Sleep-Book eBook

Sleep-Book

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SOME OF THE POETRY OF SLUMBER

COLLECTED BY

LEOLYN LOUISE EVERETT

NEW YORK

THE WATKINS COMPANY

1910

Three hundred and twenty copies of this book have been printed on hand-made Van Gelder paper, for The Watkins Company, at the press of Styles & Cash New York, and type distributed.

This book is No.

To

ETHEL DU FRE HOUSTON

who has brought the joy and beauty of dream into so many lives

SLEEP-BOOK

I.

Peace, peace, thou over-anxious, foolish heart,
Rest, ever-seeking soul, calm, mad desires,
Quiet, wild dreams—this is the time of sleep.
Hold her more close than life itself. Forget
All the excitements of the day, forget
All problems and discomforts. Let the night
Take you unto herself, her blessed self.
Peace, peace, thou over-anxious, foolish heart,
Rest, ever-seeking soul, calm, mad desires,
Quiet, wild dreams—this is the time of sleep.

Leolyn Louise Everett.

II.

Sleep, softly-breathing god! his downy wing
Was fluttering now.

Samuel T. Coleridge.

I lay in slumber’s shadowy vale

Samuel T. Coleridge.

III.

And more to lulle him in his slumber soft,
A trickling stream from high rock tumbling down
And ever-drizzling raine upon the loft,
Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne
Of swarming Bees, did cast him in a swowne.
No other noyse, nor peoples troublous cryes,
As still are wont t’annoy the walled towne,
Might there be heard; but carelesse Quiet lyes
Wrapt in eternal! silence farre from enimyes.

Edmund Spenser.

IV.

The waters murmuring, With such cohort as they keep Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
Il Penseroso.

John Milton.

V.
Ye spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts and blind-worms do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.
Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby,
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby;
Never harm.
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh
So goodnight with lullaby.

William Shakespeare.

VI.

Sleep, Silence child, sweet father of soft rest,
Prince, whose approach peace to all mortals brings,
Indifferent host to shepherds and to kings,
Sole comforter of minds with grief oppressed;
Lo, by thy charming rod all breathing things
Lie slumbering, with forgetfulness possessed.

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William Drummond of Hawthornden.

VII.

Come, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving
 Lock me in delight awhile;
 Let some pleasing dreams beguile
 All my fancies; that from thence
 I may feel an influence,
All my powers of care bereaving!

Though but a shadow, but a sliding
 Let me know some little joy!
 We that suffer long annoy
 Are contented with a thought
 Through an idle fancy wrought;
O let my joys have some abiding!

John Fletcher.

VIII.

But still let Silence trew night-watches keepe,
That sacred Peace may in assurance rayne,
And tymely Sleep, when it is time to sleep,
May pour his limbs forth on your pleasant playne;
The whiles an hundred little winged loves
Like divers-fethered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed.

Edmund Spenser.

IX.

Care-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
On this afflicted prince; fall like a cloud
In gentle showers; give nothing that is loud
Or painful to his slumbers,—easy, sweet
And as a purling stream, thou son of Night,
Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain
Like hollow murmuring wind or silver rain,
Into this prince gently, oh gently, slide
And kiss him into slumbers like a bride.

John Fletcher.

X.

God hath set
Labor and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive, and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft, slumberous weight inclines
Our eyelids.

John Milton.

XI.

Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast’
Would I were sleep and peace so sweet to rest

William Shakespeare.

The innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care, t
The death of each day’s life, sore labor’s bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great Nature’s second course,
Chief nourisher in life’s feast.

William Shakespeare.

XII.

Come, Sleep. O, Sleep! The certain knot of peace,
The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man’s wealth, the prisoner’s release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low.

Sir Philip Sidney.

XIII.

Close thine eyes, and sleep secure;
Thy soul is safe, thy body sure.
He that guards thee, he that keeps,
Never slumbers, never sleeps.
A quiet conscience in the breast
Has only peace, has only rest.
The wisest and the mirth of kings
Are out of tune unless she sings:
Then close thine eyes in peace and sleep secure,
No sleep so sweet as thine, no rest so sure.

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Charles I, King of England.

XIV.

Oh, Brahma, guard in sleep
The merry lambs and the complacent kine,
The flies below the leaves and the young mice
In the tree roots, and all the sacred flocks
Of red flamingo; and my love Vijaya,
And may no restless fay, with fidget finger
Trouble his sleeping; give him dreams of me.

William B Yeats.

XV.

Solemnly, mournfully,
Dealing its dole,
The Curfew Bell
Is beginning to toll.

Cover the embers,
And put out the light;
Toil comes with morning,
And rest with the night.

Dark grow the windows,
And quenched is the fire;
Sound fades into silence,—
All footsteps retire.

No voice in the chambers,
No sound in the hall!
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

XVI.

Lull me to sleep, ye winds, whose fitful sound
Seems from some faint Aeolian harp-string caught;
Seal up the hundred wakeful eyes of thought
As Hermes with his lyre in sleep profound
The hundred wakeful eyes of Argus bound

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

XVII.

Our life is twofold: Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things mis-named
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality.
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils.
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;—

Lord Byron.

XVIII.

O gentle Sleep! Do they belong to thee,
These twinklings of oblivion? Thou dost love
To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,
A captive never wishing to be free.

William Wordsworth.

XIX.

O soft embalmer of the still midnight!
Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the light,
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine;
O soothest Sleep! if so it pleases thee, close,
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws
Around my bed its lulling charities;
Then save me, or the passed day will shine
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes;
Save me from curious conscience, that still lords
Its strength for darkness, burrowing like a mole;
Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,
And seal the hushed casket of my soul.

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John Keats.

XX.

Sleep, that giv’st what Life denies,
Shadowy bounties and supreme,
Bring the dearest face that flies
Following darkness like a dream!

Andrew Lang.

XXI.

I have a lady as dear to me
As the westward wind and shining sea,
As breath of spring to the verdant lea,
As lover’s songs and young children’s glee.

Swiftly I pace thro’ the hours of light,
Finding no joy in the sunshine bright,
Waiting ’till moon and far stars are white,
Awaiting the hours of silent night.

Swiftly I fly from the day’s alarms,
Too sudden desires, false joys and harms,
Swiftly I fly to my loved one’s charms,
Praying the clasp of her perfect arms.

Her eyes are wonderful, dark and deep,
Her raven tresses a midnight steep,
But, ah, she is hard to hold and keep—
My lovely lady, my lady Sleep!

Leolyn Louise Everett.

XXII.

Visit her, gentle Sleep! With wings of healing,
And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,
Silent as tho’ they watched the sleeping Earth!
With light heart may she rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice.

Samuel T. Coleridge.

XXIII.

Sleep! king of gods and men!
Come to my call again,
Swift over field and fen,

Mountain and deep: Come, bid the waves be still;
Sleep, streams on height and hill;
Beasts, birds and snakes, thy will

Conquereth, Sleep!Come on thy golden wings,
Come ere the swallow sings,
Lulling all living things,

Fly they or creep!Come with thy leaden wand,
Come with thy kindly hand,
Soothing on sea or land

Mortals that weepCome from the cloudy west,
Soft over brain and breast,
Bidding the Dragon rest,

Come to me, Sleep!

Andrew Lang.

XXIV.

Sleep, death without dying—living without life.

Edwin Arnold.

XXV.

She sleeps; her breathings are not heard
In palace-chambers far apart,
The fragrant tresses are not stirr’d
That he upon her charmed heart.

She sleeps; on either hand upswells
The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest;
She sleeps, nor dreams but ever dwells
A perfect form in perfect rest.

Alfred Tennyson.

XXVI.

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The hours are passing slow,
  I hear their weary tread
Clang from the tower and go
  Back to their kinsfolk dead.
Sleep! death's twin brother dread!
  Why dost thou scorn me so?
The wind's voice overhead
  Long wakeful here I know,
And music from the steep
  Where waters fall and flow.
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

All sounds that might bestow
  Rest on the fever'd bed,
All slumb'rous sounds and low
  Are mingled here and wed,
And bring no drowsihed.
  Shy dreams flit to and fro
With shadowy hair dispread;
  With wistful eyes that glow
And silent robes that sweep.
  Thou wilt not hear me; no?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

What cause hast them to show
  Of sacrifice unsped?
Of all thy slaves below
  I most have labored
With service sung and said;
  Have cull'd such buds as blow,
Soft poppies white and red,
  Where thy still gardens grow,
And Lethe's waters weep.
  Why, then, art thou my foe?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

Prince, ere the dark be shred
  By golden shafts, ere low
And long the shadows creep:
  Lord of the wand of lead,
Soft footed as the snow,
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep!

Andrew Lang.

XXVII.

I have loved wind and light,
  And the bright sea,
But, holy and most secret Night,
  Not as I love and have loved thee.

God, like all highest things,
  Hides light in shade,
And in the night his visitings
  To sleep and dreams are clearliest made.

Arthur Symons.

XXVIII.

The peace of a wandering sky,
Silence, only the cry
Of the crickets, suddenly still,
A bee on the window sill,
A bird's wing, rushing and soft,
Three flails that tramp in the loft,
Summer murmuring
Some sweet, slumberous thing,
Half asleep:

Arthur Symons.

XXIX.

Only a little holiday of sleep,
Soft sleep, sweet sleep; a little soothing psalm
Of slumber from thy sanctuaries of calm,
A little sleep—it matters not how deep;
A little falling feather from thy wing,
Merciful Lord,—is it so great a thing?

Richard Le Gallienne.

XXX.

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water and pure sky
I have thought of all by turns and yet do lie
Sleepless!

* * * * *

Come, blessed barrier between day and day.
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

Page 6

William Wordsworth.

XXXI.

Sleep is a reconciling,

A rest that peace begets;
Does not the sun rise smiling
When fair at eve he sets’

Anonymous.

XXXII.

The cloud-shadows of midnight possess their own
repose,
The weary winds are silent or the moon is in the
deep;
Some respite to its turbulence unresting ocean
knows;

Whatever moves, or toils, or grieves, hath its
appointed sleep.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

XXXIII.

We lay
Stretched upon fragrant heath and lulled by sound
Of far-off torrents charming the still night,
To tired limbs and over-busy thoughts
Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.

William Wordsworth.

XXXIV.

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies
Than tired eye-lids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the mass the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep.
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Alfred Tennyson.

XXXV.

I went into the deserts of dim sleep—
That world which, like an unknown wilderness,
Bounds this with its recesses wide and deep

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

XXXVI.

Oh, Morpheus, my more than love, my life,
Come back to me, come back to me! Hold out
Your wonderful, wide arms and gather me
Again against your breast. I lay above
Your heart and felt its breathing firm and slow
As waters that obey the moon and lo,
Rest infinite was mine and calm. My soul
Is sick for want of you. Oh, Morpheus,
Heart of my weary heart, come back to me!

Leolyn Louise Everett.

XXXVII.

Lips
Parted in slumber, whence the regular breath
Of innocent dreams arose.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

XXXVIII.

A late lark twitters in the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers in content,
There falls on the old, gray city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

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William Ernest Henley.

XXXIX.

Oh, Sleep! it is a gentle thing
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

Samuel T. Coleridge.

XL.

What is more gentle than a wind in summer?
What is more soothing than the pretty hummer
That stays one moment in an open flower,
And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower?
What is more tranquil than a musk rose blowing
In a green island, far from all men's knowing?
More healthful than the leanness of dales?
More secret than a nest of nightingales?
More serene than Cordelia's countenance?
More full of visions than a high romance?
What, but thee Sleep? Soft closer of our eyes!
Low murmurer of tender lullabies!
Light hoverer around our happy pillows!
Wreather of poppy buds and weeping willows!
Silent entangler of a beauty's tresses!
Most happy listener! when the morning blesses
Thee for enlivening all the cheerful eyes
That glance so brightly at the new sun-rise.

John Keats.

XLI.

My sleep had been embroidered with dim dreams,
My soul had been a lawn besprinkled o'er
With flowers, and stirring shades of baffled beams.

John Keats.

XLII.

Sleep is a blessed thing. All my long life
I have known this, its value infinite
To man, its symbol of the perfect peace
That marks eternity, its marvellous
Relief from all the vanities and wounds,
The little battles and unrest of soul
That we call life.
Sleep is a blessed thing,
Doubly it has been taught me. All the time
I cannot have you, all the heart-sick days
Of utter yearning, of eternal ache
Of longing, longing for the sight of you,
Fade and dissolve at night and you are mine,
At least in dreams, at least in blessed dreams.

Leolyn Louise Everett.

XLIII.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
  In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppress'd
  Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day,
  Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain,
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
  Blended alike from sunshine and from rain,
  As though a rose could shut and be a bud again.

John Keats.

XLIV.

O magic sleep! O comfortable bird,
That broodest o'er the troubled sea of the mind
'Till it is hush'd and smooth! O unconfin'd
Restraint! imprisoned liberty! great key
To golden palaces, strange

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ministrelsy,
Fountains grotesque, new trees, bespangled caves,
Echoing grottos, full of tumbling waves
And moonlight, aye, to all the mazy world
Of silvery enchantment!—who, upfurl'd
Beneath thy drowsy wing a triple hour
But renovates and lives?

John Keats.

XLV.

A sleep
Full of sweet dreams and health and quiet breathing.

John Keats.

XLVI.

Now is the blackest hour of the long night,
The soul of midnight. Now, the pallid stars
Shine in the highest silver and the wind
That creepeth chill across the sleeping world
Holdeth no hint of morning. I look out
Into the glory of the night with tired,
Wide, sleepless eyes and think of you. There is
The hush of some great spirit o'er the earth.
Here, in the silence earth and sky are met
And merged into infinity. Oh, God
Of all, Thou who beholdest Destiny
As simple, Thou who understandest life
From birth to re-birth, who knows all our souls,
Grant her Thy perfect benediction, rest.

Leolyn Louise Everett.