose mighty scheme
These woes of mine fulfil,
Here firm I rest; they must be best,
Because they are *Thy* will!
Then all I want—O do Thou grant
This one request of mine!—
Since to *enjoy* Thou dost deny,
Assist me to *resign*.

His brief meteoric reign of popularity in Edinburgh is now at an end: from being a

popular idol of society, caressed and fêted, he has been left to sink back into his native obscurity. And, being poignantly proud, he suffers accordingly. The consciousness of genius burns within him, a flame that devours rather than illumines: and he finds vent for his bitterness, as he treads the clogging fallow, in the immortal lines: *A Man's a Man for a' that.*

Is there for honest poverty
That hings his head, an' a' that ;
The coward-slave—we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that !
For a' that, an' a' that,
Our toils obscure an' a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The Man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin grey, an' a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A Man's a Man for a' that,

For a' that, an' a' that,
Their tinsel show an' a' that ;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that;

. . . .

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, an' a' that ;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Gude faith, he mauna fa' that !
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their dignities an' a' that ;
The pith o' sense, an' pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may
(As come it will for a' that),
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,
Shall bear the gree an' a' that,
For a' that, an' a' that ;
It's coming yet for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

Presently, however, the sweet influences of the clear air, the pleasant smell of upturned earth, the wholesome sight and sounds of morning, soothe the poet's rugged spirit: he becomes attuned to the calmer present, and forgetful of the feverish past. Burns has never been given to depicting the shows and forms of nature for their own sake: he only uses them as a stage for the setting of a central human interest. In short, he "cares little," it has been said, "for the natural picturesqueness in itself: the moral picturesqueness touches him more nearly." And all sentient life is dear to him—not human life alone. Hence, one sees him wince and shrink, as his ploughshare destroys the daisy.

Wee, modest crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou'st met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet,

Painting by Dudley Hardy. THE MOUNTAIN DAISY.

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour,
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

A DAY WITH BURNS

Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' spreckl'd breast!
When upward-springing, blithe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

. . . .

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

. . . .

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

(*To a Mountain Daisy.*)

Or he becomes thoughtful and abstracted beyond his wont, after turning up a mouse's nest with the plough; and sternly recalls his "gaudsman" or ploughboy, who would kill the little creature out of pure thoughtlessness. He muses upon the irony of fate: and the world is the richer for his musings.

Wee, sleeket, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickerin brattle!
I wad be laith to run an' chase thee,
Wi' murderin' pattle!

. . . .

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,
An' weary winter coming fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell—
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

. . . .

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promised joy!

(*Lines to a Mouse.*)

But nothing is too trivial to evade this large and universal sympathy of his. "Not long ago, one morning, as I was out in the fields sowing some grass seeds, I heard the burst of a shot from a neighbouring plantation, and presently a

poor little wounded hare came crippling by me. You will guess my indignation at the inhuman fellow who could shoot a hare at this season, when they all of them have young ones." It is on record that he threatened to throw the culprit—a neighbouring farmer's son—into the Nith to reward his inhumanity.

The ploughing is finished for the day, but the poet must now needs betake himself to those official duties as an exciseman, which are perhaps even less congenial to him than agricultural pursuits. He has to cover some two hundred miles' riding every week ; he is forced to earn a scanty living for himself and his family, by incessant physical and mental work. The iron has entered into his soul—here and there it crops up in hard metallic outbursts: though for the most part, he is unrivalled in spontaneous gaiety of song. And old sorrows come upon him as he rides alone. . . . .He considers the present time to be the happiest of his life. He has an excellent wife, and bonnie bairns: friends many and faithful: com-

parative immunity from financial troubles: a popularity such as no other Scottish poet has attained; yet memories of the past remain, which are never to be obliterated in oblivion. And chief among these is the greatest sorrow that has befallen him—the loss of his one true love, his cherished Highland Mary.

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery!
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie:
There Simmer first unfald her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last Farewell
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay, green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasp'd her to my bosom!

The golden Hours on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my Dearie;
For dear to me, as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

. . . .

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly!
And clos'd for ay, the sparkling glance
That dwalt on me sae kindly!
And mouldering now in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

Burns has been an easy and inconstant lover all his days: devoted, for the nonce, to every girl he met. But Mary was on a pinnacle apart—unequalled, unreplaceable; and still he is continually dreaming of her—dreaming in tender and melodious verse.

Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,

Painting by Dudley Hardy. HIGHLAND MARY.

The golden Hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my Dearie,
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary,

Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his
breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past,
Thy image at our last embrace,
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!
(*To Mary in Heaven.*)

But now, hard upon the scent of smugglers across the Nithsdale moors, exchanging cheery greetings with cottagers here and there, the tramp of his horse's hoofs inspires him to a gayer measure. The clouds, which have overhung

his mind all the forenoon, roll away: and his mercurial spirit seizes any pleasure that the moment may afford. The nearest to hand is the ready ripple of rhythm in light short songs that fairly bubble over with gaiety. For there is nothing of the midnight oil about Robert Burns —his poems come swiftly and spontaneously to him, as naturally as music to a blackbird: they have indeed the same quality as the carols of birds—careless, happy, tuneful. Any casual impression sets our poet singing: the mere glance of a merry blue eye at a window, and he is away on the praises of one immediately present lassie, or of innumerable others absent.

Chorus:—Green grow the rashes, O;
Green grow the rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent among the lasses, O.

There's nought but care on ev'ry han',
In every hour that passes, O:
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses, O.
Green grow, etc.

The war'ly race may riches chase,
And riches still may fly them, O ;
An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.
Green grow, etc.

But gie me a cannie hour at e'en
My arms about my dearie, O ;
An' war'ly cares, and war'ly men,
May a' gae tapsalteerie, O !
Green grow, etc.

For you sae douce, ye sneer at this ;
Ye're nought but senseless asses, O :
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
He dearly lov'd the lasses, O.
Green grow, etc.

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O :
Her prentice han' she try'd on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O.
Green grow, etc.

Sometimes a flower in the hedgerow opens out to him a new and exquisite signification.

My Luve is like a red red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
My Luve is like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my Dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my Dear,
An' the rocks melt wi' the sun;
And I will luve thee still, my Dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only Luve!
And fare-thee-weel awhile!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' 'twere ten thousand mile!

Painting by Dudley Hardy.

O WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST.

O wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea;
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee;
Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or, as he meets the wind—still bleak, though now it is midday,—a cold wind charged with latent snow,—its chilly breaths are crystallized into a very jewel of song.

O wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee ;
Or did Misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a Paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there ;
Or were I Monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my Queen, wad be my Queen.

Presently he turns his horse's head towards Dumfries. It is market-day in the town, and a score of friends give him clamorous welcome. They may not fully appreciate Rob's mental equipments, but they greet him as the best of good companions: and in a little while he forms the leading spirit of some excited group, discussing matters social and political. For Burns takes the keenest interest in current events: and, though most of his poems may be of a more ephemeral interest, he is capable, when deeply stirred, of expressing himself with a stern and lofty patriotism. It may be inspired by the events of the present: it often is evoked by glories of the past.

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
    Or to Victorie!
Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's power—
    Chains and Slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a Slave?
Let him turn and flee!

. . . .

Lay the proud Usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!—
Let us Do—or Die!!!

Seated in the inn among his cronies, "as market-days are wearing late," the dour and bitter looks of the poet are exchanged for glowing eyes and laughing lips, while he recites some of the lines which he has wedded to old and familiar melodies. As Moore, a little later, secured for the Irish airs a world-wide reputation, by supplying them with words of a more popular character than their own—so Burns re-wrote the songs of his country. Thousands of people who never heard of "The Highland Watch's Farewell" have carolled that melody to his delightful verses,

My heart is sair—I dare na tell,
My heart is sair for Somebody ;
I could wake a winter night
For the sake o' Somebody :
Oh-hon ! for Somebody !
Oh-hey ! for Somebody !
I could range the world around,
For the sake o' Somebody.

Ye Powers that smile on virtuous love,
O, sweetly smile on Somebody !
Frae ilka danger keep him free,
And send me safe my Somebody !
Oh-hon ! for Somebody !
Oh-hey ! for Somebody !
I wad do—what wad I not?
For the sake o' Somebody.

As time wears by, Burns pulls out a manuscript from his pocket, and reads his latest poem to a hilarious audience : a very masterpiece, they acclaim it. The legend and the scenery are awhile familiar to them : but they

have never heard the tale told thus before, as Burns has immortalized it in "Tam o' Shanter."

. . . As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure :
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious !

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed ;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever ;
Or like the Borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place ;
Or like the Rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.
Nae man can tether Time nor Tide,
The hour approaches Tam maun ride—
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in ;
And sic a night he takes the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in,

. . . .

Weel mounted on his grey meare Meg
(A better never lifted leg),
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire ;
Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet,
Whiles crooning o'er an auld Scots sonnet,
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares ;
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

. . . .

. . . The lightnings flash from pole to pole,
Near and more near the thunders roll,
When glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seemed in a bleeze,
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

. . . .

And, wow ! Tam saw an unco sight !

Warlocks and witches in a dance :
Nae cotillion, brent-new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.

(*Tam o' Shanter.*)

But now it is time that Burns, like his hero, should take the homeward road. He calls for his horse, parts from his boisterous comrades, and rides out into the wintry evening. Nithsdale is a land of lovely sunsets : and against the rose and gold of heaven, the poet sees the homely cottage-smoke of earth, thin spirals of blue vapour, speaking of happy hearths and labour ended. It is several years since Burns, standing with Dugald Stewart upon the Braid Hills, declared that to him the worthiest object in the whole bright morning landscape was the cluster of smoking cottages. But still he regards them with affection and enjoyment : and chiefly his eyes are bent towards that quiet homestead which holds his own dear folk. All the peace which that stormy heart can find is set and centred there :

despite all previous fugitive fancies for Jessie, and Peggie, and Phemie, and the rest, he has found calm happiness with his Jean, the most devoted of wives.

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw,
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There wild-woods grow, and rivers row,
And mony a hill between:
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair,
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs,
By fountain, shaw, or green;
There's not a bonnie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.

She comes out into the twilight to meet him, and his emotion shapes itself, on the instant, into song.

This is no my ain lassie,
Fair tho' the lassie be;
Weel ken I my ain lassie,
Kind love is in her e'e.

I see a form, I see a face,
Ye weel may wi' the fairest place;
It wants, to me, the witching grace,
The kind love that's in her e'e.

She's bonnie, blooming, straight, and tall,
And lang has had my heart in thrall;
And aye it charms my very saul,
The kind love that's in her e'e.

A thief sae pawkie is my Jean,
To steal a blink, by a' unseen ;
But gleg as light are lovers' een,
When kind love is in the e'e.

It may escape the courtly sparks,
It may escape the learnèd clerks ;
But weel the watching lover marks
The kind love that's in her e'e.

The servants, sitting at the same table, according to Scottish farm custom, share his simple evening meal: and subsequently. before the children's bedtime, the master speaks with seriousness to his household, and reads aloud some passages from the Holy Book.

Their master's and their mistress's command,
The younkers a' are warned to obey ;
And mind their labours wi' an eydent hand,
An' ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk or play ;

Painting by Dudley Hardy. JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And monie a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

"And O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
"And mind your duty, duly, morn and night;
"Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
"Implore His counsel and assisting might:
"They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright."

. . . .

Then homeward all take off their several way,
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

(*The Cotter's Saturday Night.*)

Now, in the quiet house, the man at last is free to take up his pen. He is writing hard, daily, or rather nightly: every week sees a parcel of manuscript despatched to his publisher.

A DAY WITH BURNS

The thoughts which have crowded tumultuously upon him all day long, may at last be set down and conserved: for poetry, as Wordsworth says, "is emotion remembered in tranquillity." The grave and swarthy face bends above the paper in the candlelight—varying expressions chase each other across the mobile mouth and eyes. Sometimes the theme is one of poignant pathos.

Ae fond kiss and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, and then forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerful twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy.
But to see her was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.

Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted!

Fare-thee-weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, Enjoyment, Love, and Pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas! for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

(*Parting Song to Clarinda.*)

Again the music changes to the sprightliest vivaciousness, to tell how "last May a braw wooer came down the lang glen," or to sing the "dainty distress" of the maiden enamoured of *Tam Glen.*

My heart is a-breaking, dear Tittie,
Some counsel unto me come len',
To anger them a' is a pity,
But what will I do wi' Tam Glen?

I'm thinking, wi' sic a braw fellow,
In poortith I might mak a fen';
What care I in riches to wallow,
If I mauna marry Tam Glen!

There's Lowrie the Laird o' Dumeller—
"Gude-day to you"—brute! he comes ben:
He brags and he braws o' his siller,
But when will he dance like Tam Glen!

My Minnie does constantly deave me,
And bids me beware o' young men;
They flatter, she says, to deceive me,
But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen!

My daddie says, gin I'll forsake him,
He'll gie me gude hunder marks ten;
But, if it's ordain'd I maun take him,
O wha will I get but Tam Glen!

A DAY WITH BURNS

Yestreen at the Valentine's dealing,
My heart to my mou gied a sten ;
For thrice I drew ane without failing,
And thrice it was written "Tam Glen!"

The last Halloween I was waukin
My droukit sark-sleeve, as ye ken,
His likeness came up the house staukin,
And the very grey breeks o' Tam Glen!

Come, counsel, dear Tittie ! don't tarry ;
I'll gie ye my bonnie black hen,
Gif ye will advise me to marry
The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen !

But here comes a knock at the door, to stop the flow of inspiration : it is not an unwelcome visitor, but an old friend, who, returning after many years from foreign parts, has learned of " Rob's " amazing leap into fame. Strangers, drawn by curiosity and admiration, are not infrequent visitors : " It was something to have dined or supped in the company of Burns."

But this is a different matter: and the warm impulsive heart responds to it, in words which have never been forgotten.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp!
And surely I'll be mine!
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pou'd the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a weary fitt,
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl'd i' the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine ;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin' auld lang syne.

It is late, very late, when the visitor departs: the stars are frosty, the ground hard. The spell of newly-roused remembrances lies heavy still upon Burns's heart : and as he turns to rest, and sees the peaceful sleeping forms of his wife and little children, tender and calm desires well up within him. He can conceive no higher happiness than comes of a serene old age, in the company of those dear ones : and a picture rises before him of old folk gently descending to a longer rest, side by side together.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent ;
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent ;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw ;

But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither ;
And mony a cantie day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither :
Now we maun totter down, John,
And hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

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