

Green Bays. Verses and Parodies eBook

Green Bays. Verses and Parodies by Arthur Quiller-Couch

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IN A COLLEGE GARDEN.

The splendid spur.

The white moth.

Irish melodies

I. *Tim the Dragoon.*

II. *Kenmare river.*

Lady Jane (Sapphics).

A triolet.

An oath.

Upon Graciosa, Walking and talking.

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NUGAE OXONIENSES.

TWILIGHT.

WILLALOO.

The sair stroke.

The doom of the esquire Bedell.

'Behold! I am not one that goes to lectures.'

Caliban upon rudiments.

SOLVITUR ACRIS HIEMPS.



A letter.

OCCASIONAL VERSES.

ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS.

Unity put quarterly.

Fire!

De tea Fabula.

L'ENVOI (as I laye A-dreamynge).

IN A COLLEGE GARDEN.

Senex. Saye, cushat, callynge from the brake,
What ayles thee soe to pyne?
Thy carefulle heart shall cease to ake
When dayes be fyne
And greene thynges twyne:
Saye, cushat, what thy grieffe to myne?

Turtur. Naye, gossyp, loyterynges soe late,
What ayles thee thus to chyde?
My love is fled by garden-gate;
Since Lammas-tyde
I wayte my bryde.
Saye, gossyp, whom dost thou abyde?

Senex. Loe! I am he, the 'Lonelie Manne,'
Of Time forgotten quite,
That no remembered face may scanne—
Sadde eremyte,
I wayte tonyghte
Pale Death, nor any other wyghte.

O cushat, cushat, callynge lowe,
Goe waken Time from sleepe:
Goe whysper in his ear, that soe
His besom sweepe
Me to that heape
Where all my recollections keepe.

Hath he forgott? Or did I viewe
A ghostlye companye



This even, by the dismalle yewe,
Of faces three
That beckoned mee
To land where no repynynges bee?

O Harrye, Harrye, Tom and Dicke,
Each lost companion!
Why loyter I among the quicke,
When ye are gonne?
Shalle I alone
Delayinge crye 'Anon, Anon'?

Naye, let the spyder have my gowne,
To brayde therein her veste.
My cappe shal serve, now I 'goe downe,'
For mouse's neste.
Loe! this is best.
I care not, soe I gayne my reste.



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THE SPLENDID SPUR.

Not on the neck of prince or hound,
Nor on a woman's finger twin'd,
May gold from the deriding ground
Keep sacred that we sacred bind:
Only the heel
Of splendid steel
Shall stand secure on sliding fate,
When golden navies weep their freight.

The scarlet hat, the laurell'd stave
Are measures, not the springs, of worth;
In a wife's lap, as in a grave,
Man's airy notions mix with earth.
Seek other spur
Bravely to stir
The dust in this loud world, and tread
Alp-high among the whisp'ring dead.

Trust in thyself,—then spur amain:
So shall Charybdis wear a grace,
Grim Aetna laugh, the Libyan plain
Take roses to her shrivell'd face.
This orb—this round
Of sight and sound—
Count it the lists that God hath built
For haughty hearts to ride a-tilt.

THE WHITE MOTH.

*If a leaf rustled, she would start:
And yet she died, a year ago.
How had so frail a thing the heart
To journey where she trembled so?
And do they turn and turn in fright,
Those little feet, in so much night?*

The light above the poet's head
Streamed on the page and on the cloth,
And twice and thrice there buffeted
On the black pane a white-wing'd moth;



'Twas Annie's soul that beat outside
And 'Open, open, open!' cried:

'I could not find the way to God;
There were too many flaming suns
For signposts, and the fearful road
Led over wastes where millions
Of tangled comets hissed and burned—
I was bewilder'd and I turned.

'O, it was easy then! I knew
Your window and no star beside.
Look up, and take me back to you!
—He rose and thrust the window wide.
'Twas but because his brain was hot
With rhyming; for he heard her not.

But poets polishing a phrase
Show anger over trivial things;
And as she blundered in the blaze
Towards him, on ecstatic wings,
He raised a hand and smote her dead;
Then wrote '*That I had died instead!*'

IRISH MELODIES.

I.

TIM THE DRAGOON (From 'Troy Town')

Be aisy an' list to a chune
That's sung of bowld Tim the Dragoon—
Sure, 'twas he'd niver miss
To be stalin' a kiss,
Or a brace, by the light of the moon—
Aroon—
Wid a wink at the Man in the Moon!

Rest his sowl where the daisies grow thick;
For he's gone from the land of the quick:
But he's still makin' love
To the leddies above,
An' be jabbers! he'll tache 'em the thrick—
Avick—
Niver doubt but he'll tache 'em the thrick!



Page 3

'Tis by Tim the dear saints'll set sthore,
And 'ull thrate him to whisky galore:
For they 've only to sip
But the tip of his lip
An' bedad! they'll be askin' for more—
Asthore—
By the powers, they'll be shoutin' 'Ancore!

IRISH MELODIES.

II.

KENMARE RIVER.

'Tis pretty to be in Ballinderry,
'Tis pretty to be in Ballindoon,
But 'tis prettier far in County Kerry
Coortin' under the bran' new moon,
Aroon, Aroon!

'Twas there by the bosom of blue Killarney
They came by the hundther' a-coortin' me;
Sure I was the one to give back their blarney,
An' merry was I to be fancy-free.

But niver a step in the lot was lighter,
An' divvle a boulder among the bhoys,
Than Phelim O'Shea, me dynamither,
Me illigant arthist in clock-work toys.

'Twas all for love he would bring his figgers
Of imminent statesmen, in toy machines,
An' hould me hand as he pulled the thriggers
An' scattered the thraytors to smithereens.

An' to see the Queen in her Crystial Pallus
Fly up to the roof, an' the windeys broke!
And all with divvle a trace of malus,—
But he was the bhoy that enjoyed his joke!

Then O, but his cheek would flush, an' 'Bridget,'
He 'd say, 'Will yez love me?' But I 'd be coy



And answer him, 'Arrah now, dear, don't fidget!
Though at heart I loved him, me arthist bhoy!

One night we stood by the Kenmare river,
An' 'Bridget, creina, now whist,' said he,
'I'll be goin' to-night, an' may be for iver;
Open your arms at the last to me.'

'Twas there by the banks of the Kenmare river
He took in his hands me white, white face,
An' we kissed our first an' our last for iver—
For Phelim O'Shea is disparsed in space.

'Twas pretty to be by blue Killarney,
'Twas pretty to hear the linnets's call,
But whist! for I cannot attind their blarney,
Nor whistle in answer at all, at all.

For the voice that he swore 'ud out-call the linnet's
Is cracked intoirely, and out of chune,
Since the clock-work missed it by thirteen minutes
An' scattered me Phelim around the moon,
Aroon, Aroon!

LADY JANE.

Sapphics.

Down the green hill-side fro' the castle window
Lady Jane spied Bill Amaranth a-workin';
Day by day watched him go about his ample

Nursery garden. Cabbages thriv'd there, wi' a mort o' green-
stuff—
Kidney beans, broad beans, onions, tomatoes,
Artichokes, seakale, vegetable marrows,

Early potatoes.



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Lady Jane cared not very much for all these:
 What she cared much for was a glimpse o' Willum
 Strippin' his brown arms wi' a view to horti-

-Cultural effort. Little guessed Willum, never extra-vain, that
 Up the green hill-side, i' the gloomy castle,
 Feminine eyes could so delight to view his

Noble proportions. Only one day while, in an innocent mood,
 Moppin' his brow ('cos 'twas a trifle sweaty)
 With a blue kerchief—lo, he spies a white 'un

Coyly responding.

Oh, delightsome Love! Not a jot do *you* care
 For the restrictions set on human inter-
 -course by cold-blooded social refiners;
 Nor do I, neither.

Day by day, peepin' fro' behind the bean-sticks,
 Willum observed that scrap o' white a-wavin',
 Till his hot sighs out-growin' all repression

Busted his weskit. Lady Jane's guardian was a haughty
 Peer, who
 Clung to old creeds and had a nasty temper;
 Can we blame Willum that he hardly cared to

Risk a refusal? Year by year found him busy 'mid the bean-
 sticks,
 Wholly uncertain how on earth to take steps.
 Thus for eighteen years he beheld the maiden

Wave fro' her window. But the nineteenth spring, i' the Castle
 post-bag,
 Came by book-post Bill's catalogue o' seedlings
 Mark'd wi' blue ink at 'Paragraphs relatin'

Mainly to Pumpkins. "W. A. can,' so the Lady Jane read,
 'Strongly commend that very noble Gourd, the
Lady Jane, first-class medal, ornamental;

Grows to a great height.' Scarce a year arter, by the
 scented hedgerows—



Down the mown hill-side, fro' the castle gateway—
Came a long train and, i' the midst, a black bier,

Easily shouldered.

'Whose is yon corse that, thus adorned wi' gourd-leaves,
Forth ye bear with slow step?' A mourner answer'd,
"Tis the poor clay-cold body Lady Jane grew
Tired to abide in.'

'Delve my grave quick, then, for I die to-morrow.
Delve it one furlong fro' the kidney bean-sticks,
Where I may dream she's goin' on precisely

As she was used to.'Hardly died Bill when, fro' the Lady
Jane's grave,
Crept to his white death-bed a lovely pumpkin:
Climb'd the house wall and over-arched his head wi'

Billowy verdure.



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Simple this tale!—but delicately perfumed
As the sweet roadside honeysuckle. That's why,
Difficult though its metre was to tackle,

I'm glad I wrote it.

A TRIOLET.

To commemorate the virtue of Homoeopathy in restoring one apparently drowned.

Love, that in a tear was drown'd,
Lives revived by a tear.
Stella heard them mourn around
Love that in a tear was drown'd,
Came and coax'd his dripping swound,
Wept '*The fault was mine, my dear!*'
Love, that in a tear was drown'd,
Lives, revived by a tear.

AN OATH.

(From 'Troy Town'.)

A month ago Lysander pray'd
To Jove, to Cupid, and to Venus,
That he might die if he betray'd
A single vow that pass'd between us.

Ah, careless gods, to hear so ill
And cheat a maid on you relying!
For false Lysander's thriving still,
And 'tis Corinna lies a-dying.

UPON GRACIOSA, WALKING AND TALKING.

(From 'Troy Town'.)

When as abroad, to greet the morn,
I mark my Graciosa walk,
In homage bends the whisp'ring corn,
Yet to confess



Its awkwardness
Must hang its head upon the stalk.

And when she talks, her lips do heal
The wounds her lightest glances give:—
In pity then be harsh, and deal
Such wounds that I
May hourly die,
And, by a word restored, live.

WRITTEN UPON LOVE'S FRONTIER-POST.

(From 'Troy Town'.)

Toiling love, loose your pack,
All your sighs and tears unbind:
Care's a ware will break a back,
Will not bend a maiden's mind.

In this State a man shall need
Neither priest nor law giver:
Those same lips that are his creed
Shall confess their worshipper.

All the laws he must obey,
Now in force and now repeal'd,
Shift in eyes that shift as they,
Till alike with kisses seal'd.

TITANIA.

By Lord T-n.

So bluff Sir Leolin gave the bride away:
And when they married her, the little church
Had seldom seen a costlier ritual.
The coach and pair alone were two-pound-ten,
And two-pound-ten apiece the wedding-cakes;—
Three wedding-cakes. A Cupid poised a-top
Of each hung shivering to the frosted loves
Of two fond cushats on a field of ice,
As who should say 'I see you!'—Such the joy
When English-hearted Edwin swore his faith
With Mariana of the Moated Grange.



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For Edwin, plump head-waiter at The Cock,
Grown sick of custom, spoilt of plenitude,
Lacking the finer wit that saith,
'I wait, They come; and if I make them wait, they go,'
Fell in a jaundiced humour petulant-green,
Watched the dull clerk slow-rounding to his cheese,
Flicked a full dozen flies that flecked the pane—
All crystal-cheated of the fuller air,
Blurted a free 'Good-day t'ye,' left and right,
And shaped his gathering choler to this head:—

'Custom! And yet what profit of it all?
The old order changeth yielding place to new,
To me small change, and this the Counter-change
Of custom beating on the self-same bar—
Change out of chop. Ah me! the talk, the tip,
The would-be-evening should-be-mourning suit,
The forged solicitude for petty wants
More petty still than they,—all these I loathe,
Learning they lie who feign that all things come
To him that waiteth. I have waited long,
And now I go, to mate me with a bride
Who is aweary waiting, even as I!'

But when the amorous moon of honeycomb
Was over, ere the matron-flower of Love—
Step-sister of To-morrow's marmalade—
Swooned scentless, Mariana found her lord
Did something jar the nicer feminine sense
With usage, being all too fine and large,
Instinct of warmth and colour, with a trick
Of blunting 'Mariana's' keener edge
To 'Mary Ann'—the same but not the same:
Whereat she girded, tore her crisped hair,
Called him 'Sir Churl,' and ever calling 'Churl!'
Drave him to Science, then to Alcohol,
To forge a thousand theories of the rocks,
Then somewhat else for thousands dewy cool,
Wherewith he sought a more Pacific isle
And there found love, a duskier love than hers.



MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

By O—r K—m.

Wake! for the closed Pavilion doors have kept
Their silence while the white-eyed Kaffir slept,
And wailed the Nightingale with 'Jug, jug, jug!'
Whereat, for empty cup, the White Rose wept.

Enter with me where yonder door hangs out
Its Red Triangle to a world of drought,
Inviting to the Palace of the Djinn,
Where Death, Aladdin, waits as Chuckerout.

Methought, last night, that one in suit of woe
Stood by the Tavern-door and whispered, 'Lo,
The Pledge departed, what avails the Cup?
Then take the Pledge and let the Wine-cup go.'

But I: 'For every thirsty soul that drains
This Anodyne of Thought its rim contains—
Free-will the *can*, Necessity the *must*,
Pour off the *must*, and, see, the *can* remains.



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'Then, pot or glass, why label it "*With Care*"?
Or why your Sheepskin with my Gourd compare?
Lo! here the Bar and I the only Judge:—
O, Dog that bit me, I exact an hair!

We are the Sum of things, who jot our score
With Caesar's clay behind the Tavern door:
And Alexander's armies—where are they,
But gone to Pot—that Pot you push for more?

And this same Jug I empty, could it speak,
Might whisper that itself had been a Beak
And dealt me Fourteen Days 'without the Op.'—
Your Worship, see, my lip is on your cheek.

Yourself condemned to three score years and ten,
Say, did you judge the ways of other men?
Why, now, sir, you are hourly filled with wine,
And has the clay more licence now than then?

Life is a draught, good sir; its brevity
Gives you and me our measures, and thereby
Has docked your virtue to a tankard's span,
And left of my criterion—a Cri'!

RETROSPECTION.

After C. S. C.

When the hunter-star Orion
(Or, it may be, Charles his Wain)
Tempts the tiny elves to try on
All their little tricks again;
When the earth is calmly breathing
Draughts of slumber undefiled,
And the sire, unused to teething,
Seeks for errant pins his child;

When the moon is on the ocean,
And our little sons and heirs
From a natural emotion
Wish the luminary theirs;
Then a feeling hard to stifle,



Even harder to define,
Makes me feel I 'd give a trifle
For the days of Auld Lang Syne.

James—for we have been as brothers
(Are, to speak correctly, twins),
Went about in one another's
Clothing, bore each other's sins,
Rose together, ere the pearly
Tint of morn had left the heaven,
And retired (absurdly early)
Simultaneously at seven—

James, the days of yore were pleasant.
Sweet to climb for alien pears
Till the irritated peasant
Came and took us unawares;
Sweet to devastate his chickens,
As the ambush'd catapult
Scattered, and the very dickens
Was the natural result;

Sweet to snare the thoughtless rabbit;
Break the next-door neighbour's pane;
Cultivate the smoker's habit
On the not-innocuous cane;
Leave the exercise unwritten;
Systematically cut
Morning school, to plunge the kitten
In his bath, the water-butt.



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Age, my James, that from the cheek of
Beauty steals its rosy hue,
Has not left us much to speak of:
But 'tis not for this I rue.
Beauty with its thousand graces,
Hair and tints that will not fade,
You may get from many places
Practically ready-made.

No; it is the evanescence
Of those lovelier tints of Hope—
Bubbles, such as adolescence
Joys to win from melted soap—
Emphasizing the conclusion
That the dreams of Youth remain
Castles that are An delusion
(Castles, that's to say, in Spain).

Age thinks 'fit,' and I say 'fiat.'
Here I stand for Fortune's butt,
As for Sunday swains to shy at
Stands the stoic coco-nut.
If you wish it put succinctly,
Gone are all our little games;
But I thought I 'd say distinctly
What I feel about it, James.

WHY THIS VOLUME IS SO THIN.

In youth I dreamed, as other youths have dreamt,
Of love, and thrummed an amateur guitar
To verses of my own,—a stout attempt
To hold communion with the Evening Star
I wrote a sonnet, rhymed it, made it scan.
Ah me! how trippingly those last lines ran.—

*O Hesperus! O happy star! to bend
O'er Helen's bosom in the tranced west,
To match the hours heave by upon her breast,
And at her parted lip for dreams attend—
If dawn defraud thee, how shall I be deemed,
Who house within that bosom, and am dreamed?*



For weeks I thought these lines remarkable;
For weeks I put on airs and called myself
A bard: till on a day, as it befell,
I took a small green Moxon from the shelf
At random, opened at a casual place,
And found my young illusions face to face

With this:—'*Still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair Love's ripening breast
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest;
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever,—or else swoon to death.*'

O gulf not to be crossed by taking thought!
O heights by toil not to be overcome!
Great Keats, unto your altar straight I brought
My speech, and from the shrine departed dumb.
—And yet sometimes I think you played it hard
Upon a rather hopeful minor bard.

NUGAE OXONIENSES.

TWILIGHT.

By W—ll—m C—wp—r.



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'Tis evening. See with its resorting throng
 Rude Carfax teems, and waistcoats, visited
 With too-familiar elbow, swell the curse
 Vortiginous. The boating man returns,
 His rawness growing with experience—
 Strange union! and directs the optic glass
 Not unresponsive to Jemima's charms,
 Who wheels obdurate, in his mimic chaise
 Perambulant, the child. The gouty cit,
 Asthmatical, with elevated cane
 Pursues the unregarding tram, as one
 Who, having heard a hurdy-gurdy, girds
 His loins and hunts the hurdy-gurdy-man,
 Blaspheming. Now the clangorous bell proclaims
 The *Times or Chronicle*, and Rauca screams
 The latest horrid murder in the ear
 Of nervous dons expectant of the urn
 And mild domestic muffin.

To the Parks

Drags the slow Ladies' School, consuming time
 In passing given points. Here glow the lamps,
 And tea-spoons clatter to the cosy hum
 Of scientific circles. Here resounds
 The football-field with its discordant train,
 The crowd that cheers but not discriminates,
 As ever into touch the ball returns
 And shrieks the whistle, while the game proceeds
 With fine irregularity well worth
 The paltry shilling.—

Draw the curtains close

While I resume the night-cap dear to all
 Familiar with my illustrated works.

WILLALOO.

By E. A. P.

In the sad and sodden street,
 To and fro,
 Flit the fever-stricken feet
 Of the freshers as they meet,
 Come and go,
 Ever buying, buying, buying



Where the shopmen stand supplying,
Vying, vying
All they know,
While the Autumn lies a-dying
Sad and low
As the price of summer suitings when the winter breezes blow,
Of the summer, summer suitings that are standing in a row
On the way to Jericho.

See the freshers as they row
To and fro,
Up and down the Lower River for an afternoon or so—
(For the deft manipulation
Of the never-resting oar,
Though it lead to approbation,
Will induce excoriation)—
They are infinitely sore,
Keeping time, time, time
In a sort of Runic rhyme
Up and down the way to Iffley in an afternoon or so;
(Which is slow).
Do they blow?
'Tis the wind and nothing more,
'Tis the wind that in Vacation has a tendency to go:
But the coach's objurgation and his tendency to 'score'
Will be sated—nevermore.



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See the freshers in the street,
The *elite*!
Their apparel how unquestionably neat!
How delighted at a distance,
Inexpensively attired,
I have wondered with persistence
At their butterfly existence!
How admired!
And the payment—O, the payment!
It is tardy for the raiment:
Yet the haberdasher gloats as he sells,
And he tells,
'This is best
To be dress'd
Rather better than the rest,
To be noticeably drest,
To be swells,
To be swells, swells, swells, swells,
Swells, swells, swells,
To be simply and indisputably swells.'

See the freshers one or two,
Just a few,
Now on view,
Who are sensibly and innocently new;
How they cluster, cluster, cluster
Round the rugged walls of Worcester!
See them stand,
Book in hand,
In the garden ground of John's!
How they dote upon their Dons!
See in every man a Blue!
It is true
They are lamentably few;
But I spied
Yesternight upon the staircase just a pair of boots outside
Upon the floor,
Just a little pair of boots upon the stairs where I reside,
Lying there and nothing more;
And I swore
While these dainty twins continued sentry by the chamber door
That the hope their presence planted should be with me evermore,
Should desert me—nevermore.



THE SAIR STROKE.

*O waly, waly, my bonnie crew
Gin ye maun bumpit be!
And waly, waly, my Stroke sae true,
Ye leuk unpleasauntlie!*

*O hae ye suppit the sad sherrie
That gars the wind gae soon;
Or hae ye pud o' the braw bird's-e'e,
Ye be sae stricken doun?*

I hae na suppit the sad sherrie,
For a' my heart is sair;
For Keiller's still i' the bonnie Dundee,
And his is haesome fare.

But I hae slain our gude Captain,
That c'uld baith shout and sweer,
And ither twain put out o' pain—
The Scribe and Treasurere.

There's ane lies stark by the meadow-gate,
And twa by the black, black brig:
And waefu', waefu', was the fate
That gar'd them there to lig!

They waked us soon, they warked us lang,
Wearily did we greet;
'*Should he abraide*' was a' our sang,
Our food but butcher's-meat.

We hadna train'd but ower a week,
A week, but barely twa,
Three sonsie steeds they fared to seek,
That mightna gar them fa'.

They 've ta'en us ower the lang, lang coorse,
And wow! but it was wark;
And ilka coach he sware him hoorse,
That ilka man s'uld hark.



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Then upped and spake our pawkie bow,
—O, but he wasna late!
'Now who shall gar them cry *Enow*,
That gang this fearsome gate?'

Syne he has ta'en his boatin' cap,
And cast the keevils in,
And wha but me to gae (God hap!)
And stay our Captain's din?

I stayed his din by the meadow-gate,
His feres' by Nuneham brig,
And waefu', waefu', was the fate
That gar'd them there to lig!

O, waly to the welkin's top!
And waly round the braes!
And waly all about the shop
(To use a Southron phrase).

Rede ither crews be debonair,
But we 've a weird to dree,
I wis we maun be bumpit sair
By boaties two and three:
Sing stretchers of yew for our Toggere,
Sith we maun bumpit be!

THE DOOM OF THE ESQUIRE BEDELL.

Adown the torturing mile of street
I mark him come and go,
Thread in and out with tireless feet
The crossings to and fro;
A soul that treads without retreat
A labyrinth of woe.

Palsied with awe of such despair,
All living things give room,
They flit before his sightless glare
As horrid shapes, that loom
And shriek the curse that bids him bear
The symbol of his doom.



The very stones are coals that bake
And scorch his fevered skin;
A fire no hissing hail may slake
Consumes his heart within.
Still must he hasten on to rake
The furnace of his sin.

Still forward! forward! For he feels
Fierce claws that pluck his breast,
And blindly beckon as he reels
Upon his awful quest:
For there is that behind his heels
Knows neither ruth nor rest.

The fiends in hell have flung the dice;
The destinies depend
On feet that run for fearful price,
And fangs that gape to rend;
And still the footsteps of his Vice
Pursue him to the end:—
The feet of his incarnate Vice
Shall dog him to the end.

‘BEHOLD! I AM NOT ONE THAT GOES TO LECTURES.’

By W. W.

Behold! I am not one that goes to Lectures or the pow-wow of
Professors.

The elementary laws never apologise: neither do I apologise.

I find letters from the Dean dropt on my table—and every one is
signed by the Dean’s name—

And I leave them where they are; for I know that as long as I
stay up

Others will punctually come for ever and ever.

I am one who goes to the river,

I sit in the boat and think of ‘life’ and of ‘time.’

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How life is much, but time is more; and the beginning is
everything,

But the end is something.

I loll in the Parks, I go to the wicket, I swipe.

I see twenty-two young men from Foster's watching me, and the
trousers of the twenty-two young men,

I see the Balliol men *en masse* watching me.—The Hottentot
that loves his mother, the untutored Bedowee, the Cave-man
that wears only his certificate of baptism, and the shaggy
Sioux that hangs his testamur with his scalps.

I see the Don who ploughed me in Rudiments watching me: and the
wife of the Don who ploughed me in Rudiments watching me.

I see the rapport of the wicket-keeper and umpire. I cannot see
that I am out.

Oh! you Umpires!

I am not one who greatly cares for experience, soap, bull-dogs,
cautions, majorities, or a graduated Income-Tax,

The certainty of space, punctuation, sexes, institutions,
copiousness, degrees, committees, delicatessen, or the
fettors of rhyme—

For none of these do I care: but least for the fettors of rhyme.

Myself only I sing. Me Imperturbe! Me Prononce!

Me progressive and the depth of me progressive,

And the bathos, Anglice bathos

Of me chanting to the Public the song of Simple Enumeration.

CALIBAN UPON RUDIMENTS[1].

OR AUTOSCHEDIASTIC THEOLOGY IN A HOLE.



Rudiments, Rudiments, and Rudiments!
'Thinketh one made them i' the fit o' the blues.

'Thinketh one made them with the 'tips' to match,
But not the answers; 'doubteth there be none,
Only Guides, Helps, Analyses, such as that:
Also this Beast, that groweth sleek thereon,
And snow-white bands that round the neck o' the same.

'Thinketh, it came of being ill at ease.
'Hath heard that Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands, and the rest o' t. That's the case.
Also 'hath heard they pop the names i' the hat,
Toss out a brace, a dozen stick inside;
Let forty through and plough the sorry rest.

'Thinketh, such shows nor right nor wrong in them,
Only their strength, being made o' sloth i' the main—
'Am strong myself compared to yonder names
O' Jewish towns i' the paper. Watch th' event—
'Let twenty pass, 'have a shot at twenty-first,
'Miss Ramoth-Gilead, 'take Jehoiakim,
'Let Abner by and spot Melchizedek,
Knowing not, caring not, just choosing so,
As it likes me each time, I do: so they.



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'Saith they be terrible: watch their feats i' the Viva!
One question plays the deuce with six months' toil.
Aha, if they would tell me! No, not they!
There is the sport: 'come read me right or die!'
All at their mercy,—why they like it most
When—when—well, never try the same shot twice!
'Hath fled himself and only got up a tree.

'Will say a plain word if he gets a plough.

[1] Caliban museth of the now extinct Examination in the Rudiments of Faith and Religion.

SOLVITUR ACRIS HIEMPS.

My Juggins, see: the pasture green,
Obeying Nature's kindly law,
Renews its mantle; there has been
A thaw.

The frost-bound earth is free at last,
That lay 'neath Winter's sullen yoke
'Till people felt it getting past
A joke.

Now forth again the Freshers fare,
And get them tasty summer suits
Wherein they flaunt afield and scare
The brutes.

Again the stream suspects the keel;
Again the shrieking captain drops
Upon his crew; again the meal
Of chops

Divides the too-laborious day;
Again the Student sighs o'er Mods,
And prompts his enemies to lay
Long odds.

Again the shopman spreads his wiles;
Again the organ-pipes, unbound,
Distract the populace for miles
Around.



Then, Juggins, ere December's touch
Once more the wealth of Spring reclaim,
Since each successive year is much
The same;

Since too the monarch on his throne
In purple lapped and frankincense,
Who from his infancy has blown
Expense,

No less than he who barely gets
The boon of out-of-door relief,
Must see desuetude,—come let's
Be brief.

At those resolves last New Year's Day
The easy gods indulgent wink.
Then downward, ho!—the shortest way
Is drink.

A LETTER.

Addressed during the Summer Term of 1888 by Mr. Algernon Dexter,
Scholar of ----- College, Oxford, to his cousin, Miss Kitty
Tremayne, at ----- Vicarage, Devonshire.

After W. M. P.

Dear Kitty,
At length the term's ending;
I 'm in for my Schools in a week;
And the time that at present I'm spending
On you should be spent upon Greek:
But I'm fairly well read in my Plato,
I'm thoroughly red in the eyes,
And I've almost forgotten the way to
Be healthy and wealthy and wise.
So 'the best of all ways'—why repeat you
The verse at 2.30 a.m.,
When I 'm stealing an hour to entreat you
Dear Kitty, to come to Commem.?

Oh, come! You shall rustle in satin
Through halls where Examiners trod:
Your laughter shall triumph o'er Latin
In lecture-room, garden, and quad.

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They stand in the silent Sheldonian—
Our orators, waiting—for you,
Their style guaranteed Ciceronian,
Their subject—'the Ladies in Blue.'
The Vice sits arrayed in his scarlet;
He's pale, but they say he dissem-
bles by calling his Beadle a 'varlet'
Whenever he thinks of Commem.

There are dances, flirtations at Nuneham,
Flower-shows, the procession of Eights:
There's a list stretching *usque ad Lunam*
Of concerts, and lunches, and fetes:
There's the Newdigate all about 'Gordon,'
—So sweet, and they say it will scan.
You shall flirt with a Proctor, a Warden
Shall run for your shawl and your fan.
They are sportive as gods broken loose from
Olympus, and yet very em-
-inent men. There are plenty to choose from,
You'll find, if you come to Commem.

I know your excuses: Red Sorrel
Has stumbled and broken her knees;
Aunt Phoebe thinks waltzing immoral;
And 'Algy, you are such a tease;
It's nonsense, of course, but she *is* strict';
And little Dick Hodge has the croup;
And there's no one to visit your 'district'
Or make Mother Tettleby's soup.
Let them cease for a se'nnight to plague you;
Oh, leave them to manage *pro tem*.
With their croups and their soups and their ague)
Dear Kitty, and come to Commem.

Don't tell me Papa has lumbago,
That you haven't a frock fit to wear,
That the curate 'has notions, and may go
To lengths if there's nobody there,'
That the Squire has 'said things' to the Vicar,



And the Vicar 'had words' with the Squire,
That the Organist's taken to liquor,
And leaves you to manage the choir:
For Papa must be cured, and the curate
Coerced, and your gown is a gem;
And the moral is—Don't be obdurate,
Dear Kitty, but come to Commem.

'My gown? Though, no doubt, sir, you're clever,
You 'd better leave fashions alone.
Do you think that a frock lasts for ever?'
Dear Kitty, I'll grant you have grown;
But I thought of my 'scene' with McVittie
That night when he trod on your train
At the Bachelor's Ball. 'Twas a pity,'
You said, but I knew 'twas Champagne.
And your gown was enough to compel me
To fall down and worship its hem—
(Are 'hems' wearing? If not, you shall tell me
What is, when you come to Commem.)

Have you thought, since that night, of the Grotto?
Of the words whispered under the palms,
While the minutes flew by and forgot to
Remind us of Aunt and her qualms?

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Of the stains of the old *Journalisten*?
Of the rose that I begged from your hair?
When you turned, and I saw something glisten—
Dear Kitty, don't frown; it was there!
But that idiot Delane in the middle
Bounced in with 'Our dance, I—ahem!'
And—the rose you may find in my Liddell
And Scott when you come to Commem.

Then, Kitty, let 'yes' be the answer.
We'll dance at the 'Varsity Ball,
And the morning shall find you a dancer
In Christ Church or Trinity hall.
And perhaps, when the elders are yawning
And rafters grow pale overhead
With the day, there shall come with its dawning
Some thought of that sentence unsaid.
Be it this, be it that—'I forget,' or
'Was joking'—whatever the fem-
-inine fib, you'll have made me your debtor
And come,—you *will* come? to Commem.

OCCASIONAL VERSES.

ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS.

Designed to show that the practice of lying is not confined to children.

By the late W. W. (of H.M. Inland Revenue Service).

And is it so? Can Folly stalk
And aim her unrespecting darts
In shades where grave Professors walk
And Bachelors of Arts?

I have a boy, not six years old,
A sprite of birth and lineage high:
His birth I did myself behold,
His caste is in his eye.



And oh! his limbs are full of grace,
His boyish beauty past compare:
His mother's joy to wash his face,
And mine to brush his hair!

One morn we strolled on our short walk,
With four goloshes on our shoes,
And held the customary talk
That parents love to use.

(And oft I turn it into verse,
And write it down upon a page,
Which, being sold, supplies my purse
And ministers to age.)

So as we paced the curving High,
To view the sights of Oxford town
We raised our feet (like Nelly Bly),
And then we put them down.

'Now, little Edward, answer me'—
I said, and clutched him by the gown—
'At Cambridge would you rather be,
Or here in Oxford town?'

My boy replied with tiny frown
(He'd been a year at Cavendish),
'I'd rather dwell in Oxford town,
If I could have my wish.'

'Now, little Edward, say why so;
My little Edward, tell me why.'
'Well, really, Pa, I hardly know.'
'Remarkable!' said I:

'For Cambridge has her "King's Parade,"
And much the more becoming gown;
Why should you slight her so,' I said,
'Compared with Oxford town?'



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At this my boy hung down his head,
While sterner grew the parent's eye;
And six-and-thirty times I said,
'Come, Edward, tell me why?'

For I loved Cambridge (where they deal—
How strange!—in butter by the yard);
And so, with every third appeal,
I hit him rather hard.

Twelve times I struck, as may be seen
(For three times twelve is thirty-six),
When in a shop the *Magazine*
His tearful sight did fix.

He saw it plain, it made him smile,
And thus to me he made reply:—
'At Oxford there's a *Crocodile*;^[1]
And that's the reason why.'

Oh, Mr. Editor! my heart
For deeper lore would seldom yearn,
Could I believe the hundredth part
Of what from you I learn.

[1] Certain obscure paragraphs relating to a crocodile, kept at the Museum, had been perplexing the readers of the *Oxford Magazine* for some time past, and had been distorted into an allegory of portentous meaning.

UNITY PUT QUARTERLY^[1].

By A. C. S.

The Centuries kiss and commingle,
Cling, clasp, and are knit in a chain;
No cycle but scorns to be single,
No two but demur to be twain,
'Till the land of the lute and the love-tale
Be bride of the boreal breast,
And the dawn with the darkness shall dovetail,
The East with the West.

The desire of the grey for the dun nights
Is that of the dun for the grey;



The tales of the Thousand and One Nights
Touch lips with 'The Times' of to-day.—
Come, chasten the cheap with the classic;
Choose, Churton, thy chair and thy class,
Mix, melt in the must that is Massic
 The beer that is Bass!

Omnipotent age of the Aorist!
Infinitely freely exact!—
As the fragrance of fiction is fairest
If frayed in the furnace of fact—
Though nine be the Muses in number
There is hope if the handbook be one,—
Dispelling the planets that cumber
 The path of the sun.

Though crimson thy hands and thy hood be
With the blood of a brother betrayed,
O Would-be-Professor of Would-be,
We call thee to bless and to aid.
Transmuted would travel with Er, see
The Land of the Rolling of Logs,
Charmed, chained to thy side, as to Circe
 The Ithacan hogs.

O bourne of the black and the godly!
O land where the good niggers go.
With the books that are borrowed of Bodley,
Old moons and our castaway clo'!
There, there, till the roses be ripened
Rebuke us, revile, and review,
Then take thee thine annual stipend
 So long over-due.



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[1] Suggested by an Article in the *Quarterly Review*, enforcing the unity of literature ancient and modern, and the necessity of providing a new School of Literature in Oxford.

FIRE!

By Sir W. S.

Written on the occasion of the visit of the United Fire Brigades to Oxford, 1887.

I.

St. Giles's street is fair and wide,
St. Giles's street is long;
But long or wide, may naught abide
Therein of guile or wrong;
For through St. Giles's, to and fro,
The mild ecclesiastics go
From prime to evensong.
It were a fearsome task, perdie!
To sin in such good company.

II.

Long had the slanting beam of day
Proclaimed the Thirtieth of May
Ere now, erect, its fiery heat
Illumined all that hallowed street,
And breathing benediction on
Thy serried battlements, St. John,
Suffused at once with equal glow
The cluster'd Archipelago,
The Art Professor's studio
And Mr. Greenwood's shop,
Thy building, Pusey, where below
The stout Salvation soldiers blow
The cornet till they drop;
Thine, Balliol, where we move, and oh!
Thine, Randolph, where we stop.

**III.**

But what is this that frights the air,
And wakes the curate from his lair
 In Pusey's cool retreat,
To leave the feast, to climb the stair,
 And scan the startled street?
As when perambulate the young
And call with unrelenting tongue
 On home, mamma, and sire;
Or voters shout with strength of lung
 For Hall & Co's Entire;
Or Sabbath-breakers scream and shout—
The band of Booth, with drum devout,
Eliza on her Sunday out,
 Or Farmer with his choir:—

IV.

E'en so, with shriek of fife and drum
 And horrid clang of brass,
The Fire Brigades of England come
 And down St. Giles's pass.
Oh grand, methinks, in such array
To spend a Whitsun Holiday
 All soaking to the skin!
(Yet shoes and hose alike are stout;
The shoes to keep the water out,
 The hose to keep it in.)

V.

They came from Henley on the Thames,
 From Berwick on the Tweed,
And at the mercy of the flames
They left their children and their dames,
To come and play their little games
 On Morrell's dewy mead.
Yet feared they not with fire to play—
The pyrotechnics (so they say)
 Were very fine indeed.



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VI.

(P.S. by Lord Macaulay).

Then let us bless Our Gracious Queen and eke the Fire Brigade,
And bless no less the horrid mess they've been and gone
and made;
Remove the dirt they chose to squirt upon our best attire,
Bless all, but most the lucky chance that no one
shouted 'Fire!'

DE TEA FABULA.

Plain Language from truthful James[1].

Do I sleep? Do I dream?
Am I hoaxed by a scout?
Are things what they seem,
Or is Sophists about?
Is our "to ti en einai" a failure, or is Robert Browning played
out?

Which expressions like these
May be fairly applied
By a party who sees
A Society skied
Upon tea that the Warden of Keble had biled with legitimate
pride.

'Twas November the third,
And I says to Bill Nye,
'Which it's true what I've heard:
If you're, so to speak, fly,
There's a chance of some tea and cheap culture, the sort
recommended as High.'

Which I mentioned its name,
And he ups and remarks:
'If dress-coats is the game
And pow-wow in the Parks,
Then I 'm nuts on Sordello and Hohenstiel-Schwangau and similar
Snarks.'



Now the pride of Bill Nye
Cannot well be express'd;
For he wore a white tie
And a cut-away vest:
Says I, 'Solomon's lilies ain't in it, and they was reputed well
dress'd.'

But not far did we wend,
When we saw Pippa pass
On the arm of a friend
—Doctor Furnivall 'twas,
And he wore in his hat two half-tickets for London, return,
second-class.

'Well,' I thought, 'this is odd.'
But we came pretty quick
To a sort of a quad
That was all of red brick,
And I says to the porter,—'R. Browning: free passes; and kindly
look slick.'

But says he, dripping tears
In his check handkerchief,
'That symposium's career's
Been regrettably brief,
For it went all its pile upon crumpets and busted on
gunpowder-leaf!'

Then we tucked up the sleeves
Of our shirts (that were biled),
Which the reader perceives
That our feelings were riled,
And we went for that man till his mother had doubted the traits
of her child.

Which emotions like these
Must be freely indulged
By a party who sees
A Society bulged
On a reef the existence of which its prospectus had never
divulged.

But I ask,—Do I dream?
Has it gone up the spout?
Are things what they seem,
Or is Sophists about?

Is our “to ti en einai” a failure, or is Robert Browning played out?



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[1] The Oxford Browning Society expired at Keble the week before this was written.

L'ENVOI.

AS I LAYE A-DREAMYNGE.

After T. I.

As I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
O softlye moaned the dove to her mate within the tree,
And meseemed unto my syghte
Came rydynge many a knyghte
All cased in armoure bryghte
Cap-a-pie,
As I laye a-dreamynge, a goodlye companye!

As I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
O sadlye mourned the dove, callynge long and callynge lowe,
And meseemed of alle that hoste
Notte a face but was the ghoste
Of a friend that I hadde loste
Long agoe.
As I laye a-dreamynge, oh, bysson teare to flowe!

As I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
O sadlye sobbed the dove as she seemed to despayre,
And laste upon the tracke
Came one I hayled as 'Jacker!'
But he turned mee his backe
With a stare:
As I laye a-dreamynge, he lefte mee callynge there.

Stille I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
And gentler sobbed the dove as it eased her of her payne,
And meseemed a voyce yt cry'd—
'They shall ryde, and they shall ryde
'Tyll the truce of tyme and tyde
Come agayne!
Alle for Eldorado, yette never maye attayne!'

Stille I laye a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge, a-dreamynge,
And scarcelye moaned the dove, as her agonye was spente:
'Shalle to-morrowe see them nygher



To a golden walle or spyre?
You have better in yr fyre,
Bee contente.'
As I laye a-dreamynge, it seem'd smalle punyshment.

But I laye a-wakyng, and loe! the dawne was breakyng
And rarely pyped a larke for the promyse of the daye:
'Uppe and sette yr lance in reste!
Uppe and followe on the queste!
Leave the issue to be guessed
At the endynge of the waye'—

As I laye a-wakyng, 'twas soe she seemed to say—
'Whatte and if it alle be feynynge?
There be better thynges than gaynyng,
Rycher pryzes than attaynyng.'—
And 'twas truthe she seemed to saye.
Whyles the dawne was breakyng, I rode upon my waye.

THE END