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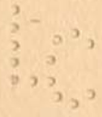
LUSTRA OF EZRA POUND

LUSTRA

of Ezra Pound

with Earlier Poems



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EZRA POUND

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Vail de Lencour
Cui dono lepidum novum libellum.

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LUSTRA OF EZRA POUND

TENZONE

Will people accept them?
(i.e. these songs).
As a timorous wench from a centaur
(or a centurion),
Already they flee, howling in terror.

Will they be touched with the verisimilitudes?
Their virgin stupidity is untemptable.
I beg you, my friendly critics,
Do not set about to procure me an audience.

I mate with my free kind upon the crags;
the hidden recesses
Have heard the echo of my heels,
in the cool light,
in the darkness.

THE CONDOLENCE

A mis soledades voy,
De mis soledades vengo,
Porque por andar conmigo
Mi bastan mis pensamientos.
Lope de Vega.

O my fellow sufferers, songs of my youth,
A lot of asses praise you because you are " virile,"
We, you, I! We are " Red Bloods "!
Imagine it, my fellow sufferers —
Our maleness lifts us out of the ruck,
Who'd have foreseen it?

O my fellow sufferers, we went out under the trees,
We were in especial bored with male stupidity.
We went forth gathering delicate thoughts,
Our " *fantastikon* " delighted to serve us.
We were not exasperated with women,
for the female is ductile.

And now you hear what is said to us:
We are compared to that sort of person
Who wanders about announcing his sex

As if he had just discovered it.
Let us leave this matter, my songs,
and return to that which concerns us.

THE GARRET

Come, let us pity those who are better off than we
are.
Come, my friend, and remember
that the rich have butlers and no friends,
And we have friends and no butlers.
Come, let us pity the married and the unmarried.

Dawn enters with little feet
like a gilded Pavlova,
And I am near my desire.
Nor has life in it aught better
Than this hour of clear coolness,
the hour of waking together.

THE GARDEN

En robe de parade.
Samain

Like a skein of loose silk blown against a wall
She walks by the railing of a path in Kensington
Gardens,
And she is dying piece-meal
of a sort of emotional anæmia.

And round about there is a rabble
Of the filthy, sturdy, unkillable infants of the
very poor.
They shall inherit the earth.

In her is the end of breeding.
Her boredom is exquisite and excessive.
She would like some one to speak to her,
And is almost afraid that I
will commit that indiscretion.

ORTUS

How have I laboured?
How have I not laboured
To bring her soul to birth,
To give these elements a name and a centre!

She is beautiful as the sunlight, and as fluid.
She has no name, and no place.
How have I laboured to bring her soul into
separation;
To give her a name and her being!

Surely you are bound and entwined,
You are mingled with the elements unborn;
I have loved a stream and a shadow.

I beseech you enter your life.
I beseech you learn to say "I"
When I question you:
For you are no part, but a whole;
No portion, but a being.

SALUTATION

O generation of the thoroughly smug
and thoroughly uncomfortable,
I have seen fishermen picnicking in the sun,
I have seen them with untidy families,
I have seen their smiles full of teeth
and heard ungainly laughter.

And I am happier than you are,
And they were happier than I am;
And the fish swim in the lake
and do not even own clothing.

SALUTATION THE SECOND

You were praised, my books,
because I had just come from the country;
I was twenty years behind the times
so you found an audience ready.
I do not disown you,
do not you disown your progeny.

Here they stand without quaint devices,
Here they are with nothing archaic about them.
Watch the reporters spit,
Watch the anger of the professors,
Watch how the pretty ladies revile them:

"Is this," they say, "the nonsense
that we expect of poets?"
"Where is the Picturesque?"
"Where is the vertigo of emotion?"
"No! his first work was the best."
"Poor Dear! he has lost his illusions."

Go, little naked and impudent songs,
Go with a light foot!
(Or with two light feet, if it please you!)
Go and dance shamelessly!
Go with an impertinent frolic!

Greet the grave and the stodgy,
Salute them with your thumbs at your noses.

Here are your bells and confetti.
Go! rejuvenate things!
Rejuvenate even "The Spectator."
Go! and make cat calls!
Dance and make people blush,
Dance the dance of the phallus
and tell anecdotes of Cybele!
Speak of the indecorous conduct of the Gods!
(Tell it to Mr. Strachey)

Ruffle the skirts of prudes,
speak of their knees and ankles.
But, above all, go to practical people —
go! jangle their door-bells!
Say that you do no work
and that you will live forever.

THE SPRING

Cydonian Spring with her attendant train,
Meliads and water-girls.
Stepping beneath a boisterous wind from Thrace,
Throughout this sylvan place
Spreads the bright tips,
And every vine-stock is
Clad in new brilliancies.
And wild desire
Falls like black lightning.
O bewildered heart,
Though every branch have back what last year lost,
She, who moved here amid the cyclamen,
Moves only now a clinging tenuous ghost.

ALBÂTRE

This lady in the white bath-robe which she calls a peignoir
Is, for the time being, the mistress of my friend,
And the delicate white feet of her little white dog
Are not more delicate than she is,
Nor would Gautier himself have despised their contrasts in whiteness

As she sits in the great chair
Between the two indolent candles.

CAUSA

I join these words for four people,
Some others may overhear them,
O world, I am sorry for you,
You do not know these four people.

COMMISSION

Go, my songs, to the lonely and the unsatisfied,
Go also to the nerve-wracked, go to the enslaved-by-convention,
Bear to them my contempt for their oppressors.
Go as a great wave of cool water,
Bear my contempt of oppressors.

Speak against unconscious oppression,
Speak against the tyranny of the unimaginative,
Speak against bonds.

Go to the bourgeoise who is dying of her ennuis,
Go to the women in suburbs.
Go to the hideously wedded,
Go to them whose failure is concealed,
Go to the unluckily mated,
Go to the bought wife,
Go to the woman entailed.

Go to those who have delicate lust,
Go to those whose delicate desires are thwarted,
Go like a blight upon the dulness of the world;
Go with your edge against this,
Strengthen the subtle cords,
Bring confidence upon the algae and the tentacles
of the soul.

Go in a friendly manner,
Go with an open speech.
Be eager to find new evils and new good,
Be against all forms of oppression.
Go to those who are thickened with middle age,
To those who have lost their interest.

Go to the adolescent who are smothered in family —
Oh how hideous it is

To see three generations of one house gathered
together!
It is like an old tree with shoots,
And with some branches rotted and falling.

Go out and defy opinion,
Go against this vegetable bondage of the blood.
Be against all sorts of mortmain.

A PACT

I make a pact with you, Walt Whitman —
I have detested you long enough.
I come to you as a grown child
Who has had a pig-headed father;
I am old enough now to make friends.
It was you that broke the new wood,
Now is a time for carving.
We have one sap and one root —
Let there be commerce between us.

SURGIT FAMA

There is a truce among the gods,
Korè is seen in the North
Skirting the blue-gray sea
In gilded and russet mantle.

The corn has again its mother and she, Leuconoë,
That failed never women,
Fails not the earth now.

The tricksome Hermes is here;
He moves behind me
Eager to catch my words,
Eager to spread them with rumour;
To set upon them his change
Crafty and subtle;
To alter them to his purpose;
But do thou speak true, even to the letter:

"Once more in Delos, once more is the altar
a-quiver.
Once more is the chant heard.
Once more are the never abandoned gardens
Full of gossip and old tales."

PREFERENCE

It is true that you say the gods are more use to
you than fairies,
But for all that I have seen you
on a high, white, noble horse,
Like some strange queen in a story.

It is odd that you should be covered with long robes
and trailing tendrils and flowers;
It is odd that you should be changing your face
and resembling some other woman to
plague me;
It is odd that you should be hiding yourself
In the cloud of beautiful women who do not
concern me.

And I, who follow every seed-leaf upon the wind?
You will say that I deserve this.

DANCE FIGURE

For the Marriage in Cana of Galilee

Dark eyed,
O woman of my dreams,
Ivory sandaled,

There is none like thee among the dancers,
None with swift feet.

I have not found thee in the tents,
In the broken darkness.
I have not found thee at the well-head
Among the women with pitchers.

Thine arms are as a young sapling under the bark;
Thy face as a river with lights.

White as an almond are thy shoulders;
As new almonds stripped from the husk.

They guard thee not with eunuchs;
Not with bars of copper.

Gilt turquoise and silver are in the place of thy rest.
A brown robe, with threads of gold woven in
patterns,
hast thou gathered about thee,
O Nathat-Ikanaie, "Tree-at-the-river."

As a rillet among the sedge are thy hands upon me;
Thy fingers a frosted stream.

Thy maidens are white like pebbles;
Their music about thee!

There is none like thee among the dancers;
None with swift feet.

APRIL

Nympharum membra disjecta

Three spirits came to me
And drew me apart
To where the olive boughs
Lay stripped upon the ground:
Pale carnage beneath bright mist.

GENTILDONNA

She passed and left no quiver in the veins, who now
Moving among the trees, and clinging
in the air she severed,
Fanning the grass she walked on then, endures:

Grey olive leaves beneath a rain-cold sky.

THE REST

O helpless few in my country,
O remnant enslaved!

Artists broken against her,
A-stray, lost in the villages,
Mistrusted, spoken-against,

Lovers of beauty, starved,
Thwarted with systems,
Helpless against the control;

You who can not wear yourselves out
By persisting to successes,
You who can only speak,
Who can not steel yourselves into reiteration;

You of the finer sense,
Broken against false knowledge,
You who can know at first hand,
Hated, shut in, mistrusted:

Take thought:
I have weathered the storm,
I have beaten out my exile.

LES MILLWIN

The little Millwins attend the Russian Ballet.
The mauve and greenish souls of the little Millwins
Were seen lying along the upper seats
Like so many unused boas.

The turbulent and undisciplined host of art students —
The rigorous deputation from " Slade "—
Was before them.
With arms exalted, with fore-arms
Crossed in great futuristic X's, the art students
Exulted, they beheld the splendours of *Cleopatra.*

And the little Millwins beheld these things;
With their large and anæmic eyes they looked out upon this configuration.

Let us therefore mention the fact,
For it seems to us worthy of record.

FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS

Come, my songs, let us express our baser passions,
Let us express our envy of the man with a steady
job and no worry about the future.
You are very idle, my songs.
I fear you will come to a bad end.
You stand about in the streets,
You loiter at the corners and bus-stops,
You do next to nothing at all.

You do not even express our inner nobilities,
You will come to a very bad end.

And I?
I have gone half cracked,
I have talked to you so much that
I almost see you about me,
Insolent little beasts, shameless, devoid of clothing!

But you, newest song of the lot,
You are not old enough to have done much mischief,
I will get you a green coat out of China
With dragons worked upon it,

I will get you the scarlet silk trousers
From the statue of the infant Christ at Santa Maria
Novella,
Lest they say we are lacking in taste,
Or that there is no caste in this family.

A SONG OF THE DEGREES

I

Rest me with Chinese colours,
For I think the glass is evil.

II

The wind moves above the wheat —
With a silver crashing,
A thin war of metal.

I have known the golden disc,
I have seen it melting above me.
I have known the stone-bright place,
The hall of clear colours.

III

O glass subtly evil, O confusion of colours!
O light bound and bent in, O soul of the captive,
Why am I warned? Why am I sent away?
Why is your glitter full of curious mistrust?
O glass subtle and cunning, O powdery gold!
O filaments of amber, two-faced iridescence!

ITÉ

Go, my songs, seek your praise from the young and
from the intolerant,
Move among the lovers of perfection alone.
Seek ever to stand in the hard Sophoclean light
And take your wounds from it gladly.

DUM CAPITOLIUM SCANDET

How many will come after me
singing as well as I sing, none better;
Telling the heart of their truth
as I have taught them to tell it;
Fruit of my seed,
O my unnameable children.

Know then that I loved you from afore-time,
Clear speakers, naked in the sun, untrammelled.

To Καλὸν

Even in my dreams you have denied yourself to me
And sent me only your handmaids.

THE STUDY IN AESTHETICS

The very small children in patched clothing,
Being smitten with an unusual wisdom,
Stopped in their play as she passed them
And cried up from their cobbles:
*Guarda! Ahi, guarda! ch' è be'a *!*

But three years after this
I heard the young Dante, whose last name I do not know —
For there are, in Sirmione, twenty-eight young Dantes and thirty-four Catulli;

* *Bella.*

And there had been a great catch of sardines,
And his elders
Were packing them in the great wooden boxes
For the market in Brescia, and he
Leapt about, snatching at the bright fish
And getting in both of their ways;
And in vain they commanded him to *sta fermo!*
And when they would not let him arrange
The fish in the boxes
He stroked those which were already arranged,
Murmuring for his own satisfaction
This identical phrase:

Ch' è be'a.

And at this I was mildly abashed.

THE BELLAIRES

Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen
Mach' ich die kleinen Lieder

The good Bellaires
Do not understand the conduct of this world's affairs.
In fact they understood them so badly
That they have had to cross the Channel.

Nine lawyers, four counsels, five judges and three
proctors of the King,
Together with the respective wives, husbands, sis-
ters and heterogeneous connections of the good
Bellaires,
Met to discuss their affairs;
But the good Bellaires have so little understood
their affairs
That now there is no one at all
Who can understand any affair of theirs. Yet
Fourteen hunters still eat in the stables of
The good Squire Bellaire;
But these may not suffer attainder,
For they may not belong to the good Squire
Bellaire
But to his wife.
On the contrary, if they do not belong to his wife,
He will plead
A " freedom from attainder "
For twelve horses and also for twelve boarhounds
From Charles the Fourth;
And a further freedom for the remainder
Of horses, from Henry the Fourth.
But the judges,
Being free of mediæval scholarship,
Will pay no attention to this,

And there will be only the more confusion,
Replevin, estoppel, espavin and what not.

Nine lawyers, four counsels, etc.,
Met to discuss their affairs,
But the sole result was bills
From lawyers to whom no one was indebted,
And even the lawyers
Were uncertain who was supposed to be indebted
to them.

Wherefore the good Squire Bellaire
Resides now at Agde and Biaucaire.
To Carcassonne, Pui, and Alais
He fareth from day to day,
Or takes the sea air
Between Marseilles
And Beziers.

And for all this I have considerable regret,
For the good Bellaires
Are very charming people.

THE NEW CAKE OF SOAP

Lo, how it gleams and glistens in the sun
Like the cheek of a Chesterton.

SALVATIONISTS

I

Come, my songs, let us speak of perfection —
We shall get ourselves rather disliked.

II

Ah yes, my songs, let us resurrect
The very excellent term *Rusticus.*
Let us apply it in all its opprobrium
To those to whom it applies.
And you may decline to make them immortal,
For we shall consider them and their state
In delicate
Opulent silence.

III

Come, my songs,
Let us take arms against this sea of stupidities —
Beginning with Mumpodorus;
And against this sea of vulgarities —
Beginning with Nimmim;
And against this sea of imbeciles —
All the Bulmenian literati.

EPITAPH

Leucis, who intended a Grand Passion,
Ends with a willingness-to-oblige.

ARIDES

The bashful Arides
Has married an ugly wife,
He was bored with his manner of life,
Indifferent and discouraged he thought he might as
Well do this as anything else.

Saying within his heart, " I am no use to myself,
" Let her, if she wants me, take me."
He went to his doom.

THE BATH TUB

As a bathtub lined with white porcelain,
When the hot water gives out or goes tepid,
So is the slow cooling of our chivalrous passion,
O my much praised but-not-altogether-satisfactory
lady.

AMITIÉS

Old friends the most.
W. B. Y.

I

To one, on returning certain years after.

You wore the same quite correct clothing,
You took no pleasure at all in my triumphs,
You had the same old air of condescension
Mingled with a curious fear
That I, myself, might have enjoyed them.

Te voilà, mon Bourrienne, you also shall be immortal.

II

To another.

And we say good-bye to you also,
For you seem never to have discovered
That your relationship is wholly parasitic;
Yet to our feasts you bring neither
Wit, nor good spirits, nor the pleasing attitudes
Of discipleship.

III

But you, *bos amic,* we keep on,
For to you we owe a real debt:
In spite of your obvious flaws,
You once discovered a moderate chop-house.

IV

Iste fuit vir incultus,
Deo laus, quod est sepultus,
Vermes habent eius vultum
A-a-a-a — A-men.
Ego autem jovialis
Gaudero contubernalis
Cum jocunda femina.

MEDITATIO

When I carefully consider the curious habits of dogs
I am compelled to conclude
That man is the superior animal.

When I consider the curious habits of man
I confess, my friend, I am puzzled.

TO DIVES

Who am I to condemn you, O Dives,
I who am as much embittered
With poverty
As you are with useless riches?

LADIES

Agathas

Four and forty lovers had Agathas in the old days,
All of whom she refused;
And now she turns to me seeking love,
And her hair also is turning.

Young Lady

I have fed your lar with poppies,
I have adored you for three full years;
And now you grumble because your dress does not fit
And because I happen to say so.

Lesbia Illa

Memnon, Memnon, that lady
Who used to walk about amongst us
With such gracious uncertainty,
Is now wedded
To a British householder.
Lugete, Venere! Lugete, Cupidinesque!

Passing

Flawless as Aphrodite,
Thoroughly beautiful,
Brainless,
The faint odour of your patchouli,
Faint, almost, as the lines of cruelty about your chin,
Assails me, and concerns me almost as little.

PHYLLIDULA

Phyllidula is scrawny but amorous,
Thus have the gods awarded her
That in pleasure she receives more than she can give;
If she does not count this blessed
Let her change her religion.

THE PATTERNS

Erinna is a model parent,
Her children have never discovered her adulteries.
Lalage is also a model parent,
Her offspring are fat and happy.

CODA

O my songs,
Why do you look so eagerly and so curiously into
people's faces,
Will you find your lost dead among them?

THE SEEING EYE

The small dogs look at the big dogs;
They observe unwieldly dimensions
And curious imperfections of odor.

Here is a formal male group:
The young men look upon their seniors,

They consider the elderly mind
And observe its inexplicable correlations.

Said Tsin-Tsu:
It is only in small dogs and the young
That we find minute observation.

ANCORA

Good God! They say you are *risqué,*
O canzonetti!
We who went out into the four A. M. of the world
Composing our albas,
We who shook off our dew with the rabbits,
We who have seen even Artemis a-binding her sandals,
Have we ever heard the like?
O mountains of Hellas! !

Gather about me, O Muses!
When we sat upon the granite brink in Helicon
Clothed in the tattered sunlight,
O Muses with delicate shins,
O Muses with delectable knee-joints,
When we splashed and were splashed with

The lucid Castilian spray,
Had we ever such an epithet cast upon us! !

"DOMPNA POIS DE ME NO'US CAL"

A TRANSLATION

FROM THE PROVENÇAL OF EN BERTRANS DE BORN

Lady, since you care nothing for me,
And since you have shut me away from you
Causelessly,
I know not where to go seeking,
For certainly
I will never again gather
Joy so rich, and if I find not ever
A lady with look so speaking
To my desire, worth yours whom I have lost,
I'll have no other love at any cost.

And since I could not find a peer to you,
Neither one so fair, nor of such heart,
So eager and alert,
Nor with such art
In attire, nor so gay
Nor with gift so bountiful and so true,

I will go out a-searching,
Culling from each a fair trait
To make me a borrowed lady
Till I again find you ready.

Bels Cembelins, I take of you your colour,
For it's your own, and your glance
Where love is,
A proud thing I do here,
For, as to colour and eyes
I shall have missed nothing at all,
Having yours.
I ask of Midons Aelis (of Montfort)
Her straight speech free-running,
That my phantom lack not in cunning.

At Chalais of the Viscountess, I would
That she give me outright
Her two hands and her throat,
So take I my road
To Rochechouart,
Swift-foot to my Lady Anhes,
Seeing that Tristan's lady Iseutz had never
Such grace of locks, I do ye to wit,
Though she'd the far fame for it.

Of Audiart at Malemort,
Though she with a full heart
Wish me ill,
I'd have her form that's laced
So cunningly,
Without blemish, for her love
Breaks not nor turns aside.
I of Miels-de-ben demand
Her straight fresh body,
She is so supple and young,
Her robes can but do her wrong.

Her white teeth, of the Lady Faidita
I ask, and the fine courtesy
She hath to welcome one,
And such replies she lavishes
Within her nest;
Of Bels Mirals, the rest,
Tall stature and gaiety,
To make these avail
She knoweth well, betide
No change nor turning aside.

Ah, Bels Senher, Maent, at last
I ask naught from you,
Save that I have such hunger for

This phantom
As I've for you, such flame-lap,
And yet I'd rather
Ask of you than hold another,
Mayhap, right close and kissed.
Ah, lady, why have you cast
Me out, knowing you hold me so fast!

THE COMING OF WAR: ACTAEON

An image of Lethe,
and the fields
Full of faint light
but golden,
Gray cliffs,
and beneath them
A sea
Harsher than granite,
unstill, never ceasing;
High forms
with the movement of gods,
Perilous aspect;
And one said:
"This is Actaeon."
Actaeon of golden greaves!

Over fair meadows,
Over the cool face of that field,
Unstill, ever moving,
Hosts of an ancient people,
The silent cortège.

AFTER CH'U YUAN

I will get me to the wood
Where the gods walk garlanded in wistaria,
By the silver blue flood
  move others with ivory cars.
There come forth many maidens
  to gather grapes for the leopards, my friend,
For there are leopards drawing the cars.

I will walk in the glade,
I will come out of the new thicket
  and accost the procession of maidens.

LIU CH'E

The rustling of the silk is discontinued,
Dust drifts over the court-yard,
There is no sound of foot-fall, and the leaves

Scurry into heaps and lie still,
And she the rejoicer of the heart is beneath them:

A wet leaf that clings to the threshold.

FAN-PIECE, FOR HER IMPERIAL LORD

A fan of white silk,
clear as frost on the grass-blade,
You also are laid aside.

TS'AI CHI'H

The petals fall in the fountain,
the orange-coloured rose-leaves,
Their ochre clings to the stone.

IN A STATION OF THE METRO

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

ALBA

As cool as the pale wet leaves
of lily-of-the-valley
She lay beside me in the dawn.

HEATHER

The black panther treads at my side,
And above my fingers
There float the petal-like flames.

The milk-white girls
Unbend from the holly-trees,
And their snow-white leopard
Watches to follow our trace.

THE FAUN

Ha! sir, I have seen you sniffing and snoozling about
among my flowers.
And what, pray, do you know about horticulture,
you capriped?

" Come, Auster, come, Apeliota,
And see the faun in our garden.
But if you move or speak
This thing will run at you
And scare itself to spasms."

COITUS

The gilded phaloi of the crocuses
are thrusting at the spring air.
Here is there naught of dead gods
But a procession of festival,
A procession, O Giulio Romano,
Fit for your spirit to dwell in.
Dione, your nights are upon us.

The dew is upon the leaf.
The night about us is restless.

THE ENCOUNTER

All the while they were talking the new morality
Her eyes explored me.
And when I arose to go

Her fingers were like the tissue
Of a Japanese paper napkin.

TEMPORA

Io! Io! Tamuz!
The Dryad stands in my court-yard
With plaintive, querulous crying.
(Tamuz. Io! Tamuz!)
Oh, no, she is not crying: "Tamuz."
She says, "May my poems be printed this week?
The god Pan is afraid to ask you,
May my poems be printed this week?"

BLACK SLIPPERS: BELLOTTI

At the table beyond us
With her little suede slippers off,
With her white-stockin'd feet
Carefully kept from the floor by a napkin,
She converses:

Connaissez-vous Ostende?

The gurgling Italian lady on the other side of the restaurant

Replies with a certain hauteur,
But I await with patience
To see how Celestine will re-enter her slippers.
She re-enters them with a groan.

SOCIETY

The family position was waning,
And on this account the little Aurelia,
Who had laughed on eighteen summers,
Now bears the palsied contact of Phidippus.

IMAGE FROM D'ORLEANS

Young men riding in the street
In the bright new season
Spur without reason,
Causing their steeds to leap.

And at the pace they keep
Their horses' armoured feet
Strike sparks from the cobbled street
In the bright new season.

PAPYRUS

Spring. . .
Too long. . .
Gongula. . .

"IONE, DEAD THE LONG YEAR"

Empty are the ways,
Empty are the ways of this land
And the flowers
Bend over with heavy heads.
They bend in vain.
Empty are the ways of this land
Where Ione
Walked once, and now does not walk
But seems like a person just gone.

ἰμέρρω

Thy soul
Grown delicate with satieties,
Atthis.
O Atthis,
I long for thy lips.

I long for thy narrow breasts,
Thou restless, ungathered.

SHOP GIRL

For a moment she rested against me
Like a swallow half blown to the wall,
And they talk of Swinburne's women,
And the shepherdess meeting with Guido.
And the harlots of Baudelaire.

TO FORMIANUS' YOUNG LADY FRIEND

After Valerius Catullus

All Hail! young lady with a nose
by no means too small,
With a foot unbeautiful,
and with eyes that are not black,
With fingers that are not long, and with a mouth undry,
And with a tongue by no means too elegant,
You are the friend of Formianus, the vendor of cosmetics,

And they call you beautiful in the province,
And you are even compared to Lesbia.

O most unfortunate age!

TAME CAT

" It rests me to be among beautiful women.
Why should one always lie about such matters?

I repeat:
It rests me to converse with beautiful women
Even though we talk nothing but nonsense,

The purring of the invisible antennæ
Is both stimulating and delightful."

L'ART, 1910

Green arsenic smeared on an egg-white cloth,
Crushed strawberries! Come, let us feast our eyes.

SIMULACRA

Why does the horse-faced lady of just the unmentionable age
Walk down Longacre reciting Swinburne to herself, inaudibly?
Why does the small child in the soiled-white imitation fur coat
Crawl in the very black gutter beneath the grape stand?
Why does the really handsome young woman approach me in Sackville Street
Undeterred by the manifest age of my trappings?

WOMEN BEFORE A SHOP

The gew-gaws of false amber and false turquoise attract them.
" Like to like nature ": these agglutinous yellows!

EPILOGUE

O chansons foregoing
You were a seven days' wonder,
When you came out in the magazines
You created considerable stir in Chicago,

And now you are stale and worn out,
You're a very depleted fashion,
A hoop-skirt, a calash,
An homely, transient antiquity.

Only emotion remains.

Your emotions?

Are those of a maître-de-café.

THE SOCIAL ORDER

I

This government official
Whose wife is several years his senior,
Has such a caressing air
When he shakes hands with young ladies.

II

(Pompes Funèbres)

This old lady,
Who was " so old that she was an atheist,"
Is now surrounded
By six candles and a crucifix,
While the second wife of a nephew

Makes hay with the things in her house.
Her two cats
Go before her into Avernus;
A sort of chloroformed suttee,
And it is to be hoped that their spirits will walk
With their tails up,
And with a plaintive, gentle mewing,
For it is certain that she has left on this earth
No sound
Save a squabble of female connections.

THE TEA SHOP

The girl in the tea shop
is not so beautiful as she was,
The August has worn against her.
She does not get up the stairs so eagerly;
Yes, she also will turn middle-aged,
And the glow of youth that she spread about us
as she brought us our muffins
Will be spread about us no longer.
She also will turn middle-aged.

ANCIENT MUSIC

Winter is icummen in,
Lhude sing Goddamm,
Raineth drop and staineth slop,
And how the wind doth ramm!
Sing: Goddamm.
Skiddeth bus and sloppeth us,
An ague hath my ham.
Freezeth river, turneth liver,
Damn you, sing: Goddamm.
Goddamm, Goddamm, 'tis why I am, Goddamm,
So 'gainst the winter's balm.
Sing goddamm, damm, sing Goddamm,
Sing goddamm, sing goddamm, DAMM.

NOTE.— This is not folk music, but Dr. Ker writes that the tune is to be found under the Latin words of a very ancient canon.

THE LAKE ISLE

O God, O Venus, O Mercury, patron of thieves,
Give me in due time, I beseech you, a little tobacco-
shop,
With the little bright boxes
piled up neatly upon the shelves

And the loose fragrant cavendish
and the shag,
And the bright Virginia
loose under the bright glass cases,
And a pair of scales not too greasy,
And the whores dropping in for a word or two in passing,
For a flip word, and to tidy their hair a bit.

O God, O Venus, O Mercury, patron of thieves,
Lend me a little tobacco-shop,
or install me in any profession
Save this damn'd profession of writing,
where one needs one's brains all the time.

EPITAPHS

Fu I

Fu I loved the high cloud and the hill,
Alas, he died of alcohol.

Li Po

And Li Po also died drunk.
He tried to embrace a moon
In the Yellow River.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

When the Taihaitian princess
Heard that he had decided,
She rushed out into the sunlight and swarmed up
a cocoanut palm tree,

But he returned to this island
And wrote ninety Petrarchan sonnets.

NOTE.— Il s'agit d'un jeune poète qui a suivi le culte de Gauguin jusqu'à Tahiti même (et qui vit encore). Étant fort bel homme, quand la princesse bistre entendit qu'il voulait lui accorder ses faveurs elle montra son allegresse de la façon dont nous venons de parler. Malheureusement ses poèmes ne sont remplis que de ses propres subjectivités, style Victorien de la "Georgian Anthology."

ANCIENT WISDOM, RATHER COSMIC

So Shu dreamed,
And having dreamed that he was a bird, a bee, and
a butterfly,
He was uncertain why he should try to feel like anything else,

Hence his contentment.

THE THREE POETS

Candidia has taken a new lover
And three poets are gone into mourning.
The first has written a long elegy to " Chloris,"
To " Chloris chaste and cold," his " only Chloris."
The second has written a sonnet
upon the mutability of woman,
And the third writes an epigram to Candidia.

THE GYPSY

" Est-ce que vous avez vu des autres — des camarades — avec des singes ou des ours? "

A Stray Gipsy — A.D. 1912

That was the top of the walk, when he said:
" Have you seen any others, any of our lot,
" With apes or bears? "
— A brown upstanding fellow
Not like the half-castes,
up on the wet road near Clermont.
The wind came, and the rain,
And mist clotted about the trees in the valley,
And I'd the long ways behind me,
gray Arles and Biaucaire,
And he said, " Have you seen any of our lot? "

I'd seen a lot of his lot . . .
ever since Rhodez,
Coming down from the fair
of St. John,
With caravans, but never an ape or a bear.

THE GAME OF CHESS

Dogmatic Statement Concerning the Game of Chess: Theme for a Series of Pictures

Red knights, brown bishops, bright queens,
Striking the board, falling in strong "L"s of colour,
Reaching and striking in angles,
holding lines in one colour.
This board is alive with light;
these pieces are living in form,
Their moves break and reform the pattern:
Luminous green from the rooks,
Clashing with "X"s of queens,
looped with the knight-leaps.

"Y" pawns, cleaving, embanking!
Whirl! Centripetal! Mate! King down in the vortex,

Clash, leaping of bands, straight strips of hard
colour,
Blocked lights working in. Escapes. Renewal of
contest.

PROVINCIA DESERTA

At Rochecoart,
Where the hills part
in three ways,
And three valleys, full of winding roads,
Fork out to south and north,
There is a place of trees . . . gray with lichen.
I have walked there
thinking of old days.
At Chalais
is a pleached arbour;
Old pensioners and old protected women
Have the right there —
it is charity.
I have crept over old rafters,
peering down
Over the Dronne,
over a stream full of lilies.
Eastward the road lies,
Aubeterre is eastward,

With a garrulous old man at the inn.
I know the roads in that place:
Mareuil to the north-east,
La Tour,
There are three keeps near Mareuil,
And an old woman,
glad to hear Arnaut,
Glad to lend one dry clothing.

I have walked
into Perigord,
I have seen the torch-flames, high-leaping,
Painting the front of that church;
Heard, under the dark, whirling laughter.
I have looked back over the stream
and seen the high building,
Seen the long minarets, the white shafts.
I have gone in Ribeyrac
and in Sarlat,
I have climbed rickety stairs, heard talk of Croy,
Walked over En Bertran's old layout,
Have seen Narbonne, and Cahors and Chalus,
Have seen Excideuil, carefully fashioned.

I have said:
"Here such a one walked.

" Here Cœur-de-Lion was slain.
" Here was good singing.
" Here one man hastened his step.
" Here one lay panting."
I have looked south from Hautefort,
thinking of Montaignac, southward.
I have lain in Rocafixada,
level with sunset,
Have seen the copper come down
tingeing the mountains,
I have seen the fields, pale, clear as an emerald,
Sharp peaks, high spurs, distant castles.
I have said: " The old roads have lain here.
" Men have gone by such and such valleys
" Where the great halls are closer together."
I have seen Foix on its rock, seen Toulouse, and
Arles greatly altered,
I have seen the ruined " Dorata."
I have said:
" Riquier! Guido."
I have thought of the second Troy,
Some little prized place in Auvergnat:
Two men tossing a coin, one keeping a castle,
One set on the highway to sing.
He sang a woman.
Auvergne rose to the song;

The Dauphin backed him.
" The castle to Austors ! "
" Pieire kept the singing —
" A fair man and a pleasant."
He won the lady,
Stole her away for himself, kept her against armed force:
So ends that story.
That age is gone;
Pieire de Maensac is gone.
I have walked over these roads;
I have thought of them living.

CATHAY

FOR THE MOST PART FROM THE CHINESE OF RIHAKU,
FROM THE NOTES OF THE LATE ERNEST
FENOLLOSA, AND THE DECIPHERINGS
OF THE PROFESSORS MORI
AND ARIGA

SONG OF THE BOWMEN OF SHU

Here we are, picking the first fern-shoots
And saying: When shall we get back to our country?
Here we are because we have the Ken-nin for our foemen,
We have no comfort because of these Mongols.
We grub the soft fern-shoots,
When anyone says " Return," the others are full of sorrow.
Sorrowful minds, sorrow is strong, we are hungry and thirsty.
Our defence is not yet made sure, no one can let his friend return.
We grub the old fern-stalks.
We say: Will we be let to go back in October?
There is no ease in royal affairs, we have no comfort.
Our sorrow is bitter, but we would not return to our country.
What flower has come into blossom?
Whose chariot? The General's.
Horses, his horses even, are tired. They were strong.
We have no rest, three battles a month.

By heaven, his horses are tired.
The generals are on them, the soldiers are by them.
The horses are well trained, the generals have ivory
arrows and quivers ornamented with fish-skin.
The enemy is swift, we must be careful.
When we set out, the willows were drooping with
spring,
We come back in the snow,
We go slowly, we are hungry and thirsty,
Our mind is full of sorrow, who will know of our
grief?

By Bunno
Reputedly 1100 *B.C.*

THE BEAUTIFUL TOILET

Blue, blue is the grass about the river
And the willows have overfilled the close garden.
And within, the mistress, in the midmost of her
youth,
White, white of face, hesitates, passing the door.
Slender, she puts forth a slender hand,

And she was a courtezan in the old days,
And she has married a sot,

Who now goes drunkenly out
And leaves her too much alone.

By Mei Sheng
B.C. 140

THE RIVER SONG

This boat is of shato-wood, and its gunwales are
cut magnolia,
Musicians with jewelled flutes and with pipes of gold
Fill full the sides in rows, and our wine
Is rich for a thousand cups.
We carry singing girls, drift with the drifting water,
Yet Sennin needs
A yellow stork for a charger, and all our seamen
Would follow the white gulls or ride them.
Kutsu's prose song
Hangs with the sun and moon.

King So's terraced palace
is now but a barren hill,
But I draw pen on this barge
Causing the five peaks to tremble,
And I have joy in these words
like the joy of blue islands.
(If glory could last forever
Then the waters of Han would flow northward.)

And I have moped in the Emperor's garden, awaiting an order-to-write!
I looked at the dragon-pond, with its willow-coloured water
Just reflecting the sky's tinge,
And heard the five-score nightingales aimlessly singing.

The eastern wind brings the green colour into the island grasses at Yei-shu,
The purple house and the crimson are full of Spring softness.
South of the pond the willow-tips are half-blue and bluer,
Their cords tangle in mist, against the brocade-like palace.
Vine-strings a hundred feet long hang down from carved railings,
And high over the willows, the fine birds sing to each other, and listen,
Crying—"Kwan, Kuan," for the early wind, and the feel of it.
The wind bundles itself into a bluish cloud and wanders off.
Over a thousand gates, over a thousand doors are the sounds of spring singing,

And the Emperor is at Ko.
Five clouds hang aloft, bright on the purple sky,
The imperial guards come forth from the golden
house with their armour a-gleaming.
The Emperor in his jewelled car goes out to inspect
his flowers,
He goes out to Hori, to look at the wing-flapping
storks,
He returns by way of Sei rock, to hear the new
nightingales,
For the gardens at Jo-run are full of new nightin-
gales,
Their sound is mixed in this flute,
Their voice is in the twelve pipes here.

By Rihaku
8th century A.D.

THE RIVER-MERCHANT'S WIFE: A LETTER

While my hair was still cut straight across my fore-
head
I played about the front gate, pulling flowers.
You came by on bamboo stilts, playing horse,
You walked about my seat, playing with blue plums.

And we went on living in the village of Chokan:
Two small people, without dislike or suspicion.

At fourteen I married My Lord you.
I never laughed, being bashful.
Lowering my head, I looked at the wall.
Called to, a thousand times, I never looked back.

At fifteen I stopped scowling,
I desired my dust to be mingled with yours
Forever and forever and forever.
Why should I climb the look out?

At sixteen you departed,
You went into far Ku-to-Yen, by the river of swirling eddies,
And you have been gone five months.
The monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead.
You dragged your feet when you went out.
By the gate now, the moss is grown, the different mosses,
Too deep to clear them away!
The leaves fall early this autumn, in wind.
The paired butterflies are already yellow with August
Over the grass in the West garden;

They hurt me.
I grow older.
If you are coming down through the narrows of the
river Kiang,
Please let me know beforehand,
And I will come out to meet you
As far as Cho-fu-Sa.

By Rihaku

THE JEWEL STAIRS' GRIEVANCE

The jewelled steps are already quite white with dew,
It is so late that the dew soaks my gauze stockings,
And I let down the crystal curtain
And watch the moon through the clear autumn.

By Rihaku

NOTE.— Jewel stairs, therefore a palace. Grievance, therefore there is something to complain of. Gauze stockings, therefore a court lady, not a servant who complains. Clear autumn, therefore he has no excuse on account of weather. Also she has come early, for the dew has not merely whitened the stairs, but has soaked her stockings. The poem is especially prized because she utters no direct reproach.

POEM BY THE BRIDGE AT TEN-SHIN

March has come to the bridge head,
Peach boughs and apricot boughs hang over a thousand gates,
At morning there are flowers to cut the heart,
And evening drives them on the eastward-flowing waters.
Petals are on the gone waters and on the going,
And on the back-swirling eddies,
But to-day's men are not the men of the old days,
Though they hang in the same way over the bridge-rail.

The sea's colour moves at the dawn
And the princes still stand in rows, about the throne,
And the moon falls over the portals of Sei-go-yo,
And clings to the walls and the gate-top.
With head gear glittering against the cloud and sun,
The lords go forth from the court, and into far borders.
They ride upon dragon-like horses,
Upon horses with head-trappings of yellow metal,
And the streets make way for their passage.
Haughty their passing,

Haughty their steps as they go in to great banquets,
To high halls and curious food,
To the perfumed air and girls dancing,
To clear flutes and clear singing;
To the dance of the seventy couples;
To the mad chase through the gardens.
Night and day are given over to pleasure
And they think it will last a thousand autumns,
Unwearying autumns.
For them the yellow dogs howl portents in vain,
And what are they compared to the lady Riokushu,
That was cause of hate!
Who among them is a man like Han-rei
Who departed alone with his mistress,
With her hair unbound, and he his own skiffsman!

By Rihaku

LAMENT OF THE FRONTIER GUARD

By the North Gate, the wind blows full of sand,
Lonely from the beginning of time until now!
Trees fall, the grass goes yellow with autumn.
I climb the towers and towers
to watch out the barbarous land:
Desolate castle, the sky, the wide desert.

There is no wall left to this village.
Bones white with a thousand frosts,
High heaps, covered with trees and grass;
Who brought this to pass?
Who has brought the flaming imperial anger?
Who has brought the army with drums and with
kettle-drums?
Barbarous kings.
A gracious spring, turned to blood-ravenous autumn,
A turmoil of wars-men, spread over the middle king-
dom,
Three hundred and sixty thousand,
And sorrow, sorrow like rain.
Sorrow to go, and sorrow, sorrow returning.
Desolate, desolate fields,
And no children of warfare upon them,
No longer the men for offence and defence.
Ah, how shall you know the dreary sorrow at the
North Gate,
With Rihoku's name forgotten,
And we guardsmen fed to the tigers.

By Rihaku

EXILE'S LETTER

To So-Kin of Rakuyo, ancient friend, Chancellor
of Gen.
Now I remember that you built me a special tavern
By the south side of the bridge at Ten-Shin.
With yellow gold and white jewels, we paid for
songs and laughter
And we were drunk for month on month, forgetting
the kings and princes.
Intelligent men came drifting in from the sea and
from the west border,
And with them, and with you especially
There was nothing at cross purpose,
And they made nothing of sea-crossing or of moun-
tain-crossing,
If only they could be of that fellowship,
And we all spoke out our hearts and minds, and
without regret.

And then I was sent off to South Wei,
smothered in laurel groves,
And you to the north of Raku-hoku,
Till we had nothing but thoughts and memories in
common.
And then, when separation had come to its worst,

We met, and travelled into Sen-Go,
Through all the thirty-six folds of the turning and twisting waters,
Into a valley of the thousand bright flowers,
That was the first valley;
And into ten thousand valleys full of voices and pine-winds.
And with silver harness and reins of gold,
Out come the East of Kan foreman and his company.
And there came also the "True man" of Shi-yo to meet me,
Playing on a jewelled mouth-organ.
In the storied houses of San-Ko they gave us more Sennin music,
Many instruments, like the sound of young phœnix broods.
The foreman of Kan Chu, drunk, danced
because his long sleeves wouldn't keep still
With that music playing,
And I, wrapped in brocade, went to sleep with my head on his lap,
And my spirit so high it was all over the heavens,
And before the end of the day we were scattered like stars, or rain.

I had to be off to So, far away over the waters,
You back to your river-bridge.

And your father, who was brave as a leopard,
Was governor in Hei Shu, and put down the barbarian rabble.
And one May he had you send for me,
despite the long distance.
And what with broken wheels and so on, I won't say it wasn't hard going,
Over roads twisted like sheep's guts.
And I was still going, late in the year,
in the cutting wind from the North,
And thinking how little you cared for the cost,
and you caring enough to pay it.
And what a reception:
Red jade cups, food well set on a blue jewelled table,
And I was drunk, and had no thought of returning.
And you would walk out with me to the western corner of the castle,
To the dynastic temple, with water about it clear as blue jade,
With boats floating, and the sound of mouth-organs and drums,
With ripples like dragon-scales, going grass green on the water,

Pleasure lasting, with courtezans, going and coming
without hindrance,
With the willow flakes falling like snow,
And the vermilioned girls getting drunk about sunset,
And the water a hundred feet deep reflecting green
eyebrows
— Eyebrows painted green are a fine sight in young
moonlight,
Gracefully painted —
And the girls singing back at each other,
Dancing in transparent brocade,
And the wind lifting the song, and interrupting it,
Tossing it up under the clouds.
And all this comes to an end.
And is not again to be met with.
I went up to the court for examination,
Tried Layu's luck, offered the Choyo song,
And got no promotion,
and went back to the East Mountains
white-headed.
And once again, later, we met at the South bridge-
head.
And then the crowd broke up, you went north to
San palace,
And if you ask how I regret that parting:
It is like the flowers falling at Spring's end
Confused, whirled in a tangle.

What is the use of talking, and there is no end of
talking,
There is no end of things in the heart.
I call in the boy,
Have him sit on his knees here
To seal this,
And send it a thousand miles, thinking.

By Rihaku

From Rihaku

FOUR POEMS OF DEPARTURE

Light rain is on the light dust
The willows of the inn-yard
Will be going greener and greener,
But you, Sir, had better take wine ere your departure,
For you will have no friends about you
When you come to the gates of Go.

(or *Omakitsu*)

SEPARATION ON THE RIVER KIANG

Ko-Jin goes west from Ko-kaku-ro,
The smoke-flowers are blurred over the river.
His lone sail blots the far sky.
And now I see only the river,
The long Kiang, reaching heaven.

TAKING LEAVE OF A FRIEND

Blue mountains to the north of the walls,
White river winding about them;
Here we must make separation
And go out through a thousand miles of dead grass.
Mind like a floating wide cloud,
Sunset like the parting of old acquaintances
Who bow over their clasped hands at a distance.
Our horses neigh to each other
as we are departing.

LEAVE-TAKING NEAR SHOKU

"Sanso, King of Shoku, built roads"

They say the roads of Sanso are steep,
Sheer as the mountains.
The walls rise in a man's face,
Clouds grow out of the hill
at his horse's bridle.
Sweet trees are on the paved way of the Shin,
Their trunks burst through the paving,
And freshets are bursting their ice
in the midst of Shoku, a proud city.

Men's fates are already set,
There is no need of asking diviners.

THE CITY OF CHOAN

The phœnix are at play on their terrace.
The phœnix are gone, the river flows on alone.
Flowers and grass
Cover over the dark path
        where lay the dynastic house of the Go.
The bright cloths and bright caps of Shin
Are now the base of old hills.

The Three Mountains fall through the far heaven,
The isle of White Heron
        splits the two streams apart.
Now the high clouds cover the sun
And I can not see Choan afar
And I am sad.

SOUTH-FOLK IN COLD COUNTRY

The Dai horse neighs against the bleak wind of
    Etsu,
The birds of Etsu have no love for En, in the north,
Emotion is born out of habit.
Yesterday we went out of the Wild-Goose gate,

To-day from the Dragon-Pen.*
Surprised. Desert turmoil. Sea sun.
Flying snow bewilders the barbarian heaven.
Lice swarm like ants over our accoutrements.
Mind and spirit drive on the feathery banners.
Hard fight gets no reward.
Loyalty is hard to explain.
Who will be sorry for General Rishogu,
the swift moving,
Whose white head is lost for this province?

SENNIN POEM BY KAKUHAKU

The red and green kingfishers
flash between the orchids and clover,
One bird casts its gleam on another.

Green vines hang through the high forest,
They weave a whole roof to the mountain,
The lone man sits with shut speech,
He purrs and pats the clear strings.

* *I.e.*, we have been warring from one end of the empire to the other, now east, now west, on each border.

He throws his heart up through the sky,
He bites through the flower pistil
and brings up a fine fountain.
The red-pine-tree god looks on him and wonders.
He rides through the purple smoke to visit the sennin,
He takes " Floating Hill " * by the sleeve,
He claps his hand on the back of the great water sennin.

But you, you dam'd crowd of gnats,
Can you even tell the age of a turtle?

A BALLAD OF THE MULBERRY ROAD

(Fenollosa MSS., very early)

The sun rises in south east corner of things
To look on the tall house of the Shin
For they have a daughter named Rafu,
(pretty girl)
She made the name for herself: " Gauze Veil,"
For she feeds mulberries to silkworms,
She gets them by the south wall of the town.

* Name of a sennin.

With green strings she makes the warp of her
basket,
She makes the shoulder-straps of her basket
from the boughs of Katsura,
And she piles her hair up on the left side of her
head-piece.

Her earrings are made of pearl,
Her underskirt is of green pattern-silk,
Her overskirt is the same silk dyed in purple,
And when men going by look on Rafu
They set down their burdens,
They stand and twirl their moustaches.

OLD IDEA OF CHOAN BY ROSORIU

I

The narrow streets cut into the wide highway at
Choan,
Dark oxen, white horses,
drag on the seven coaches with outriders.
The coaches are perfumed wood,
The jewelled chair is held up at the crossway,

Before the royal lodge
a glitter of golden saddles, awaiting the princess,
They eddy before the gate of the barons.
The canopy embroidered with dragons
drinks in and casts back the sun.

Evening comes.
The trappings are bordered with mist.
The hundred cords of mist are spread through
and double the trees,
Night birds, and night women,
spread out their sounds through the gardens.

II

Birds with flowery wing, hovering butterflies
crowd over the thousand gates,
Trees that glitter like jade,
terraces tinged with silver,
The seed of a myriad hues,
A net-work of arbours and passages and covered ways,
Double towers, winged roofs,
border the net-work of ways:

A place of felicitous meeting.
Riu's house stands out on the sky,
with glitter of colour
As Butei of Kan had made the high golden lotus
to gather his dews,
Before it another house which I do not know:
How shall we know all the friends
whom we meet on strange roadways?

TO-EM-MEI'S "THE UNMOVING CLOUD"

"WET SPRINGTIME," SAYS TO-EM-MEI,
"WET SPRING IN THE GARDEN."

I

The clouds have gathered, and gathered,
and the rain falls and falls,
The eight ply of the heavens
are all folded into one darkness,
And the wide, flat road stretches out.
I stop in my room toward the East, quiet, quiet,
I pat my new cask of wine.
My friends are estranged, or far distant,
I bow my head and stand still.

II

Rain, rain, and the clouds have gathered,
The eight ply of the heavens are darkness,
The flat land is turned into river.
" Wine, wine, here is wine! "
I drink by my eastern window.
I think of talking and man,
And no boat, no carriage, approaches.

III

The trees in my east-looking garden
are bursting out with new twigs,
They try to stir new affection,

And men say the sun and moon keep on moving
because they can't find a soft seat.

The birds flutter to rest in my tree,
and I think I have heard them saying,
" It is not that there are no other men
But we like this fellow the best,
But however we long to speak
He can not know of our sorrow."

T'ao Yuan Ming
A.D. 365–427

END OF CATHAY

NEAR PERIGORD

A Perigord, pres del muralh
Tan que i puosch' om gitar ab malh

You'd have men's hearts up from the dust
And tell their secrets, Messire Cino,
Right enough? Then read between the lines
of Uc St. Circ,
Solve me the riddle, for you know the tale.

Bertrans, En Bertrans, left a fine canzone:
" Maent, I love you, you have turned me out.
The voice at Montfort, Lady Agnes' hair,
Bel Miral's stature, the viscountess' throat,
Set all together, are not worthy of you. . . ."
And all the while you sing out that canzone,
Think you that Maent lived at Montaignac,
One at Chalais, another at Malemort
Hard over Brive — for every lady a castle,
Each place strong.

Oh, *is* it easy enough?
Tairiran held hall in Montaignac,
His brother-in-law was all there was of power
In Perigord, and this good union
Gobbled all the land, and held it later
for some hundred years.

And our En Bertrans was in Altafort,
Hub of the wheel, the stirrer-up of strife,
As caught by Dante in the last wallow of hell —
The headless trunk " that made its head a lamp."
For separation wrought out separation,
And he who set the strife between brother and
brother
And had his way with the old English king,
Viced in such torture for the " counterpass."

How would you live, with neighbours set about
you —
Poictiers and Brive, untaken Rochechouart,
Spread like the finger-tips of one frail hand;
And you on that great mountain of a palm —
Not a neat ledge, not Foix between its streams,
But one huge back half-covered up with pine,
Worked for and snatched from the string-purse of
Born —
The four round towers, four brothers — mostly
fools:
What could he do but play the desperate chess,
And stir old grudges?
" Pawn your castles, lords!
Let the Jews pay."
And the great scene —

(That, maybe, never happened!)
Beaten at last,
Before the hard old king:
"Your son, ah, since he died
My wit and worth are cobwebs brushed aside
In the full flare of grief. Do what you will."

Take the whole man, and ravel out the story.
He loved this lady in castle Montaignac?
The castle flanked him — he had need of it.
You read to-day, how long the overlords of Perigord,
The Talleyrands, have held the place, it was no transient fiction.
And Maent failed him? Or saw through the scheme?

And all his net-like thought of new alliance?
Chalais is high, a-level with the poplars.
Its lowest stones just meet the valley tips
Where the low Dronne is filled with water-lilies.
And Rochecouart can match it, stronger yet,
The very spur's end, built on sheerest cliff,
And Malemort keeps its close hold on Brive,
While Born, his own close purse, his rabbit warren,
His subterranean chamber with a dozen doors,

A-bristle with antennæ to feel roads,
To sniff the traffic into Perigord.
And that hard phalanx, that unbroken line,
The ten good miles from thence to Maent's castle,
All of his flank — how could he do without her?
And all the road to Cahors, to Toulouse?
What would he do without her?

" Papiol,
Go forthright singing — Anhes, Cembelins.
There is a throat; ah, there are two white hands;
There is a trellis full of early roses,
And all my heart is bound about with love.
Where am I come with compound flatteries —
What doors are open to fine compliment? "
And every one half jealous of Maent?
He wrote the catch to pit their jealousies
Against her, give her pride in them?

Take his own speech, make what you will of it —
And still the knot, the first knot, of Maent?

Is it a love poem? Did he sing of war?
Is it an intrigue to run subtly out,
Born of a jongleur's tongue, freely to pass
Up and about and in and out the land,

Mark him a craftsman and a strategist?
(St. Leider had done as much as Polhonac,
Singing a different stave, as closely hidden.)
Oh, there is precedent, legal tradition,
To sing one thing when your song means another,
" *Et albirar ab lor bordon* —"
Foix' count knew that. What is Sir Bertrans' singing?

Maent, Maent, and yet again Maent,
Or war and broken heaumes and politics?

II

End fact. Try fiction, Let us say we see
En Bertrans, a tower-room at Hautefort,
Sunset, the ribbon-like road lies, in red cross-light,
South toward Montaignac, and he bends at a table
Scribbling, swearing between his teeth; by his left hand
Lie little strips of parchment covered over,
Scratched and erased with *al* and *ochaisos*.
Testing his list of rhymes, a lean man? Bilious?
With a red straggling beard?
And the green cat's-eye lifts toward Montaignac.

Or take his " magnet " singer setting out,
Dodging his way past Aubeterre, singing at Chalais
In the vaulted hall,
Or, by a lichened tree at Rochecouart
Aimlessly watching a hawk above the valleys,
Waiting his turn in the mid-summer evening,
Thinking of Aelis, whom he loved heart and soul . . .
To find her half alone, Montfort away,
And a brown, placid, hated woman visiting her,
Spoiling his visit, with a year before the next one.
Little enough?
Or carry him forward. " Go through all the courts,
My Magnet," Bertrand had said.

We came to Ventadour
In the mid love court, he sings out the canzon,
No one hears save Arrimon Luc D'Esparo —
No one hears aught save the gracious sound of compliments.
Sir Arrimon counts on his fingers, Montfort,
Rochecouart, Chalais, the rest, the tactic,
Malemort, guesses beneath, sends word to Cœur-de-Lion:

The compact, de Born smoked out, trees felled
About his castle, cattle driven out!
Or no one sees it, and En Bertrans prospered?

And ten years after, or twenty, as you will,
Arnaut and Richard lodge beneath Chalus:
The dull round towers encroaching on the field,
The tents tight drawn, horses at tether
Further and out of reach, the purple night,
The crackling of small fires, the bannerets,
The lazy leopards on the largest banner,
Stray gleams on hanging mail, an armourer's torch-
flare
Melting on steel.

And in the quietest space
They probe old scandals, say de Born is dead;
And we've the gossip (skipped six hundred years).
Richard shall die to-morrow — leave him there
Talking of *trobar clus* with Daniel.
And the "best craftsman" sings out his friend's
song,
Envies its vigour . . . and deplores the technique,
Dispraises his own skill? — That's as you will.
And they discuss the dead man,
Plantagenet puts the riddle: "Did he love her?"

And Arnaut parries: "Did he love your sister?
True, he has praised her, but in some opinion
He wrote that praise only to show he had
The favour of your party; had been well received."

"You knew the man."
"*You* knew the man."
"I am an artist, you have tried both métiers."
"You were born near him."
"Do we know our friends?"
"Say that he saw the castles, say that he loved
Maent!"
"Say that he loved her, does it solve the riddle?"
End the discussion, Richard goes out next day
And gets a quarrel-bolt shot through his vizard,
Pardons the bowman, dies,

Ends our discussion. Arnaut ends
"In sacred odour"— (that's apocryphal!)
And we can leave the talk till Dante writes:
Surely I saw, and still before my eyes
Goes on that headless trunk, that bears for light
Its own head swinging, gripped by the dead hair,
And like a swinging lamp that says, "Ah me!

I severed men, my head and heart
Ye see here severed, my life's counterpart."

Or take En Bertrans?

III

Ed eran due in uno, ed uno in due
Inferno, XXVIII, 125

" Bewildering spring, and by the Auvezere
Poppies and day's-eyes in the green émail
Rose over us; and we knew all that stream,
And our two horses had traced out the valleys;
Knew the low flooded lands squared out with
poplars,
In the young days when the deep sky befriended.
And great wings beat above us in the twilight,
And the great wheels in heaven
Bore us together . . . surging . . . and apart . . .
Believing we should meet with lips and hands.

High, high and sure . . . and then the counter-
thrust:
' Why do you love me? Will you always love me?
But I am like the grass, I can not love you.'

Or, ' Love, and I love and love you,
And hate your mind, not *you,* your soul, your hands.'

So to this last estrangement, Tairiran!

There shut up in his castle, Tairiran's,
She who had nor ears nor tongue save in her hands,
Gone — ah, gone — untouched, unreachable!
She who could never live save through one person,
She who could never speak save to one person,
And all the rest of her a shifting change,
A broken bundle of mirrors . . . !"

VILLANELLE: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL HOUR

I had over-prepared the event,
that much was ominous.
With middle-ageing care
I had laid out just the right books.
I had almost turned down the pages.

Beauty is so rare a thing.
So few drink of my fountain.

So much barren regret,
So many hours wasted!
And now I watch, from the window,
the rain, the wandering busses.

"Their little cosmos is shaken"—
the air is alive with that fact.
In their parts of the city
they are played on by diverse forces.
How do I know?
Oh, I know well enough.
For them there is something afoot.
As for me:
I had over-prepared the event—

Beauty is so rare a thing.
So few drink of my fountain.

Two friends: a breath of the forest . . .
Friends? Are people less friends
because one has just, at last, found them?
Twice they promised to come.
"Between the night and morning?"

Beauty would drink of my mind.
Youth would awhile forget
my youth is gone from me.

II

(" Speak up! You have danced so stiffly?
Someone admired your works,
And said so frankly.

" Did you talk like a fool,
The first night?
The second evening? "

" *But* they promised again:
' To-morrow at tea-time.' ")

III

Now the third day is here —
no word from either;
No word from her nor him,
Only another man's note:
" Dear Pound, I am leaving England."

DANS UN OMNIBUS DE LONDRES

Les yeux d'une morte aimée
M'ont salué,
Enchassés dans un visage stupide
Dont tous les autres traits étaient banals,
Ils m'ont salué

Et alors je vis bien des choses
Au dedans de ma mémoire
Remuer,
S'éveiller.

Je vis des canards sur le bord d'un lac minuscule,
Auprès d'un petit enfant gai, bossu.

Je vis les colonnes anciennes en " toc "
Du Parc Monceau,
Et deux petites filles graciles,
Des patriciennes,
aux toisons couleur de lin,
Et des pigeonnes
Grasses
comme des poulardes.
Je vis le parc,
Et tous les gazons divers
Où nous avions loué des chaises
Pour quatre sous.

Je vis les cygnes noirs,
Japonais,
Leurs ailes
Teintées de couleur sang de-dragon,

Et toutes les fleurs
D'Armenonville.

Les yeux d'une morte
M'ont salué.

PAGANI'S, NOVEMBER 8

Suddenly discovering in the eyes of the very
beautiful
Normande cocotte
The eyes of the very learned British Museum as-
sistant.

TO A FRIEND WRITING ON CABARET DANCERS

"Breathe not the word to-morrow in her ears"
Vir Quidem, on Dancers

Good "Hedgethorn," for we'll anglicize your name
Until the last slut's hanged and the last pig disem-
boweled,
Seeing your wife is charming and your child
Sings in the open meadow — at least the kodak says
so —

My good fellow, you, on a cabaret silence
And the dancers, you write a sonnet;
Say " Forget To-morrow," being of all men
The most prudent, orderly, and decorous!

" Pepita " has no to-morrow, so you write.

Pepita has such to-morrows: with the hands puffed
out,
The pug-dog's features encrusted with tallow
Sunk in a frowsy collar — an unbrushed black.
She will not bathe too often, but her jewels
Will be a stuffy, opulent sort of fungus
Spread on both hands and on the up-pushed
bosom —
It juts like a shelf between the jowl and corset.

Have you, or I, seen most of cabarets, good
Hedgethorn?

Here's Pepita, tall and slim as an Egyptian
mummy,
Marsh-cranberries, the ribbed and angular pods
Flare up with scarlet orange on stiff stalks
And so Pepita
flares on the crowded stage before our
tables

Or slithers about between the dishonest waiters —

" CARMEN EST MAIGRE, UN TRAIT DE BISTRE
CERNE SON ŒIL DE GITANA "

And " rend la flamme "
you know the deathless verses.
I search the features, the avaricious features
Pulled by the kohl and rouge out of resemblance —
Six pence the object for a change of passion.

" Write me a poem."
Come now, my dear Pepita,
" -ita, bonita, chiquita,"
that's what you mean you advertising spade,
Or take the intaglio, my fat great-uncle's heir-loom:
Cupid, astride a phallus with two wings,
Swinging a cat-o'-nine-tails.
No. Pepita,
I have seen through the crust.
I don't know what you look like
But your smile pulls one way
and your painted grin another,
While that cropped fool,
that tom-boy who can't earn her living,

Come, come to-morrow,
To-morrow in ten years at the latest,
She will be drunk in the ditch, but you, Pepita,
Will be quite rich, quite plump, with pug-bitch features,
With a black tint staining your cuticle,
Prudent and svelte Pepita.
" Poète, writ me a poème! "
Spanish and Paris, love of the arts part of your geisha-culture!

Euhenia, in short skirts, slaps her wide stomach,
Pulls up a roll of fat for the pianist,
" Pauvre femme maigre! " she says.
He sucks his chop bone,
That some one else has paid for,
grins up an amiable grin,
Explains the decorations.
Good Hedgethorn, they all have futures,
All these people.
Old Popkoff
Will dine next week with Mrs. Basil,
Will meet a duchess and an ex-diplomat's widow
From Weehawken — who has never known
Any but " Majesties " and Italian nobles.

Euhenia will have a *fonda* in Orbajosa.
The amorous nerves will give way to digestive;
" Delight thy soul in fatness," saith the preacher.
We can't preserve the elusive " *mica salis,*"
It may last well in these dark northern climates,
Nell Gwynn's still here, despite the reformation,
And Edward's mistresses still light the stage,
A glamour of classic youth in their deportment.
The prudent whore is not without her future,
Her bourgeois dulness is deferred.

Her present dulness . . .
Oh well, her present dulness . . .

Now in Venice, 'Storante al Giardino, I went early,
Saw the performers come: him, her, the baby,
A quiet and respectable-tawdry trio;
An hour later: a show of calves and spangles,

" *Un e duo fanno tre,*"
Night after night,
No change, no change of program, " *Che!*
La donna è mobile."

HOMAGE TO QUINTUS SEPTIMIUS FLORENTIS CHRISTIANUS

(Ex libris Graecæ)

I

Theodorus will be pleased at my death,
And someone else will be pleased at the death of
Theodorus,
And yet everyone speaks evil of death.

II

This place is the Cyprian's, for she has ever the
fancy
To be looking out across the bright sea,
Therefore the sailors are cheered, and the waves
Keep small with reverence, beholding her image.

Anyte

III

A sad and great evil is the expectation of death —
And there are also the inane expenses of the
funeral;
Let us therefore cease from pitying the dead
For after death there comes no other calamity.

Palladas

IV

Troy

Whither, O city, are your profits and your gilded
shrines,
And your barbecues of great oxen,
And the tall women walking your streets, in gilt
clothes,
With their perfumes in little alabaster boxes?
Where is the work of your home-born sculptors?

Time's tooth is into the lot, and war's and fate's
too.
Envy has taken your all,
Save your douth and your story.

Agathas Scholasticus

V

Woman? Oh, woman is a consummate rage,
but dead, or asleep, she pleases.
Take her. She has two excellent seasons.

Palladas

VI

Nicharcus upon Phidon his doctor

Phidon neither purged me, nor touched me,
But I remembered the name of his fever medicine
and died.

FISH AND THE SHADOW

The salmon-trout drifts in the stream,
The soul of the salmon-trout floats over the stream
Like a little wafer of light.

The salmon moves in the sun-shot, bright shallow
sea. . . .

As light as the shadow of the fish
that falls through the water,
She came into the large room by the stair,
Yawning a little she came with the sleep still upon
her.

"I am just from bed. The sleep is still in my
eyes.
"Come. I have had a long dream."

And I: "That wood?
And two springs have passed us."
"Not so far, no, not so far now,
There is a place — but no one else knows it —
A field in a valley . . .
Qu'ieu sui avinen,
Ieu lo sai."

She must speak of the time
Of Arnaut de Mareuil, I thought, "*qu'ieu sui avinen.*"

Light as the shadow of the fish
That falls through the pale green water.

IMPRESSIONS OF FRANÇOIS-MARIE AROUET (DE VOLTAIRE)

I

Phyllidula and the Spoils of Gouvernet

Where, Lady, are the days
When you could go out in a hired hansom
Without footmen and equipments?
And dine in a soggy, cheap restaurant?

Phyllidula now, with your powdered Swiss footman
Clanking the door shut,
and lying;
And carpets from Savonnier, and from Persia,
And your new service at dinner,
And plates from Germain,
And cabinets and chests from Martin (almost lacquer),
And your white vases from Japan,
And the lustre of diamonds,
Etcetera, etcetera, and etcetera?

II

To Madame du Châtelet

If you'd have me go on loving you
Give me back the time of the thing.

Will you give me dawn light at evening?
Time has driven me out of the fine plaisaunces,
The parks with the swards all over dew,
And grass going glassy with the light on it,
The green stretches where love is and the grapes
Hang in yellow-white and dark clusters ready for pressing.

And if now we can't fit with our time of life
There is not much but its evil left us.

Life gives us two minutes, two seasons —
One to be dull in;
Two deaths — and to stop loving and being lovable,
That is the real death,
The other is little beside it.

Crying after the follies gone by me,
Quiet talking is all that is left us —
Gentle talking, not like the first talking, less lively;
And to follow after friendship, as they call it,
Weeping that we can follow naught else.

III

To Madame Lullin

You'll wonder that an old man of eighty
Can go on writing you verses. . . .

Grass showing under the snow,
Birds singing late in the year!

And Tibullus could say of his death, in his Latin:
" Delia, I would look on you, dying."

And Delia herself fading out,
Forgetting even her beauty.

END OF LUSTRA

POEMS PUBLISHED BEFORE 1911

IN DURANCE

I am homesick after mine own kind,
Oh, I know that there are folk about me, friendly
faces,
But I am homesick after mine own kind.

" These sell our pictures! " Oh well,
They reach me not, touch me some edge or that,
But reach me not and all my life's become
One flame, that reaches not beyond
Mine heart's own hearth,
Or hides among the ashes there for thee.
" Thee "? Oh " thee " is who cometh first
Out of mine own soul-kin,
For I am homesick after mine own kind
And ordinary people touch me not.
Yea, I am homesick
After mine own kind that know, and feel
And have some breath for beauty and the arts.

Aye, I am wistful for my kin of the spirit
And have none about me save in the shadows
When come *they,* surging of power, " DÆMON,"

" Quasi KALOUN," S. T. says, Beauty is most that,
a " calling to the soul."
Well then, so call they; the swirlers out of the mist
of my soul,
They that come mewards bearing old magic.

But for all that, I am homesick after mine own kind
And would meet kindred even as I am,
Flesh-shrouded bearing the secret.
" All they that with strange sadness "
Have the earth in mock'ry, and are kind to all,
My fellows, aye I know the glory
Of th' unbounded ones, but ye, that hide
As I hide most the while
And burst forth to the windows only whiles or whiles
For love, or hope, or beauty or for power,
Then smoulder, with the lids half closed
And are untouched by the echoes of the world.

Oh ye, my fellows: with the seas between us some be,
Purple and sapphire for the silver shafts
Of sun and spray all shattered at the bows,
And some the hills hold off,
The little hills to east us, though here we
Have damp and plain to be our shutting in.

And yet my soul sings "Up!" and we are one.
Yea thou, and Thou, and THOU, and all my kin
To whom my breast and arms are ever warm,
For that I love ye as the wind the trees
That holds their blossoms and their leaves in cure
And calls the utmost singing from the boughs
That 'thout him, save the aspen, were as dumb
Still shade, and bade no whisper speak the birds of
how
"Beyond, beyond, beyond, there lies . . ."

PIERE VIDAL OLD

It is of Piere Vidal, the fool par excellence of all Provence, of whom the tale tells how he ran mad, as a wolf, because of his love for Loba of Penautier, and how men hunted him with dogs through the mountains of Cabaret and brought him for dead to the dwelling of this Loba (she-wolf) of Penautier, and how she and her Lord had him healed and made welcome, and he stayed some time at that court. He speaks:

When I but think upon the great dead days
And turn my mind upon that splendid madness,
Lo! I do curse my strength
And blame the sun his gladness;
For that the one is dead
And the red sun mocks my sadness.

Behold me, Vidal, that was fool of fools!
Swift as the king wolf was I and as strong
When tall stags fled me through the alder brakes,
And every jongleur knew me in his song,
And the hounds fled and the deer fled
And none fled over long.

Even the grey pack knew me and knew fear.
God! how the swiftest hind's blood spurted hot
Over the sharpened teeth and purpling lips!
Hot was that hind's blood yet it scorched me not
As did first scorn, then lips of the Penautier!
Aye ye are fools, if ye think time can blot

From Piere Vidal's remembrance that blue night.
God! but the purple of the sky was deep!
Clear, deep, translucent, so the stars me seemed
Set deep in crystal; and because my sleep
— Rare visitor — came not,— the Saints I guerdon
For that restlessness — Piere set to keep

One more fool's vigil with the hollyhocks.
Swift came the Loba, as a branch that's caught,
Torn, green and silent in the swollen Rhone,
Green was her mantle, close, and wrought
Of some thin silk stuff that's scarce stuff at all,
But like a mist wherethrough her white form fought,

And conquered! Ah God! conquered!
Silent my mate came as the night was still.
Speech? Words? Faugh! Who talks of words
and love?!
Hot is such love and silent,
Silent as fate is, and as strong until
It faints in taking and in giving all.

Stark, keen, triumphant, till it plays at death.
God! she was white then, splendid as some tomb
High wrought of marble, and the panting breath
Ceased utterly. Well, then I waited, drew,
Half-sheathed, then naked from its saffron sheath
Drew full this dagger that doth tremble here.

Just then she woke and mocked the less keen blade.
Ah God, the Loba! and my only mate!
Was there such flesh made ever and unmade!
God curse the years that turn such women grey!
Behold here Vidal, that was hunted, flayed,
Shamed and yet bowed not and that won at last.

And yet I curse the sun for his red gladness,
I that have known strath, garth, brake, dale,
And every run-way of the wood through the great
madness,

Behold me shrivelled as an old oak's trunk
And made men's mock'ry in my rotten sadness!

No man hath heard the glory of my days:
No man hath dared and won his dare as I:
One night, one body and one welding flame!
What do ye own, ye niggards! that can buy
Such glory of the earth? Or who will win
Such battle-guerdon with his "prowesse high"?

O Age gone lax! O stunted followers,
That mask at passions and desire desires,
Behold me shrivelled, and your mock of mocks;
And yet I mock you by the mighty fires
That burnt me to this ash.

. . . . . .

Ah! Cabaret! Ah Cabaret, thy hills again!

. . . . . .

Take your hands off me! . . . *(Sniffing the air)*
Ha! this scent is hot.

CANZONI

First Published 1911

PRAYER FOR HIS LADY'S LIFE

From Propertius, Elegiae, lib. III, 26

Here let thy clemency, Persephone, hold firm,
Do thou, Pluto, bring here no greater harshness.
So many thousand beauties are gone down to Avernus
Ye might let one remain above with us.

With you is Iope, with you the white-gleaming Tyro,
With you is Europa and the shameless Pasiphæ,
And all the fair from Troy and all from Achaia,
From the sundered realms, of Thebes and of aged Priamus;
And all the maidens of Rome, as many as they were,
They died, and the greed of your flame consumes them.

Here let thy clemency, Persephone, hold firm,
Do thou, Pluto, bring here no greater harshness.
So many thousand fair are gone down to Avernus,
Ye might let one remain above with us.

"BLANDULA, TENULLA, VAGULA"

What hast thou, O my soul, with paradise?
Will we not rather, when our freedom's won,
Get us to some clear place wherein the sun
Lets drift in on us through the olive leaves
A liquid glory? If at Sirmio,
My soul, I meet thee when this life's outrun,
Will we not find some headland consecrated
By aery apostles of terrene delight,
Will not our cult be founded on the waves,
Clear sapphire, cobalt, cyanine,
On triune azures, the impalpable
Mirrors unstill of the eternal change?

Soul, if She meet us there, will any rumour
Of havens more high and courts desirable
Lure us beyond the cloudy peak of Riva?

ERAT HORA

"Thank you, whatever comes." And then she
turned
And, as the ray of sun on hanging flowers
Fades when the wind hath lifted them aside,
Went swiftly from me. Nay, whatever comes

One hour was sunlit and the most high gods
May not make boast of any better thing
Than to have watched that hour as it passed.

THE SEA OF GLASS

I looked and saw a sea
roofed over with rainbows,
In the midst of each
two lovers met and departed;
Then the sky was full of faces
with gold glories behind them.

ROME

FROM THE FRENCH OF JOACHIM DU BELLAY

"Troica Roma resurges."
PROPERTIUS

O thou new comer who seek'st Rome in Rome
And find'st in Rome no thing thou canst call Roman;
Arches worn old and palaces made common,
Rome's name alone within these walls keeps home.

Behold how pride and ruin can befall
One who hath set the whole world 'neath her laws,

All-conquering, now conquerèd, because
She is Time's prey and Time consumeth all.

Rome that are Rome's one sole last monument,
Rome that alone hast conquered Rome the town,
Tiber alone, transient and seaward bent,
Remains of Rome. O world, thou uncon-
stant mime!
That which stands firm in thee Time batters down,
And that which fleeteth doth outrun swift time.

HER MONUMENT, THE IMAGE CUT THEREON

From the Italian of Leopardi

(Written 1831–3 circa)

Such wast thou,
Who art now
But buried dust and rusted skeleton.
Above the bones and mire,
Motionless, placed in vain,
Mute mirror of the flight of speeding years,
Sole guard of grief
Sole guard of memory
Standeth this image of the beauty sped.

O glance, when thou wast still as thou art now,
How hast thou set the fire
A-tremble in men's veins; O lip curved high
To mind me of some urn of full delight,
O throat girt round of old with swift desire,
O palms of Love, that in your wonted ways
Not once but many a day
Felt hands turn ice a-sudden, touching ye,
That ye were once! of all the grace ye had
That which remaineth now
Shameful, most sad
Finds 'neath this rock fit mould, fit resting place!

And still when fate recalleth,
Even that semblance that appears amongst us
Is like to heaven's most 'live imagining.
All, all our life's eternal mystery!
To-day, on high
Mounts, from our mighty thoughts and from the
fount
Of sense untellable, Beauty
That seems to be some quivering splendour cast
By the immortal nature on this quicksand,
And by surhuman fates
Given to mortal state
To be a sign and an hope made secure

Of blissful kingdoms and the aureate spheres;
And on the morrow, by some lightsome twist,
Shameful in sight, abject, abominable
All this angelic aspect can return
And be but what it was
With all the admirable concepts that moved from it
Swept from the mind with it in its departure.

Infinite things desired, lofty visions
'Got on desirous thought by natural virtue,
And the wise concord, whence through delicious seas
The arcane spirit of the whole Mankind
Turns hardy pilot . . . and if one wrong note
Strike the tympanum,
Instantly
That paradise is hurled to nothingness.

O mortal nature,
If thou art
Frail and so vile in all,
How canst thou reach so high with thy poor sense;
Yet if thou art
Noble in any part
How is the noblest of thy speech and thought
So lightly wrought
Or to such base occasion lit and quenched?

HOUSMAN'S MESSAGE TO MANKIND

O woe, woe,
People are born and die,
We also shall be dead pretty soon,
Therefore let us act as if we were
dead already.

The bird sits on the hawthorn tree
But he dies also, presently.
Some lads get hung, and some get shot.
Woeful is this human lot.
Woe! woe, etcetera. . . .

London is a woeful place,
Shropshire is much pleasanter.
Then let us smile a little space
Upon fond nature's morbid grace.
Oh, Woe, woe, woe, etcetera. . . .

TRANSLATIONS FROM HEINE

VON DIE HEIMKEHR

I

Is your hate, then, of such measure?
Do you, truly, so detest me?

Through all the world will I complain
Oh *how* you have addressed me.

O ye lips that are ungrateful,
Hath it never once distressed you,
That you can say such *awful* things
Of *any* one who ever kissed you?

II

So thou hast forgotten fully
That I so long held thy heart wholly,
Thy little heart, so sweet and false and small
That there's no thing more sweet or false at all.

Love and lay thou hast forgotten fully,
And my heart worked at them unduly.
I know not if the love or if the lay were better stuff,
But I know now, they both were good enough.

III

Tell me where thy lovely love is,
Whom thou once did sing so sweetly,
When the fairy flames enshrouded
Thee, and held thy heart completely.

All the flames are dead and sped now
And my heart is cold and sere;
Behold this book, the urn of ashes,
'Tis my true love's sepulchre.

IV

I dreamt that I was God Himself
Whom heavenly joy immerses,
And all the angels sat about
And praised my verses.

V

The mutilated choir boys
When I begin to sing
Complain about the awful noise
And call my voice too thick a thing.

When light their voices lift them up,
Bright notes against the ear,
Through trills and runs like crystal,
Ring delicate and clear.

They sing of Love that's grown desirous,
Of Love, and joy that is Love's inmost part,
And all the ladies swim through tears
Toward such a work of art.

VI

This delightful young man
Should not lack for honourers,
He propitiates me with oysters,
With Rhine wine and liqueurs.

How his coat and pants adorn him!
Yet his ties are more adorning,
In these he daily comes to ask me:
"Are you feeling well this morning?"

He speaks of my extended fame,
My wit, charm, definitions,
And is diligent to serve me,
Is detailed in his provisions.

In evening company he sets his face
In most spiritu*el* positions,
And declaims before the ladies
My *god-like* compositions.

O what comfort it is for me
To find him such, when the days bring
No comfort, at my time of life when
All good things go vanishing.

O Harry Heine, curses be,
I live too late to sup with thee!
Who can demolish at such polished ease
Philistia's pomp and Art's pomposities!

VII

SONG FROM DIE HARZREISE

I am the Princess Ilza
In Ilsenstein I fare,
Come with me to that castle
And we'll be happy there.

Thy head will I cover over
With my waves' clarity
Till thou forget thy sorrow,
O wounded sorrowfully.

Thou wilt in my white arms there,
Nay, on my breast thou must
Forget and rest and dream there
For thine old legend-lust.

My lips and my heart are thine there
As they were his and mine.
His? Why the good King Harry's,
And he is dead lang syne.

Dead men stay alway dead men,
Life is the live man's part,
And I am fair and golden
With joy breathless at heart.

If my heart stay below there,
My crystal halls ring clear
To the dance of lords and ladies
In all their splendid gear.

The silken trains go rustling,
The spur-clinks sound between,
The dark dwarfs blow and bow there
Small horn and violin.

Yet shall my white arms hold thee,
That bound King Harry about.
Ah, I covered his ears with them
When the trumpet rang out.

VIII

And have you thoroughly kissed my lips?
There was no particular waste,
And are you not ready when evening's come?
There's no *particular* haste.

You've got the whole night before you,
Heart's-all-belovèd-my-own,
In an uninterrupted night one can
Get a good deal of kissing done.

UND DRANG

Nay, dwells he in cloudy rumour alone?
BINYON

I

I am worn faint,
The winds of good and evil
Blind me with dust
And burn me with the cold,
There is no comfort being over-man;
Yet are we come more near
The great oblivions and the labouring night,
Inchoate truth and the sepulchral forces.

II

Confusion, clamour, 'mid the many voices
Is there a meaning, a significance?

That life apart from all life gives and takes,
This life, apart from all life's bitter and life's sweet,
Is good.

Ye see me and ye say: exceeding sweet
Life's gifts, his youth, his art,
And his too soon acclaim.

I also knew exceeding bitterness,
Saw good things altered and old friends fare forth,
And what I loved in me hath died too soon,
Yea I have seen the " gray above the green ";
Gay have I lived in life;
Though life hath lain
Strange hands upon me and hath torn my sides,
Yet I believe.
. . . . . .
Life is most cruel where she is most wise.

III

The will to live goes from me.
I have lain
Dull and out-worn
with some strange, subtle sickness.
Who shall say
That love is not the very root of this,
O thou afar?

Yet she was near me,
that eternal deep.

O it is passing strange that love
Can blow two ways across one soul.

. . . . . .

And I was Aengus for a thousand years,
And she, the ever-living, moved with me
And strove amid the waves, and
would not go.

IV

ELEGIA

"Far buon tempo e trionfare"

"I have put my days and dreams out of mind,"
For all their hurry and their weary fret
Availed me little. But another kind
Of leaf that's fast in some more sombre wind,
Is man on life, and all our tenuous courses
Wind and unwind as vainly.

. . . . . .

I have lived long, and died,
Yea I have been dead, right often,
And have seen one thing:
The sun, while he is high, doth light our wrong
And none can break the darkness with a song.

To-day's the cup. To-morrow is not ours:
Nay, by our strongest bands we bind her not,

Nor all our fears and our anxieties
Turn her one leaf or hold her scimitar.

The deed blots out the thought
And many thoughts, the vision;
And right's a compass with as many poles
As there are points in her circumference,
'Tis vain to seek to steer all courses even,
And all things save sheer right are vain enough.
The blade were vain to grow save toward the sun,
And vain th' attempt to hold her green forever.

All things in season and no thing o'er long!
Love and desire and gain and good forgetting,
Thou canst not stay the wheel, hold none too long!

V

How our modernity,
Nerve-wracked and broken, turns
Against time's way and all the way of things,
Crying with weak and egoistic cries!
. . . . . .
All things are given over,
Only the restless will
Surges amid the stars

Seeking new moods of life,
New permutations.

. . . . . .

See, and the very sense of what we know
Dodges and hides as in a sombre curtain
Bright threads leap forth, and hide, and leave no
pattern.

VI

I thought I had put Love by for a time
And I was glad, for to me his fair face
Is like Pain's face.
A little light,
The lowered curtain and the theatre!
And o'er the frail talk of the inter-act
Something that broke the jest! A little light,
The gold, and half the profile!
The whole face
Was nothing like you, yet that image cut
Sheer through the moment.

VI*b*

I have gone seeking for you in the twilight,
Here in the flurry of Fifth Avenue,
Here where they pass between their teas and teas.
Is it such madness? though you could not be

Ever in all that crowd, no gown
Of all their subtle sorts could be your gown.

Yet I am fed with faces, is there one
That even in the half-light mindeth me.

VII

THE HOUSE OF SPLENDOUR

'Tis Evanoe's,
A house not made with hands,
But out somewhere beyond the worldly ways
Her gold is spread, above, around, inwoven,
Strange ways and walls are fashioned out of it.

And I have seen my Lady in the sun,
Her hair was spread about, a sheaf of wings,
And red the sunlight was, behind it all.

And I have seen her there within her house,
With six great sapphires hung along the wall,
Low, panel-shaped, a-level with her knees,
And all her robe was woven of pale gold.

There are there many rooms and all of gold,
Of woven walls deep patterned, of email,

Of beaten work; and through the claret stone,
Set to some weaving, comes the aureate light.
Here am I come perforce my love of her,
Behold mine adoration
Maketh me clear, and there are powers in this
Which, played on by the virtues of her soul,
Break down the four-square walls of standing time.

VIII

THE FLAME

'Tis not a game that plays at mates and mating,
Provençe knew;
'Tis not a game of barter, lands and houses,
Provençe knew.
We who are wise beyond your dream of wisdom,
Drink our immortal moments; we " pass through."
We have gone forth beyond your bonds and borders,
Provençe knew;
And all the tales they ever writ of Oisin
Say but this:
That man doth pass the net of days and hours.
Where time is shrivelled down to time's seed corn
We of the Ever-living, in that light
Meet through our veils and whisper, and of love.

O smoke and shadow of a darkling world,
Barters of passion, and that tenderness
That's but a sort of cunning! O my Love,
These, and the rest, and all the rest we knew.

'Tis not a game that plays at mates and mating,
'Tis not a game of barter, lands and houses,
'Tis not " of days and nights " and troubling years,
Of cheeks grown sunken and glad hair gone gray;
There *is* the subtler music, the clear light
Where time burns back about th' eternal embers.
We are not shut from all the thousand heavens:
Lo, there are many gods whom we have seen,
Folk of unearthly fashion, places splendid,
Bulwarks of beryl and of chrysoprase.

Sapphire Benacus, in thy mists and thee
Nature herself's turned metaphysical,
Who can look on that blue and not believe?

Thou hooded opal, thou eternal pearl,
O thou dark secret with a shimmering floor,
Through all thy various mood I know thee mine;

If I have merged my soul, or utterly
Am solved and bound in, through aught here on
earth,

There canst thou find me, O thou anxious thou,
Who call'st about my gates for some lost me;
I say my soul flowed back, became translucent.
Search not my lips, O Love, let go my hands,
This thing that moves as man is no more mortal.
If thou hast seen my shade sans character,
If thou hast seen that mirror of all moments,
That glass to all things that o'ershadow it,
Call not that mirror me, for I have slipped
Your grasp, I have eluded.

IX

(HORÆ BEATÆ INSCRIPTIO)

How will this beauty, when I am far hence,
Sweep back upon me and engulf my mind!

How will these hours, when we twain are gray,
Turned in their sapphire tide, come flooding o'er us!

X

(THE ALTAR)

Let us build here an exquisite friendship,
The flame, the autumn, and the green rose of love
Fought out their strife here, 'tis a place of wonder;
Where these have been, meet 'tis, the ground is holy.

IX

(AU SALON)

Her grave, sweet haughtiness
Pleaseth me, and in like wise
Her quiet ironies.
Others are beautiful, none more, some less.

I suppose, when poetry comes down to facts,
When our souls are returned to the gods
and the spheres they belong in,
Here in the every-day where our acts
Rise up and judge us;

I suppose there are a few dozen verities
That no shift of mood can shake from us:

One place where we'd rather have tea
(Thus far hath modernity brought us)
"Tea" (Damn you!)
Have tea, damn the Cæsars,
Talk of the latest success, give wing to some scandal,
Garble a name we detest, and for prejudice?
Set loose the whole consummate pack
to bay like Sir Roger de Coverley's
This our reward for our works,
sic crescit gloria mundi:
Some circle of not more than three
that we prefer to play up to,

Some few whom we'd rather please
than hear the whole ægrum vulgus
Splitting its beery jowl
a-meaowling our praises.

Some certain peculiar things,
cari laresque, penates,
Some certain accustomed forms,
the absolute unimportant.

XII

(AU JARDIN)

O you, away high there,
you that lean
From amber lattices upon the cobalt night,
I am below amid the pine trees,
Amid the little pine trees, hear me!

"The jester walked in the garden."
Did he so?
Well, there's no use your loving me
That way, Lady;
For I've nothing but songs to give you.

I am set wide upon the world's ways
To say that life is, some way, a gay thing,
But you never string two days upon one wire
But there'll come sorrow of it.
And I loved a love once,
Over beyond the moon there,
I loved a love once,
And, may be, more times,

But she danced like a pink moth in the shrubbery.

Oh, I know you women from the " other folk,"
And it'll all come right,
O' Sundays.

" The jester walked in the garden."
Did he so?

. . . . . .

RIPOSTES

First Published 1912

When I behold how black, immortal ink
Drips from my deathless pen — ah, well-away!
Why should we stop at all for what I think?
There is enough in what I chance to say.

It is enough that we once came together;
What is the use of setting it to rime?
When it is autumn do we get spring weather,
Or gather may of harsh northwindish time?

It is enough that we once came together;
What if the wind have turned against the rain?
It is enough that we once came together;
Time has seen this, and will not turn again;

And who are we, who know that last intent,
To plague to-morrow with a testament!

IN EXITUM CUIUSDAM

On a certain one's departure

"Time's bitter flood"! Oh, that's all very well,
But where's the old friend hasn't fallen off,
Or slacked his hand-grip when you first gripped
fame?

I know your circle and can fairly tell
What you have kept and what you've left behind:
I know my circle and I know very well
How many faces I'd have out of mind.

APPARUIT

Golden rose the house, in the portal I saw
thee, a marvel, carven in subtle stuff, a
portent. Life died down in the lamp and flickered,
caught at the wonder.

Crimson, frosty with dew, the roses bend where
thou afar moving in the glamorous sun
drinkst in life of earth, of the air, the tissue
golden about thee.

Green the ways, the breath of the fields is thine there,
open lies the land, yet the steely going
darkly hast thou dared and the dreaded æther
parted before thee.

Swift at courage thou in the shell of gold, casting a-loose the cloak of the body, camest
straight, then shone thine oriel and the stunned
light faded about thee.

Half the graven shoulder, the throat aflash with
strands of light inwoven about it, loveliest of all things, frail alabaster, ah me!
swift in departing,

Clothed in goldish weft, delicately perfect,
gone as wind! The cloth of the magical hands!
Thou a slight thing, thou in access of cunning
dar'dst to assume this?

THE TOMB AT AKR ÇAAR

" I am thy soul, Nikoptis. I have watched
These five millennia, and thy dead eyes
Moved not, nor ever answer my desire,
And thy light limbs, wherethrough I leapt aflame,
Burn not with me nor any saffron thing.

See, the light grass sprang up to pillow thee,
And kissed thee with a myriad grassy tongues;
But not thou me.

I have read out the gold upon the wall,
And wearied out my thought upon the signs.
And there is no new thing in all this place.

I have been kind. See, I have left the jars sealed,
Lest thou shouldst wake and whimper for thy wine.
And all thy robes I have kept smooth on thee.

O thou unmindful! How should I forget!
— Even the river many days ago,
The river, thou wast over young,
And three souls came upon Thee —

And I came.
And I flowed in upon thee, beat them off;
I have been intimate with thee, known thy ways.
Have I not touched thy palms and finger-tips,
Flowed in, and through thee and about thy heels?
How 'came I in'? Was I not thee and Thee?

And no sun comes to rest me in this place,
And I am torn against the jagged dark,
And no light beats upon me, and you say
No word, day after day.

Oh! I could get me out, despite the marks
And all their crafty work upon the door,
Out through the glass-green fields. . . .
. . . . . .
Yet it is quiet here:
I do not go."

PORTRAIT D'UNE FEMME

Your mind and you are our Sargasso Sea,
London has swept about you this score years
And bright ships left you this or that in fee:
Ideas, old gossip, oddments of all things,
Strange spars of knowledge and dimmed wares of price.
Great minds have sought you — lacking someone else.
You have been second always. Tragical?
No. You preferred it to the usual thing:
One dull man, dulling and uxorious,
One average mind — with one thought less, each year.
Oh, you are patient, I have seen you sit
Hours, where something might have floated up.
And now you pay one. Yes, you richly pay.
You are a person of some interest, one comes to you
And takes strange gain away:
Trophies fished up; some curious suggestion;
Fact that leads nowhere; and a tale for two,
Pregnant with mandrakes, or with something else
That might prove useful and yet never proves,
That never fits a corner or shows use,
Or finds its hour upon the loom of days:

The tarnished, gaudy, wonderful old work;
Idols and ambergris and rare inlays,
These are your riches, your great store; and yet
For all this sea-hoard of deciduous things,
Strange woods half sodden, and new brighter stuff:
In the slow float of differing light and deep,
No! there is nothing! In the whole and all,
Nothing that's quite your own.
Yet this is you.

NEW YORK

My City, my beloved, my white!
Ah, slender,
Listen! Listen to me, and I will breathe into thee
a soul.
Delicately upon the reed, attend me!

Now do I know that I am mad,
For here are a million people surly with traffic;
This is no maid.
Neither could I play upon any reed if I had one.

My City, my beloved,
Thou art a maid with no breasts,

Thou art slender as a silver reed.
Listen to me, attend me!
And I will breathe into thee a soul,
And thou shalt live for ever.

A GIRL

The tree has entered my hands,
The sap has ascended my arms,
The tree has grown in my breast —
Downward,
The branches grow out of me, like arms.

Tree you are,
Moss you are,
You are violets with wind above them.
A child — *so* high — you are,
And all this is folly to the world.

"PHASELLUS ILLE"

This *papier-mâché,* which you see, my friends,
Saith 'twas the worthiest of editors.
Its mind was made up in "the seventies,"
Nor hath it ever since changed that concoction.

It works to represent that school of thought
Which brought the hair-cloth chair to such perfection,
Nor will the horrid threats of Bernard Shaw
Shake up the stagnant pool of its convictions;
Nay, should the " deathless voice of all the world "
Speak once again for its sole stimulation,
'Twould not move it one jot from left to right.

Come Beauty barefoot from the Cyclades,
She'd find a model for St. Anthony
In this thing's sure *decorum* and behaviour.

AN OBJECT

This thing, that hath a code and not a core,
Hath set acquaintance where might be affections,
And nothing now
Disturbeth his reflections.

QUIES

This is another of our ancient loves.
Pass and be silent, Rullus, for the day
Hath lacked a something since this lady passed;
Hath lacked a something. 'Twas but marginal.

THE SEAFARER

(From the early Anglo-Saxon text)

May I for my own self song's truth reckon,
Journey's jargon, how I in harsh days
Hardship endured oft.
Bitter breast-cares have I abided,
Known on my keel many a care's hold,
And dire sea-surge, and there I oft spent
Narrow nightwatch nigh the ship's head
While she tossed close to cliffs. Coldly afflicted,
My feet were by frost benumbed.
Chill its chains are; chafing sighs
Hew my heart round and hunger begot
Mere-weary mood. Lest man know not
That he on dry land loveliest liveth,
List how I, care-wretched, on ice-cold sea,
Weathered the winter, wretched outcast
Deprived of my kinsmen;

Hung with hard ice-flakes, where hailscur flew,
There I heard naught save the harsh sea
And ice-cold wave, at whiles the swan cries,
Did for my games the gannet's clamour,
Sea-fowls' loudness was for me laughter,
The mews' singing all my mead-drink.
Storms, on the stone-cliffs beaten, fell on the stern
In icy feathers; full oft the eagle screamed
With spray on his pinion.
Not any protector
May make merry man faring needy.
This he little believes, who aye in winsome life
Abides 'mid burghers some heavy business,
Wealthy and wine-flushed, how I weary oft
Must bide above brine.
Neareth nightshade, snoweth from north,
Frost froze the land, hail fell on earth then,
Corn of the coldest. Nathless there knocketh now
The heart's thought that I on high streams
The salt-wavy tumult traverse alone.
Moaneth away my mind's lust
That I fare forth, that I afar hence
Seek out a foreign fastness.
For this there's no mood-lofty man over earth's
midst,

Not though he be given his good, but will have in
his youth greed;
Nor his deed to the daring, nor his king to the faith-
ful
But shall have his sorrow for sea-fare
Whatever his lord will.
He hath not heart for harping, nor in ring-having
Nor winsomeness to wife, nor world's delight
Nor any whit else save the wave's slash,
Yet longing comes upon him to fare forth on the
water.
Bosque taketh blossom, cometh beauty of berries,
Fields to fairness, land fares brisker,
All this admonisheth man eager of mood,
The heart turns to travel so that he then thinks
On flood-ways to be far departing.
Cuckoo calleth with gloomy crying,
He singeth summerward, bodeth sorrow,
The bitter heart's blood. Burgher knows not —
He the prosperous man — what some perform
Where wandering them widest draweth.
So that but now my heart burst from my breast-
lock,
My mood 'mid the mere-flood,
Over the whale's acre, would wander wide.
On earth's shelter cometh oft to me,

Eager and ready, the crying lone-flyer,
Whets for the whale-path the heart irresistibly,
O'er tracks of ocean; seeing that anyhow
My lord deems to me this dead life
On loan and on land, I believe not
That any earth-weal eternal standeth
Save there be somewhat calamitous
That, ere a man's tide go, turn it to twain.
Disease or oldness or sword-hate
Beats out the breath from doom-gripped body.
And for this, every earl whatever, for those speaking after —
Laud of the living, boasteth some last word,
That he will work ere he pass onward,
Frame on the fair earth 'gainst foes his malice,
Daring ado, . . .
So that all men shall honour him after
And his laud beyond them remain 'mid the English,
Aye, for ever, a lasting life's-blast,
Delight mid the doughty.
Days little durable,
And all arrogance of earthen riches,
There come now no kings nor Cæsars
Nor gold-giving lords like those gone.
Howe'er in mirth most magnified,
Whoe'er lived in life most lordliest,

Drear all this excellence, delights undurable!
Waneth the watch, but the world holdeth.
Tomb hideth trouble. The blade is layed low.
Earthly glory ageth and seareth.
No man at all going the earth's gait,
But age fares against him, his face paleth,
Grey-haired he groaneth, knows gone companions,
Lordly men are to earth o'ergiven,
Nor may he then the flesh-cover, whose life ceaseth,
Nor eat the sweet nor feel the sorry,
Nor stir hand nor think in mid heart,
And though he strew the grave with gold,
His born brothers, their buried bodies
Be an unlikely treasure hoard.

THE CLOAK *

Thou keep'st thy rose-leaf
Till the rose-time will be over,
Think'st thou that Death will kiss thee?
Think'st thou that the Dark House
  Will find thee such a lover
As I? Will the new roses miss thee?

* Asclepiades, Julianus Ægyptus.

Prefer my cloak unto the cloak of dust
'Neath which the last year lies,
For thou shouldst more mistrust
Time than my eyes.

AN IMMORALITY

Sing we for love and idleness,
Naught else is worth the having.

Though I have been in many a land,
There is naught else in living.

And I would rather have my sweet,
Though rose-leaves die of grieving,

Than do high deeds in Hungary
To pass all men's believing.

DIEU! QU'IL LA FAIT

From Charles D'Orleans
For music

God! that mad'st her well regard her,
How she is so fair and bonny;
For the great charms that are upon her
Ready are all folk to reward her.

Who could part him from her borders
When spells are alway renewed on her?
God! that mad'st her well regard her,
How she is so fair and bonny.

From here to there to the sea's border,
Dame nor damsel there's not any
Hath of perfect charms so many.
Thoughts of her are of dream's order:
God! that mad'st her well regard her.

SALVE PONTIFEX

(A. C. S.)

One after one they leave thee,
High Priest of Iacchus,
Intoning thy melodies as winds intone
The whisperings of leaves on sunlit days.

And the sands are many
And the seas beyond the sands are one
In ultimate, so we here being many
Are unity; nathless thy compeers,
Knowing thy melody,
Lulled with the wine of thy music
Go seaward silently, leaving thee sentinel
O'er all the mysteries,
High Priest of Iacchus.
For the lines of life lie under thy fingers,
And above the vari-coloured strands
Thine eyes look out unto the infinitude
Of the blue waves of heaven,
And even as Triplex Sisterhood
Thou fingerest the threads knowing neither
Cause nor the ending,
High Priest of Iacchus,
Draw'st forth a multiplicity
Of strands, and, beholding
The colour thereof, raisest thy voice
Towards the sunset,
O High Priest of Iacchus!
And out of the secrets of the inmost mysteries
Thou chantest strange far-sourcèd canticles:
O High Priest of Iacchus!
Life and the ways of Death her

Twin-born sister, that is life's counterpart,
And of night and the winds of night;
Silent voices ministering to the souls
Of hamadryads that hold council concealèd
In streams and tree-shadowing
Forests on hill slopes,
O High Priest of Iacchus,
All the manifold mystery
Thou makest a wine of song,
And maddest thy following even
With visions of great deeds
And their futility,
O High Priest of Iacchus!
Though thy co-novices are bent to the scythe
Of the magian wind that is voice of Persephone,
Leaving thee solitary, master of initiating
Mænads that come through the
Vine-entangled ways of the forest
Seeking, out of all the world,
Madness of Iacchus,
That being skilled in the secrets of the double cup
They might turn the dead of the world
Into pæans,
O High Priest of Iacchus,
Wreathed with the glory of thy years of creating

Entangled music,
Breathe!
Now that the evening cometh upon thee,
Breathe upon us, that low-bowed and exultant
Drink wine of Iacchus, that since the conquering
Hath been chiefly containèd in the numbers
Of them that, even as thou, have woven
Wicker baskets for grape clusters
Wherein is concealèd the source of the vintage,
O High Priest of Iacchus,
Breathe thou upon us
Thy magic in parting!
Even as thy co-novices,
At being mingled with the sea,
While yet thou madest thy canticles
Serving upright before the altar
That is bound about with shadows
Of dead years wherein thy Iacchus
Looked not upon the hills, that being
Uncared for, praised not him in entirety.
O High Priest of Iacchus,
Being now near to the border of the sands
Where the sapphire girdle of the sea
Encinctureth the maiden
Persephone, released for the spring,
Look! Breathe upon us

The wonder of the thrice encinctured mystery
Whereby thou being full of years art young,
Loving even this lithe Persephone
That is free for the seasons of plenty;
Whereby thou being young art old
And shalt stand before this Persephone
    Whom thou lovest,
In darkness, even at that time
That she being returned to her husband
Shall be queen and a maiden no longer,
Wherein thou being neither old nor young
Standing on the verge of the sea
Shall pass from being sand,
    O High Priest of Iacchus,
And becoming wave
    Shalt encircle all sands,
Being transmuted through all
The girdling of the sea.
    O High Priest of Iacchus,
Breathe thou upon us!

NOTE.— This apostrophe was written three years before Swinburne's death. Balderdash but let it stay for the rhythm.— E. P.

Be in me as the eternal moods
of the bleak wind, and not
As transient things are —
gaiety of flowers.
Have me in the strong loneliness
of sunless cliffs
And of grey waters.
Let the gods speak softly of us
In days hereafter,
The shadowy flowers of Orcus
Remember Thee.

THE NEEDLE

Come, or the stellar tide will slip away.
Eastward avoid the hour of its decline,
Now! for the needle trembles in my soul!

Here have we had our vantage, the good hour.
Here we have had our day, your day and mine.
Come now, before this power
That bears us up, shall turn against the pole.

Mock not the flood of stars, the thing's to be.
O Love, come now, this land turns evil slowly.
The waves bore in, soon will they bear away.

The treasure is ours, make we fast land with it.
Move we and take the tide, with its next favour,
Abide
Under some neutral force
Until this course turneth aside.

SUB MARE

It is, and is not, I am sane enough,
Since you have come this place has hovered round
me,
This fabrication built of autumn roses,
Then there's a goldish colour, different.

And one gropes in these things as delicate
Algæ reach up and out beneath
Pale slow green surgings of the underwave,
'Mid these things older than the names they have,
These things that are familiars of the god.

PLUNGE

I would bathe myself in strangeness:
These comforts heaped upon me, smother me!
I burn, I scald so for the new,
New friends, new faces,
Places!
Oh, to be out of this,
This that is all I wanted
— Save the new.
And you,
Love, you the much, the more desired!
Do I not loathe all walls, streets, stones,
All mire, mist, all fog,
All ways of traffic?
You, I would have flow over me like water.
Oh, to be out of this!
Grass, and low fields, and hills,
And sun,
Oh, sun enough!
Out and alone, among some
Alien people!

A VIRGINAL

No, no! Go from me. I have left her lately.
I will not spoil my sheath with lesser brightness,
For my surrounding air has a new lightness;
Slight are her arms, yet they have bound me straitly
And left me cloaked as with a gauze of æther;
As with sweet leaves; as with a subtle clearness.
Oh, I have picked up magic in her nearness
To sheathe me half in half the things that sheathe
her.

No, no! Go from me. I have still the flavour,
Soft as spring wind that's come from birchen bowers.
Green come the shoots, aye April in the branches,
As winter's wound with her sleight hand she
staunches,
Hath of the tress a likeness of the savour:
As white their bark, so white this lady's hours.

PAN IS DEAD

" Pan is dead. Great Pan is dead.
Ah! bow your heads, ye maidens all,
And weave ye him his coronal."

"There is no summer in the leaves,
And withered are the sedges;
How shall we weave a coronal,
Or gather floral pledges?"

"That I may not say, Ladies.
Death was ever a churl.
That I may not say, Ladies.
How should he show a reason,
That he has taken our Lord away
Upon such hollow season?"

THE PICTURE *

The eyes of this dead lady speak to me,
For here was love, was not to be drowned out,
And here desire, not to be kissed away.

The eyes of this dead lady speak to me.

* "Venus Reclining," by Jacopo del Sellaio (1442–93)

OF JACOPO DEL SELLAIO

This man knew out the secret ways of love,
No man could paint such things who did not know.

And now she's gone, who was his Cyprian,
And you are here, who are " The Isles " to me.

And here's the thing that lasts the whole thing out:
The eyes of this dead lady speak to me.

THE RETURN

See, they return; ah, see the tentative
Movements, and the slow feet,
The trouble in the pace and the uncertain
Wavering!

See, they return, one, and by one,
With fear, as half-awakened;
As if the snow should hesitate
And murmur in the wind,
and half turn back;
These were the " Wing'd-with-Awe,"
Inviolable.

Gods of the wingèd shoe!
With them the silver hounds,
sniffing the trace of air!

Haie! Haie!
These were the swift to harry;
These the keen-scented;
These were the souls of blood.

Slow on the leash,
pallid the leash-men!

THREE CANTOS

THREE CANTOS OF A POEM OF SOME LENGTH

An earlier version of these Cantos appeared in *Poetry* during June, July and August, 1917. Most of the poems in the section headed "Lustra" had appeared there at earlier dates. To the editors of this magazine, and of the others where his poems have appeared, the author wishes to make due acknowledgment.

I

Hang it all, there can be but the one "Sordello,"
But say I want to, say I take your whole bag of tricks,
Let in your quirks and tweeks, and say the thing's an art-form,
Your "Sordello," and that the "modern world"
Needs such a rag-bag to stuff all its thought in;
Say that I dump my catch, shiny and silvery
As fresh sardines flapping and slipping on the marginal cobbles?
I stand before the booth (the speech), but the truth
Is inside this discourse: this booth is full of the marrow of wisdom.
Give up the intaglio method?
Tower by tower,
Red-brown the rounded bases, and the plan
Follows the builder's whim; Beaucaire's slim gray
Leaps from the stubby base of Altaforte —
Mohammed's windows, for the Alcazar
Has such a garden, split by a tame small stream —
The Moat is ten yards wide, the inner court-yard
Half a-swim with mire.
Trunk-hose?

There are not. The rough men swarm out
In robes that are half Roman, half like the Knave
of Hearts.
And I discern your story:
Peire Cardinal
Was half fore-runner of Dante. Arnaut's the trick
Of the unfinished address,
And half your dates are out; you mix your eras;
For that great font, Sordello sat beside —
'Tis an immortal passage, but the font
Is some two centuries outside the picture —
And no matter.
Ghosts move about me patched with histories.
You had your business: to set out so much thought,
So much emotion, and call the lot "Sordello."
Worth the evasion, the setting figures up
And breathing life upon them.
Has it a place in music? And your: "Appear Ve-
rona!"?
I walk the airy street,
See the small cobbles flare with the poppy spoil.
'Tis your "Great Day," the Corpus Domini,
And all my chosen and peninsular village
Has spread this scarlet blaze upon its lane,
Oh, before I was up,— with poppy-flowers.
Mid-June, and up and out to the half ruined chapel,

Not the old place at the height of the rocks
But that splay barn-like church, the Renaissance
Had never quite got into trim again.
As well begin here, here began Catullus:
" Home to sweet rest, and to the waves deep laughter,"
The laugh they wake amid the border rushes.
This is our home, the trees are full of laughter,
And the storms laugh loud, breaking the riven waves
On square-shaled rocks, and here the sunlight
Glints on the shaken waters, and the rain
Comes forth with delicate tread, walking from Isola Garda,

Lo Soleils plovil.

It is the sun rains, and a spatter of fire
Darts from the " Lydian " ripples, *lacus undae,*
And the place is full of spirits, not *lemures,*
Not dark and shadow-wet ghosts, but ancient living,
Wood-white, smooth as the inner-bark, and firm of aspect
And all a-gleam with colour?
Not a-gleam
But coloured like the lake and olive leaves,
GLAUKOPOS, clothed like the poppies, wearing golden greaves,

Light on the air. Are they Etruscan gods?
The air is solid sunlight, *apricus*.
Sun-fed we dwell there (we in England now)
For Sirmio serves my whim, better than Asolo,
Yours and unseen. Your palace step?
My stone seat was the Dogana's vulgarest curb,
And there were not " those girls," there was one flare,
One face, 'twas all I ever saw, but it was real . . .
And I can no more say what shape it was . . .
But she was young, too young.
True, it was Venice,
And at Florian's under the North arcade
I have seen other faces, and had my rolls for breakfast,
Drifted at night and seen the lit, gilt cross-beams
Glare from the Morosini.
And for what it's worth
I have my background; and you had your background,
Watched " the soul," Sordello's soul, flare up
And lap up life, and leap " to th' Empyrean ";
Worked out the form, meditative, semi-dramatic,
Semi-epic story; and what's left?
Pre-Daun-Chaucer, Pre-Boccacio? Not Arnaut,
Not Uc St Circ.

Gods float in the azure air,
Bright gods and Tuscan, back before dew was shed;
It is a world like Puvis'?
Never so pale, my friend,
'Tis the first light — not half-light — Panisks
And oak-girls and the Maelids have all the wood;
Our olive Sirmio
Lies in its burnished mirror, and the Mounts Balde
and Riva
Are alive with song, and all the leaves are full of
voices.
"*Non è fuggi.*"
"It is not gone." Metastasio
Is right, we have that world about us.
And the clouds bowe above the lake, and there are
folk upon them
Going their windy ways, moving by Riva,
By the western shore, far as Lonato,
And the water is full of silvery almond-white swim-
mers,
The silvery water glazes the upturned nipple.

"When Atlas sat down with his astrolabe,
He brother to Prometheus, physicist."

We let Ficino
Start us our progress, say it was Moses' birth year?

Exult with Shang in squatness? The sea-monster
Bulges the squarish bronzes.
Daub out, with blue of scarabs, Egypt,
Green veins in the turquoise?
Or gray gradual steps
Lead up beneath flat sprays of heavy cedars:
Temple of teak-wood, and the gilt-brown arches
Triple in tier, banners woven by wall,
Fine screens depicted: sea-waves curled high,
Small boats with gods upon them,
Bright flame above the river: Kuanon,
Footing a boat that's but one lotus petal,
With some proud four-square genius
Leading along, one hand upraised for gladness,
Saying, " 'Tis she, his friend, the mighty Goddess.
Sing hymns, ye reeds, and all ye roots and herons
and swans, be glad.
Ye gardens of the nymphs, put forth your flowers."
What have I of this life?
Or even of Guido?
A pleasant lie that I knew *Or San Michaele,*
Believe the tomb he leapt was Julia Laeta's,
Do not even know which sword he'd with him in the
street-charge.
I have but smelt this life, a whiff of it,
The box of scented wood

Recalls cathedrals. Shall I claim;
Confuse my own phantastikon
Or say the filmy shell that circumscribes me
Contains the actual sun;
confuse the thing I see
With actual gods behind me?
Are they gods behind me?
Worlds we have, how many worlds we have.
If Botticelli
Brings her ashore on that great cockle-shell,
His Venus (Simonetta?), and Spring
And Aufidus fill all the air
With their clear-outlined blossoms?
World enough. Behold, I say, she comes
" Apparelled like the Spring, Graces her subjects "
(" Pericles "),
Such worlds enough we have, have brave decors
And from these like we guess a soul for man
And build him full of aery populations.
(Panting and Faustus),
Mantegna a sterner line, and the new world about us:
Barred lights, great flares, and write to paint, not music,
O Casella.

II

O " Virgilio mio,"
Send out your thought upon the Mantuan palace,
Drear waste, great halls; pigment flakes from the stone;
Forlorner quarter:
Silk tatters still in the frame, Gonzaga's splendour,
Where do we come upon the ancient people,
Or much or little,
Where do we come upon the ancient people?
" All that I know is that a certain star "—
All that I know of one, Joios, Tolosan,
Is that in middle May, going along
A scarce discerned path, turning aside
In " level poplar lands," he found a flower, and wept;
" Y a la primera flor," he wrote,
" Qu'ieu trobei, tornei em plor."
One stave of it, I've lost the copy I had of it in Paris,
Out of a blue and gilded manuscript:
Couci's rabbits, a slim fellow throwing dice,
Purported portraits serving in capitals.
Joios we have, by such a margent stream,
He strayed in the field, wept for a flare of colour
When Cœur de Lion was before Chalus;
Arnaut's a score of songs, a wry sestina;

The rose-leaf casts her dew on the ringing glass,
Dolmetsch will build our age in witching music,
Viols da Gamba, tabors, tympanons.

Yin-yo laps in the reeds, my guest departs,
The maple leaves blot up their shadows,
The sky is full of Autumn,
We drink our parting in saki.
Out of the night comes troubling lute music,
And we cry out, asking the singer's name,
And get this answer:
"Many a one
Brought me rich presents, my hair was full of jade,
And my slashed skirts were drenched in the secret dyes,
Well dipped in crimson, and sprinkled with rare wines;
I was well taught my arts at Ga-ma-rio
And then one year I faded out and married."
The lute-bowl hid her face. We heard her weeping.

Society, her sparrows, Venus' sparrows.
Catullus hung on the phrase (played with it as Mallarmé
Played for a fan: "Rêveuse pour que je plonge.");
Wrote out his crib from Sappho:

God's peer, yea and the very gods are under him
Facing thee, near thee; and my tongue is heavy,
And along my veins the fire; and the night is
Thrust down upon me.
That was one way of love, *flamma demanat,*
And in a year: "I love her as a father,"
And scarce a year, "Your words are written in
water,"
And in ten moons: "O Caelius, Lesbia illa,
Caelius, Lesbia, our Lesbia, that Lesbia
Whom Catullus once loved more
Than his own soul and all his friends,
Is now the drab of every lousy Roman";
So much for him who puts his trust in woman.

Dordoigne! When I was there
There came a centaur, spying the land
And there were nymphs behind him;
Or procession on procession by Salisbury,
Ancient in various days, long years between them;
Ply over ply of life still wraps the earth here.
Catch at Dordoigne!
Vicount St. Antoni —
"D'amor tug miei cossir"— hight Raimon Jordans
Of land near Caortz. The Lady of Pena
"Gentle and highly prized."

And he was good at arms and *bos trobaire,*
" Thou art the pool of worth, flood-land of pleasure,
And all my heart is bound about with love,
As rose in trellis that is bound over and over ";
Thus were they taken in love beyond all measure.
But the Viscount Pena
Went making war into an hostile country,
And was sore wounded. The news held him dead,
" And at this news she had great grief and teen,"
And gave the church such wax for his recovery
That he recovered,
" And at this news she had great grief and teen "
And fell a-moping, dismissed St. Antoni,
" Thus was there more than one in deep distress,"
So ends that novel. Here the blue Dordoigne
Placid between white cliffs, pale
As the background of a Leonardo. Elis of Montfort
Then sent him her invitations (wife of de Gordon).
It juts into the sky, Gordon that is,
Like a thin spire. Blue night pulled down about it
Like tent-flaps or sails close hauled. When I was there,
La Noche de San Juan, a score of players
Were walking about the streets in masquerade,
Pike-staves and paper helmets, and the booths

Were scattered align, the rag ends of the fair.
False arms, true arms:
A flood of people storming about Spain:
My Cid rode up to Burgos,
Up to the studded gate between two towers,
Beat with his lance butt. A girl child of nine years
Comes to the shrine-like platform in the wall,
Lisps out the words a-whisper, the King's writ:
Let no man speak to Diaz (Ruy Diaz, Myo Cid)
Or give him help or food, on pain of death:
His heart upon a pike, his eyes torn out, his goods sequestered.
Cid from Bivar, from empty perches of dispersed hawks,
From empty presses,
Came riding with his company up the great hill
(*Afe Minaya!*) to Burgos in the Spring,
And thence to fighting, to down-throw of Moors
And to Valencia rode he. By the beard! *Muy velida!*
Of onrush of lances, of splintered staves
Riven and broken casques, dismantled castles;
Of painted shields split up, blazons hacked off,
Piled men and bloody rivers. Or
" Of sombre light upon reflected armour "
When De las Nieblas sails —

" Y dar nueva lumbre las armas y hierros "—
And portents in the wind, a pressing air;
Full many a fathomed sea-change in the eyes
That sought with him the salt sea victories,
Rumble of balladist.
Another gate:
And Kumasaka's ghost comes back to explain
How well the young man fenced who ended him.
Another gate:
The kernelled walls of Toro, *las almenas,*
Añield, a king come in an unjust cause,
Atween the chinks aloft flashes the armoured figure,
" Muy linda! ", " Helen! ", " a star,"
Lights the king's features . . .
" No use, my liege. She is your highness' sister,"
Breaks in Ancures.
" Mal fuego s'enciende! "
Such are the gestes of war.
A tire-woman,
Court sinecure, the court of Portugal,
And the young prince loved her, Pedro,
Called later, Cruel. Jealousy, two stabbed her,
Courtiers, with king's connivance.
And he, the prince, kept quiet a space of years.
And came to reign, after uncommon quiet,
And had his will upon the dagger-players:

A wedding ceremonial: he and the dug-up corpse in
cerements.
Who winked at murder kisses the dead hand,
Does loyal homage
"Que despois de ser morta foy Rainha."
Dig up Camoens:
"That once as Proserpine
Gatheredst thy soul's light fruit, and every blindness;
Thy Enna the flary mead-land of Mondego,
Long art thou sung by Maidens in Mondego."
What have we now of her, his "*linda Ignez*"?
Houtmans in jail for debt in Lisbon, how long after,
Contrives a company, the Dutch eat Portugal,
Follow her ships tracks. Roemer Vischer's daughters
Talking some Greek, dally with glass engraving:
Vondel, the Eglantine, Dutch Renaissance.
The old tale out of fashion, daggers gone,
And Gaby wears Braganza on her throat,
Another pearl, tied to a public gullet.

I knew a man, but where 'twas is no matter,
Born on a farm, he hankered after painting,
His father kept him at work, no luck,
Married and got four sons,

Three died, the fourth he sent to Paris. And this son:
Ten years of Julians' and the ateliers,
Ten years of life, his pictures in the salons,
Name coming in the press;
and when I knew him:
Back once again in middle Indiana,
Acting as usher in the theatre,
Painting the local drug-shop and soda bars,
The local doctor's fancy for a mantel-piece:
Sheep! jabbing the wool upon their flea-bit backs.
"Them sheep! Them goddamd sheep!!" Adoring Puvis,
Giving his family back what they had spent on him,
Talking Italian cities,
Local excellence at Perugia;
dreaming his renaissance,
Take my Sordello!

III

Another one, half-cracked: John Heydon,
Worker of miracles, dealer in levitation,
"Servant of God and secretary of nature,"
The half transparent forms, in trance at Bulverton:
"Decked all in green," with sleeves of yellow silk
Slit to the elbow, slashed with various purples,

(Thus in his vision) Her eyes were green as glass,
Her foot was leaf-like, and she promised him,
Dangling a chain of emeralds, promised him
The way of holiest wisdom.
" Omniformis
Omnis intellectus est ": thus he begins
By spouting half of Psellus; no, not " Daemonibus,"
But Porphyry's " Chances," the 13th chapter,
That every intellect is omniform.
" A daemon is a substance in the locus of souls."
Munching Ficino's mumbling Platonists.

Valla, more earth and sounder rhetoric,
Prefacing praise to his Pope, Nicholas:
A man of parts skilled in the subtlest sciences;
A patron of the arts, of poetry; and of a fine discernment.
A catalogue, his jewels of conversation.
" Know then the Roman speech: a sacrament "
Spread for the nations, eucharist of wisdom,
Bread of the liberal arts.
Ha! Sir Blancatz,
Sordello would have your heart up, give it to all the princes;
Valla, the heart of Rome,
sustaining speech,

Set out before the people. " Nec bonus
Christianus " (in the Elegantiae) " ac bonus Tullianus."
Shook the church. Marius, Du Bellay, wept for the buildings;
Baldassar Castiglione saw Raphael
" Lead back the soul into its dead, waste dwelling,"
Laniato corpore. Lorenzo Valla
" Broken in middle life? Bent to submission?
Took a fat living from the Papacy "
(That's in Villari, but Burckhardt's statement's different).
" More than the Roman city the Roman speech "
Holds fast its part among the ever living.
" Not by the eagles only was Rome measured."
" Wherever the Roman speech was, there was Rome."
Wherever the speech crept, there was mastery,
Spoke with the law's voice, while your greek logicians. . . .

More greeks than one! Doughty's " Divine Homeros "
Came before sophistry. Justinopolitan, uncatalogued,
One Andreas Divus gave him in latin,

In Officina Wecheli, M.D. three " X s." eight,
Caught up his cadence, word and syllable:
" Down to the ships we went, set mast and sail,
Black keel and beasts for bloody sacrifice,
Weeping we went."
I've strained my ear for *-ensa, -ombra,* and *-ensa,*
And cracked my wit on delicate canzoni,
Here's but rough meaning:
" And then went down to the ship, set keel to breakers,
Forth on the godly sea,
We set up mast and sail on the swart ship,
Sheep bore we aboard her, and our bodies also,
Heavy with weeping; and winds from sternward
Bore us out onward with bellying canvas,
Circe's this craft, the trim-coifed goddess.
Then sat we amidships — wind jamming the tiller —
Thus with stretched sail
we went over sea till day's end.
Sun to his slumber, shadows o'er all the ocean,
Came we then to the bounds of deepest water,
To the Kimmerian lands and peopled cities
Covered with close-webbed mist, unpierced ever
With glitter of sun-rays,
Nor with stars stretched, nor looking back from heaven,

Swartest night stretched over wretched men there,
The ocean flowing backward, came we then to the
place
Aforesaid by Circe.
Here did they rites, Perimedes and Eurylochus,
And drawing sword from my hip
I dug the ell-square pitkin,
Poured we libations unto each the dead,
First mead and then sweet wine, water mixed with
white flour,
Then prayed I many a prayer to the sickly death's-
heads,
As set in Ithaca, sterile bulls of the best
For sacrifice, heaping the pyre with goods.
Sheep, to Tiresias only; black and a bell sheep.
Dark blood flowed in the fosse,
Souls out of Erebus, cadaverous dead,
Of brides, of youths, and of much-bearing old;
Virgins tender, souls stained with recent tears,
Many men mauled with bronze lance-heads,
Battle spoil, bearing yet dreary arms,
These many crowded about me,
With shouting. Pallor upon me, cried to my men
for more beasts.
Slaughtered the herds, sheep slain of bronze,
Poured ointment, cried to the gods,

To Pluto the strong, and praised Proserpine,
Unsheathed the narrow sword,
I sat to keep off the impetuous, impotent dead
Till I should hear Tiresias.
But first Elpenor came, our friend Elpenor,
Unburied, cast on the wide earth,
Limbs that we left in the house of Circe,
Unwept, unwrapped in sepulchre, since toils urged other.
Pitiful spirit, and I cried in hurried speech:
" Elpenor, how art thou come to this dark coast?
Cam'st thou a-foot, outstripping seamen? "
And he in heavy speech:
" Ill fate and abundant wine! I slept in Circe's ingle,
Going down the long ladder unguarded, I fell against the buttress,
Shattered the nape-nerve, the soul sought Avernus.
But thou, O King, I bid remember me, unwept, unburied,
Heap up mine arms, be tomb by sea-board, and inscribed:
' A man of no fortune and with a name to come.'
And set my oar up, that I swung mid fellows."

Came then another ghost, whom I beat off, Anticlea,
And then Tiresias, Theban,

Holding his golden wand, knew me and spoke first:
" Man of ill hour, why come a second time,
Leaving the sunlight, facing the sunless dead, and this joyless region?
Stand from the fosse, move back, leave me my bloody bever,
And I will speak you true speeches."
And I stepped back,
Sheathing the yellow sword. Dark blood he drank then,
And spoke: " Lustrous Odysseus
Shalt return through spiteful Neptune, over dark seas,
Lose all companions." Foretold me the ways and the signs.
Came then Anticlea, to whom I answered:
" Fate drives me on through these deeps. I sought Tiresias,"
Told her the news of Troy. And thrice her shadow
Faded in my embrace.

Lie quiet Divus. Then had he news of many faded women,
Tyro, Alcmena, Chloris,
Heard out their tales by that dark fosse, and sailed
By sirens and thence outward and away,

And unto Circe. Buried Elpenor's corpse.
Lie quiet Divus, plucked from a Paris stall
With a certain Cretan's " Hymni Deorum ";
The thin clear Tuscan stuff
Gives way before the florid mellow
phrase,
Take we the goddess, Venerandam
Auream coronam habentem, pulchram. . . .
Cypri munimenta sortita est, maritime,
Light on the foam, breathed on by Zephyrs
And air-tending Hours, mirthful, orichalci, with
golden
Girdles and breast bands, Thou with dark eyelids,
Bearing the golden bough of Argicida.

END OF THREE CANTOS

END

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