

# Voices of Dawn Over the Hills

By  
ROSE E. SHARLAND

*With an Introduction by*  
EDWARD CARPENTER



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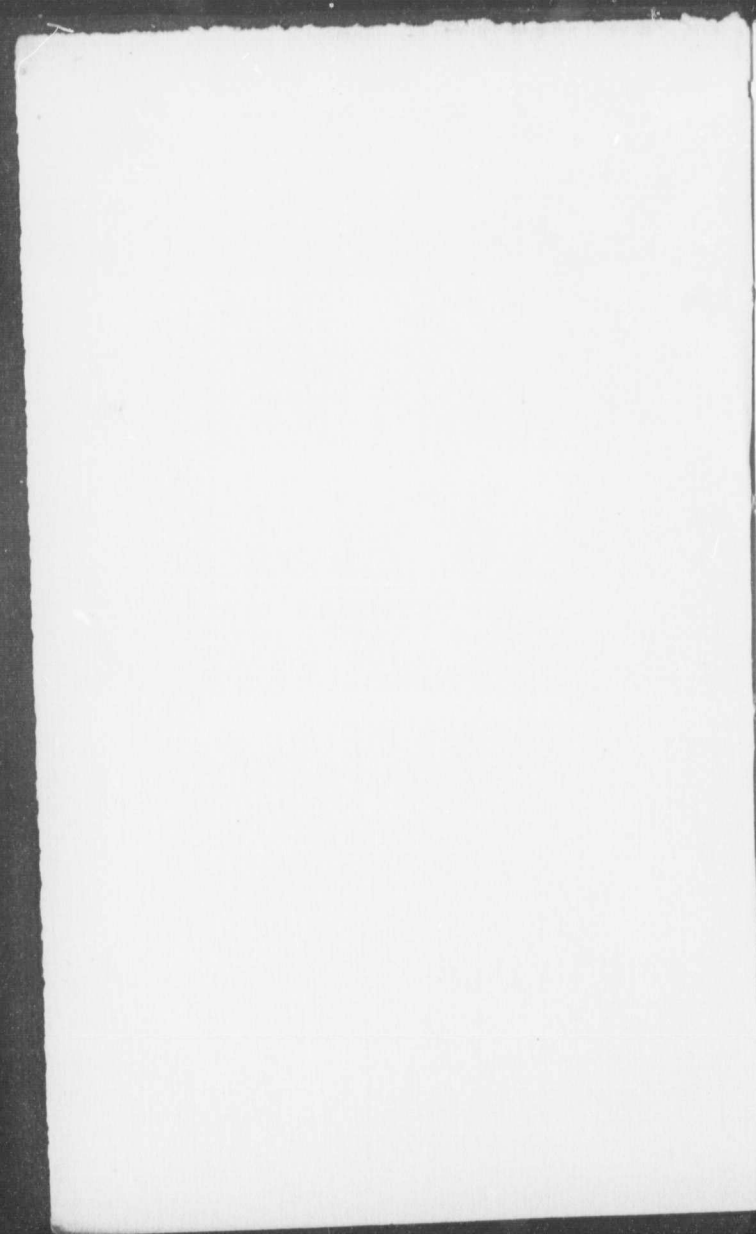


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VOICES OF DAWN  
OVER THE HILLS





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# Voices of Dawn over the Hills

BY

ROSE E. SHARLAND

AUTHOR OF "EXMOOR LYRICS"

*With an Introduction by*

EDWARD CARPENTER

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"Two voices are there ; one is of the sea,  
One of the mountains ; each a mighty voice ;  
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !"

WORDSWORTH

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BRISTOL

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As I passed singing to the hill-tops of my desire, my songs received audience in the following Halls of the People: *The Daily Citizen, Daily Herald, Socialist Review, Clarion, Labour Leader, and Justice*, for which I tender my thanks; and also to the *Bristol Observer* and *Malvern Gazette*.

R. E. S.



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## Introduction.

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I COMMEND this little book of verses very heartily to all who care about the Labour movement of to-day, because out of the heart of that movement it not only gives voice to the longing for a more natural and gracious life than is now possible, but also, like the apparition of a snowdrop in Spring, bears with it some promise of glad fulfilment.

EDWARD CARPENTER

I.

## The Sure Haven.

**N**OW will I spread the canvas of my soul  
Full to the winds of God: this  
mountain-crest

Has havened me aforetime, when unrest  
Of Life, its seething storm's tumultuous roll,  
In boisterous surgings to an unknown goal,  
Has put the lordliest vessel to the test.

But here is Peace, and tranquil sunlight, blest,  
Serene, above that palpitating whole.

Eternal forces have me in their urge,  
Mine the momentum of the circling star,  
The shadowy earth below grows dim and far ;  
With limitless infinity I merge,  
Borne on some undefined emotion's surge  
To where divinest healing waters are.

## Exaltation.

FOR me the hill-tops laughing up to Heaven,  
Where ample distance makes the spirit  
free :

Upon these spacious mountains it is given  
To know Life's purest joy of ecstasy.  
The tremulous world, soft shadowed, lies below  
In semitones of purple, blue and grey,  
What though amid those shadows I must go ?  
Sufficient now this breadth of splendid day.

I drink full-deep this wine of rushing air,  
My senses reel before the mighty spell,  
I seem to soar to high empyrean, where  
The holy fires dissolve this earthy shell.  
I find that path no bird hath ever known,  
That track no foot of man hath ever trod,  
Where love and high desires arise alone,  
The highway of the soul that leads to God.

Down from the hills, exultant I descend  
To this deep vale of transitory grief.  
Dim shadows gather round, the mountains bend  
From flaming skies outlined in stern relief.  
Here, in the gloom by those great boulders cast,  
Shall I for level sweeps, sun-haunted, pine ?  
Nay, mine the joy when this dark hour is past,  
To rise again to heights so near divine !



## The "Wind on the Heath."

YOU come so swift, belovèd,  
You run straight from the sea ;  
Your salty breath that quickeneth,  
Flows like new wine through me.  
So strong you are, the grass afar,  
Beneath your footfall bows ;  
And leaves you met are trembling yet  
To hear your careless vows.

You come so fresh, belovèd,  
From leagues of curling foam,  
The seaweed clings about your wings,  
Mid-ocean is your home ;  
Your whisper tells to woody dells  
The secrets of the deep,  
To blossom-drifts your magic lifts  
The little clouds that weep.

You come so cool, belovèd,  
So passionless your kiss,  
Your soft caress is happiness,  
Your lashing fury, bliss.  
You sing a song of hope grown strong,  
Joy follows to your lure,  
Your spell is such that all you touch  
Becometh clean and pure.

## The Piper.

PAN is piping in the lanes,  
Through the mossy byways,  
Down the meadows, wet with rains,  
In the city highways.  
Calling, calling to the seeds,  
To each leaf-bud folded,  
Tuning up his flute of reeds  
By Spring's magic moulded.

Snowdrop, primrose, answer him,  
Soft winds hasten rushing,  
And, along the mountain's rim,  
Brimming brooks are gushing,  
Grassy pennons fly unfurled,  
Earth-clods tear asunder,  
Shy Spring follows thro' the world,  
Waking it to wonder.

Pan, the King, goes by a way  
Paved with golden splendour,  
Each dew-coroneted day  
Comes new gifts to tender.  
Crocus-garbed princesses fill  
Gardens with perfection,  
Where the gay Knight, Daffodil,  
Heralds resurrection.

We, too, hear you, merry faun,  
Do you call in pity  
To the slaves who know your dawn  
Dimly in the city?  
We have felt our pulses leap  
Swift to some sweet measure,  
We, who only in our sleep,  
Dream the joys of leisure.

Pan is piping in the lanes,  
Through the mossy byways,  
Down the meadows, wet with rains,  
In the city highways.  
To his love-tuned carolling,  
Memories rise thronging,  
And his lilting song of Spring  
Breaks the heart with longing.

## Renewal.

THE flood of green that laughing leaps  
Through meadow, heath, and wood,  
Whose foam is blossom-drift, whose deeps  
Reach through infinitude ;  
This bourgeoning of bud and tree,  
These matings that begin,  
Are tide-waves of that vigorous sea,  
The vital force within.

This Spring-born ecstasy that knits  
All Nature at the birth,  
This joy of life that so befits  
The flowers that gem the earth ;  
Man's high desires, the eager strife  
For joy that stirs his blood,  
Are risings of that sea of life  
In swift insurgent flood.

That tide whose torrent none can stay  
When comes that visioned Spring,  
In the inevitable day  
Of man's awakening ;  
As certainly as leaf and grass  
Renew their lovely youth,  
So surely shall the old things pass  
Before the light of Truth.

O great and universal sea !  
Whose drops are lives of men,  
Where none may stand apart or free,  
Whose might is past our ken ;  
We, being part of that great whole,  
Would keep our purpose strong,  
Lest back upon our shuddering soul  
Should surge unconquered wrong.

## To the Light!

OVER earth-mother's bed were the tender  
roots spread,  
In quiet the waiting buds lay,  
Till a voice through the world sang of banners  
unfurled,  
And life rising new in the May;  
Then quickening seeds in the hedgerows and  
meads  
Raised armies of blossoms a-dance,  
Each tree, blade, and flow'r obeyed in that hour  
The impulse that bade them advance—

To the light! to the light!  
From the bondage of night  
To the warmth of a Springtime begun,  
With their beauty revealed  
Over coppice and field,  
By the might of their father, the sun.

And we, with our face turned to beauty and  
grace,

This glory that colours the earth,  
We, too, with clear eyes would scan the wide  
skies

For promise of ransom from dearth ;  
The spirit expressed in a landscape new-  
dressed

Has brought us a message of hope,  
Our watchwords we take from young Nature  
awake,

And sing as we crowd up the slope—

To the light ! to the light !

From the bondage of night

To the hills rosy-coloured with morn,

Our faces are lit

With the wonder of it,

The Day, our new day that is born !

## The Free Breath.

THE sea-drenched wind ran singing up the  
hill,  
And met me waiting, still,  
For that great power that haunts the  
moorland track,  
Which knows no bridling will.  
That force none holdeth back  
Which rushes thro' the wilds, untram-  
melled, free,  
The soul of ecstasy.

The spirit of the moor, resistless, wild,  
Caught me, as seas a child,  
And bore me westward, where in white and  
grey,  
Fleeced clouds were piled  
Around the couchèd day ;  
Where mountains, purple-lit, from glory  
bent,  
Like kings, magnificent.



On, ever on! Swift o'er the heathered height,  
In dear, compelling flight.

We are as gods that tread the exultant air,  
So sanguine in our might ;

This altar stair

Leads to some vestibule of Heaven : not  
less

Than utter happiness.

The gods' red wine is staining all the west,  
A shadowed sense of rest

Steals through sequestered valleys there  
below,

And up the moorland's crest,

Whence torrents flow,

Empurpled stands the hilly battlement,

Where sky and earth are blent.

The little simple wild-flow'rs, as we pass,  
Smile from the grass,

With drowsy fragrance of encircling peace ;

They know not the " Alas ! "

That bids joy cease,

And heaves its sigh when unremembered  
most,

A frail, insistent ghost.

But here, the pain that cutteth like a knife,  
Finds not our life ;  
    The generous moorland some wild spell has  
    cast,  
Pure joy is rife,  
    We know we live at last,  
    And are content to wander on and on,  
    In rapture halcyon.

No weariness is here : the willing feet  
Could wander till they beat  
    The threshold of the sunset with their tread,  
Up that gold street  
    Upon the sea ahead ;  
    This earth-bound self, like trilling larks  
    a-wing,  
    Would seem to soar and sing.

On windy days, and in the moons of spring,  
This spirit comes to bring  
    Its lyric music to the noisy town ;  
And everything  
    Is calling to the down,  
    With sudden beckonings of sun and breeze,  
    And sounds of murmurous seas.

The pale-faced mill-girl stays her dexterous  
hand,  
And feels her hot brow fanned  
By some elusive breath of Liberty ;  
She seems to stand,  
As once she stood, to see  
The rolling breakers : now the captive sky  
Thro' that high window mocks her  
tremulous sigh.

It is the breath of Freedom, wooing men  
To fuller life again,  
To those old, simple instincts of the past,  
Of ages when  
Such luminance was cast  
On History's page by those great-hearted  
ones,  
Old Britain's noblest sons.

They heard her in the thundering torrents roar,  
The snowy flag she bore,  
Around their craggy summits was unfurled,  
The dawn, her door,  
Through which the world  
Caught the effulgence of her flashing eyes,  
A ray from nobler skies.

Wallace, Llewellyn, Tyler, Hampden, Drake,  
These rose to take  
Her inspiration for their patriot soul,  
Well might the tyrants quake,  
As through them stole  
The knowledge that no victory conquereth  
A mightier than Death.

Breathe ye, from ramparts of the windy hills,  
Joy-giving breath that fills  
Mankind with splendid purpose and desire :  
Brace the enslavèd wills,  
The strong inspire.  
Fierce, quickening wind, whose spirit none  
may stay,  
We, we would know thy day.

# Vale of Avon.

(April.)

JUST now the Vale of Evesham  
Is white with petal-snow,  
With pink between and tender green  
Where apple-blossoms glow ;  
And all the air is scented there,  
Clear azure laughs the sky,  
Young Nature weaves anew her leaves,  
For April passes by.

There, up and down the valleys,  
By many a sheltered way,  
Rise budding trees where April's breeze  
Flits dancing all the day.  
Those aisles of flowers are bridal bowers  
Sweet with the throstle's mirth ;  
The gold sun wakes and beaming takes  
His glorious bride, the earth.

In town, in lonely beauty,  
The burgeoning fruit-trees spread,  
Where plum and pear rise here and there,  
In gardens islanded ;  
But, oh ! the sight of billowy white,  
Those leagues of petals pale,  
That sea of scent and wonderment  
That floods the Avon Vale !

## Pastorale.

ON Sundays they go up the valleys  
By ways that are narrow and steep,  
But sure are the feet of the shepherds,  
And long is the track of the sheep.  
Old Leo, the faithful, and Rover  
Walk slowly, demurely, behind,  
Until at the hill-top, and over,  
They race like the wind.

For there, at the lead of the wether,  
The flock wanders whither he will,  
The crisp bark that calls them together  
Rings clear down the echoing hill,  
And mingles with bells' golden chiming,  
Borne upward in cadences deep,  
Where, down in the village, the shepherd  
Is calling the sheep.

## Will Langland.

OLD hill-top dreamer, seeing far ahead  
Your vision of a cleaner, happier land,  
This "fair field full of folk," where you had  
planned

All men at work, by working perfected,  
So on to Truth, as honest pilgrims led.

Here you beheld the Master-craftsman  
stand,

The Christ in ploughman garb into Whose  
hand

Was given the fruit whereby mankind is fed.

Fierce scorner of the wrong : truth-loving seer,  
Six hundred years this circling earth has spun  
On in its path of progress with the sun,  
On to your visioned, love-enlightened year,  
And still we need your voice, proclaiming clear,  
Through work the way to Happiness is won.

## The Mead of Mothers.

WHERE Malvern dips to Severn,  
The fields are fair and green ;  
The hedgerows hold the cowslip gold,  
And shed May snow between.  
While down below big kingcups grow  
Beside a fairy rill,  
With lady-smocks and elfin " clocks " .  
A-flutter on the hill.

At evening thro' the meadows,  
The red-cheeked children go,  
Knee-deep in grass they slowly pass  
Like white moths to and fro ;  
Where blooms are thick they stoop and pick,  
Their bluebell eyes alight,  
The sun regrets, so slow he sets,  
To leave so sweet a sight.

Then softly tread the mothers  
Along the scented down,  
They go to bring fair harvesting  
Of yellow heads and brown.  
Far in the west lies Malvern's crest,  
By nightfall half concealed,  
But very bright in ruddy light  
The slopes of Madresfield.



## Rain of the Silver Feet.

RAIN of the silver feet  
Danced from her mountain lair,  
Ran down the valley fleet,  
Loosening her cloudy hair,  
Sped to the plain to greet  
Her brothers there.

“Sweet little rain,” they said,  
“Ours was a dizzy way,  
Sheer from our heather bed,  
Tumbling in foamy spray,  
Laughing, we leaped and sped  
By night and day.

“Boiling and fuming, down  
Through aisles that woodlands tint,  
Through lucent pools and brown,  
Perfumed with thyme and mint,  
Straight from the mountain’s crown  
Where sunbeams glint.

“Now all the smiling lands  
Fruitful and glad shall be.”  
Rain tossed her flying strands :  
“Come ! one last game,” said she,  
“Let us all, joining hands,  
Dance to the sea.”

## The Bells of Abbot's Leigh.

**I**N the pleasant summer gloaming,  
When the birds and bees are homing,  
And the sun flings gleaming diamonds round  
the bosom of the sea,  
When the lengthening evening shadows  
Lie along the river meadows,  
Then a ringing  
Joy comes swinging  
From the bells of Abbot's Leigh.

With the thrushes' hush-song throbbing,  
Swelled to joy, or sunk to sobbing,  
Borne on purring thymy breezes comes the  
faery peal to me ;  
Even birds that hymn the mating  
Pause to hear the air vibrating  
With the humming  
Music coming  
From the bells of Abbot's Leigh.

Mine this bloomy Nature-palace,  
Where the buttercup's gold chalice  
    Waits abrim with dewy nectar for the  
        festival to be ;

Mine this wakened thrill of wonder  
At wide skies and good earth under,  
    And the story  
    Of Heaven's glory  
From the bells of Abbot's Leigh.

Here is tranquil Peace abiding,  
Quiet calm in Nature hiding,  
    For Joy's spirit broods immortal on the  
        hill-tops and the sea.

Nature sings new-crowned and vernal—  
"Pain is brief, but joy eternal!"  
    Mellow laughter  
    Echoes after  
From the bells of Abbot's Leigh.

## The Unexpressed.

**D**AY comes as it goes,  
In soft amber and rose  
Dissolved in dim amethyst lakes ;  
And no poet has told  
Half its glory of gold,  
Or the thoughts that such beauty awakes.

Life comes as it goes  
Like the wind when it blows,  
On earth but a moment alit ;  
Yet never was sung  
By most eloquent tongue  
The meaning and glory of it.

## A Perfect Day.

WOULD I might hold you, day of days !  
So beautiful in trembling haze  
Of veiling blue September weaves  
Above her woods of burnished leaves ;  
Blue with the tender light that lies  
Within a woman's tear-soft eyes.  
Day of the sapphire, green, and gold,  
Would I might hold !

Would I might keep you, noon of noons !  
Whose light down purple distance swoons  
Beyond mauve-shadowed hills, where mist  
Melts into lucent amethyst ;  
When overhead in pomp roll by  
The stately galleons of the sky.  
Noon of white cloud, of winds asleep,  
Would I might keep !

Would I might guard you, joy of joys !  
Where neither time nor sense destroys :  
In some locked treasury away,  
The magic of one perfect day ;  
Where memory could bid your breath  
Speak of the gentleness of Death.  
This restful calm, this Peace unmarred.  
Would I might guard !

## Yellow Leaves.

WHY were you born, little leaves, yellow  
leaves,  
Flying along at my feet?  
You and your beauty the old earth receives,  
While the sad wind, like a lover that grieves,  
Bears you along on his pinions fleet,  
Bears you afar in a long dance and sweet,  
Last dance of all, yellow leaves.

What was the purpose that bade you appear  
But for so fleeting an hour?  
Delicate-green in the sweet of the year,  
Bathed in cool dews and the summer's warm  
tear,  
Kissed by the sunlight and washed by the  
shower,  
What is the stern irresistible power  
Drags you, O leaves, to the bier?

Earth shall absorb you, and, out of your mould,  
    Crumbling, decaying and brown,  
Build her pure blossoms of buttercup-gold,  
Spread wide green meadows—a joy to behold,  
    Weave the young Spring-maid a blossoming crown,  
    'Tis for renewal she beckons you down,  
New life to give for the old.

What though all perish and die, yellow leaves,  
    Mingling with earth as you must ?  
Though all days wear to the wan autumn eves,  
Life in such endless variety weaves,  
    Wonders more rare shall arise from our dust,  
    Worlds ever fairer and peoples more just,  
Rising from death, yellow leaves !

---

And is this Death, whose golden-sandalled feet  
- Go softly through the woodland ? With what  
    Peace  
And tenderness he passes ! Thus, complete,  
    With love and work fulfilled, let my life cease !

## The Homeland Hills.

**M**ISTS lie eternal on the rugged hills of  
Gwalia,  
Barren are their summits and stern beneath  
the skies,  
I know a hill clad from foot to crown in love-  
liness,  
Steep from a fertile plain its gentle beauties  
rise,  
Cader and Snowdon, Mendips and Dunkery,  
The little hills of Shropshire, and the Surrey  
hills of pine,  
Cotswold and Cornish cliffs, all have delighted  
me,  
But Malvern Hills lie nearest to England's  
heart and mine.



Salt airs blow bleak on the mountains of West-  
moreland,  
    Bending the tree-tops and blighting leaf and  
    flower,  
Over my hills the little winds blow murmurous,  
    Swaying blue harebells that chime the fairy  
    hour.  
Cader and Snowdon, Mendips and Dunkery,  
    The little hills of Shropshire, and the Surrey  
    hills of pine,  
Cotswold and Cornish cliffs, all have delighted  
    me,  
But Malvern Hills lie nearest to England's  
    heart and mine.

Kingly her ramparts stand, wardens of Britain's  
    isle,  
    Stern heights impregnable, front to the sea ;  
Sure in the fold of peace, wrapped in security,  
    Nestle the rounded hills whose bosoms  
    cradled me.  
Cader and Snowdon, Mendips and Dunkery,  
    The little hills of Shropshire, and the Surrey  
    hills of pine ;  
Cotswold and Cornish cliffs, all have delighted  
    me,  
But Malvern Hills lie nearest to England's  
    heart and mine.

## The Waggoner.

**C**RACK! Crack! sings the whip as the  
horses dip

From the green woodside to the town,  
And the driver's face has the comely grace  
Of the rich earth's red and brown.  
For the wild wind stings as it rushing sings  
From the sea to the low hill's brow,  
With its rim of rime for the Christmas-time,  
And its red for the holly bough.

Down the hard white road winds the glossy load,  
Bright green on a pallid sky,  
Great logs below, and the mistletoe  
With the holly-sprays piled high.  
How the maidens laugh! How they nudge and  
chaff!

What looks to the lad they throw!  
For dangers run in the path of one  
Who carries the mistletoe!

## Glastonbury.

**H**ERE are dream-arches meeting in the sky,  
Impalpable, but lovelier so : the prayer  
Of sunlight and soft rain of ages there  
Is uttered in green ivy trails that lie  
With ferns and lichens, where of old the sigh  
Of penitence, or ringing Gloria bare  
Its echoing cadence thro' the heavy air ;  
Dreams only now, but dreams not made to die.

Rise, soaring arches yearning from your beams !  
Man's eager soul, all potent to create,  
Rises immortal by a power innate,  
To view-points far beyond the thing that seems.  
You speak to us old longings and old dreams  
In grace and beauty grown articulate.

## At the Summit.

**M**INE eyes ache with the beauty of the  
world,  
My soul is drunk with all its loveliness :  
Both have been baffled in the throng and  
press  
Of cities, where the spirit's wings are furled,  
Until an impulse irresistible  
Called me to-day to keep Joy's festival.

In high cerulean waters, a white cloud  
Glided to port along the hollowed hill,  
Then, spreading its white canvas to winds'  
will,  
Westward to farthest distance dipped and  
bowed,  
And, as it havened where the sunlight  
shone,  
Its utter beauty lured me up and on.

White dazzling clouds at rest upon the green,  
Fair deep-blue shadows chasing down the  
slope,  
And in my soul the exquisite surge of hope  
That knows horizons spread beyond, unseen,  
And in my heart emotions undefined,  
Born of sweet earth and sky and singing  
wind.

The far and circling rim of earth entwines  
These little meadows, hedgerows, villages,  
Those spires amid the woods' intricacies,  
That ribboned silver where the Severn shines.  
I see the soul of England in her sod,  
Apart, above, I view the earth as God.

Strong breast of earth, my mother, fold, ah, fold  
The starveling child that hungered for your  
milk ;  
Your robes of gossamer and emerald silk  
Brush in the face that presses, growing bold,  
Your thymy breath envelops me : I feel  
Your pulsing heart that throbs mine own  
to heal.

The baby-winds, light-hearted, run and skip  
About the shimmering fringes of your dress,  
The air, articulate with happiness,  
Whispers to birds that o'er the bracken dip ;  
And, near Heaven's blossom of eternal blue,  
A sky-lark sobs his ecstasy anew.

And as those cloud-ships bear their freight of  
rain,  
Bringing perfection to the azure's deep,  
So here I bend in sheer delight to weep,  
To bring to joy the ecstasy of pain ;  
Joy being like light, more exquisite when  
spun  
To rainbow teardrops dancing in its sun.

The very roots of me are intertwined  
About these fair fields spread along the  
plain,  
For generations, earth and sun and rain  
Have nurtured them that built me, brain and  
mind,  
This vigorous air, this earth-sap rising free  
Find kinship in the singing blood of me.

Those dead have mingled close with you, O  
earth,  
These lispng grasses chant above their  
dust,  
And I, who only sing because I must,  
Sing thanks to them who gave me more than  
birth,  
This love of Beauty, this desire for Truth,  
This poet-rapture, and a heart of youth.

## II.

### The Vision.

LET me go up Truth's mountain, there to see  
The vision of the ages bathed in gold,  
Like a wide summer landscape : let me hold  
Within my soul the undoubted certainty  
Of Hope's fulfilment : let her show to me  
Those dreams were not in vain the poets  
told,—  
That Life is glorious, and Love not cold,  
But all that has been sung, indeed shall be.

So, when I feeble grow and impotent,  
Strength of the hills vibrating thro' my  
thought,  
Shall build a world with Truth and Beauty  
fraught,  
Shall go to form the Commonwealth of Mind  
Where high ideals and purposes are blent,  
To move to action worlds they lie behind.

## The Pioneers.

ALL honour to you!—ye who made the road  
Whereon we walk rejoicing. Ye have  
known

The fiercest combat, and the cumbrous load  
Upon the path with brambles overgrown ;  
But, nothing daunted, with your care and toil  
Ye cleared a way for Freedom's holy feet,  
And scattered seeds upon the wayside soil  
Which since have yielded blossoms fair and  
sweet.

And we, who follow after, walk with ease  
Because of that wild travail full of tears,  
We hear the songs of Freedom on the breeze,  
And see her triumph in the nearing years.  
The Dawn ye witnessed breaks to golden Day—  
All honour to you—ye who made the Way !



## Spirit of Freedom.

**S**PIRIT of Freedom, deathless thro' the  
years,

But slumbering, waken ! England bids thee  
rise,

And flash that stern defiance to the skies,  
'Gainst tyranny's oppressing hand that sears  
The People's life. They, thro' a mist of tears,  
Knowing themselves nor valiant nor wise,  
Look where their new-born hope of justice  
lies,

And wait some mighty voice to stay their fears.

Let the down-trodden hear that pregnant word,  
Whereat kings tremble, tyrant-cowards  
cringe ;

Gather thy cohorts from earth's farthest  
fringe,

Speak to the hearts of men thy vast decree,  
Which they of by-gone days, swift-answering,  
heard,

Then lead them to thyself, O Liberty !

## The Coming Maytime.

COME! list a song that telleth of the  
Maytime that shall be,  
With Love enthroned the radiant Queen of  
all ;  
When Springtime shall be welcomed by a people  
grandly free,  
As symbol of their wakening from thrall.  
The buds shall burst, the sun shall shine, the  
moonbeams shed their light ;  
The thrush and cuckoo still repeat their song ;  
But Freedom shall have come to men from out  
the age-long night,  
And Joy and Gladness laugh the whole day  
long.

O'er meads where dappled shadows flit beneath  
the whispering trees,  
The children shall go gathering the may,  
Or sit and make them daisy-chains while spring's  
soft scented breeze  
About their radiant face and hair shall play.  
And others in the purling brook shall bathe their  
baby feet,  
Or lie close by and dream a fairy dream,  
Where snowy cherry-blossom in its springtide  
beauty sweet  
Is nodding to its image in the stream.

'Mid glamour of the moonlight in glades of leafy  
shade  
Young lovers wander telling Love's sweet tale,  
Tall, lithe and tanned the stripling; sweet,  
healthy, pure the maid,  
The joy of living both of them exhale.  
And other lovers bend in awe before a baby  
form,  
Born of them to be servant to his race,  
They feel their life's love deepen, and their hearts  
with rapture warm,  
When looking on that flower-like baby-face.

Among fair beds of lilies, the white-haired folk  
shall stray  
And watch May's snow-white children sweetly  
wake,  
While budding baby-roses stretch athwart their  
tottering way,  
As if old age's blessing they would take.  
Like evening colours in the sky their latter days  
shall seem,  
The splendour that appears at set of sun,  
With happiness, true love and peace their restful  
hours shall teem,  
The happiness that comes through work well  
done.

Not to the few—the wealthy—shall that May-  
time bring its joy,  
But all shall share the ecstasy of mirth,  
Then work shall be a glory, and pleasure shall  
not cloy,  
And all shall be of use upon the earth.  
'Tis no Arcadian rhapsody, or filmy passing  
thought,  
A vision conjured up your souls to thrill,  
This Maytime of the future with sweetest beauty  
fraught  
Shall come joy-crowned just when the people  
WILL.

## Spring Song.

**S**URGE, O sap, in a tide of green,  
To the song of the love-lorn wind !  
Surge o'er woodlands and vales between,  
And the dimpled hills behind.  
Where the path of the darling spring has been  
In a cowslip trail outlined.

Leap, O sap, like an untamed sea,  
Limitless, past control !  
Drench dun ways with thine ecstasy,  
Over the wan world roll,  
Till the slumb'rous earth shall transfigured be  
By the wonderment of her soul.

Rise, O spirit of man, behold  
Miracle-time of birth !  
Shall warm Nature still find thee cold ?  
Lone in a love-filled earth ?  
See thee shackled, betrayed, cajoled,  
When her meadows are wreathed in mirth ?

Surge, O soul of Humanity !  
Sap of divinest good,  
Rise untrammelled, leap broadly-free  
Out of self-solitude !  
Wake for the glory of what shall be—  
The Kingdom of Brotherhood !

## May-Day To Be.

**W**HITE with cherry-bloom is the pathway  
thro' the meadow,  
White in the sunlight runs the road beyond,  
From its mossy border plum-trees throw a  
shadow  
Tenderly on cowslips and the young fern-  
frond.  
Sapphire is the tide of the bluebells, surging  
Underneath the twined boughs where the  
thrushes sing,  
Gold of buttercup, with broom and gorse-bush  
merging,  
Gold of light, and gold of Love, and gold on  
everything.

Maidens in their white gowns trip across the  
hollow,  
Children race light-hearted, hair blown on  
the wind,  
Women, fresh as roses, down the woodland  
follow,  
Stalwart sons of Labour hasten on behind.  
Memories of old-time round this day are clinging,  
This May-Day symbolic of new joys begun ;  
Here, amid young Nature's prodigal up-  
springing,  
These, who long had slumbered, greet the  
risen sun.

Do they sometimes think of those days well-  
nigh forgotten—  
Days of shuddering horror, poverty and  
crime ?  
Yonder white-haired grandsire knows how, hate-  
begotten,  
Greed held iron kingship in that woeful time.  
Souls of women bartered, lives of children  
squandered,  
Men outcast, down-trodden, fettered, bought  
and sold,  
Like some hideous nightmare, neither told nor  
pondered,  
Is the dreadful shadow of that Reign of Gold.

Past those days for ever: now a wakened  
people

Sing of fresh endeavour in a song that swells,  
Let the bells ring out their pæan from the steeple,

Earth is nearer heaven now, O happy bells!  
See them come triumphant, Man, the conqueror,  
leading

Great and patient Nature, tamed, his willing  
slave,

She all smiles to-day, his mighty yoke un-  
heeding,

Giving freely still her gifts as e'en of old she  
gave.

On, then, jocund people, heirs of countless ages,

Who may now defraud you of that heritage?  
Yours the secrets torn from hoarding Nature's  
pages,

Yours the wealth of craftsman, artist, poet,  
sage.

"All for each!" you cry, as each for all you  
labour,

Plenty now is yours and all the joys thereof.  
Brothers are you now, and none distrusts his  
neighbour,

Glad in Justice, Honour, Peace, the coronal  
of Love.



## The Lode-Star.

THE spirit of a people long oppressed,  
Waking, beholds the radiance of a Star  
Burn in the east, intangible, afar,  
Yet o'er a new-born hope its flashings rest.

Follow that star, ye wise ones ! It shall be  
That when you near it you shall find a Sun.  
Lighting the rugged way—the only one  
That leads you unto perfect Liberty !

## Song of the Brave Heart.

COME, fill the bowl to the cheery soul  
Who sees through the night the day,  
Who ever hopes, though his brother gropes  
And stumbles upon the way,  
Whose magic wand, in a grand beyond,  
Can conjure a joy-filled earth,  
Who hails the star through the mists that are,  
And heartens the dusk with mirth.

Though o'er the past is a shadow cast  
Of bloodshed and woe and crime,  
He does not lie in the dust to die  
Because of a bygone time.  
To toil and fight for the true and right,  
To aim at the star—no less,  
With self forgot in the People's lot  
Is the way to happiness.

The hours men spent full of discontent  
In moans that the fields were bare,  
They might have filled had they only willed  
In planting some seedlings there,  
And faith would see in futurity  
A harvest beneath the sun.  
To work and sing is a better thing  
Than weeping o'er deeds undone.

So pledge the bowl to the noble soul  
Who lives for Humanity,  
For Brotherhood, for the highest good,  
And Liberty yet to be,  
No fear of death can bedim his faith,  
Nor battle-cry stay his song—  
The best in man since the world began  
Shall finally conquer wrong.

## The Man Underneath.

(A PARABLE.)

**I**T happened on a fateful day,  
Within the city's heart,  
A man was crushed beneath a dray  
That broke down in the mart.

Upon the dray was merchandise,  
And up on top of that  
The owners, looking plump and wise,  
In meditation sat.

A crowd soon gathered. Small and great  
Discussed how best they might  
Conveniently extricate  
That crushed and luckless wight.

Long, long they talked, till rhetoric's gem  
Bespoke such good intent  
The people soon exalted them  
Into a Parliament.

Political economists

Next came to demonstrate—  
The natural scheme of things insists  
Upon his crushed estate.

In weighty words, deliberate, slow,  
A noble of renown  
Then spake: "To drag him from below  
Would turn things upside down!"

Then Universities arose,  
Endowed to clearly prove  
He *could* not stand up if he chose,  
Since rusting in one groove.

Professors eagerly proclaimed  
The wretch unfit to live,  
And Darwin's dogma, justly famed,  
A full excuse could give.

The parsons came on business bent,  
And said his heart was bad;  
Change that, and he would be content  
With twice the load he had.

At last a saner brain began  
The obvious cure to see:  
With "Take the weight from off the man,  
And let him rise up free!"

And him they seized, and dubbed a thief,  
A rank materialist,  
A home-destroyer, fiend-in-chief,  
A cut-throat atheist.

While vast campaigns at once set out,  
With pamphlets by the ream,  
And orators, well paid to flout  
So visionary a scheme.

Meantime, that would-be rescuer strong  
Begins the load to move,  
And whether he was right or wrong—  
Well, time alone will prove !

## The Shadow.

THE day was golden, and the sky  
Like eyes of children pure :  
My heart with wonderment beat high,  
My faith was sure.

A brother did my soul a wrong :  
My faith low-shattered lay.  
Love soared no more so heavenly-strong,  
And noon was grey.

## The Meeting.

**H**IS tool-bag was slung on his shoulder,  
He hummed a sweet song as he stepped,  
And looked up the hillside as moulder  
With bracken by autumn's brush swept.  
The flame-yellow gorse-bushes burning,  
To him were the candles of God  
Before some great altar, where, yearning,  
The spirit walked humbly, unshod.

“Get out of the way, you!” came, heated,  
A voice from the depths of a car,  
Wherein a great Bishop was seated,  
Aloof in his splendour, and far.  
He passed : and the fair roadside under  
Was foul as the powdered dust spun,  
Where, lost in a sad smile of wonder,  
Was standing the Carpenter's Son.



## “Rejected of Men.”

(Written after hearing lecture by Edward  
Carpenter.)

WHO waits without so long, so patiently,  
And knocks insistent, listening for the  
key

That opes the ponderous portal? It is one  
They dub the Man of Sorrows; just the son  
Of some poor toiler, hither hunger-led,  
To crave at gates of Chance or Pity, bread.

Ye know his form : the work-worn form whose  
feet

Have trod alone the winepress, borne the heat  
Of questing pilgrimage; ye know the face,  
The wistful hungry eyes, sad resting-place  
Of dolorous tears; ye mark the hollow cheek  
And coarsened hands, the narrow chest and  
weak.

Ye see him ever. Aye, a common sight,  
But marked ye e'er before that holy light  
That hovers round him radiant? Knew ye not  
Who was this outcast, nor imagined what  
A sacred destiny was his, to save  
His hapless country from her self-hewn grave?

Behold the Man, the saviour of his kind!  
He shall arise exultant, though they bind  
His crown of briars more close about his brow,  
Yea, though they scourge and crucify him now,  
His sufferings must ere long sure entrance win,  
And bid his brothers pass triumphant in.

## The Suicide.

FOLD thy warm arms about me, mother-  
earth,

And in them let me sleep the endless sleep.  
Life, the great boon thou gavest, is not worth

The awful struggle to maintain and keep.  
Take back thy gift : to thee I come to die,  
Beneath the arch of a relentless sky.

My sin? The awful crime of Poverty,

A poverty that crushed my soul to naught,  
Through which men in their depths of misery

Like savage beasts with one another fought  
For work whereby to earn a crust of bread,  
And in that struggle I were better dead.

For am I not beyond the power to fight ?  
These wasted limbs have hardly strength to  
seek

This sheltered spot, where in the shadowy light  
My mouldering corpse shall own my courage  
weak.

Courage ? The demon Hunger soon can wrest  
The power to struggle from its victim's breast.

Fold thy warm arms about me, mother-earth,  
And of thy pity let the little leaves,  
Which in their death seek thee who gave them  
birth,

Gather upon me, while the cold wind grieves  
In moaning requiem. To the great Unknown  
Which is not worse than this, I pass alone.

## The Age-Long Storm.

**W**ILD windy days! Your tumult and  
unrest

Play on the heart as on Æolian strings,  
And chords unbidden vibrate in the breast,  
Chords of our yearning for long-hoped-for-  
things :

For in the heart a secret sympathy  
Exists with Nature in her stormy moods ;  
The soul leaps up in kindred mutiny,  
And in its cage no longer dormant broods.

As a great gale goes rushing o'er the wold,  
And lashing into fury lake and sea,  
So has an age-long storm unceasing rolled,  
Uprooting in its course all tyranny.

No strong reform, no freedom has been gained  
But had its birth in some upheaving blast ;  
With blood and storm-tears must the way be  
    stained  
Ere old-time creeds and systems are o'er-  
    past.

Oh, better far that some wide-blowing wind  
Should cleanse the world with pure and  
    fragrant breath,  
Than deep in hidden crannies of the mind  
Should lurk the noisome germs of hate and  
    death.

The hurricane shall not for ever stay :  
Anon shall blow from out the blue above  
A softer breath ; and on that gladsome day  
A nobler world shall be—a world of Love !

## The Garden-Makers.

THE men who have weeded and ploughed,  
They turn them to rest and to sleep,  
The sowers of seed they are bowed,  
And come not their harvest to reap ;  
But we, we shall know their reward,  
Shall see the results of their toil,  
Bright blooms on the face of the sward,  
And joy on the desolate soil.  
For a breeze of the morning that blows  
Has scattered illusions and night,  
The desert shall bloom as the rose,  
When riseth the sun on our sight.

Snow-white are the blossoms of Truth  
New-sprung in the borders of pain,  
And golden the harvests of Youth  
Distilled from the dust of the slain ;  
But red rises Justice and stern,  
Deep-dyed with humanity's blood,  
Its petals immortally burn  
With wrongs it beheld in its bud.  
But a breeze of the morning that blows  
Has scattered illusions and night,  
The desert shall bloom as the rose,  
When riseth the sun on our sight.

The seed that was planted in tears,  
The ways where the deep shadows bend,  
Spring green in the prosperous years,  
And where are the hands that will tend?  
In beauty this garden shall rise,  
A sweet and desirable whole,  
With blooms for the heart and the eyes,  
With fruit for the hungry soul.  
For a breeze of the morning that blows  
Has scattered illusions and night,  
The desert shall bloom as the rose,  
When riseth the sun on our sight.



## The Soul's Awakening.

IT seems I have been blind: for though I  
moved

With seeing eyes about the beauteous world,  
The half my being slumbered, like the curled  
Soft fronds of ferns, that, living, sleep unproved  
By blast of wind, or dreadful hurricane,  
The storm of Life's immensity of pain.

Now have mine eyes been opened, and the earth  
No longer is the pleasaunce that I knew,  
Those flowery reaches where my fancies grew  
Are harsh with groans of death, and throes of  
birth,  
And, like sheathed buds that burst to rainy  
Spring,  
My heart is torn at this awakening.

The primrose stars are turned to frozen tears  
    Wrung from wan eyes of mothers : the wide  
        sky  
    Yawns at the suppliant arm and yearning  
        cry :  
The unwavering mountains mock man's tremu-  
    lous fears :  
    And dull-eyed Sorrow and gaunt Famine  
        tread  
    The poor man's threshold for their dole of  
        dead.

Some in red vintage seek forgetfulness,  
    Some in a rapt devotion's solitudes,  
    Others on mountain-pinnacles, where broods  
The light of heaven : and some in Love's caress.  
    Mahommet sought the desert's mystery,  
    Jesus, the tranquil shores of Galilee.

Then shall I pray that darkness fall once more  
    To hide from me the world's tremendous  
        need ?  
    Shall the false langour of some opiate creed  
Dull my unthinking vision as of yore ?  
    Shall I still cry " Peace ! Peace ! "—when  
        Peace is not,  
    And find my happiness in pain forgot ?

No : having seen the hideousness of hate,  
Injustice reigning in Love's gracious place,  
I will go forth to meet them face to face,  
Nor be a plaything in the hands of fate.  
Then on, to seek that sure unfaltering knife  
That cuts the canker from the heart of Life.

Sheathed for a time, and hidden in a lake  
Of ignorance and purblind prejudice,  
It shall appear and flash before the kiss  
Of orient sunbeams when the dawn-clouds  
break,  
Then shall arise the spotless character  
Destined to wield the Sword Excalibur.

Him will I follow : one of many bound  
In the close bonds of deathless fellowship,  
Our service, not alone of hand and lip,  
But with Love's heart-felt benediction crowned.  
And joy of hope shall to that band belong,  
Who, having seen, march out to right the  
wrong.

III.

Child of the Wonder-Eyes.

CHILD of the wonder-eyes,  
Is the world strange and new?  
Why does that sweet surprise  
Lurk in their winsome blue?  
Blue of the pansy skies,  
Bathed in a twilight dew.

Have you just wandered, sweet,  
Straight out of fairyland?  
Do these big folk you meet  
Seem hard to understand?  
Yours are such rosebud feet,  
Yours such a baby hand.

We grow so old and dull,  
Roaming afar to find  
Marvels more wonderful,  
Nor see before, behind,  
All things a miracle,  
Earth with strange wonders lined.

You, with those parted lips,  
Soft skin, and wondering stare,  
Flower-petal finger-tips,  
Sweet from your toes to hair,  
Wonder beyond eclipse,  
You in your childhood there.

Up in God's nurseries,  
For you did angels choose  
That gift of wide blue eyes  
Bathed in soft twilight dews,  
To bring when childhood flies,  
Dreams for the ones we lose?

## Margaret : A Pearl.

(To M. E. MACDONALD.)

THERE is within the pearl so soft a hint  
Of rarest beauty, that the eager sight  
Finds more of wonder in its sheeny tint,  
Than in the diamond flashing to the light :  
Like the sweet moon that comes the dusk to  
    bless,  
So beams its unassuming loveliness.

She was a pearl : about her was the glow  
Of some pure radiance from a holier sphere,  
The People's crown of thorns she chose to know,  
And gladden for a while the sorrowing here.  
The casket of a thousand hearts shall shrine  
Her life, her love, her sympathy divine.

## The Well-Beloved.

**S**HE is not young : but lasting youth  
Lives in her trustful eyes,  
Whose depths are limpid lakes of truth  
That mirror Paradise.

She is not fair : but on her face  
The lovely soul of her  
Has set the far diviner grace  
Of noble character.

She is not clever, save to do  
The things of every day,  
And yet dull life is brighter through  
Her tender woman's way.

She has no fluent speech, that thus  
The world her powers may see,  
But all her words are tremulous  
With perfect sympathy.

She is not rich except in love :  
But this such wealth imparts,  
It sets her as a queen above  
A thousand lesser hearts.

## Enid.

LITTLE child, you are fair,  
From your sun-beloved hair  
To those twin rosy blossoms, your feet,  
Gladder far beamed the light,  
When you danced on my sight,  
With those sky-blue eyes laughing, O sweet.

Budding mouth with its pearls,  
Corn-gold hair hung in curls,  
Glowing cheeks like the pink dawning day,  
Little dimples that chase  
From your dear laughing face  
To your knees and round arms as you play.

Like first buds of Spring's crowd,  
Like sun-shafts from a cloud,  
Your bright sudden loveliness shone,  
And the memory yet,  
Like a pressed violet,  
I carry to glory upon.

Little child, little flower,  
You have this for your dower,  
A beauty delightful to see,  
And may love ever strew  
Down Life's pathway for you,  
Such blooms as your youth brings to me.



## O Sweet of Face.

O SWEET of face, your soul is wondrous  
fair,

The soul that shines so steadfast in your eyes,  
Like the soft light that down far valleys lies  
In summer time, the blue of Heaven is there,  
But holier, with the look that angels wear,  
Selfless in service and in sorrow wise.  
Before such radiance all evil dies,  
As worldly thoughts before the hush of prayer.

Through such as you the world shall be  
redeemed,

Truth shall foul falsehood, wrong and crime  
outpace,

O perfect woman, mother, friend, the race  
Beholds through you a day of poets dreamed ;  
And looking on your loveliness, it seemed

I saw your purpose glowing from your face.

## Queen of Faery.

**S**TILL, still I see your little hands, like  
cherry-petals lying  
Soft on the red-brown of your gown—the brown  
of leaves a-dying.  
Still, still I see your golden hair, that binds the  
heart unwary,  
In curls where sunbeams lurk and glint, my  
dainty Queen of Faery.

Your eyes like wild forget-me-nots are wide  
with childish wonder,  
I love the budding of your mouth, and that  
dear dimple under.  
They called you Mab, and when I saw the  
brightness of your glancing,  
I knew twas by that gleam o' nights the "little  
folk" go dancing.

So slight you are and full of grace, so sweet,  
and elfin-moulded,  
It seems as if your dreamy days were passed all  
lily-folded,  
Or wandering by stream and hill, by mead and  
woody hollow,  
Where nymphs and dryads watch your way, and  
gnomes delight to follow.

Your loveliness is fraught with charm and  
beauty of June roses,  
Such sweetness is there in your heart, such  
truth therein reposes.  
The wand you wield is not alone your grace so  
frail and tender,  
But love expressed in sympathy—this is your  
crowning splendour.

“Her Children Arise Up, and  
Call Her Blessed.”

THE peace of God keeps you in quietude,  
And guards in tranquil stillness all your  
days,

By the calm waters lie your verdant ways,  
And through green pastures where no ills  
intrude ;

So, on your face a glory seems to brood,  
Whose life is one continuous hymn of praise,  
A perfect symphony a master plays  
Upon the lute of purest womanhood.

You have been where the Vale its shadow  
throws,

You, knowing Sorrow, came forth triumphing,  
And, fairer than the promise of your Spring,  
Fairer than fleeting loveliness of youth,  
Is this fruition that your autumn knows,  
For deep from secret stores you garnered  
Truth.



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