

Spring and Fall: a Poetry Journal

Featuring Poetry by Victorian Poets and Hymn Writers





The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never.
I nothing lack if I am his,
and he is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth;
and where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me;
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days,
thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
Within God's house forever.

--Sir Henry Williams Baker, compiler of Hymns Ancient and Modern (1821-1877)

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish, but nought changeth Thee.

Great Father of Glory, pure Father of Light
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render, O help us to see:
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee.

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

The Revival

Unfold! Unfold! Take in His light,
Who makes thy cares more short than night.
The joys which with His day-star rise
He deals to all but drowsy eyes;
And, what the men of this world miss
Some drops and dews of future bliss.
Hark! How His winds have chang'd their note!
And with warm whispers call thee out;
The frosts are past, the storms are gone,
And backward life at last comes on.
The lofty groves in express joys
Reply unto the turtle's voice;
And here in dust and dirt, O here
The lilies of His love appear!

--Henry Vaughan, 1621-1696



See the Crocus' Golden Cup

See the crocus' golden cup
Like a warrior leaping up
At the summons of the spring,
"Guard turn out!" for welcoming
Of the new elected year.
The blackbird now with psalter clear
Sings the ritual of the day
And the lark with bugle gay
Blows reveille to the morn,
Earth and heaven's latest born.

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Binsey Poplars

My aspens dear, whose airy cages quelled,
Quelled or quenched in leaves the leaping sun,
All felled, felled, are all felled;
Of a fresh and following folded rank
Not spared, not one
That dandled a sandalled
Shadow that swam or sank
On meadow & river & wind-wandering weed-winding bank.

O if we but knew what we do
When we delve or hew —
Hack and rack the growing green!
Since country is so tender
To touch, her being só slender,
That, like this sleek and seeing ball
But a prick will make no eye at all,
Where we, even where we mean
To mend her we end her,
When we hew or delve:
After-comers cannot guess the beauty been.
Ten or twelve, only ten or twelve
Strokes of havoc unselve
The sweet especial scene,
Rural scene, a rural scene,
Sweet especial rural scene.
--Gerard Manley Hopkins



Peupliers au bord de l'Epte, vue du marais (Monet, 1891)



Dora's Field and church from Rydal Mount, planted in honor of Wordsworth's daughter, Dora, by Wordsworth, his wife, and his sister Dorothy.

Of their first sighting of the daffodils, Dorothy wrote in her *Grasmere Journal*, April 15, 1802:

When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow park we saw a few daffodils close to the water side. We fancied that the lake had floated the seeds ashore and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more and at last under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful they grew among the mossy stones about and about them, some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness and the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake, they looked so gay ever glancing ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot and a few stragglers a few yards higher up but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity and unity and life of that one busy highway. We rested again and again.

Daffodil Poem

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

In the Valley of the Elwy

I remember a house where all were good
To me, God knows, deserving no such thing:
Comforting smell breathed at very entering,
Fetched fresh, as I suppose, off some sweet wood.
That cordial air made those kind people a hood
All over, as a bevy of eggs the mothering wing
Will, or mild nights the new morsels of Spring:
Why, it seemed of course; seemed of right it should.

Lovely the woods, waters, meadows, combes, vales,
All the air things wear that build this world of Wales;
Only the inmate does not correspond:
God, lover of souls, swaying considerate scales,
Complete thy creature dear O where it fails,
Being mighty a master, being a father and fond.

--Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)



St. Bueno's Jesuit House in the Elwy valley in Snowdonia, Wales, where Hopkins wrote most of his early poetry, including the Windhover. Hopkins had given up poetry after ordination as a Jesuit priest, but his Superior asked him to write a poem in honor of the five Franciscan nuns who perished in a shipwreck. This unstopped the flow of poetry and gave Hopkins his life mission. He wrote the terrible sonnets during his battle with tuberculosis and depression in the slums of Dublin, where he taught theology and where he died of typhoid in 1889.

Crossing the Bar

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

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The Starlight Night

Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies!

O look at all the fire-folk sitting in the air!

The bright boroughs, the circle-citadels there!

Down in dim woods the diamond delves! the elves'-eyes!

The grey lawns cold where gold, where quickgold¹ lies!

Wind-beat whitebeam²! airy abeles³ set on a flare!

Flake-doves sent floating forth at a farmyard scare!

Ah well! it is all a purchase, all is a prize.

Buy then! bid then! — What? — Prayer, patience, alms, vows.

Look, look: a May-mess, like on orchard boughs!

Look! March-bloom, like on mealed-with-yellow sallows⁴!

These are indeed the barn; withindoors house

The shocks⁵. This piece-bright paling⁶ shuts the spouse

Christ home, Christ and his mother and all his hallows⁷.

--Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

¹ liquid gold, Hopkins' poem first use of

² columnar white flowering tree in Rosaceae family

³ white Poplar

⁴ willow tree, especially of the low-growing or shrubby kind.

⁵ bundle of corn for drying

⁶ fence from pointed wooden stakes

⁷ saint or holy person

The Splendour Falls

The splendour falls on castle walls

And snowy summits old in story:

The long light shakes across the lakes,

And the wild cataract leaps in glory.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,

Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,

And thinner, clearer, farther going!

O sweet and far from cliff and scar

The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!

Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:

Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,

They faint on hill or field or river:

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,

And grow for ever and for ever.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,

And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

--Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)



Spring and Fall

Márgarét, áre you gríeving
Over Goldengrove unleaving?
Leáves like the things of man, you
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
Ah! ás the heart grows older
It will come to such sights colder
By and by, nor spare a sigh
Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;
And yet you will weep and know why.
Now no matter, child, the name:
Sórrrow's spríngs áre the same.
Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
It ís the blight man was born for,
It is Margaret you mourn for.

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Beech leaves in Fall

Tears, Idle Tears

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more!

--Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)



Bridge at Chatsworth, Derbyshire, England

Poets

í é e é ě í Alfred, Lord Tennyson was the son of a British rector. Tennyson wrote poetry, but struggled with feelings of inadequacy in the wake of criticism. The death of his father and best friend threw him into depression, from which eventuated his greatest poem, *In Memoriam*. Eventually Tennyson was freed from a self-diagnosis of epilepsy, became the British Poet Laureate after Wordsworth, and went on to write several other long poems: *Maud*, about the Crimean War, and *Idylls of the King*, which tells the story of Arthur and the rise and fall of his kingdom perhaps as a metaphor for the loss of identity in the Victorian age. He helped bring Arthurian myth back into notice. One of the greatest lyricists in the English language.

J í Ê é k Ê í P Contemporary with the latter half of Tennyson's life, Hopkins was an Anglican poet who became a Catholic Jesuit Priest during the height of the Oxford Movement. His family, notable high church Anglicans, were likewise entranced with language and poetry and art, as well as holiness. His father was an Anglican priest who wrote poetry, his sisters included artists and one of them became an Anglican religious; an uncle was an Anglican bishop in the new province of Hawaii. Estranged from his family when he became a Roman Catholic, he gave up poetry upon his ordination to the Jesuit priesthood, but resumed it when asked by his Superior to write a poem in honor of a famous shipwreck, the *Wreck of the Deutschland*, in which 5 Franciscan nuns were killed. Hopkins was unwisely assigned to teach beginning theology students in Dublin, where he suffered from depression, lung complaints from the pollution, and where he wrote the *Terrible Sonnets*. He died of Typhoid fever and peritonitis. Although by date he is a Victorian, he is considered the first modern poet because of his unique Sprung Rhythm and understanding of Inscap. He is the finest Christian poet. His poem, *The Windhover: to Christ our Lord*, is the finest Christian sonnet in the English language.

P í ½ Ê Ê Welsh Metaphysical poet, he became a Christian upon reading the devotional poetry of George Herbert, and gave up "idle verse." He was also a doctor throughout his adult career. Grew up with both Catholic and Protestant family members. He probably went to Jesus College, Oxford, before that a Royalist involved in the Royalist cause. A life-threatening illness and the reading of Herbert's poetry led to his conversion to Jesus Christ, and he was an Anglican the rest of his life. Influenced by Herbert, and an influence on other poets including Wordsworth. His Welsh use of alliteration can be seen in his poetry. He deeply identified with the Welsh landscape and called himself a "Silurist," after the Silures, an ancient Welsh people group who resisted the Romans.

P í ½ Ê * Ê í Hymn writer best known as the editor of the famous *Hymns Ancient and Modern of the Anglican Church*

James Connolly Member of the Irish Republican cause and planner of the Easter Uprising. A Roman Catholic from an upper-class family who studied abroad. Campaigned to get German involvement in the Irish Cause. Married to Grace Gifford 7 hours before his execution on May 4, 1916 by firing squad.

Walter Scott Scottish Free Minister who wrote poetry to escape the cares of daily life. His hymn *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise* is based on I Timothy 1:17 and set to a Welsh hymn tune.

William Wordsworth Romantic and early Victorian poet who, along with Coleridge, wrote *Lyrical Ballads* in 1779, launching the Romantic Movement. In his Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth laid out the distinctives of the movement, with its emphasis on common speech and common experience as well as love for and reverence for nature. His major work, the *Prelude*, was published posthumously after he lost his zest for life following the premature death of his daughter, Dora. The English Poet Laureate from 1843 to 1850, before Alfred, Lord Tennyson assumed the post.

Mary Wordsworth Sister to the poet William Wordsworth. They were close all their lives. Her journals formed the basis for many of his poems, including the *Daffodil Poem*. She went on daily nature walks with the poet. Although she wrote some poetry and much descriptive journaling, she never wanted to be a published poet, preferring to “leave that to William.” Towards the end of her life she struggled with addictions to opium and laudanum, and William remained her caretaker until his death.