

THESIS PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POETRY

OF

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

(By V.K.Narayana Menon M.A.)



CONTENTS.

	Page.
Preface	3
Introduction	6
The Background of Modern Irish Literature	18
The English and European Background	24
Early Days and Work	31
'Mosada'	42
'The Wanderings of Oisín'-.....	46
- 'And other Poems'	63
'Countess Kathleen etc.'	73
Speculations	89
'The Wind Among the Reeds'&'In the Seven Woods'	99
1903-1910; The Plays	114
'The Green Helmet etc'&'Responsibilities'.....	120
The Last Phase	129
The Development of interests; 'A Vision'.....	137
The Technical Development	153
Conclusion	165
Books Consulted	169
APPENDIX I -"An edition of 'The Wanderings of Oisín' to illustrate the development of Yeats's diction	172
APPENDIX II Some 'unpublished Poems'.....	248
APPENDIX III Bibliography of Yeats's works	310

PREFACE.

I have confined this thesis to Yeats's Poetry, and have mentioned his dramas and prose-works only in passing. I have dealt with the earliest dramatic sketches in verse (Island of Statues, Mosada etc) in some detail, because they belong to the domain of Poetry, and not Drama. John E. Yeats exalted the dramatic form above everything else and condemned personal utterance as egoism, and it was to the dramatic form that young Yeats first turned. It has been difficult to steer clear of the Poetic Plays in a treatment of his Poetry, but the thread of his development is sufficiently clear even outside his plays. Drama, he made into an elaborate ritual, and he subtilised dramatic speech to a disciplined movement, which gives it an incantation on the whole different from that of his Poetry. And in this respect he is very unlike some other modern poets. Take T.S.Eliot. Any passage at random from 'The Family Reunion' like:

Spring is an issue of blood
 A season of sacrifice
 And the wail of the new full tide
 Returning the ghosts of the dead
 Those whom the winter drowned
 Do not the ghosts of the drowned
 Return to land in the Spring?
 Do not the dead want to return?

Or

A curse is like a child, formed,
 In a moment of unconsciousness
 In an accidental bed
 Or under an elder tree
 According to the phase
 Of the determined moon.

A curse is like a child, formed
 To grow to maturity:
 Accident is design
 And design is accident
 In a cloud of unknowing.

is just Eliot all over. It is possible to make a good anthology of Eliot's poetry from his two plays, 'Murder in the Cathedral' and 'The Family Reunion'. But not so with Yeats.

I have treated the early poetry in more detail because that was the period he was 'on the boiling pot'. The difference between the lyrics of the 'Wanderings of Oisín' (1889) and 'The Wind Among the Reeds' (1899) is considerably greater than that between 'The Fascination of what's difficult' (1910) and the 'Circus Animal's Desertion' (1939). Once his speculations grew vivid, his poetry as well as its expression crystallised into its modern form. From 1919 ('The Wild Swans at Coole') to 1939 it

matured and grew in strength, but did not undergo any revolutionary change.

I have endeavoured in criticising his early work to take stock of the reactions they caused on the audience of the day rather than judge them objectively from modern standards. His later work does not allow such elaborate diagnosis and is a little terrifyingly near for more careful scrutiny. And I have been a little afraid of losing my bearings.

INTRODUCTION.

"We make out of the quarrel with others,
rhetoric, but out of the quarrel with ourselves,
poetry." — Per Amica Silentia Lunae.

In Per Amica Silentia Lunae, Yeats wrote —
'A poet when he is growing old will ask himself if
he cannot keep his mask and his vision without new
bitterness, new disappointment'. Yeats's own later
days are the most complete answer to it. His work il-
lustrates how a poet should and can go on developing
and it comes home to our mind all the more when we
think of the many poets, (Wordsworth, for example)
who have lived on past their best periods of poetic
activity into an easy and peaceful senescence to
versify mere platitudes or become the accepted teachers
of the orthodox. That such a thing would have been im-
possible in the development of Yeats would have been
obvious to any one who has followed the internal con-
flicts of Yeats the artist. His achievement is ^{the} natural
and inevitable result of a life of desire and conflict;
a desire for 'the abounding glittering jet', conflict
with everything that in disintegrating his vision —
character, conscience, speculation, philosophy —
checks spontaneous and intuitive expression. That
desire and that conflict have been all over Yeats; as
also, like his father John Yeats, a sense of the ~~1/4~~-

incompleteness of all that he has done, a brooding
over

Things said or done long years ago,
Or things I did not do or say
But thought that I might say or do.

During his last days W.B. Yeats remained an isolated figure in modern letters. He had seen the world of his earlier days go and a new world come; yet ^{he} was so live, so emotionally intact that he could grasp the validity of the new world and take in its loveliness without quite being an integral part of it. His last works are consciously modern, even modernistic and we can trace many parallels in them to the youngest English poets. Stephen Spender, Louis McNeice, even the American, Frederic Prokosch, get at the significant word rejecting superficial and easy rhythms and patterns; Day Lewis and George Barker use epithets in the latest Yeatsian manner. Yet his own rhythms have an intonation so unique, a texture so inextricably woven into his past that they give him the stamp of another generation.

Yeats kept up with the times in his own way, was always up-to-date. He had been throughout not only in touch with the literary movements of his time, but was deeply involved in those movements and with the people who were part of them. Thus, though he consciously ~~usely~~ sought to root his poetry in Irish ballads and folklore at one time and to take his tradition from

books (Blake, Shelly, Morris) we see that throughout his development he has been influenced by contemporary writing and writers. The poets of the Rhymers' Club, Ernest Dowson, Lionel Johnson, Arthur Symons, were the friends of his youth. In the middle period it was the Symbolists who moved him most. And in his last phase he was an ardent admirer of Ezra Pound and would not have quarrelled with him (or Eliot) for saying "I quite often write as if I expected my reader to use his intelligence and count on its being fairly strong"¹.

His earliest work was unashamedly of the 'eighties'. Lines like

Autumn is over the long leaves that love us,
 And over the mice in the barely sheaves;
 Yellow the leaves of the rowan above us,
 And yellow the wet wild-strawberry leaves

were a conscious imitation of Morris. There were echoes of Tennyson in lines like

'Your eyes that once were never weary of mine
 Are bowed in sorrow under pendulous lids,
 Because our love is waning.'

And then she:

'Although our love is waning, let us stand
 By the lone border of the lake once more,
 Together in that hour of gentleness
 When the poor tired child, Passion, falls asleep:

1. Introduction to 'Active Anthology' - ed by Ezra Pound

How far away the stars seem, and how far
Is our first kiss, and ah, how old my heart'.

His keen interest in the Irish Literary Revival was also one of the predominant formative influences of those days. In 'Poetry and Tradition' he wrote:
"When Lionel Johnson, and Katharine Tynan (as she was then), and I began to reform Irish Poetry, we thought to keep unbroken the thread running up to Grattan which John O'Leary had put into our hands, though it might be our business to explore new paths of the labyrinth. We sought to make a more subtle rhythm, a more organic form than that of the older Irish poets who wrote in English, but always to remember certain ardent ideas and high attitudes of mind which were the nation itself, to our belief, so far as a nation can be summarised in the intellect."¹ Writing about the ideal theme in Celtic literature he quotes the 'Mabinogion' in the essay 'The Celtic Element in Literature'. The Bards "took the blossoms of the oak and the blossoms of the meadow-sweet and produced from them a maiden, the fairest and most graceful men ever saw; and they baptised her and called her the Flower Aspect"². His early poetry, the 'Wanderings of Oisín' and other poems, the Rose etc., so frivolously

1. P.95 Collected Works Vol. VIII (1908 edition).
2. P.214 Collected Works Vol. VI (1908 edition)

decorative and, one might almost say, elaborately erudite, moves in this world of dream.

Then we see his interest in Occultism gathering strength. He is more and more preoccupied with magic, visits haunted houses, calls on Madame Blavatsky, attends seances. Who could forget Mrs. Hinkson's description — 'Willie Yeats was banging his head on the table as though he had a fit, muttering to himself'? His interest in these things seems to have been, partly at least, ~~as~~ a scientific curiosity: Would the spirits, allied to the fairies of Sligo, link him with the Great Memory that contains all truth? And partly an effort to create an alternative science. Huxley and Tyndall, Duran and Bastien-Lepage did not satisfy him. He had rejected them in the name of imagination and emotion. The enemies of his soul, he called them, for they frustrated his craving for spiritual unity and dissolved the simplicity of religion. A change of heart could come through nothing but religion, he declared. And in his effort to create an alternative philosophy he turned to Occultism and magic. He says in the essay on Magic —

I believe

(1) 'That the borders of our minds are ever shifting, and that many minds can flow into one another as it were, and create or reveal a single mind, a single energy.

(2) 'That the borders of our memory are as

shifting, and that our memories are a part of one great memory, the memory of Nature herself.

(3) 'That this great mind and great memory can be evoked by symbols.

"I often think I would put this belief in magic from me if I could, for I have come to see or to imagine, in men and women, in houses, in handicrafts, in nearly all sights and sounds, a certain evil, a certain ugliness, that comes from the slow perishing through the centuries of a quality of mind that made this belief and its evidences common over the world".

And then again, later —

"All men, certainly all imaginative men, must be for ever casting forth enchantments, glamo-urs, illusions; and all men, especially tranquil men who have no powerful egoistic life, must be continually passing under their power. Our most elaborate thoughts, elaborate purposes, precise emotions, are often, as I think, not really ours, but have on a sudden come up, as it were, out of hell or down out of heaven."

Yeats's own theory of symbolism (especially the way he made use of it in his early symbolist poems) shows how closely related these beliefs are to it. He says — "I cannot now think of symbols less than the greatest of all powers whether they are used consciously by the masters of magic or half consciously

by their successors, the poet, the musician and the artist. At first I tried to distinguish between symbols and symbols, between what I called inherent symbols and arbitrary symbols, but the distinction has come to mean little or nothing. Whether their power has arisen out of themselves, or whether it has an arbitrary origin, matters little, for they act, as I believe, because the great memory associates them with certain events and moods and persons. Whatever the passions of man have gathered about, becomes a symbol in the great memory, and in the hands of him that has the secret, it is a worker of wonders, ~~a~~ caller up of angels or of devils."

These beliefs obviously have a French background and the Protestant influence accounts, partly at least, for his wanderings among oriental philosophies and his dubious mysticism. But whether it was due to the exhaustion of the symbolist impulse or the extinction of the shallow inspiration of the Yellow Book Period, Yeats's poetic activity is lulled for a period and when he brings out a slim volume in 1910 after six years of poetic sterility, it is full of a restlessness, a railing at all that has been distracting him. He has said good-bye to the Celtic Twilight, to Florence Farr and the psaltery.

'The Green Helmet and other Poems' reflects his various activities (including his political ones ~~and~~) of the period. It is the revelation of a period

of bitter conflict — a picture of the inner struggle of the nineteenth century mind in an heroic form.

That weariness with his art, that sense of the inadequacy of his inspiration in lines like

. . . . 'A line may take us hours may be;
Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought,
Our stitching and unstitching has been naught.'

becomes acute and he even thinks of abandoning Poetry altogether.

"All things can tempt me from this craft of verse;
One time it was a woman's face, or worse ———
The seeming needs of my fool-driven land".

When four years later in 'Responsibilities and Other Poems' we get grumblings and more grumblings and rather carelessly expressed instructions, critics began a little too hastily to apply Swinburne's lines

'For the crown of our life as it closes
Is darkness, the fruit thereof dust.'

to Yeats too. He went so far as to write — 'I think the common condition of our life is hatred — I know that this is so with me — irritation with public or private events or persons'. But conflict is energy and by 1919 in a poem like 'Ego Dominus Tuus' we see the real Yeats emerging. He has created for himself an intellectual solitude. He has discarded all his earlier paraphernalia and writes without the least

shoddiness or ambiguity.

The interrelation of the development of his mind and the expression of it is a very interesting study. In a great poet a change in ^{the} quality of his diction always comes about as a result of a change in the nature of the theme. The greatest poets in any age have always succeeded ^e in finding an idiom close enough to the world in which they live. During the fifty years of Yeats's poetic career the world has changed more than once and Yeats's technique has developed in such a way that throughout his career he never has been out of date.

'The Wanderings of Oisín' is a young romantic artist's work. The earlier version, especially, is full of an over-wrought imagery and long drawn-out descriptions. Four years afterwards he wrote — "With a rhyme that still echoed William Morris I prayed to the Red Rose". Even the 'Wind Among the Reeds' is full of the imagery of ^{the} Celtic Twilight. But by this period we see a definite change coming over Yeats's diction. Victor Hugo and Swinburne had so delighted him in his school days that his earlier poetry is full of a romantic Italian colour which he now works hard to get rid of. He does away with artificialities, redundancies, for the sake of metre and rhyme, inversions which even such a scrupulous artist like the late Robert Bridges tolerated. It is an

effort to create a naked simplicity of language, to make every word directly expressive, and though every word is there to help the sense and not for any kind of ornamentation the whole has a wonderful emotional sense and poetic beauty. Speaking of the conventional language of poetry he had said 'I was weary of it'. He drops it successfully.

Thus the importance of his early work is that it is that of a serious craftsman, probably the most serious of his day. He established the tradition of real verse and developed an individual rhythm. His later poetry is devoid of the dreamy hypnotic rhythm of his earlier verse. It has no incantation. But it has the idiom, the run of modern speech. It recognises the actual world, but holds against it an ideal of aristocratic fineness.

In his last period his poetry becomes powerful, intellectual, evocative. It is full of a contemporary awareness, a profound feeling for the destiny of Europe as in the lines —

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
 Are full of passionate intensity.

The influence of politics on his writings was almost

revolutionary and in this he reminds us of Goethe. The opening lines of Goethe's 'West-Oestlicher-Divan' written at a time of European revolution,

'Nord und West und Sud zersplittern,
Throne bersten, Reiche zittern,
Flüchte du, im reinen Osten
Patriarchenluft zu kosten!
Unter Lieben, Trinken, Singen
Soll dich Chisers Quell verjüngen'

compares with

At midnight on the Emperor's pavement flit
Flames that no faggot feeds, nor steel has lit,
Nor storm disturbs, flames begotten of flame,
Where blood-begotten spirits come
And all complexities of fury leave,
Dying into a dance,
An agony of trance,
An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve.

Yeats's whole development is reminiscent of that of Goethe. But Yeats goes further than ^{he}him in renouncing his romanticism completely.

∞

'The Tower' is the work of a man who has known intellectual passion. He had said: 'To speak of one's emotions without fear or moral ambition, to come out from under the shadow of other men's minds, to forget their needs, to be utterly oneself, that is

all the muses care for.' The growth of his art is more than a mere maturing. If during his development he was experimental, uncertain at periods, it was inevitable. During periods of spiritual and artistic rebirth such things are inevitable. (Compare Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure"). But his Art has always had the honesty to keep growing and his work stands before us to-day charged with the quality of an authentic personal vision of life.

On the occasion of Yeats's seventieth birthday T.S. Eliot wrote in the Criterion: "I can think of no poet, not even among the greatest, who has shown a longer period of development than Yeats Development to his extent is not merely genius, it is character; and it sets a standard which his juniors should seek to emulate without hoping to equal."

THE BACKGROUND OF MODERN IRISH LITERATURE.

The advent of English into Irish Literature really began with the first attempts of the English Kings to establish their suzerainty there. The result of this English contact is seen in the first monument to Anglo-Irish Literature, the 'Kildare Poems' which belong to the early fourteenth century. Its interest now is mainly philological. English slowly ~~traced~~ ^{ad} into the country after the occupation though its use was mainly limited to towns and the confines of the Pale. The use of English by the urban population and educated class gave rise to a kind of Janus-faced literature, Irish to the English and English to the Irish. This Janus-faced nature of Anglo-Irish literature has lasted into the twentieth century. To Irishmen and Ireland it lacked ~~in~~ artistic integrity, but to England and English literature it has been a great contribution. Irish Literature, like Scottish, has had a great fertilizing effect on English. Such fertilization from kindred or foreign languages is a great service, is in fact a perpetual need to any language.

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Till the seventeenth century (and even during the seventeenth century to some extent) whoever wrote English in Ireland wrote in the spirit of an enemy to the Irish. A few 'Bohemians' of the peasant world, most of them hedge school-

masters, clever and drunken, wrote songs for their patrons, landlords of English name and race. They preserved the tradition of savage satire and were constantly at odds both with the law and with the church. Yet what they wrote was live and vigorous and forms the germ of a national literature.

Ireland produced a considerable number of important writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries — Swift, Denham, Parnell, Farquhar, Steele, Southerne, Roscommon, Boyle, Ussher, Berkeley, Goldsmith, Sheridan. And with all their differences, they had one thing in common — a strong Irish accent in thought and its expression. Ireland gave Swift his fierce hatred of injustice and that deep compassion for impoverished humanity so marked in his works. The poverty of Irish life gave Goldsmith a fine sense of social values which raises him from the level of most urbane and artificial poets. It gave Burke a passion for justice which glows in his political philosophy. Dublin with its brilliant and corrupt social life and inequalities of status and political control could not but fire the eloquence of Grattan and Curran. It must have been responsible in no small measure for the pointedness of Sheridan's wit.

Eighteenth century Ireland presented a

scene of violent contrasts and into the midst of this conflict of Irish and English elements was born Thomas Moore. Son of a Dublin grocer, Moore made his name as Thomas Little and attracted the attention of no less a celebrity than Byron. A sensitive and accomplished master of verse, Moore introduced certain Irish modes to English metres besides bringing into his work a faint breath of the Gaelic spirit. The 'Irish Melodies' gave Moore a European reputation as well as the title 'the national lyrist of Ireland'. Following in Moore's footsteps several younger poets like Callanan, Walsh, George Darley caught up the cadences and imagery of Gaelic Poetry. The supreme example is James Clarence Mangan. The great mass of Mangan's work is very unequal, but at his best he reached great lyrical heights. 'The Nameless One' his morbid autobiographical ballad has the troubled, vehement sincerity of Villon or Byron and his 'Dark Rosaleen' is ranked by Lionel Johnson with the greatest lyrics of the world.

In the meantime scholars were laying the foundation of Gaelic scholarship. O'Curry, O'Donovan and Petric were the greatest influences in this direction. The new scholarship left little mark on the somewhat meditative, impersonal work of writers like Aubry de Vere or Denis Florence M'Carthy, but certainly affected the work of the great Sir Samuel

Ferguson. Sir Samuel Ferguson found Irish themes to fit "the epic largeness of his conception" and he was not slow to show his younger contemporaries the harvest about their feet.

About this time too, a group of writers round the 'Nation' newspaper was working on the political consciousness of the people. Politics played a very vigorous part in the moulding of the Literary Renaissance of Ireland. Duffy, D'Arcy McGee and the other writers of the 'Nation' group have hardly a place in pure literature. They were primarily preoccupied with politics. Literature to them was nothing like an end in itself. It was merely a tool. But they laid the seeds of race-consciousness on which new Ireland was to thrive later on.

Thus the period after Berkeley and Swift was one of transition. It was a period of experimenta-
/tion, hard work, conflict of ideas and ideals. Modern Irish Literature traces its ancestry through Ferguson and Mangan to the early Gaelic Poets. The writers to the 'Nation' were patriotic but not national. Davis and his followers expressed too limited a phase of Irish life to justify so comprehensive a term. Ferguson and Mangan did away with the aggressive nationalism of Davis and

substituted a dignified sense of nationality in its place. The eighteenth century scholars and their successors Whitley Stokes, Standish Hayes O'Grady, Kuno Meyer, Dr. Sigerson and others led the way and revealed to Irish poets and writers their ancient heritage. Several editions of Gaelic poets were published. Two great influences were Dr. Hyde's 'Love Songs of Connacht' and the works of Standish O'Grady (the II). And it is interesting to note that their influences really worked in contrary directions. The 'Love Songs of Connacht' influenced the new school in the direction of a folk-simplicity whereas Standish O'Grady invested the heroic Irish Literature with a conspicuous glamour.

By the close of the nineteenth century the Irish Literary Revival was an active and rapidly growing movement. And it had about it a group of writers as race-conscious in literature as the Gaelic League in education or Sinn Fein in politics. This race-consciousness was stimulated by the study of the old heroic literature and of folk poetry which never really died in Ireland.

Ferguson died in 1886 and the same year saw the publication of Yeats's first work 'Mosada'. Yeats literally caught the Celtic spirit set free by Ferguson. Political turmoil and an extinct language

had kept it ⁱⁿ imprisoned for a long while. The literary movement with its roots in nation-consciousness might have remained a phenomenon of political or antiquarian interest. Yeats's greatest service to Irish Letters was his persistent rejection of anything commended solely by patriotic fervour. Aggressive patriotism and sincerity of motive by themselves could not make literature. Ireland was to learn from him an intellectual arrogance and a contempt for any kind of compromise.

THE ENGLISH AND EUROPEAN BACKGROUND.

In his 'Science and the Modern World', A. N. Whitehead analyses the Romantic Movement. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he says, witnessed in Europe a great advance in the Sciences of Mathematics and of Physics. The great astronomers, mathematicians, and physicists of the 'classical' period created a picture of the Universe as a machine working according to a well-regulated system obeying strict and logical laws. The poets and the writers of the period applied this conception of the Universe to society and dealt with society and human nature as a well-knit organisation. They tried to discuss social laws and discover the principles on which they revolved. The Romantic Movement was a reaction against this mechanistic conception of life.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century the poets began to feel the limitations of such a mechanistic conception of the Universe. It left out too much. The Universe was more mysterious.

'The atoms of Democritus,

And Newton's particles of light

Are signs upon the Red Sea shore,

Where Israel's tents do shine so bright!'

wrote Blake who was not hiding his contempt of the

physicists. Looking at himself, his mind, his soul, the Romantic poet could not find scientific order, but only chaos, conflict, turbulent insubordination. Blake, and later Wordsworth with prophetic intuition exalted the importance of the individual soul; and Byron pitted the individual's will against the mechanistic order of the physicists and the mathematicians. The Romantic Movement meant the emergence of the Individual, and the Romantic poet turned from mankind and society, treated as a whole, to the scrutiny of the individual soul. The scientific spirit had

The scientific spirit had given language precision, clarity and pattern. The rationalism had penetrated into every recess of thought. The Royal Society's efforts in the seventeenth century towards establishing clarity of expression were not merely an experiment conducted by the Academicians. But with the coming of a change of attitude it was necessary to create a new language for its expression. The geometrical patterns of Racine's plays and the balanced couplets of Pope were not suited to the expression of wonder, mystery, conflict and confusion and the Romantics had to create a language of their own which was somewhat turbid or opalescent. A revolution in the imagery of Poetry, says Whitehead, is in reality a revolution in metaphysics. 'What has really taken place is a philosophical revolution.'

Whitehead's examination of the Romantic Revolt provides us with the key to an almost parallel phenomenon later in the nineteenth century. The excesses of the Romantic Revolt favoured in literature a return to precision in form, to beauty well within the limits of reason. The scientific spirit, again, helped the process. But this time it was neither mathematics nor physics, but biology which brought new scientific advances. The theory of Evolution reduced man from the heroic heights to which the Romantics exalted him to the position of a helpless animal, the product of heredity and environment and completely at the mercy of the forces round him. The new revolt was very pronounced on the Continent and is particularly evident in the work of novelists like Zola, perhaps the greatest exponent of the doctrine of Naturalism. In England itself the scientific development led to a period of unequalled prosperity. The general optimism and a happy belief in the future led to stability, balance and a desire to obey the laws of life and the governing principles of success. The technical perfection of Tennyson and the exactitude of his descriptions ring true of his age. And Browning's diction is in direct contrast to the flamboyancy of the Romantics.

Towards 1870 we begin to notice a change in the English literary temperament. It is like the

second swing of the pendulum, again away from the scientific spirit. The need for a spiritual renovation appears and forces itself on the national consciousness and in the new 'Romantic Revival' takes the form of a revival of mysticism. The new spirit of restlessness can be roughly described as 'The emancipation of the imagination'. On the Continent it took the form of the Symbolist Movement. In England its precursors were the Pre-Raphaelites. The new school of Poetry laid great insistence on the treatment of the sensations and emotions of the individual. Yeats wrote in 1897: "The reaction against the rationalism of the eighteenth century has mingled with a reaction against the materialism of the nineteenth century, and the Symbolical movement, which has come to perfection in Germany in Wagner, in England in the Pre-Raphaelites, and in France in Villiers de L'Isle-Adam and Mallarmé and Maeterlinck, and has stirred the imagination of Ibsen and D'Annunzio, is certainly the only movement that is saying new things."

The Symbolist movement in English Literature manifested itself in two schools --- the Pre-Raphaelites and later on 'the aesthetes' and 'decadents' of the Rhymers' Club. The Pre-Raphaelite school was governed by the same impulses as the Symbolists and was a very important force. The Rhymers' Club merely imitated the French without much originality and was

more interesting as a circle than for what they created.

The English Pre-Raphaelites did not exert a European influence like Mallarmé or Rimbaud. They were characterised by a love of words for their own sake. Witness Rossetti saying in a letter to his brother, "I have done but little in any way, having wasted several days at the Museum where I have been reading up all manner of old romaunts, to pitch upon stunning words for Poetry. I have found several."¹ 'Grame', 'dole', 'grout', 'teen' are some of the 'stunners' he collected. The pre-Raphaelites were a great force only in diction. Swinburne's greatest contribution to Literature is the metallic resonance of his lines. "The chorus of Swinburne", says T. S. Eliot in 'The Sacred Wood',² "is almost a parody of the Athenian: it is sententious but it has not even the significance of a commonplace. . . . It is effective because it appears to be a tremendous statement, like statements made in dreams; when we wake up we find that the 'glass that ran' would do better for time than for grief, and that the gift of tears would be as appropriatately bestowed by

1. 'Family Letters' 1895. P.51.
2. 'The Sacred Wood' 1920. P.135.

grief as by time"

In his 'Studies in Literature'¹ Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch wrote:- 'Swinburne was a tremendous force in Poetry: the force died; the man outlived it, and died many years later, solicitously tended.' Sir Arthur there describes the tragedy not merely of Swinburne but of Pre-Raphaelite Poetry. Pre-Raphaelitism was a spent force by 1885, though poems in the pre-Raphaelite manner continued to appear. "None of them mattered, none of them contained any longer any hope; all were galvanic - reflex action of genius after death"². And before long we see a poet like Francis Thompson assailing their diction in that frequently quoted passage: "Poetic diction has become latterly a kaleidoscope, and one's chief curiosity is as to the precise combinations into which the pieces will be shifted. There is, in fact, a certain band of words, the Praetorian cohorts of Poetry, whose prescriptive aid is invoked by every aspirant to the poetical purple; against them it is time some banner should be raised. Perhaps it is almost impossible for a contemporary writer quite to evade the services of the free-lances whom one encounters

1. 'Studies in Literature' 1919. P.250.
 2. Ibid.

under so many standards. But it is at any rate curious to note that the literary revolution against the despotic diction of Pope seems issuing, like political revolutions, in a despotism of its own making"¹.

Yeats was brought up in this atmosphere of Pre-Raphaelite Poetry and Painting in a family where the father, a great Pre-Raphaelite enthusiast, was virtually a dictator as far as the reading of his sons was concerned.

1. Essay on Shelley. 1912. P.25-26

EARLY DAYS AND WORK.

William Butler Yeats was born at Sandymount near Dublin on June 13, 1865. John B. Yeats, his father, was a man of strong opinions and an artist of considerable merit who gave up an honourable practice at the Irish Bar to devote himself to painting. His mother was a Pollexfen, frail and beautiful, who fostered in him that deep and passionate yearning for Sligo which was such a formative influence in his early days. The Yeats were courteous and gentle, "respectable" as the Sligo barber said; the Pollexfens fearless and somewhat adventurous. "We have ideas and no passions, but by marriage with a Pollexfen we have given a tongue to the sea-cliffs"¹, said a Yeats once and it was the only eulogy which really turned W. B.'s head.

A shy, wide-eyed boy, he grew up in lovely Sligo with its hills and rivers and inland lakes and the sea. Yet his childhood was not one of happiness. "I remember little of childhood but its pain; I have grown happier with every year of life as though gradually conquering something in myself, for certainly my miseries were not made by others,

1. Autobiographies (Macmillan 1926) P. 27.

but were a part of my own mind"¹. The later^t part of that statement is significant. All his life Yeats has been pre-occupied with self. That he did not corrode within himself shows he could rise out of the bonds of self. The greatest quality of his Poetry is its integrity. The enterprise of walking naked.

The stable-boy was his principal friend and his book of Orange Rhymes which they read together in the hayloft or among the piles of nets on the quay gave him for the first time the pleasures of rhyme. His mother read little, but she and the fisherman's wife would tell each other stories "that Homer might have told, pleased with any moment of sudden intensity and laughing together over any point of satire"². 'Village Ghosts' in "Celtic Twilight" is the record of such an afternoon. And he was eight or nine years old when his father, sitting with him on a tongue of land covered with coarse grass between Sligo and Rosses Point, read out to him 'The Lays of Ancient Rome'. It was the first poetry to move him after the stable-boy's Orange Rhymes. Later came Scott, 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel'. "The Lay of the Last Minstrel gave me a wish to turn magician that competed for years with the dream of being killed on the sea-shore"³, he wrote later. But even Grimm and

1. Autobiographies I. P.13.

2. Ibid. XIII P.75.

3. Ibid. P.57.

Hans Anderson could not satisfy his prodigious fancy or give him the knights and dragons and beautiful ladies that he longed for.

Soon afterwards the Yeats family shifted to London and went to live in a house close to Burne-Jones's. Yeats hated London and longed for Sligo, if only for a sod of earth from some field that he knew or something of Sligo to hold in his hand. And at the school at Hammersmith with its Gothic building of yellow bricks, unable to attend to anything less interesting than his thoughts, and persecuted by the boys for being Irish, he would think of Sligo with tears.

His father influenced his reading a great deal and even as a boy he read Balzac, Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats, Byron, the pre-Raphaelites, and a little later Darwin and Wallace, Huxley and Haeckel. John Yeats was really an English liberal in thought and a sceptical philosopher. He disliked the "Victorian Poetry of ideas" and insisted that Poetry must be an idealisation of speech. He never read anything out for its content and all his discussions were of style.

Back in Dublin in 1880, Yeats went to The Harcourt Street High School where Mr. Wilkins the headmaster, a clever versifier, rather distrusted the lank and tawny young genius who read out Sinnett's "Esoteric Buddhism" to his class-mates and was

indifferent to examinations. Later he went to the Art Schools in Kildare Street where he made the friendship of John Hughes and Oliver Sheppard, the Irish sculptors, and A.E. the poet. Neither the masters at the school, nor his father who was his real teacher satisfied him and he merely studied art for want of anything better to do. But Dublin is a strange place. It is surprising how much idealism even of a crude kind is to be found there. Dublin, intimate, personal, vital is the place to foster dreams. And in this he was helped by the celebrities he met at his father's circle, people like Katherine Tynan (later Mrs. Hinkson) and Prof. Dowden.

He had begun to write poetry "in imitation of Shelley and of Edmund Spenser, play after play, for my father exalted dramatic poetry above all other kinds, and I invented fantastic and incoherent plots. My lines but seldom scanned, for I could not understand the prosody in the books, although there were many lines that taken by themselves had music. I spoke them slowly as I wrote and only discovered when I read them to somebody else that there was no common music, no prosody".¹ The play after play he refers to were 'The Island of Statues'², 'The Seeker'³, 'Mosada'⁴, and possibly the slightly later 'Time and the Witch Vivien'⁵. None of these are in the collected

1. Autobiographies P. 81-82.

2,3,4,5, Appendix.

Works of Yeats. The first poems of Yeats to be published were two short poems 'Song of the Fairies' and 'Voices' both of which appeared in the Dublin University Review for March 1885. Both of these appear again in 'The Island of Statues' (II 5) and 'Voices' has been preserved as the exquisite lyric 'The Cloak, the boat and the Shoes'. Yeats must have had 'The Island of Statues' ready and perhaps was in doubt as to its publication.¹ In any case, it appeared in The Dublin University Review soon afterwards. Act I Sc. 1 came out in the April issue (1885), Scenes 2 & 3 in May, II Sc. 1 and Sc. 2 in June, and Sc. 3 in July. The 1889 volume² has only the last scene, under the heading 'A Fragment' and even that was dropped in the collected works.

"I had read Shelley and Spenser and had tried to mix their styles together in a pastoral play"³, he wrote later. 'Two shepherds at dawn meet before the door of the shepherdess Naschina and sing to her in rivalry. Their voices grow louder and louder as they try to sing each other down. At last she comes out a little angry. An

1. "I had been invited to read out a poem called 'The Island of Statues', an Arcadian play in imitation of Edmund Spenser, to a gathering of critics who were to decide whether it was worthy of publication in the College Magazine. The Magazine had already published a lyric of mine, the first ever printed....." Autobiographies. 114.
 2. 'Wanderings of Oisín & other Poems' 1889.
 3. 'Ireland and the Arts'. Vol. 4 P. 1.

arrow flies across the scene. The two shepherds fly, being full of Arcadian timidity. Almintor, who is loved by Naschina, comes in having shot the arrow at a heron. Naschina receives him angrily. 'No one in Arcadia is courageous', she says. 'Others to prove their love, go upon some far and dangerous quest. They but bring Arcadian gifts, small birds and beasts'. She goes again angrily into her cottage. Almintor seeks the enchanted island to find for her the mysterious flower guarded there by the enchantress and her spirits. He is led thither by a voice singing in the valley. The island is full of flowers and of people turned into stone. They chose the wrong flower. He also chooses wrong and is turned into stone. Naschina resolves to seek him disguised as a shepherd. On her way she meets with the two shepherds of Scene 1. They do not recognise her, but like to be near her. They tell her they love one maid. She answers, if that be¹so, they must clearly settle it by combat. She, not believing they will do so, passes on and comes to the edge of the lake in which is the enchanted island and is carried over in a boat with wings. The shepherds also come to the edge of the lake. They fight fiercely, made courageous by love. One is killed'¹.

1. Yeats's own words. Introduction to the 'fragment' Wanderings of Oisín etc. 1889.

The enchantress on the island loves Naschina in her shep^herd's guise and prevents her from seeking the flower, as her failure to do so might cause her death. Naschina insisting, the enchantress explains how the flower may be discovered only by a certain shepherdess and that too only if somebody has died for her. Naschina begs the enchantress to send some attendant sprites with a cry to see that one shall die and the enchantress, very much in love with Naschina consents. Very soon a voice announces that the two shepherds have died for Naschina. ~~He~~^{She} throws off her guise and proclaims herself to be the shepherdess in disguise and the enchantress points out a scarlet flower to Naschina and resigns herself to her death. Naschina picks up the flowers and brings the statues to life, one by one, and they are a crowd of all nations and all times -- a sailor of Aeneas, an Arthurian knight, a votary of Pan, a trojan Almintor is chosen their king and Naschina becomes their queen. The rising moon casts the shadows of Almintor and the sleepers far across the grass. Close by Almintor's side, Naschina is standing, shadowless.

Spenser and Shelley are again the chief inspiration. The pastoral setting, the Arcadian shepherds, Naschina's disguises in the

quest of her love, are all in the real Spenserian manner. Perhaps the Island of Venus¹ suggested to Yeats the idea of the Island itself and Diana's nymphs who change into stone² gave him the idea of the statues. The Voices and their prophesies and the general atmosphere of doom about the island remind us of Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound'.

Naschina is the human soul struggling for an ideal living and her adventures stand for the great sacrifices one should entail in reaching that stage. The allegory is not worked out clearly and Yeats seems to be toying with the idea that the ideal life implies a kind of immortality which has something awful and crushing about it and here he is almost a mediaeval Christian in his Weltanschauung. Curiously enough, this note of pessimism recurs in 'The Seeker' and is in direct contrast to the gay Pagan spirit of 'The Wanderings of Oisín'.

As a first attempt it is essentially tentative in its prosody and is interesting especially in the light of Yeats's own confession. The basic foot is the iambic tetrameter varied with iambic pentameters and romance-sixes. The rhyme scheme varies. The majority of lines are end-stopped and the pauses well marked so that

1. Faerie Queene IV x.
2. Ibid II viii.

there is a cramped effect in places and the rhythm has not the smoothness of his later works.

The little dramatic sketch, 'The Seeker'¹ appeared in the September issue of the Dublin University Review and Spenser again seems to have been the inspiration and the model. The woodland valley, its shepherds and their flutes, the old knight, the ruined temple in the forest, the bearded witch Infamy luring the knight on to his doom, are all in the conventional Spenserian manner.

Next month appeared an 'Epilogue' to 'The Island of Statues' and 'The Seeker'. This appears in the 1889 edition under the title 'Song of the Last Arcadian' (he carries a sea-shell)² and in the Collected Poems as 'The Song of the Happy Shepherd'. Patty Gurd³ thinks that this poem is a reverie caused by a conversation with Oscar Wilde and by the author's association with a young Brahmin (Cf. Kanva on Himself). Its main interest is that in it we get a first avowal of Yeats's poetic creed:

Of all the many changing things

-
1. Appendix.
 2. The sea-shell, a symbol suggested by the mystic shell which Prometheus gave to the spirit of the Hour, 'that curved shell which Proteus old made Asia's nuptial boon, breathing within it a voice to be accomplished' and which Prometheus bids her 'bear over the cities of mankind' breathing into it so that she may 'loosen its mighty music'. Prometheus Unbound III 3.
 3. 'Early Poetry of W.B. Yeats' Lancaster Pa. 1916.

In dreary dancing past us whirled,
 To the cracked tune that Chronos sings,
 Words alone are certain good.

and it is the first real indication of Yeats's early efforts in quest of style.

The Dublin University Review continued to bring out several little poems, fragments and odds and ends. The May issue(1885) had a rather inconsequential little poem, 'Life and Death'¹. The 1886 January issue contained a short poem entitled 'In a drawing Room' which is unsigned. But actually, the two stanzas which make up the poem are the second and sixth of 'Quatrains and Aphorisms' of the 1889 volume. The next month's issue had another poem entitled 'Life' of 5 quatrains of which the first appeared as the first stanza of 'Quatrains and Aphorisms' of the 1889 volume. March had a political poem called 'The Two Titans' which has never been reprinted, and April 'On Mr. Nettleship's Picture, 1885'.

These poems and dramatic sketches were Yeats's first and almost juvenile efforts. They show flaws of execution, slovenly lines, awkward and uncouth constructions, exuberances which are not beauties, attempts at concentration of expression which are crude and stiff. Yet they

1. Appendix.

form a distinct achievement, full of promise, the work of a young poet trying to find his medium. It is a period of apprenticeship to the English tradition in its narrowest sense, the years of conscious imitation of the English masters, Shelley and Spenser. What is interesting is the fact that in these earliest days Yeats shows himself to be a romantic in the broader sense of the word -- Arcadia and pastoral romances, the fantastic and the marvellous, isles where 'dreary Time lets fall his sickle and Life the sandals of her fleetness'. And he turned to Spain and the Inquisition next in his first published work in book form.

MOSADA.

The Dublin University Review in the last two decades of the Nineteenth Century was a great deal more than a mere University Journal. Its importance is almost as great as that of the 'Nation' newspaper. Duffy, the editor of the 'Nation' has had few equals in interpreting, expounding and diffusing a political creed. But ~~th~~ough the 'Nation' could claim Clarence Mangan, its literary contributors were mainly facile and mechanical rhymers whose work too easily passed into bombast and the 'Nation' remained in the main a vigorous political pamphlet. The Dublin University Review, on the other hand, really became the organ of the Young Ireland Movement, the first deliberate attempt to found a school of Irish literature in the English tongue. John Mitchell, the ablest writer of the new group, published the testament of Young Ireland when he wrote his 'Jail Journal'¹. T.W. Rolleston and Charles Herbert Oldham, the editors of the Dublin University Review, were men of great critical acumen and ready to snap up any new literary talent. Rolleston's importance in the early stages of the new movement is sometimes underrated.

1. 'Jail Journal or Five Years in British Prisons' by John Mitchell. Glasgow. Cameron & Ferguson (no date).

It is noteworthy that he was the first person to publish Yeats's work and bring him to the notice of the public.

In June 1886 Yeats's most ambitious and serious work to date came out, again, in the Dublin University Review. It was ^a short poetical play in one Act. The same year it was published separately in book form. 'Mosada - a Dramatic Poem. Dublin: Sealy Bryers and Walker, 1886.' It has long been out of print and is now a bibliophile's treasure.¹

'Mosada' is a dramatic poem in three scenes. Like Kingsley in 'Westward Ho!' and Browning in 'The Confessional' Yeats takes his theme from the Spanish Inquisition.

Mosada, a beautiful Moorish lady of the village of Azubia, is day-dreaming about her lover, 'dark Gomez', a Christian. She is condemned to the stake for her religion by the Officers of the Inquisition. The Monks and Inquisitors discuss her case in a room lighted by a stained window picturing St. James of Spain. Ebremar, the chief monk, bright-eyed and hollow-cheeked from fasting, decrees that the Moorish girl must die. "I will burn heresy from this mad earth", he says with passionate devotion. In the

1. The British Museum has no copy.

"dungeon of the Inquisition, the morning of the auto-da-fé¹ dawns dimly through a barred window. A few faint stars are shining. Swallows are circling in the dimness without." Mosada, alone in her cell, sucks poison from a ring in anticipation of death and is thinking of her lover. Ebremer enters to prepare the heretic to her death and recognises her as his old love. "Look up, thy Gomez is by thee". He becomes the gay lover again and entreats her to escape with him far away where 'none shall know that I was Ebremer whose thoughts were fixed on God and heaven and holiness'. But it is too late. The deadly poison has done its work and Mosada comes to her end.

It is a slight story and there is a great deal that is unsatisfying in the handling of the plot. Ebremer's character is not sufficiently developed and the sudden changes in the proud persecutor are almost inconceivable. 'Fantastic and incoherent' as Yeats confesses. The song of the Spanish Monk about a saint of Munster is comic and thoroughly out of place. It is one of the few comic touches in Yeats's early works.

Spenser and Shelley again. But there are few affectations and little of copious imitation and unhappy borrowed mannerisms. The description of the Isle owes something to Phaedria's and Acrasia's Islands of Delight¹. The river which Ebremer speaks of is reminiscent of Shelley's 'river of life' down which

1. Faerie Queene. Book II.

Laon and Cythna float to the Temple of the Spirit. Mosada calls Cola to gaze in the cloud of immense smoke and read the future for her, 'for none but the innocent can see', reminding one of Rossetti's Rose-Mary who was called by her mother to gaze in the beryl-stone.

The period of English apprenticeship is continued. 'Mosada' is an immature work, but it is that of a conscious craftsman. A few more years were to pass before Yeats turned to Sligo and Irish themes and really came to his own.



THE WANDERINGS OF OISIN AND OTHER POEMS. (1889)

(i)

The Yeats family returned to London in 1887 to set up house in Bedford Park and W.E.'s attention was turned for the moment from Dowden and Dr. Hyde and Katherine Tynan and O'Leary to William Morris and W.E. Henley.

The years 1880-1887 in Dublin are vitally important. It was a period of first impressions, dissatisfaction, disillusionment. And yet we see the young poet trying to form his character and give expression to it. Yeats, an Anglo-Irish Protestant had come to Catholic Dublin a young man, and found it was Catholicism which was giving Ireland a Poetry with a high keen spiritual note and a note of mystic exaltation. Protestant Ireland seemed to think of nothing but getting on in the world and they had good taste, household courtesy and decency. Like most isolated provincials, "respectability" was their fetish. And though they were hardly the equals of the Catholic Irish in politics or wit, they maintained a social and cultural exclusiveness. The Irish intelligentsia were split into two and the cleavage seemed not so much due to fundamental differences of outlook as to a lack of faith in each

other. J.M.Hone¹ describes the situation eloquently:

"The wasteful virtues are, or rather were, characteristic of the Anglo-Irish stock to which the Yeats belong, a people said to have become more Irish than the Irish themselves. Maybe it should have been put "more English than the English"-of an England become commercialised. Something at least of the adventurous spirit of the Elizabethans lingered on in the Galway and Dublin of the later eighteenth, and earlier nineteenth centuries; and even today the "eccentric Englishman" of French criticism will be studied in Ireland. This people has, however, fallen in the world during the last 100 years: It felt, Mr. Yeats has suggested in one of his essays², in the Gaelic peasantry the presence of an exacting and ancient tribunal, but it did not understand the country, and the game well enough, and at last, "after an epoch of such eloquence the world has hardly seen its like", lost to spirit and heart. In

1. W.B.Yeats - a study by J.M.Hone
2. The essay on Lady Gregory, "Gods and Fighting Men" in Mr. Yeats's "Collected Works", Vol.VIII. 1908.

1782, or thereabouts, the English-speaking Protestant Ascendancy of Ireland forgot their duties of a garrison, and in their pride would have threatened the security of the Empire for the sake of putting a Parliament in Dublin on a level with the English senate, and making Grattan the equal of Pitt; but all was changed by the Union, which left a race of adventurers with little ambition to play its part on a local stage; the Colony no longer identified its interests with a strong Ireland, ^{and it was} in the British army and colonies, that the Anglo-Irish found scope for their vigour and abilities. In Ireland they lost their initiative and gradually became provincial. They shared none of the memories of Ireland - Gaelic, Jacobite, Catholic. England cut them off from European influences.

The 'seventies, 'eighties, and 'nineties saw another flight of the wild geese, in the shape of an exodus of writers from Ireland, adventurers like an Oscar Wilde or a George Moore or a Bernard Shaw, and (in a different category) a T.P.O'Connor, a Justin MacCarthy. Some of the intelligentsia traded on English

sentimentality or played the 'poor Paddy'; others with more starch in them, surprised and had an equal success in London by their irreverence, the free play of their ideas, in their critical impartiality. They were not, like Englishmen, hampered by any grandiose 'myth' of the national mind and character. Anglo-Irish writers have owed much to the fact that they are a race without a myth, a people, therefore, that is easily capable of an excessive mental detachment. Either way they could be thorough, whether they chose to be sincere or insincere; to capture the English audience by outrage or by cajolery; to mock at the English myth or (as ^{by} the 'poor Paddy' method) to encourage it. Their history is of a people that has, in the widest sense of the expression, lived by its wits".

Yeats, of course, does not take his place with the wild geese of Irish Protestantism. Irish of the Irish, with his roots in Sligo, he was a student of Davis and young Ireland and believed in the spiritual force of the Gael. The spirit of Catholicism had been tempered in Ireland by

historical and social conditions. And though it was the Catholic and Gaelic element which provided the frame-work of the Irish Renaissance Yeats found that the greatest Irish revolutionaries, Emmet, John Mitchel¹ and Parnell were all Protestants. And it was a Protestant, Thomas Davis, who had more or less formulated Irish literary nationalism. Davis's belief that an independent national culture based on Gaelic tradition can be shared by Irishmen of all origins and faiths moved Yeats. "I thought we might bring the halves together if we had a national literature that made Ireland beautiful in the memory, and yet had been freed from provincialism by an exacting criticism, an European pose." "I began to plot a scheme how one might seal with the right image the soft wax before it began to harden".²

"The Wanderings of Oisín" was written in that frame of mind and most of the characteristic poems in that first volume had an Irish background. It was published by subscription in 1889, "O'Leary finding many subscribers". Dr. Hyde, Katherine Tynan and O'Leary, Ireland, its legends, myths, heroes gave him the theme, but it was Henley and William

1. Author of 'Gael Journal'.
2. Autobiographies. P. 125

Morris, frequent visitors at the red-brick house at Bedford Park, who determined his language and expression. The fine resonance of Lionel Johnson's 'Te martyrum Candidatus' did not move him in those days as much as the music of Rossetti, Swinburne and Tennyson.



The Wanderings of Oisín.

In the introduction to Nora Hopper in 'A Treasury of Irish Poetry in the English Tongue'¹, Yeats says:- "Modern Poetry grows weary of using over and over again the personages and stories and metaphors that have come to us through Greece and Rome, or from Wales and Brittany through the middle ages and has found new life in the Norse and German legends. The Irish legends in popular tradition and in old Gaelic Literature, are more numerous and as beautiful, and alone among great European legends have the beauty and wonder of altogether new things. May one not say, then, without saying anything improbable, that they will have a predominant influence in the coming century and that their influence will pass through many countries?" As a major European influence, the Celtic twilight never blossomed forth into the day. Apart from Ireland, the land of its birth, and Scotland, her neighbour, where her more nation-conscious ^{people} are going back to the Gaelic, few European countries have had anything in the nature of a major Celtic Renaissance. But it is Ireland that is important in

1. 'A Treasury of Irish Poetry in the English Tongue' Edited by Stopford A. Brooke and T.W. Rolleston. London. 1900.

the present context, and Yeats's work; and it is not far wrong to say that the entire history of the Irish Literary Renaissance can be more or less summed up in the literary career and achievement of Yeats.

'The Wanderings of Oisín' traces its ancestry right back to Gaelic mythology. Yeats must surely have been familiar with current Oisín stories and legends, and the works of Sir Samuel Ferguson¹, Lady Gregory², and Dr. Douglas Hyde³. But he had very little respect or use for a work like Macpherson's 'Ossianic Poems', partly because the authenticity of Macpherson's work is very questionable, and partly also because Yeats had a wholesome dislike for eighteenth sentimentality of the pseudo-Rousseau type.

There is a considerable body of Gaelic Literature about Oisín in prose as well as in

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1. 'Aideen's Grave' by Sir Samuel Ferguson.
 2. Lady Gregory's "Gods and Fighting Men". This might sound like an anachronism as Lady Gregory's work was actually published only in 1904. But she had been collecting the material for it for several years, and it is more than likely that Yeats has had access to it. The close resemblance between 'The Wanderings of Oisín' and 'Gods and Fighting Men' confirms it.
 3. 'Religious Songs of Connaught' by Dr. Douglas Hyde.

verse, though the old texts are mostly in prose. Some Irish manuscripts are dated the eleventh and twelfth centuries and even go back 150 to 250 years before that. The bulk of Ossianic Literature, however, is of later date as far as the form under which they have come down to us is concerned. A number of useful texts, mostly in prose, are preserved in manuscripts of the 14th century. During the 16th and early 17th centuries Scotland was responsible for the creation of a large mass of narrative poems dealing with Ossian. The Gaelic-speaking peasantry in Ireland as well as Scotland have preserved orally several of these ballads as well as a mine of prose narratives most of which have Ossian and his comrades as the central figures.

Yeats was not a Gaelic scholar, and his knowledge of ~~Gaelic~~ Irish, old as well as new, was negligible. But he was aware of the existence of many of these later manuscripts. The two works he did make use of copiously were Sir Samuel Ferguson's "Aideen's Grave", Oisín's lament over Aideen, the wife of his son, Oscar, and Dr. Douglas Hyde's "Religious Songs of Connaught". Ferguson, on the whole, in reshaping his old material hammered it down to a rather taut Homeric shape and texture. Yeats is truer to the original and has created the vagueness of a dream. Yet

lines like

We thought on Oscar's pencilled urn
And those on Gavra lying low,
Where round and round the ravens go

are dangerously close to Ferguson's

The great green rath's ten-acred tomb
Lies heavy on his urn;

and

A cup of bodkin-pencilled clay
Holds Oscar

and show how greatly indebted Yeats is to Sir Samuel. Yeats's earliest poetry was a plaintive cry for a domain set apart from 'life's exceeding injocundity'. In 'The Wanderings of Oisin' he is carefully, deliberately getting out of the classical European tract and the result is a poem in which "Vision emerged here and there suddenly, with all of a dream's intermittent distinctness..... A dim world somewhere between night and day, between waking and sleeping, (in which) his imagination moved in; utterly remote from the clear hard light of Mediterranean shores Men and women moved under laws unintelligible to us; and Yeats seeking to identify himself with the spirit of

them instinctively made a dream-world"¹.

It is a characteristically early Yeatsian mood, the longing to get out of real life, customs, and conventions and to enter into the life of a spirit.

And in a wild and sudden dance

We mocked at time and fate and chance

does not merely describe the Gaelic spirit dreaming of love and feasts and bloodless fights and happy far-away lands, but is the revolt of the Celtic spirit against the tyranny and the limitations of Reality. The entire poem, its characters, events, landscape, pageantry, is unadulteratedly Celtic. Its dream-laden mood has a pagan, sensuous beauty.

Here and there the English masters intrude-- Shelley, Blake, Tennyson, Keats, even Coleridge. The framework of the poem has something strangely reminiscent of Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner'. St. Patrick is the wedding guest and Oisín the ancient mariner himself. And it is difficult to resist the temptation of wanting to compare it with Keats's *Endymion*. "In *Endymion* everything is sacrificed to detail; the design is lost in a maze of allusions, of side-issues, in a beautiful cloud of colour, bewildering, baffling"². But "The Wanderings of

1. Stephen Gwynn - Irish Literature and Drama.
2. Forrest Read - W.B. Yeats, a study. P 35

Oisin" with all its romantic prodigality does not lose sight of the story.

Shelley and Blake are the two main influences in the body of the poem. Refrains like

Away, away with me she cried¹

are distinctly Shelleyan. The description of the approach to the Isle of Dancing is reminiscent of Shelley and the great fortress on the 'Isle of Many Fears' is obviously suggested by and based on Shelley's "Temple of the Spirit"². Blake's influence is mainly spiritual and philosophical. Yeats in his early days loved to don the mantle of a mystic and Blake held a great fascination for him. He studied Blake with great care and attention and though he never attempted to copy or imitate Blake's style there are several lines in the poems which recall Blake.

Compare for example-

" -----and my land where tide
And sleep drown sun and moon and star."

"O saddest harp in all the world,
Sleep till the moon and the stars die".

1. Cf. "Then 'Away! Away!' She cried and stretched her sword"
'Revolt of Islam'
2. Revolt of Islam - (st. 49 - 53)

"But the love-dew dims our eyes till the day
When God shall come from the sea with a sigh
And bid the stars drop down from the sky
And the moon like a pale rose wither away".

" And the fixed stars had dawned and shone and set,
Since God Time and Death and Sleep".

But in spite of all that, the similes, the metaphors, the very phrases are un-English and are in the characteristic early Yeatsian manner. "Old like the wandering moon" - "Like coloured Asian birds at evening in the rainless lands". The shell of Niamh's dress wavered "like the summer streams as her soft bosom rose and fell"; and her days pass "like a wayward tune". Her sheep have wool "whiter than sea-froth flows". Her companions laughed "like murmurs of the sea", their brows "white as fragrant milk". The song-birds "stood round the shore like drops of frozen rain-bow light". Oisín falls into "a long iron sleep, as a fish in the water goes dumb as a stone". His horse "fled away like a summer fly".

And the loveliest parts of the poem are where his imagination has free play.

" And like a sunset were her lips,
A stormy sunset on doomed ships".

There is a touch of the Homeric manner in lines

like

Tying the horse to his vast foot that lay
Half in the unvesselled sea, we climbed the stairs
And climbed so long, I thought the last steps were
Hung from the morning star.

Or again,

. we held our way
And stood within: clothed in a misty ray
I saw a foam-white sea-gull drift and float
Under the roof, and with a straining throat
Shouted and hailed him: he hung there a star,
For no man's cry shall ever mount so far.

Or again,

Snatching the horn of Niamh, I blew a lingering
note;
Came sound from those monstrous sleepers, a
sound like the stirring of flies.
He, shaking the fold of his lips, and heaving
the pillar of his throat,
Watched me with mournful wonder out of the well
of his eyes.

There is something distinctly remote,
an un-European cadence and imagery about lines like

. A foaming tide

Whitened afar with surge, fan-formed and wide,

Burst from a great door marred by many a blow
 From mace and sword and pole-axe, long ago
 When Gods and giants warred "

"If indeed there is a Celtic spirit, Celtic glamour, Celtic imaginative quality in English Literature, we find the quintessence of it in this description of the Castle of Fears built by the celtic sea-god, Mananan"¹.

'The Wanderings of Oisín' with its sustained music is not the work of a mere accomplished versifier, but of a poet whose melodic faculty steeped in Celtic imagination does not allow his work to degenerate into the incessant jingle and slipshodness of long rhymed poems. Its prosody is worth examining.

In the first two books, the loose stanza-form with long and short lines and rhymed couplets are varied by the use of alternate rhymes of the broken stave. The basic foot is the iambic tetrameter. Alternate rhyme relieves the monotony of the couplet. Arrangements like abbaedcdaeffeagghc.. are common and very fascinating. The metres of the three parts are chosen carefully to suit appropriately the theme. Thus the first is in free octosyllabics, the second in Keatsian decasyllabic

1. Patty Gurd. 'Early Poetry of W.B. Yeats.'

couplets, the third in quatrains of long-lined anapaestics and dactylic verse. The first and third metres, especially the third, are managed with considerable mastery. In the Keatsian verse, Yeats is evidently much less at ease.

The earliest version of the poem, the 1889 edition, undoubtedly, has charm, but the verse is on the whole uneven and has a touch of immaturity about it. The first and second parts have been changed considerably in later editions. But though practically rewritten, the sequence is retained and the changes are more in the nature of a line by line revision.

Many lines in the earlier version, (dropped or entirely changed in the later editions), are typical of a young poet who is anxious to secure as much musical effect as possible. Compare

'In the poppy-hung house of the twilight fluted'
or,

'Basaltic pillars marred with hew and hack'.

In the earlier version, especially in parts 1 and 2, there is a passion for detail almost Keatsian, and a tendency to crowd in images, side-issues etc. In the later version there is an almost fastidious avoidance of surplusage. Many beautiful lines like the description of the morning in Part I

On a morning misty and mild and fair

-- And Other Poems.

The other poems in the 1889 volume consist of short dramatic sketches, meditative and fanciful lyrics, ballads, songs and quatrains. Most of them had appeared in Reviews or Periodicals¹ and some² in the anthology 'Poems and Ballads of Young Ireland'³. They have a spontaneous singing quality which must have come as a very refreshing note at the time of their publication. In a lesser way, they had the same effect on the reading public as A. E. Housman's 'Shropshire Lad'. Even Oscar Wilde with his fastidious tastes praised them without qualification.

Walsh and Allingham had initiated Yeats into the secrets of country spirits and folklore. And Ferguson had roused his interest in the heroic cycles of Irish Myth. But none of them seem to have affected his style or even his view of the world in this volume. It is strange and somewhat surprising that someone so Irish as Yeats, so deeply rooted in Sligo, should produce poems so palpably English, so like a dilution of the

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1. The Dublin University Review, The Irish Monthly, The Irish Fireside, The Leisure Hour.
 2. The Stolen Child, King Goll, The Meditation of the Old Fisherman.
 3. M.H.Gill and Son. Dublin, 1888.

old romantics; graceful, delicate, at times weak and yet elaborate and complicated.

Several of them are dramatic sketches--
'Time and the Witch Vivien', 'Jealousy'(in later editions 'Anashuya and Vijaya'), 'Mosada', 'The Seeker', 'The Island of Statues'; and we might even include 'A Lovers' Quarrel among the Fairies', 'How Ferenczi Renyi kept Silent' and the 'Fairy Pedant' under the same category. John E. Yeats exalted dramatic Poetry above all other kinds. The younger Yeats argued that personal utterance could be as fine an escape from rhetoric and abstraction as drama itself. "But my father would hear of nothing but drama; personal utterance was only egoism. I knew it was not, but ~~did~~not know how to explain the difference...
... Yet when I re-read those early poems which gave me so much trouble, I find little but romantic convention, unconscious drama"¹.

- REPEATED

'Time and the Witch Vivien'² is the boldest of these dramatic sketches. Apart from its appearance in the 1889 volume it has not

1. Autobiographies. (Macmillan, 1926) p.127.
He continues: 'It is so many years before one can believe enough in what one feels even to know what the feeling is.'
2. Appendix IV.

been reprinted.

In a marble-flagged, pillared room the witch Vivien is admiring her beauty. In the centre of the room is a fountain and there are magical instruments in one corner. She is full of conceit of her youth and beauty, the roseate fingers, the gleam in her long hair. Time enters as an old pedlar "with a scythe, an hour-glass and a black bag". Vivien, subtlest of magicians and conqueror of Merlin, scoffs at old age and defies Time. She wants to buy the hour-glass, but Time will not sell it; they play for it with dice and Vivien loses. She plays again this time with her life at stake, and the game chess. But she is no match for Time and is defeated again.

Yeats's main sources were Tennyson, Sir Thomas Malory and probably Lady Charlotte Guest¹. In the 'Idylls of the King' the wily Vivien tries her designs on the irreproachable Arthur and is laughed at by the court. Enraged, she turns to Merlin, 'the most famous man of those times', and her sprightly talk and vivid smiles make him 'tolerant of what he half-disdained'. She follows him to the wood of Broceliande

1. The Mabinogion - a collection of 11 Welsh prose Tales from the 14th century Red Book of Hergest. Edited and translated by Lady Charlotte Guest. (1st pub. 1838)

and imprisons him there by using the charm he had unfolded to her. Malory's portrait of Merlin is less sympathetic and makes one sympathise with Vivien who is referred to simply as 'the lady of the lake'. 'The Mabinogion' is fair to both. In it Vivien is given high lineage and represented as really loving Merlin; and Merlin discloses the secrets of his art to Vivien impelled by a fatal destiny of which he was fully aware.

Yeats's Vivien is vain, proud and egotistic and his Time is a poor old humble philosopher who wants to teach the arrogant Vivien a lesson. Perhaps the whole sketch grew out of Spenser's Garden of Adonis, though Spenser's Time is called wicked and shown as the great enemy of the 'fair Flower of Beauty'. The device of the fountain is probably an unconscious Shelleyan influence¹. There is a great deal of enjambement in the blank verse and Yeats seems to be experimenting with the broken stave. He is very successful.

The group of Indian poems ('An Indian Song'; 'Kanva, the Indian^f, on God'; 'Kanva on himself'; 'Jealousy') owe their origin to the young Brahmin

1. Cf. Shelley's fondness for the fountain as a setting for his poems. Leon and Cythna wake up after death beside a fountain; Rosalind and Helen meet beside a fountain to tell their woes; the Witch of Atlas lived in a cavern near a secret fountain.

67

whom Yeats, AE and others invited to Dublin. Even early in life Yeats had been drawn to mysticism and spiritualism. "When we were schoolboys we used to discuss whatever we could find to read of mystical philosophy and to pass crystals over each other's hands and eyes and to fancy that we could feel a breath flowing from them"¹. He had been introduced to Theosophy by Charles Johnstone, had read ~~Sinnott~~^{Sinnett}'s Esoteric Buddhism and was getting interested in Eastern philosophy and thought.

"Some among us when we look backward upon our lives see that the coming of a young Brahmin into Ireland helped to give our vague thoughts a shape"². The young Brahmin seems to be the Kanva³ of these poems. He was a charming man with delicate hands and beautiful gestures. "He taught us by what seemed an invincible logic that those who die, in so far as they have imagined beauty or justice, are made a part of beauty or justice, and move through the minds of living men, as Shelley believed; and that mind overshadows mind even among the living, and by pathways that lie beyond the senses; and that he measured labour by this measure, and put the hermit above all other labourers, because, being the most silent and the most hidden, he

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1. The Pathway. Volume VIII. p.191. The Shakespeare Head Press, Stratford-on-Avon. 1908.
 2. Ibid.
 3. A great sage and philosopher in Hindu mythology.

lived nearer to the Eternal Powers, and showed their mastery of the world".¹.

"Religion", he said, existed also for its own sake; and every soul quivered between two emotions, the desire to possess things, to make them a portion of its egotism, and a delight in just and beautiful things for their own sake-- and all religions were a doctrinal or symbolical crying aloud of this delight".² These words have an added significance when we think of Yeats's own theories about the idea of Art for Art's sake in later days and his interest in Symbolism. The unfolding of the wisdom continued for days.

"Alcibiades fled from Socrates lest he might do nothing but listen to him all his life long and I am certain that we, seeking as youth will for some unknown deed and thought, all dreamed that but to listen to this man who threw the enchantment of power about silent and gentle things, and at last to think as he did, was the one thing worth doing and thinking; and that all action and all words that lead to action were a little vulgar, a little trivial".³ The important thing is that Yeats did awake out of that dream. That period of dream-

1. The Pathway. Collected Works, Vol. VIII. p.196.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

69

wrapt fancy, seances, Eastern mysticism served a definite purpose. It left its mark on his diction, his metaphors, his rhythm as much as his other interests, pre-Raphaelitism, Ireland, Gaelic mythology and the French symbolists. The individuality of Yeats's diction and rhythm, the lovely incantation during the middle period, the naked simplicity during the later period, is neither a racial heritage nor a cultivated habit. It is the product of his divergent interests, activities and pursuits.

The Brahmin's formula for a bed-time prayer -- "I have lived many lives. I have been a slave to a prince. Many a beloved has sat upon my knees and I have sat upon the knees of many a beloved. Everything that has been shall be again" -- is the basis of the poem 'Kanva on Himself'. 'Beautiful words that I spoilt once by turning them into clumsy words' says Yeats.¹ 'Kanva on Himself' is clumsy verse, though viewed objectively, the Brahmin's utterance seems to have little beauty in spite of Yeats's eulogy. 'Kanva on God' is the most successful of the four poems, though all of them possess a certain lyrical fervour, and some critics find in 'Jealousy' something of the delicate spirit of Kalidasa's 'Sakunthala'.²

Of the other poems, 'Ephemera' is one

1. The Pathway. 2. J. Todhunter in a review (The Academy, 30-3-1889)

of the best and shows little immaturity. It reminds one of Oscar Wilde's 'Her Voice' and is also reminiscent of Verlaine's 'Colloque Sentimental' which begins:

Dans le vieux parc solitaire et glacé
Deux formes ont tout (a) l'heure passé.

This resemblance might be superficial, even casual; but there is no mistaking that the poem owes something to Maeterlinck's 'Trésor des Humbles'.

Several of these poems are pre-Raphaelite in their freshness and naïveté and attention to minute detail. 'She who dwelt among the Sycamores'² is one of the lovely ones which has never been reprinted. Yeats told Forrest Reid that it was written in its first form when he was only sixteen and that he thought he had spoiled it when he re-wrote it as a sonnet. 'The Stolen Child'¹ is another refreshingly beautiful poem which ^{YEATS} did not think of including in later editions.

For the first time Yeats begins to find himself in the Irish poems. Some of them are too consciously Irish and emphatically patriotic, e.g.

1, 2. Appendix IV.

'How Ferenczi Renyi kept Silent'¹; which is Yeats's earliest attempt at a patriotic poem. It is a conscious attempt to imitate Davis and is as bad and melodramatic as Davis at his worst. Others are commonplace with merely an Irish title like 'The Fairy Pedant'. 'The Fairy Pedant' shows in its tunefulness the influence of Swinburne:

Afar from our lawn and our levee,
 O sister of sorrowful gaze!
 Where the roses in scarlet are heavy
 And dream of the end of their days,
 You move in another dominion
 And hang o'er the historied stone:
 Unpruned is your beautiful pinion
 Who wander and whisper alone.

The best of them are thoroughly Irish. 'A Legend' is based on Irish folk-lore.² 'An old song re-sung' (Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet) is "an attempt to reconstruct an old song from three lines imperfectly remembered by an old woman in the village of Ballysodare, Sligo"³. These with 'King Goll' and 'To an Isle in the Water' are perhaps the most

1. Appendix IV.
 2. It is attributed to Giraldus Cambrensis, the mediaeval historian and is referred to in Thomas Moore's Irish Melodies - 'Let Erin remember the days of old'.
 3. Footnote on p.129. Wanderings of Oisín (1889).

Yeatsian of the poems. They were all written about 1888-'89. 'King Goll' appeared in 1888 in the little anthology of Gill and Son and the others appear for the first time in 1889 and are thus slightly later in date than most of the others. They indicate the direction of his development and form a prelude to the more Irish imagery and contents of his next volume.

THE COUNTESS KATHLEEN
&
VARIOUS LEGENDS AND LYRICS.

"When I had just published my first book, I met William Morris in Holborn Viaduct, and he began to praise it with the words, 'That is my kind of Poetry', and promised to write about it, and would have said I do not know how much more if he had not suddenly caught sight of one of those decorated lamp posts"1

The resemblance between 'The Wanderings of Oisín' and Morris's Sagas is more than skin deep. In both Yeats and Morris "there is the same use of the old story and its facts; and there is an infusion, too, of wholly modern feeling, which the poet wagers that he will somehow reconcile with that more primitive matter. Morris infused . . . a temper towards beauty which belonged to his group and is not found in the northern stories at all; And something of the same temper, with a difference with a greater strangeness and remoteness, is infused by Yeats into all of his verse that is based on legend.."2 Morris must have also had in mind

1. 'Samhain' An occasional review edited by W.B. Yeats. November 1908. P.1.
2. 'Modern Studies'. Oliver Elton. P.299.

a certain preciseness and beauty of expression which is evident in the shorter lyrics and sketches of the 1889 volume. The value of Morris's literary influence, following upon the rather prim domesticities of the early Victorian Era and the established conventions of the Pre-Raphaelites is sometimes underrated. Yeats saw a great deal of Morris as well as Henley during the years following 1887. At William Morris's house at Hammersmith, he was a frequent visitor. He met there Walter Crane, Emery Walker, Bernard Shaw, Hyndman the Socialist, and the anarchist Prince Kropotkin, all members of Morris's Socialist circle. Yeats had read 'The Earthly Paradise' and 'The Defence of Guenevere' as a boy and admired so much 'The man who never laughed again' that his father teased him for preferring Morris to Keats, even accused him of that. Morris stirred his interest very much. "If some angels offered the choice, I would choose to live his life, Poetry and all, rather than my own or any other man's¹". Yet Morris's influence worked in a different way from Henley's. Morris did not "project like Henley an image of himself because having all his imagination set upon making and doing, he had little self knowledge. He imagined instead new

1. Autobiographies. P.175.

conditions of making and doing; and in the teeth of those scientific generalisations that cowed my boyhood, I can see some like imagining in every great change, and believe that the first flying fish first leaped, not because it sought 'adaptation' to the air, but out of horror of the sea"¹.

On the other hand, Henley was his acknowledged teacher. "I like many others, began under him my education"². Morris's Poetry moved him intensely; Henley's writings he disliked "mainly because he wrote vers libre, which I associated with Tyndall and Huxley, and Bastien-Lepages's clownish peasant staring with vacant eyes at her great boots"³. The strong impressionism of 'Hospital Sketches' and 'London Voluntaries' did not appeal to Yeats. In his poetical works he was like a great actor with a bad part, Yeats used to say. "... like a great actor of passion; and an actor of passion will display some one quality of soul personified again and again..... Henley, half inarticulate - 'I am very costive' , he would say - beset with personal quarrels, built up an image of power and magnanimity till it became, at moments, when seen

1. Autobiographies. P.177.
 2. Ibid. P.153.
 3. Ibid. P.154.

as it were by lightning, his true self"¹. Henley was the leader of a little group which included Charles Whibley, Kenneth Grahame, Barry Pain the novelist, R.A.M. Stevenson. Kipling was there sometimes and Stepniak, the Revolutionary. Henley was something of an autocrat, but he encouraged talent, denounced things and persons, "that did not move us to reverence" and was "quite plainly not on the side of our parents". "He got the best out of us all, because he had made us accept him as our judge and we knew that his judgement could neither sleep, nor be softened, nor changed, nor turned aside"².

Several of the poems in the Countess Kathleen Volume^{my} appeared first in 'The Scots Observer' (afterwards 'The National Observer'), Henley's weekly newspaper. 'A Cradle Song', 'Father Gilligan', 'The old Pensioner', 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree', 'A man who dreamed of Fairyland', 'A Fairy Song', 'An Epitaph' (A Dream of Death), 'The Rose of the World' (Rosa Mundi), 'The Peace of the Rose', 'The White Birds', 'Fergus and the Druid'³. "Henley often revised my lyrics, crossing out a line or a

1. Autobiographies. P.155.
 2. Ibid. P.158
 3. Appendix

a stanza and writing in one of his own, and I was comforted by my belief that he also rewrote Kipling then in the first flood of popularity". And again, "At first, indeed, I was ashamed of being rewritten and thought that others were not, and only began investigation when the editorial characteristics, epigrams, archaisms, and all appeared in the article upon Paris fashions and in that upon opium by an Egyptian Pasha. I was not compelled to full conformity, for verse is plainly stubborn; and in prose, that I might avoid unacceptable opinions, I wrote nothing but ghost or fairy stories, picked up from my mother or some pilot at Rosses Point and Henley saw that I must needs mix a palette fitted to my subject matter. But if he had changed every 'has' into 'hath' I would have let him, for had not we sinned ourselves in his generosity?"¹

That was life in London. But in spite of all its excitement, interest and importance, his heart remained in Ireland. We see him writing to Katherine Tynan: "Any breath from Ireland in this hateful London, where you cannot go five paces without seeing some wretched object broken either by wealth or poverty is good"² and again in another letter: "I do not think I shall

1. Autobiographies P.159.

2. Twenty-Five Years: Reminiscences. P.259.

ever find London very tolerable. It can give me nothing"¹. He had just published 'John Sherman' and 'Dhoya', written perhaps at the instigation of his father². These two stories are not isolated prose fragments in Yeats's poetic career. *They* provide the key to his personal feelings, the inner struggle which had not yet made itself the basis of his Poetry. Sherman is not unlike Yeats himself and Ballah is Sligo. Ganconagh's apology is young Yeats's confession of faith and an admirable introduction to his early Poetry:

.... I am an old little Irish spirit, and I sit in the hedges and watch the world go by. I see the boys going to market driving donkeys with creels of turf and the girls carrying baskets of apples. Sometimes I call to some pretty face, and we chat a little in the shadow, the apple basket before us, for I care for nothing in the world but love and idleness..... If my voice at while grows distant and dreamy when I talk of the world's affairs, remember that I have seen all from my hole in the hedge. I hear continually the songs of my own people

1. Twenty-five Years: Reminiscences. P.265.
 2. In a letter to Katherine Tynan he said: 'My father does not wish me to do critical work. He wants me to write stories. I am working on one (possibly John Sherman). It is almost done now. There is some good character drawing in it, I think, but the construction is patchy and incoherent!'

who dance on the hillside, and am content.
 I have never carried apples or driven turf
 myself, or if I have it was only in a
 dream.....¹

Most of the poems in this volume are
 founded on Irish tradition. 'The Countess
 Kathleen', the principal work, is an attempt to
 expound the traditions, customs and beliefs of
 Christian Ireland and is in direct contrast to the
 Pagan beauty of 'The Wanderings of Oisín' which
 belongs to the pre-Christian cycle of legends.
 "The Christian cycle being mainly concerned with
 contending moods and moral motives needed, I
 thought, a dramatic vehicle. The tumultuous
 and heroic pagan cycle, on the other hand, having
 to do with vast and shadowy activities and with
 the great impersonal emotions expressed itself
 naturally or so I imagined in epic and epic-
 lyric measures. No epic method seemed sufficient-
 ly minute and subtle for the one, and no dramatic
 method elastic and all-containing enough for the
 other"²

The dramatic method employed by Yeats is
 a purely subjective one. And perhaps it was in
 justification of this that he wrote in the
 dedicatory letter to AE in 'The Secret Rose':

1. Introduction to John Sherman and Dhoya. P.1.
 2. Preface to 'Countess Kathleen and Various Legends
 and Lyrics' (1892 edition) P.8.

"Poetry and romance cannot be made by the most conscientious study of famous moments and of the thoughts and feelings of others, but only by looking into that little, infinite, faltering, eternal flame that one calls one's self". And the result was that the play met with a chorus of protests especially from the clergy. "I was accused of blasphemy because I made a woman sell her soul and yet escaped damnation, and a lack of patriotism because I made Irishmen and women, who it seems never did such a thing, sell theirs" said Yeats afterwards.

'The Countess Kathleen' is a dramatic poem in which the unity of movement is preserved by a careful avoidance of complexities of facts and motives. There is no central crisis/~~in~~ dramatic sense. This absence of complexity is its strength. Yeats was not attempting to write a realistic drama for the stage (though the play is extremely effective on the stage) but only using the dramatic method to give strength and point to his narrative. It is an attempt "to unite a more ample method to feeling not less national, celtic, and distinctive"¹. It is a tribute to Yeats's genius that he gave it dramatic directness and severity.

1. Introduction to 'The Countess Kathleen etc' (1892 edition) p.9.

Directness and severity. Kathleen's inner struggle is not depicted, though we are intensely aware of it. She is not etherialised but is human and womanly and the loss of her soul becomes a simple, but noble act of self-surrender. The mental conflict, the valuation of motives, the casuistry are left to the imagination of the audience. And never for a moment does the play suggest the unearthliness of spiritual things or glorify the oddities of peasant superstition. The symbolism is suggestive, as it should be in a play, and even obvious. The poisonous and pestilent vapours of the woods and marshes stand for sin and evil, and Kathleen's beauty and unselfishness for grace and faith.

The music of its lines has an intangible mystical beauty as in

Who will go drive with Fergus now,
And pierce the deep wood's woven shade,
And dance upon the level shore?
Young man, lift up thy russet brow,
And lift ~~your~~ tender eyelids, maid,
And brood on hopes and years no more.
And no more turn aside and brood
Upon love's bitter mystery;
For Fergus rules the brazen cars
And rules the shadows of the wood,

And the white breast of the dim sea

And all dishevelled wandering stars.¹

And yet it is conscious art. The peasants speak in lines whose very metre seems to show the stark reality of famine and want.

Shemus. What can we do but live on sorrel and dock,

And dandelion, till our mouths are green?

or again

Mary. You shall at last dry like dry leaves and hang

Nailed like dead vermin to the doors of God.

The 'Various Legends and Lyrics' include stories from the old Irish cycle, ballads based on more modern incidents, imaginative lyrics and mystical love poems. Their fearless simplicity, haunting music, wistfulness, even melancholy show how Irish Yeats has become. The theme of these poems is really 'A Druid land, a Druid time'. It is Irish Poetry with a Celtic imagination, Celtic imagery and diction in the classical manner. Morris's grasp of his themes and Henley's strict and passionate self-judgement have become a part of Yeats so completely and his influences have been assimilated so thoroughly that there are no odd lines and phrases breaking up his expression and bringing us memories of his masters. Lionel Johnson in a review in The Academy (Oct. 1892) says

1. Dropped in later editions, but included in 'The Rose' as 'who goes with Fergus?'

how Yeats is not overcome by the apparent antagonism of the classical and the romantic in art, and that he can treat his subject according to its nature. Consider the 'Attis' of Catullus where the monstrous, barbaric severity of the theme is realised in verse of the strictest beauty. Yeats's Poetry is in that spirit and with all the intensity of its passion is very severe art.

Yeats's Irishism never becomes provincial. "It is easy to be fantastic, mystical, quaint, full of old-world delights in myths and legends devoted to dreams and sentiments of a fairy antiquity; but writers of this kind are commonly successful by fits and starts, their charm elusive and fugitive -- they have the vague imagination of Welsh and Irish folk; that perpetual vision of things under enchanted lights, which makes the thought and speech of many an old peasant woman so graceful, so 'poetical'. But when they approach the art of literature, they are unequal to its demands; they cannot so master the art as to make it convey the imagination"¹. The writers of the Irish Literary Revival have been varied and

1. Lionel Johnson. 'The Academy' October 1, 1892.

uneven. How far did the creative, in a literary sense, show a distinctive evolution in technique and quality? Did the new Literature show a genuine feeling for Irish idiom and the native speech? Outside Yeats's work these questions were a little difficult to answer. But in 1892 the Irish Renaissance was still in its early stages. A national revival of Letters requires a national change of heart. Yeats realised it and fashioned his work accordingly.

'The Various Legends and Lyrics' begin and end with the pursuit and finding of Beauty, 'the red-rose-bordered hem', and they are appropriately called 'The Rose' in later editions. It opens:

Red Rose, proud Rose, sad Rose of all my days!
 Come near me, while I sing the ancient ways:

" " " " " "

Come near, that no ^ore blinded by man's fate,
 I find under the boughs of love and hate,
 In all poor foolish things that live a day,
 Eternal beauty wandering on her way.

And closes:

I cast my heart into my rhymes,
 That you, in the dim coming times

May know how my heart went with them
After the red-rose bordered hem.

The Rose poems are significant. They mark the beginnings of Yeats's pre-occupation with symbolism, a symbolism which he developed in his next volume, 'The Wind Among the Reeds'. The Irish symbolism of the Rose was not known to the majority of readers in Ireland, let alone in England. Perhaps it was a blessing in disguise, as it made the understanding, even the appreciation of these poems easier. ~~The~~ ~~idea~~ of Yeats had never been a poet of strong physical emotions. In his early days whenever he dealt with love or beauty, he toyed with the idea of an abstract, intangible, personified Eternal Beauty.

'The Two Trees', another mystic, symbolic poem shows a dissatisfaction with the outer world.

Beloved, gaze in thine own heart.

The inner life and the inner vision are the only things which matter. 'The White Birds' too shows the same dissatisfaction with the world we live in, but there the cry is for another world of phantasy and dream. Similarly, the visionary's

dream of the legendary country is the theme of 'The man who dreamed of Fairy-land'.

Two poems both employing a great deal of dialogue are 'Fergus and the Druid' and the 'Death of Cuchulain' (Cuchulain's fight with the Sea). 'Fergus and the Druid' is a dialogue in blank verse. 'The Death of Cuchulain' is partly in dialogue and written in loose stanza form, rhymed in couplets. It is only a different version of the later 'On Baile's Strand' and owes a great deal to Lady Gregory's 'Cuchulain of Muirtheme'. The use of the broken stave (as in lines 29, 30, 60, 61, 75 etc.) relieves the monotony of the rhymed couplets and is a masterly expedient.

'The Lake Isle of Innisfree', perhaps the most popular of Yeats's shorter lyrics appears here for the first time in book form. The first reference to it is in a letter to Katherine Tynan in which he gives two of the three stanzas¹. Later on, in the 'Autobiographies'

1. 'Twenty-five Years: Reminiscences' by Katharine Tynan. (W.B. Yeats: Some Letters).

he says: "I had still the ambition, formed in Sligo in my teens, of living in imitation of Thoreau on Innisfree, a little island in Lough Gill, and when walking through Fleet Street very homesick I heard a little tinkle of water and saw a fountain in a shop-window which balanced a little ball upon its jet, and began to remember lake water. From the sudden remembrance came my poem 'Innisfree', my first lyric with anything in its rhythm of my own music. I had begun to loosen rhythm as an escape from rhetoric and from that emotion of the crowd which rhetoric brings, but I only understood vaguely and occasionally that I must for my special purpose use nothing but the common syntax. A couple of years later I would not have written that first line with its conventional archaism -- "Arise and go" -- nor the inversion in the last stanza"¹. 'The Lake Isle' has not much passion in it. Neither has the wistful love poem 'When you are old'. But they have both a certain subtlety of motive and tenderness. The lightness of touch in both is exquisite. And that is felt in many other poems also. Compare, for example, in 'The

1. Autobiographies. P.190-191.

Rose of the World':

Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream?
 For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
 Mournful that no new wonder may betide,
 Troy passed away in one high funereal gleam,
 And Usna's children died.

The simplicity of feeling and the directness of expression of the ballads provide somewhat of a contrast. The best of them -- 'Father Gilligan', 'Lament of the old Pensioner', 'Meditation of an old Fisherman', 'The Fiddler of Dooney' -- are full of natural sentiment. They have humour and a sense of the human soul in all things, a gentleness towards life which is not merely Irish, but Yeatsian. "'Le génie celtique', says Michelet, 'sympathise profondément avec le génie grec'. Neither Greek nor Celtic Poetry has that 'gravitas', that 'auctoritas' which belongs to the Poetry of Rome and of England. In place of it the Greeks and Celts have the gift of simple spirituality, a quickness and adroitness in siezing the spiritual relations of things, a beautiful childishness and freshness"¹.

1. Lionel Johnson in 'The Academy' October 1, 1892.

SPECULATIONS.

(1) Legendary, magic, astrology.

Between 1892 and 1899 Yeats produced two volumes of prose: 'The Celtic Twilight' (1893) and 'The Secret Rose' (1897).

'The Celtic Twilight' is an attempt to create in the form of vivid sketches the background to Irish beliefs, superstitions, and customs. The sketches comprise scraps of autobiography, the conversation of peasants and farmers, stories of old country women, gossip, folk-lore, dramatised incidents. They are fresh, truthful and sincere. At its best the book is light pleasant 'reportage' of the Irish countryside and its simple people and is a prelude to the more serious work. 'The Secret Rose' has something of the inwardness of a poet's beliefs. It is a study in Irish mythology and its symbolic meanings. Some of its legends and tales are of the poet's own creation and the whole book is an intensely personal document. It is an attempt to create a personal and individual mythology, a mythology he makes use of later to express personal emotions and modern ideas. "Ireland has preserved with some excellent things a gift of vision which has died out among more hurried and more successful nations" he writes to A.E. in the dedication letter in 'The Secret Rose'. The book is a tribute to that gift and an elaboration of that vision. "They have but one subject, the war of spiritual with natural order".

'The Secret Rose' is really the key to 'The Wind Among the Reeds'. To understand the complete significance of the poems one has to turn back to 'The Secret Rose'. "Hanrahan is the simplicity of an imagination too changeable to gather permanent possessions, or the adoration of the shepherds; and Michael Robartes is the pride of the imagination brooding upon the greatness of its possessions, or the adoration of the Magi; while Aedh is the myrrh and frankincense that the imagination offers continually before all that it loves".¹ That is from Yeats's own notes to 'The Wind Among the Reeds'. In 'The Secret Rose' these imaginary personages, Hanrahan, Michael Roberts, Aedh come to life and we see the symbols as a living force.

These heroes are not unrelated to the Alchemical Rose and Owen Aherne of the 'Tables of the Law'. 'The Tables of the Law' and 'The Adoration of the Magi' appeared in a limited edition soon after 'The Secret of the Rose' and with 'Rosa Alchemica' make a very colourful trilogy. At the British Museum reading-room Yeats had met MacGregor Mathers, the author of 'The Kabbala Unveiled' and the brother-in-law of Henri Bergson, the philosopher. Soon he

1. The Wind Among the Reeds- Notes. P. 73-74.

was initiated into "The Hermetic Students" in a Charlotte Street studio and had mastered Mather's symbolic system. The elaborate ritual of "The Hermetic Order of the Golden Door" fascinated him and he went so far as to say that Alchemy is "the gradual distillation of the contents of the soul, until they are ready to put off the mortal and put on the immortal".¹ Like Lully, Flamel and Paracelsus, Alchemy began to acquire an importance and a significance to him and became a dangerous preoccupation. And sometimes he even looked as if he was a victim of his own credulity. Mathers and his friend, the white-haired Oxfordshire clergyman, spoke of alchemical laboratories in weird cells and the elixir of life. At his house at Forest Hill a small romantic group including Florence Farr assembled. Mathers was demonstrating to his initiates, one by one, strange and unbelievable phenomena, and, "presently, my turn came. He gave me a card-board symbol and I closed my eyes. Sight came slowly, there was not that sudden miracle as if the darkness had been cut with a knife, for that miracle is mostly a woman's privilege, but there arose before me mental images that I could not control: a desert and black Titan raising himself up by his two hands from the middle of a heap of ancient ruins.

1. The Secret Rose, 1897. P.249.

Mathers explained that I had seen a being of the order of Salamanders because he had shown me their symbol, but it was not necessary even to show the symbol, it would have been sufficient that he imagined it."¹

This was not mere imagination, because we find him soon asking himself "What fixed law would our experiments leave to our imagination?"²

Astrology too ~~attracted~~ attracted him and Macgregor Mathers again seems to be the originator of the interest. George Moore in 'Ave' describes how Yeats had cards "specially designed for the casting of horoscopes. He (Yeats) spoke of his uncle, a celebrated occultist, whose predictions were all fulfilled, and related some of his own successes. All the same, he had been born under Aquarius, and the calculations of the movements of the stars in that constellation were so elaborate that he had abandoned the task for the moment, and was now seeking the influence of the Pleiades. He showed me triangles drawn on plain sheets of cardboard, into which I was to look while thinking of some primary colour - red, or blue, or green ..."³

And in 'Where there is Nothing' when the wise woman in her trance told him that his inspiration was from the moon, he says: "I had no need to turn to my books of astrology to know that the common

1. Autobiographies. P.230.
2. Ibid. P. 232.
3. 'Ave'. P.67.

people are under the moon, or the Porphyry to remember the image-making power of the waters".

ii

Theosophy.

It was Charles Johnstone who introduced Yeats to Theosophy, "Already in Dublin, I had been attracted to the Theosophists because they had affirmed the real existence of the Jew, or of his like, and, apart from whatever might have been imagined by Huxley, Tyndall, Carolus Duran and Bastien-Lepage, I saw nothing against reality"¹. The young Brahmin whom Yeats and friends invited to Dublin, Astrology, and Theosophy are all of one sequence. Theosophy is a diluted mixture of the superficialities of many religions and in its finished form has something distantly akin to certain channels of Indian thought. Madame Blavatsky, an extraordinary woman with a frighteningly fertile and vivid imagination, psychic intuition and compelling personality, made the society a living organism. The esoteric teachings, the use of colour and symbol, clairvoyance and occultism must have been the things which drew Yeats into the circle. He called on Blavatsky and was soon a frequent visitor at her house in Holland Park. Henley had warned him that she was a fake, yet a genius; but his curiosity will not be denied.

"If wisdom existed anywhere in the world, it must be in some lonely mind admitting no duty to us, communing with God only, conceding nothing from fear or favour".¹

With Theosophy came the Society of Psychical research and he began to attend seances. His curiosity was insatiable and he could lend himself to any experience with the utmost readiness. Yeats took every one of these projects with a sincerity which is unquestionable, but at the same time critically, almost scientifically. It is doubtful if he took part in their scientific inquiries. Perhaps, but it would be unlike him. But he did conduct the most fantastic experiments: "Some book or magazine had quoted from an essay upon magic by some seventeenth century writer. If you burnt a flower to ashes and put the ashes under the receiver of an air-pump and stood the receiver in the moonlight for so many nights, the ghost of the flower would appear hovering over its ashes. I got together a committee which performed this experiment without results."² But criticism and argument were unwelcome in such circles and he wondered whether it was just a dread of heresy or lack of essential purpose.

1. Autobiographies. P.214.
2. Ibid. P.224.

Yeats met Ernest Rhys, "a Welshman, lately a writer of Welsh translations and original poems"¹, and with him founded the Rhymers' Club. The club met at an old eating-house in Strand called "The Cheshire Cheese". The principal members were Lionel Johnson, Ernest Dowson, Victor Plarr, Ernest Radford, John Davidson, Richard le Gallienne, T.W. Rolleston, Edwin Ellis and Arthur Symons. Less frequent visitors to "The Cheshire Cheese" were John Todhunter, Oscar Wilde, Herbert Horne and Francis Thompson². Iconoclasm was their fetish and they revelled in spirited contradiction. They dressed in the conventional poetic fashion and created a little bohemia of their own and read their poems to one another. But the meetings were dull and decorous and politeness made their criticism of little value. "I saw that Swinburne in one way, Browning in another, and Tennyson in a third, had filled their work with what I called 'impurities', curiosities about politics, about science, about history, about religion; and that we must create once more the pure work"³. These words of Yeats represent the attitude of the Rhymers towards Poetry; and it is ironical that Yeats should have said that because no man's

1. Autobiographies P.204.
2. William Watson was a member but never attended the Cheshire Cheese meetings.
3. Autobiographies P.207.

work shows more curiosities about politics, science, history and religion. Art for art's sake meant much the same as Art in a vacuum and soon the Rhymers' Club came to grief.

It was at the Rhymers' Club that Yeats met Arthur Symons. Lionel Johnson was the acknowledged critic of the group and his place in Yeats's friendship was soon taken by Arthur Symons. Symons was full of France and Impressionism. Nothing should be described, but only suggested. Symons's friendship gave Yeats's thoughts a richness and clearness and was to make a lasting influence on his poetry. "He (Symons) was making those translations from Mallarmé and from Verlaine, from Calderon, from St. John of the Cross, which are the most accomplished metrical translations of our time, and I think that those from Mallarmé may have given elaborate form to my verses of those years, to the latter poems of "The Wind Among the Reeds", to "The Shadowy Waters", while Villiers de L'Isle Adam had shaped whatever in my "Rosa Alchemica" Pater had not shaped"¹.

Arthur Symons was writing his "Symbolist Movement in Literature" and when it was published in 1899, dedicated it to Yeats. In the dedicatory epistle he said: "You, more than any one else, will sympathise with what I say in it, being yourself the chief representative of that movement in our country. . . . Your

1. Autobiographies p.395.

own Irish liaterary movement is one of its expressions; your own poetry and A.E.'s poetry belong to it in the most intimate sense ". Yeats had just published his "Wind Among the Reeds" and how much its symbolism owes to Symons and France can be seen when Symons goes on to say: "How often have you and I discussed all these questions, rarely arguing about them, for we rarely had an essential difference of opinion, but bringing them more and more clearly into light, turning our instincts into logic, digging until we reached the bases of our convictions. And all the while we were working as well as thinking out a philosophy of art; you at all events, creating beautiful things ".

The Symbolist Movement originated in France. It was a reaction against form, the preciseness and realism of the romantics, Baudelaire, Flaubert, the Goncourts, Taine, Zola, Leconte de Lisle. The symbolists aimed at suggesting rather than saying. They elaborated form but not for its own sake, attempting to separate it from its servility to rhetoric. Verbal elaboration of details gave way to a subtle style which evoked significant details in objects. The image, pure visual experience is evoked by the symbol which evokes subconscious memories and emotional suggestions. It was a revolt against rhetoric, "exteriority", the material tradition, and Literature in their hands became a sacred ritual with the dignity and solemnity

of religion.

"The doctrine of Mysticism", says Arthur Symons, "with which all this Symbolical Literature has so much to do, of which it is all so much the expression, presents us with a theory of life which makes us familiar with mystery, and which seems to harmonise those instincts which make for religion, passion and art, freeing us at once of a great bondage".¹ Yeats responded to these sentiments fully.

1. The Symbolist Movement in Literature — Arthur Symons p. 173.

96
99

"THE WIND AMONG THE REEDS" and "IN THE SEVEN WOODS".

Writing about the Countess Kathleen
volume Yeats has said:

"I thought that for a time I could rhyme
of love, calling it 'The Rose', because of the
Rose's double meaning; of a fisherman who had 'never
a crack' in his heart; of an old woman complaining
of the idleness of the young, or of some cheerful
fiddler, all those things that 'popular poets' write
of, but that I must some day -- on that day when the
gates began to open -- become difficult or obscure.
With a rhyme that still echoed Morris I prayed to
the Red Rose, to Intellectual Beauty:

Come near, come near, come near - ah, leave me still,
A little space for the Rose-breath to fill,
Lest I no more hear common things
But seek alone to hear the strange things said
By God to the bright hearts of those long dead,
and learn to chant a tongue men do not know".¹

The Rose poems are simple lyrics which
have something of the swift and airy rhyming of
Allingham (Compare 'Down by the Salley Gardens
did I meet my Love') and a pleasant singing
quality reminiscent occasionally of the subtle
rhythm and fluency of Thomas More. (Compare 'When you
are old'). They were an attempt to be Irish, a

1. Autobiographies. P.315.

proclamation of his *raison d'être*. The last poem, 'To Ireland in the Coming Times' is a statement of that ambition, a bold and fearless cry:

Know that I would accounted be
True brother of a company
Who sang to sweeten Ireland's wrong,
Ballad and story, rann and song;
Nor be I any less of them,
Because the red-rose-bordered hem
Of her, whose history began
Before God made the Angelic clan,
Trails all about the written page.

x x x x

Nor may I less be counted one
With Davis, Mangan, Ferguson,
Because to him, who ponders well,
My rhymes more than their rhyming tell
Of things discovered in the deep,
Where only body's laid asleep,
For the elemental creatures go
About my table to and fro,
That hurry from unmeasured mind
To rant and rage in flood and wind.

It is a far cry from that direct personal statement to the abstract symbolism of 'The Wind Among the Reeds'. 'The Rose' is the song of a patriot in love with mother Earth, perhaps with a bruised heart, whereas the 'Wind Among the Reeds' is the Celtic

soul dwelling with her in spirit decrying the desire for self-perpetuation. The imagery of the Celtic Twilight and the earlier lyrics is still there. Such combinations as 'cloud-pale', 'dream-heavy', 'passion-dimmed', are frequent. But the 'dream-reality' acquires a new significance and finds a new motive. Irish mythology and legendary history crystallise into a Yeatsian pattern and take on a new life.

"I use the wind as a symbol of vague desires and hopes, not merely because the Sidhe are in the wind, or because the wind bloweth as it listeth, but because wind and spirit and vague desire have been associated everywhere"¹. It is that vague desire which gives these poems a kind of inhuman beauty. They have a haunting cadence which is intangible, which cannot be analysed but only felt. Their delicate and evanescent charm is at its highest when he is obeying the dictates of an emotion or a sentiment and at its **weakest** when he tries to be definite and precise.

The poems are attributed to the heroes of the Secret Rose, Aedh, Hanrahan, Robartes, all of whom represent a particular outlook of the Consciousness in its passionate, dreaming or intellectual moods. "It is by means of these dramatic symbols, refining still further upon the large mythological symbolism which he has built up into almost a system, that Mr.

1. Notes; Wind Among the Reeds.

Yeats weaves about the simplicity of moods that elaborate web of atmosphere in which the illusion of love and the cruelty of pain and the gross ecstasy of hope become changed into beauty."¹ The mythological imagery and symbolism are used in a sense of his own and provide him with a vehicle for the expression of personal emotions. "Elaborate modern psychology sounds egotistical, I thought, when it speaks in the first person, but not those simple emotions which resemble the more, the more powerful they are, everybody's emotion, and I was soon to write many poems where an always personal emotion was woven into a general pattern of myth and symbol."²

Most of the love poetry in 'The Wind Among the Reeds' and in 'In the Seven Woods' is written in this idiom. Some, like 'O do not love too long'

Sweetheart, O do not love too long,
 I loved long and long,
 And grew to be out of fashion
 Like an old song

or 'Never give all the Heart,'

For everything that's lovely is
 But a brief, dreamy, kind delight.
 O never give the heart outright,

1. Arthur Symons: a review in the Saturday Review for May 6, 1899.
 2. Autobiographies. P.187.

For they, for all smooth lips can say
 Have given their hearts up to the play.

express a poignant mood directly. All have been the inspiration of that colourful personality, Maud Gonne. Maud Gonne, young, tall, and beautiful, came to Dublin at a period when the revolutionary fervour which Parnell embodied was at its highest; so completely her own mistress that she led an independent art student's life in the Latin Quarter. John O'Leary had given her an introduction to the elder Yeats and she visited the Yeats at the Bedford Park house. "She seemed a classical impersonation of the Spring, the Virgilian commendation 'She walks like a goddess' made for her alone. Her complexion was luminous, like that of apple blossom through which the light falls."¹ Her dynamic personality, boundless energy and great beauty have been the inspiration for the greatest love poetry of our age. Much of it has been expressed in symbols and attributed to others, but whether he was writing about Cathleen ni Houlihan or some Sybil from an old legend, it was Maud Gonne's shape that they all took.

I thought of your beauty, and this arrow,
 Made out of a wild thought, is, in my marrow.
 There's no man may look upon her, no man,

1. Autobiographies P.152.

As when newly grown to be a woman,
 Tall and noble but with face and bosom
 Delicate in colour as apple blossom.
 This beauty's kinder, yet for a reason
 I could weep that the old is out of season.¹

Yeats brought this vision of her to everything that he touched, the stage, the players, and made everybody susceptible to her arresting beauty.

I had a thought for no one's but your ears:
 That you were beautiful, and that I strove
 To love you in the old high way of love;²

It is doubtful if one woman has been the inspiration of so much great love poetry with any poet. Expressed in symbols and personified, it becomes profound and limitless and is like a poignant penetrating cry.

When my arms wrap you round I press
 My heart upon the loveliness
 That has long faded from the world;³

'Michael Robartes remembers forgotten Beauty'; 'Aedh thinks of those who have spoken Evil of his Beloved', 'gives his Beloved certain rhymes' and 'tells of the Perfect Beauty'. 'He laments the loss of love' and

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1. The arrow. In the Seven Woods.
 2. Adam's Curse. In the Seven Woods.
 3. Michael Robartes remembers forgotten Beauty.

'wishes his Beloved were dead'. 'Hanrahan speaks to the lovers of his songs in coming days'. 'Mongon thinks of his past greatness', 'laments the change that has come upon him and his Beloved and longs for the end of the world'. Through all these, which deal with an absolute beauty seen and felt in an impersonal vision we feel a quality of ecstasy or poignancy which is profoundly personal. And though the individual's passion becomes a universal consciousness in most of them, the dropping of the names, Hanrahan, Robartes and Aedh in later editions is something in the nature of a confession of the ineffectiveness of all this elaborate symbolic garb. For the sheer enjoyment of many of these poems a complete knowledge of the mythological imagery is not necessary. Take the notes on 'The Rose' for example:

The Rose has been for many centuries a symbol of spiritual love and supreme beauty. The Count Goblet D'Alviella thinks that it was once a symbol of the sun, — itself a principal symbol of the divine nature, and the symbolic heart of things. The lotus was in some Eastern countries imagined blossoming upon the Tree of Life, as the Flower of Life, and is thus represented in Assyrian bas-reliefs. Because the Rose, the flower sacred to the Virgin Mary, and the flower that Apuleius' adventurer ate, when he was changed out of the ass's shape and received into the fellowship of Isis, is

the Western Flower of Life, I have imagined it growing upon the Tree of Life One finds the Rose in the Irish poets, sometimes as a religious symbol, as in the phrase, 'the Rose of Friday', meaning the Rose of austerity, in a Gaelic poem in Dr. Hyde's 'Religious Songs of Connacht'; and, I think, as a symbol of woman's beauty in the Gaelic Song, 'Roseen Dubh'; and a symbol of Ireland in Mangan's adaptation of 'Roseen Dubh', 'My Dark Roseleen', and in Mr. Aubrey de Vere's "The Little Black Rose". I do not know any evidence to prove whether this symbol came to Ireland with Mediaeval Christianity, or whether it came down from Celtic times. I have read somewhere that a Stone engraved with a Celtic God, who holds what looks like a rose in one hand, has been found somewhere in England; If the Rose was really a symbol of Ireland among the Gaelic poets, and if 'Roseen Dubh' is really a political poem, as some think, one may feel pretty certain that the ancient Celts associated the Rose with Eire, or Fotla, or Bamba — Goddesses who gave their names to Ireland — or with some principal god or goddess, for such symbols are not suddenly adopted or invented, but come out of mythology.

I have made The Seven Lights, the Constellation of the Bear, lament for the theft of the Rose, and I have made the Dragon, the constellation

Draco, the guardian of the Rose, because these constellations move about the pole of the heavens, the ancient Tree of Life in many countries, and are often associated with the Tree of Life in mythology. It is this Tree of Life that I have put into the 'Song of Mongan' under its common Irish form of a hazel; and because it had sometimes the stars for fruit, I have hung upon it 'the Crooked Plough' and the 'Pilot' star, as the Gaelic-speaking Irishmen sometimes call the Bear and the North Star. I have made it an axle-tree in "Aedh hears the Cry of the Sedge", for this was another ancient way of representing it.¹

Such notes make lovely reading, but are a clumsy expedient and only make one conscious of the arbitrariness of the symbols. If 'Hanrahan', 'Michael Robartes', and 'Aedh' did stand for a particular consciousness in 1899 and had a profound significance, why were they dropped later? When a poet uses recondite imagery and explains elaborately in notes that he is doubtful of its meaning he can be legitimately accused of creating wanton difficulty. But Yeats's use of symbolism here, especially the use of astrological and magical symbols, is that of an artist somewhat enamoured of a new medium, but who has the ingenuity to make use of it well.

London

1. The Wind Among the Reeds. / P. 74 - 75.

Thus in the notes to 'Michael Robartes bids his Beloved be at Peace' he describes first the neo-platonist symbolism of the sea and then goes on to say: "I follow much Irish and other mythology and the magical tradition in associating North with night and sleep, the East, place of sunrise, with hope and the South, the place of the sun when at its height, with passion and desire and the West, the place of sunset, with fading and dreaming things."¹ And the hound in

Do you not hear me calling, white deer with no horns?

I have been changed to a hound with one red ear²

is supposed to be "related to the Hounds of Annwyn or of Hades who are white and have red ears; also the hounds that Irish country people believe will awake and seize the souls of the dead if you lament them too loudly, or too soon; and to the hound, the son of Setanta, killed on a visit to the Celtic Hades"! And again: 'I got my hound and deer out of a last-century Gaelic poem about Oisín's journey to the country of the young. After the hunting of the hornless deer, that leads him to the seashore, and while he is riding over the sea with Niamh, he sees amid the waters a young man following a girl who has a golden apple, and afterwards a hound with one red ear following with no horns. This hound and this deer seem plain images

1. Wind Among the Reeds. P. 90.
 2. Mongon laments the change that has come on him and Beloved.

of the desire of the man 'which is for the woman', and 'the desire of the woman which is for the desire of the man', and of all desires that are as these The man in my poem who has a hazel wand may have been Aengus, Master of Love; and I have made the boar without bristles come out of the West, because the place of sunset was in Ireland, as in other countries, a place of symbolic darkness and death".¹

On the other hand, some of the notes are delightfully vague and explain very little. 'The Cap and Bells' is one of the loveliest of the poems in the "Wind Among the Reeds" and has been interpreted several ways. Perhaps the most satisfactory explanation is to take 'Cap and Bells' to mean the poet's gift of rhyme. "I dreamed this story exactly as I have written it", Yeats says in the notes, "and dreamed another long dream after it, trying to make out its meaning, and whether I was to write it in prose or verse. The first dream was more a vision than a dream, for it was beautiful and coherent, and gave me the sense of illumination and exaltation that one gets from visions, while the second dream was confused and meaningless. The poem has always meant a great deal to me, though, as is the way with symbolic poems, it has not always meant quite the

1. P.440. Collected Poems (Macmillan 1933).

same thing. Blake would have said, 'The authors are in eternity', and I am quite sure they can only be questioned in dreams."

Blake is still in his mind and one naturally associates

'O blessedness comes in the night and the day
And whither the wise heart knows;
And one has seen in the redness of wine

The Incorruptible Rose.'¹

with Blake's doctrine of the eternal holiness of passion.

In all these poems the attempt is to express the things which lie on the farthest edge of expression and one of Yeats's greatest services to literature is that he has thus enhanced the poetic consciousness of our age. L.A.G. Strong in his 'A Letter to W.B. Yeats'² says: "It would almost be fair to say that you have sought to express the inexpressible, since your aim, that rim of difficulty that stops just short of the impossible, would have been indeed impossible to any shot but yours. Poets, you have said, are not permitted to shoot beyond the tangible: but there has been nothing to forbid their extending the range of consciousness to include what hitherto had been

1. 'The Blessed' Wind Among the Reeds.
2. P. 11-12 A Letter to W.B. Yeats - L.A.G. Strong
(The Hogarth Letters No.6)

subjective and intangible. This was a task for a magician, and you have gone about it as a practical magician must. It is in terms of the tangible that the intangible is snared. The significance of your poetry has been its power to evoke by the hardest and most precise of symbols the most delicate tones of beauty and meaning and you are a magical poet in that you have by ceaseless diligence and labour found a way of arranging concrete symbols that shall awake in us huge shadows of your wonder. It is a precise and definite art: the cutting of an agate. First the incisive spirit, and the shock of perception: then by long diligence, the magician. No one since Blake has made a few words signify so much."

On the whole, the poems of 'In the Seven Woods' show an advance. 'Adam's Curse' is very much in a later Yeatsian manner.

'For to articulate sweet sounds together
 Is to work harder than all these, and yet
 Be thought an idler by the noisy set
 Of bankers, schoolmasters, and clergymen
 The martyrs call the world.'

is clearly a departure from the visionary mood and the direct statement of a human experience. He has been accused of a half-ironical pose in the opening lines:

'A line will take us hours may be;
 Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought,
 Our stitching and unstitching has been nought!'

REPEATED

though actually it is a straightforward confession of despair. In a review of Dr. Hyde's 'Love Songs of Connacht' in the 'Bookman' (October 1893) he said the very same thing: "And we - we labour and labour, and spend days over a stanza or a paragraph, and at the end of it have made, likely as not, a mere bundle of phrases".

'The Song of the Wandering Aengus' like 'The Host of the Air' in the 'Wind among the Reeds' is based on an old ballad. It was suggested to Yeats by an old Greek ballad, but in his hands it has acquired something of the quality of Lady Gregory's 'Dream of Angus Og'. 'The Host of the Air' has the severity and directness of the best ballads. Yeats always acquires this when dealing with the traditions or beliefs which he can share with the people. 'The Happy Townland' is another example. It is based on the belief, ~~that~~ so common in Celtic legends, that an earthly paradise exists somewhere near our earth; that men in trance can see the fairy people and their shining duns and hear their sweet and soothing music.¹

'The Old Age of Queen Maeve' and 'Baile and Aillinn' are Yeats's best narrative poems. 'Queen

1. Maeterlinck was so charmed with this idea that he made use of it in 'L'Oiseau Bleu'. As Mytyl and Tytyl stand at midnight in the cold dark cemetery 'une floraison d'abord grêle et timide comme une vapeur d'eau, puis blanche et virginale et de plus en plus touffue transforme le cimetière en un sort de jardin féerique et nuptial'. VII^e tableau, act IV.

Maeve' is written in the manner of the ancient Irish bard, the poet interrupting the narrative now and then to put in a word of his own:

"O unquiet heart,
 Why do you praise another, praising her,
 As if there were no tale but your own tale
 Worth knitting to a measure of sweet sound?
 Have I not bid you tell of that great queen
 Who has been burned some two thousand years?"

The blank verse has a dignified cadence which gives the poem a touch of the poetry of the Irish heroic age and the Homeric epics. And it is only by comparing it with Lady Gregory's "Cuchulain of Muirthemne" that one realises the complete transformation the original has undergone in Yeats's hand. The poem owes a great deal to Lady Gregory and the description of Maeve:

She had been beautiful in that old way
 That's all but gone, for the proud heart is gone,
 And the fool of the Counting-house fear all
 But soft beauty and indolent desire.

Can well be applied to her. Technically the poem is very advanced and it is difficult to say whether it is on the whole a greater achievement than "Baile and Aillinn". Dr. Hyde and Lady Gregory again are the source in "Baile and Aillinn", but Yeats has given the old story which is sweet and lovely, clearness and strength,.

1903- 1910.

THE PLAYS.

Between 1903 ('In the Seven Woods') and 1910 ('The Green Helmet and Other Poems') Yeats wrote little Poetry. But they were busy years.

In those eight years, Yeats produced eight plays - 'The Shadowy Waters'(1900), 'Cathleen ni Hoolihan'(1902), 'Where there is Nothing'(1903), 'The Hour Glass'(1903), 'The Pot of Broth', 'The King's Threshold', 'On Baile's Strand'(1904), and 'Deirdre'(1907); two volumes of criticism, 'Ideas of Good and Evil'(1903) and 'Discoveries'(1907); and edited, off and on, three publications: 'Samhain', 'Beltaine' and 'The Arrow'.

'All the Irish movements rose out of Yeats and returns to Yeats'¹ said George Moore once and it was no exaggeration. He was virtually the founder of the 'Irish Literary Society' in London as well as 'The National Literay Society' in Dublin. 'I had definite plans; I wanted to create an Irish theatre'². That was about 1890. He hadn't completed his 'Countess Kathleen' then. By 1899, the project had practically taken shape. The Irish National Theatre really came into being

1. 'Vale' P.206.

2. Autobiographies. P.246.

on the 8th of May, 1899. Lady Gregory, Edward Martyn, A.E., Dr. Douglas Hyde, George Moore were his main collaborators. And outside Literature there were John O'Leary, Lord Dufferin, William O'Erien, the agrarian agitator and Lord O'Brien, Chief Justice of Ireland. But from the very beginning there was trouble. Yeats was accused of blasphemy in 'Countess Cathleen', one of the plays in the opening programme, and there were booing and cat-calls in the theatre. It was not an auspicious start. Soon, George Moore and Martyn showed that they were principally interested in the continental type of drama and there was division among the directors. Yeats insisted that the aim of the theatre should be a return to the people. In 1902 Martyn and George Moore gave up their association with the theatre. But Yeats did not give up. In 1904 Miss Horniman presented the organisation with a theatre of their own in Abbey Street. But criticism was always rampant, and more often than not, Yeats was alone in shouldering all the blame and most of the responsibilities. He experimented with the speaking of verse, invited Florence Farr to speak to the psaltery and maintained the high standard and exclusiveness of the Abbey Theatre. When Synge's 'Playboy' was produced at the Abbey the Unionist papers called it an insult to Ireland and the police had to be called in to restore

order at the Theatre. Yeats had to fight a lone battle against the clergy, the newspapers, the tyrannies of political clubs and societies. But he won through. The play went on and was at last received quietly. Soon Miss Horniman bade farewell to Irish drama; the Fays, ever faithful to the Abbey, and great artists, left Dublin with Maire O'Neill; Synge died. And once again the burden fell on Yeats and Lady Gregory.

In th^e midst of all this turmoil, Yeats produced play after play, in prose as well as verse. He had written the slight but beautiful one-act play, 'The Land of Heart's Desire' in 1894. 'The Shadowy Waters', Yeats's own favourite play, came out in 1900. It is a delightful dream world created out of a strange symbolic imagery — the red rose, the lit torch, the sacramental wine, the ancient worm and dragon of the world. 'Cathleen ni Houlihan', 'On Baile's Strand' and 'The Knight's Threshold' dealt with Irish mythology, but Yeats's treatment gave them the significance of modern problem plays. 'Deirdre' like 'The Shadowy Waters' had little action. Both these could be called dramas of moods. They dealt with the mind and the emotions.

Yeats's later plays owe a great deal to Japanese Nō plays. The importance of the dance, of disciplined movements, was brought home to him

by Eastern Drama. Speaking to a group of students at Oxford in 1919, he said that at one period he tried to steep himself in translations of Sanskrit plays and assimilate for use in his writings whatever in them seemed valuable and congenial¹. 'Four Plays for Dancers' (1921) was written in the new frame of mind. The first performance of 'At the Hawk's Well' was in an ordinary room without a platform. A patterned screen against the wall at one end was the only device. Masks were worn by the actors. In 'Calvary' Yeats combines the symbolism of Robartes with the technique of Nō plays. The play has a severe, austere beauty. 'The Dreaming of the Bones' makes use of a similar legend. 'The only Jealousy of Emir' again deals with the Irish hero Cuchulain.

Yeats managed to solve a personal problem when he attempted to transplant the Nō plays to the Irish stage. And this in spite of the fact that Irish mythological figures as Japanese warriors produced a rather curious and bizarre effect on an audience. 'Calvary' and 'Resurrection' with their loose Alexandrines justify this treatment and do not show any straining towards an exotic cult. In the much later 'Wheels and Butterflies' (1935) he bases his art on the Japanese 'shinji' and 'ki' play.

1. 'W.B. Yeats: A Study' by C.L. Wrenn P.13.

Yeats had little use for democracy in the theatre. He remained exclusive and even demanded a small and elect audience. He made drama an elaborate ritual. Yet one of his latest plays, 'The Words upon the Window-pane' (1934) is in prose. Here he makes excellent dramatic use of the seance. The ~~x~~ expedient of bringing Swift and Stella to life again shows dramatic instinct and resourcefulness. But 'The Words upon the Window-pane' stands alone among the later works. In his very latest works like 'The King of the Great Clock Tower' he gets very impatient ^{with} ~~in~~ his inability to create the proper atmosphere for their appreciation. Its central theme is Salome's dance, and its climax the dance itself; but there is no dancing in the play except in the imagination of the audience. 'A Full Moon in March' is the new verse-form of 'The King of the Great Clock Tower'. "I wrote the King of the Great Clock Tower in prose; a friend, whose judgement I have trusted in the past, denounced it in violent language..... I came to the conclusion that prose dialogue is as unpopular among my studious friends as dialogue in verse among actors and play-goers. I have therefore rewritten 'The King of the Great Clock Tower' in verse, but if anybody is inclined to play it, I recommend the prose version....."1. 'A Herne's

1. Introduction to 'A Full Moon in March' Macmillan, 1935.

Egg' (1938) is in verse and so is his very last play, 'Purgatory' which was performed at the Abbey in the summer of 1938 and led to the most heated and controversial debates as to its meaning. It is to be published this autumn by his sister at the Cuala Press.

and

"I have always sought to bring my mind close to the mind of Indian and Japanese poets, old women in Connaught, mediums in Soho, lay brothers whom I imagine dreaming in some mediaeval monastery the dreams of their village, learned authors who refer all to antiquity; to immerse it in the general mind where that mind is scarce seperable from what we have begun to call 'the subconscious' And \bar{x} . . . I have murmured evocations and frequented mediums, delighted in all that displayed great problems through sensuous images, or exciting phrases, accepting from abstract schools but a few technical words that are so old they seem but broken architraves fallen amid bramble and grass, and have put myself to school where all things are seen: A Tenedo Tacitae per Amica Silentia Lunae."¹

Yeats did not undertake these things wilfully nor through a love of the strange and the exotic; but because, "unaccountable things had happened even in my childhood, and because of an ungovernable craving"².

1. 'Anima Mundi'. Essays (Macmillan) P.507.
 2. 'Hodos Chamekiontes', Trembling of the Veil Essays (Macmillan) P.326-327.

The remarkable change that we meet with in Yeats's poetry by 1910 is the result of that period of speculation and struggle. And it ended in disillusionment and bitterness. "The poet finds and makes his mask in disappointment, the hero in defeat", he wrote in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*.¹ And the net achievement of it all was a mere taking stock of the desert sand and of the sayings of antiquity.²

'The fascination of what is difficult
Has dried the sap out of my vein, and rent
Spontaneous joy and natural content
Out of my heart.'³

is the sardonic voice of a man who has struggled and has been frustrated.

Through all the lying days of my youth
I swayed my leaves and flowers in the sun;
Now I may wither into the truth.⁴

These lines find a poignant echo in the later

The holy centaurs of the hills are vanished;
I have nothing but the embittered sun;
Banished heroic mother moon and vanished,
And now that I have come to fifty years
I must endure the timid sun.⁵

Which are really lines written in dejection. But soon

1. 'Anima Hominis'. Essays (Macmillan) P. 500.
2. c.f. P.508 'Anima Mundi'. 'I will but say like the Arab boy that became Vizier: "O brother, I have taken stock in the desert sand and of the sayings of antiquity"'.
3. 'The Fascination of What is Difficult' -
4. 'The Coming of Wisdom with Time' - The Green Helmet and Other Poems.

he realises that 'men improve with the years',

I am worn out with dreams,
A weather-worn marble-triton
Among the streams.

.
But I grow old among dreams.¹

And he develops energy out of conflict and forces a triumph out of defeat. He casts off his old coat:

I made my song a coat
Covered with embroideries
Out of old mythologies
From heel to throat;
But the fools caught it,
Wore it in the world's eyes
As though they'd wrought it.
Song, let them take it,
For there's more enterprise
In walking naked.

This was his inner struggle. But at the same time Ireland, the theatre, Politics occupied his mind very much. Synge's strange career and his disagreement with the Nationalists filled his mind. "The Irish Nationalists", he wrote in 'J.M. Synge and the Ireland of his Time', 'are preoccupied with the nation's future, with heroes, poets, soldiers, painters, armies, fleets, but only as these things are

1. 'Men improve with the Years'. Wild Swans at Coole

understood by a child in a Nationalist School, while a secret feeling that what is so unreal needs continual defence makes them bitter They no longer love, for only life is loved, and at last, a generation is like an hysterical woman who will make unmeasured accusations and believe impossible things, because of some logical deduction from a solitary thought which has turned a portion of her mind to stone".¹ His impatience becomes a raillery:

. My curse on plays
 That have to be set up in fifty ways,
 On the day's war with every knave and dolt,
 Theatre bu/siness, management of men.²

John O'Leary, the old Fenian, who had ventured into an insurrection not hoping to attain victory but to set the nation an example, stood for romantic Ireland and it was Yeats's hope that a great tragic poetry was to arise from it. But he was disappointed with a Nationalism which cared only for an immediate victory and an immediate utility.

Romantic Ireland is dead and gone,
 It's with O'Leary in the grave.
 Was it for this the wild geese spread
 The grey wing upon every tide;
 For this that all that blood was shed,

1. Essays (Macmillan). P.389.
 2. 'The Fascination of what is Difficult' - The Green Helmet and Other Poems.

For this Edward Fitzgerald died,
 And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone,
 All that delirium of the brave?
 Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
 It's with O'Leary in the grave.¹

That unity of image which he sought in national literature seemed hopelessly far away. 'I began to feel myself not only solitary, but helpless'.²

But this despair turned him towards himself and becomes the subject matter of his Poetry. Earlier he had toyed himself with the idea that Poetry should be written only about beautiful things. He wrote about the Celtic Twilight, Eternal Beauty, heroes and heroines of Irish mythology and clothed them all in a half-dreamy, hypnotic imagery. But now he leaves the Ivory Tower and presses everything, patriotism as well, into the domain of Poetry. And he works hard to rescue his imagination from abstraction and make it as preoccupied with life as had been the imagination of Chaucer.

The keynote of 'The Green Helmet and Other Poems' is dissatisfaction, impatience, helplessness.

Dissatisfaction with Ireland:

How should the world be luckier if this house,
 Where passion and precision have been one

1. 'September 1913' ('Responsibilities')
 2. 'Autobiographies' P.326.

Time out of mind, became too ruinous

To breed the lidless eye that loves the sun?

and with himself:

All things can tempt me from this craft of verse:

One time it was a woman's face, or worse —

The seeming needs of my fool-driven land;²

It marks a period of transition. But by 1914 with 'Responsibilities' he has departed into the wilderness. 'The Green Helmet and Other Poems' show an advance in precision of imagery and syntax on his earlier work ('The Mask', for example) though we get traces in it of that bold use of lonely words, completely absorbed into the texture of the poems, which characterised 'The Wind Among the Reeds'.

'O love is the crooked thing,

There is nobody wise enough

To find out all that is in it'.³

Or

I had this thought a while ago,

'My darling cannot understand

What I have done, or what would do

In this blind bitter land.'⁴

could well be from any of the love lyrics in 'In the Seven Woods'.

-
- 1. "Upon a House Shaken by the Land Agitation".
 - 2. "All things can tempt me"
 - 3. 'Brown Penny'.
 - 4. 'Words!'

"Responsibilities" marks his entry into contemporary life. Here his lines are stripped bare, and we notice in his diction a conscious attempt to acquire the run of every day speech:

'A cursing rogue with a merry face,
A bundle of rags upon a crutch,
Stumbled upon that windy place . . . !'¹

Or

'As I came over Windy Gap
They threw a half-penny into my cap,
For I am running to Paradise; . . . !'²

Or again, the refrain of 'September 1913',

Romantic Ireland's dead and gone
It is with O'Leary in the grave.

"Like boughs in winter, they showed the stark perfection of their architecture that bound each word to stem and branch and root: the idea bitterly flowing out into the bare, clean boughs.

"'September 1913': 'The Cold Heaven': 'The Magi': and the terrible

Toil and grow rich
What's that but to lie
With a foul witch
And after, drained dry,
To be brought

1. 'The Hour before Dawn'. 2. 'Running to Paradise'

To the chamber where
Lies one long sought
With despair."¹

The three main events in contemporary Irish life which stirred him most were the Parnell controversy, the dispute over 'The Playboy' and the Dublin Corporation's refusal of a building for Sir Hugh Lane's famous collection of pictures. And they are directly responsible for 'To a Wealthy Man', 'To a friend whose work has come to nothing'², 'Pandeen', 'To a Shade', and, of course, 'September 1913'.

'The Dolls' and 'The Magi' are based on fables -- "The fable for this poem('The Dolls') came into my head while I was giving some lectures in Dublin. I had noticed once again how all thought among us is frozen into 'something other than human life'. After I had made the poem,I looked up one day into the blue of the sky,and suddenly imagined,as if lost in the blue of the sky,stiff figures in procession. I remembered that they were the habitual image suggested by the blue sky, and looking for a second fable called them 'The Magi', complementary forms of those enraged dolls"³. They form a refreshing contrast to

1. L.A.G.Strong. 'A Letter to W.B.Yeats' P.13-14.
2. Lady Gregory thought that the poem 'To a friend whose work has come to nothing'is addressed to Sir Hugh Lane. Actually it is addressed to her.
3. Collected Works. Macmillan(1933). P.445.

the political, literary and artistic controversies which form the basis for most of the other poems in the book. 'In dreams begins responsibility'; but he had been having very few dreams of late:

"How am I fallen from myself, for a long time
now

I have not seen the Prince of Cheng in my dreams

Khong-Fou-Tseu"

THE LAST PHASE.

With 'The Wild Swans at Coole' Yeats enters the last phase of his poetic career. His natural expression had always kept up with the development of his mind. And now after the storms of 'Responsibilities', he has entered into a comparative calm. His verse has grown firmer and terser, and in 'The Wild Swans at Coole' we notice a very individual rhythm with a finished beauty.

The Trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October Twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine-and-fifty swans.¹

The rhythm of that is new to English Poetry and it is Yeats's own creation. And a different one, but again very individual is that of:

There is a queen in China, or maybe it's in Spain,
And birthdays and holidays such praises can be heard
Of her unblemished lineaments, a whiteness with
no stain,
That she might be that sprightly girl trodden by
a bird;²

He had speculated a good deal. But once these speculations had crystallised into definite patterns, "(he) had created for (himself) an

1. 'The Wild Swans at Coole'
2. His 'Phoenix'

intellectual solitude, (and) most arguments that could influence action had lost something of their meaning"¹. In these poems he has caught the serenity of the swans at Coole, 'Mysterious, beautiful'. And though there are 'lines written in dejection' in them, most of them show a stability and a poise wrung out of controlled passion. It is the futility of discipline that is not of the whole being, that makes him say 'on being asked for a poem':

I think it better that in times like these
 A poet's mouth ~~must~~ be silent, for in truth
 We have no gift to set a statesman right;
 He has had enough of meddling who can please
 A young girl in the indolence of her youth,
 Or an old man upon a winter's night.

That is in an ironical vein, is even flippant and is in striking contrast to the sustained dignity and dispassionate judgment of 'Ego Dominus Tuus'

Michael Robartes and Owen Aherne are stripped of their symbolic strappings. The Alchemist who symbolised a certain mood of the poet's consciousness is transformed into a "friend who has but lately returned from Mesopotamia, where, he has partly found and partly thought out much philosophy. I consider that Aherne and Robartes, men to whose namesakes I had attributed a turbulent life or death have quarrelled with me. They take

¹ Autobiographies p. 326

their place in a phantasmagoria in which I endeavour to explain my philosophy of life and death. To some extent I wrote these poems as a text for exposition."¹

He is back to life with a quiet determination and gentle assurance in 'A Prayer for my Daughter'². What a lovely benediction that beautiful poem is! And yet he is full of a grave concern about the future:

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
 Are full of passionate intensity.³

REPEATED

The destiny of Europe and the world has taken the place of Ireland, and mere raillery has given way to an utterance of profound concern. 'Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen'⁴ is a heart-breaking poem. How much he has gained in awareness and the expression of it can be seen by comparing 'Meditations in time of Civil War', written at Thoor Ballylee in 1922 to 'Upon a home shaken by the Land Agitation'.

He had published 'A Vision' in 1925, a difficult text-book of magic and symbolism, which

1. Notes. Collected Poems. '33. P. 446.
 2. 'Michael Robartes and the Dancer'(1921)
 3. 'The Second Coming'.
 4. Written in 1919, but published in 'The Tower'(1928)

puzzled the critics. Some ignored it. Others evaded it. Even Edmund Wilson, the American critic, who has interpreted Yeats's work better than any one else, dismissed it as the price we have to pay for the greatest intellect of modern times. Yeats had an intelligence which will not be denied. His curiosity till his very last days remained alive, and he would go round and round everything that he interested himself in, and into it, until he had found all there was to find.

'The Tower' (1928) does not show signs of such obscurantism. Its symbolism has no trappings, no veil of fancy, no untraceable ^s etiological meaning, and its personages are far removed from abstract personifications of particular moods. "The persons mentioned are associated by legend, story and tradition with the neighbourhood of Thoor Ballylee or Ballylee Castle, where the poem was written. Mrs. French lived at Peterswell in the eighteenth century and was related to Sir Jonna Barrington, who described the incident of the ears and the trouble that came of it. The peasant beauty and the blind poet are Mary Hynes and Raftery" ¹.

'The Tower' has a certain proud austerity about it, a nobility, a reticence. Yet he does rend

1. Collected Poems. Macmillan. P.446.

the veil now and then, as in:

I mock Plotinus' thought
 And cry in Plato's teeth,
 Death and life were not
 Till man made up the whole
 Made lock, stock and barrel
 Out of his bitter soul.

Aye, sun and moon and star, all.^{1.}

It is something in our own eyes that make us see Plato and Plotinus as all transcendence, he adds in a later note. That mockery and that cry are those of one whose soul has clapped its hands and sung; and sung, loudly and with flawless clarity. He has proved himself no paltry thing, far from 'a tattered coat upon a stick'. The direct passion of a poem like 'Leda and the Swan' is almost startling; and the wonderful lines:

A shudder in the loins engenders there
 The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
 And Agamemnon dead.

make you feel the actual pulse of blood.

Then we come to 'The Winding Stair' (1933). He had a long period of illness in 1928. "Then in the spring of 1929 life returned as an impression of the uncontrollable energy and daring of the great creators; it seemed that but for journalism

1. 'The Tower'

and criticism, all that evasion and explanation, the world would be torn in pieces. I wrote 'Mad as the mist and Snow', a mechanical little song, and after that almost all that group of poems called XXXXX in memory of those exultant weeks, 'Words for Music, Perhaps'. Then ill again, I warmed myself back into life with 'Byzantium' and 'Veronica's Napkin', looking for a theme that my befit my years".¹

We were the last romantics — chose for theme
Traditional sanctity and loveliness;
Whatever's written in what poets name
The Book of the people; whatever most can bless
The mind of man or elevate a rhyme;
But all is changed, that high horse riderless,
Though mounted in that saddle Homer rode
Where the swan drifts upon a darkening flood.²

Homer is the touchstone here. Something in the nature of a reversion to, and a disdain for the comforts of religion. Solomon and Sheba have given place to Crazy Jane and Jack, the Journeyman. And the cold proud women of his earlier poems have been superseded by Crazy Jane, self-forgetful and abandoned in love. Von Hügel, he dismisses, though with blessings on his head.

'Homer is my example and his unchristened heart'.

And in 'The Dialogue of Self and Soul', he cries:

1. Collected Poems, P.451. 2. 'Coole and Ballylee'

'Who can distinguish darkness from the soul?'

The pagan position again, a pagan courage and defiance in the face of every human imperfection:

I am content to live it all again
 And yet again, if it be life to pitch
 Into the frog-spawn of a blind man's ditch,
 A blind man battering blind men;
 Or in that most fecund ditch of all,
 The folly that man does
 Or must suffer, if he woos
 A proud woman not kindred of his soul.¹

The love of life is unabated. It is full-blooded, passionate in its intensity.

Why should the imagination of man
 Long past his prime remember things that are
 Emblematical of love and war?
 Think of ancestral night that can,
 If but imagination scorn the earth
 And intellect its wandering
 To this and that and t'other thing,
 Deliver from the crime of death and birth.²

There he has surpassed all that he has done. "The thought is more compressed, the diction simpler, the vision bolder. . . . There is, in the Poetry of (his) later period, an intellectual content,

1. 'A Dialogue of Self and Soul'
 2. Ibid.

an imagination, a passion, and a sure control which is not to be matched in any poet of (our) generation. It is contemporary Poetry, yet it transcends its time. It is aristocratic, yet has all the vigour coarseness could have given it. It is intellectual, but its blood runs hot. It is full of anger, yet holds the perfect equilibrium. It mocks, but keeps its dignity. A magnificent arrogance, (the) response to 'the fascination of what is difficult' informs it all. It is wise, without wisdom's chill." ¹

1. L.A.G.Strong: A Letter to W.B.Yeats.

The Developmentx of Yeats's interests
with special reference to
'A Vision'.

Dorothy H. Hoare in her book 'The Works of Morris and Yeats in Relation to Saga Literature' points out how Morris found reality in the sounds and sights of the English landscape, but that Yeats was moved by his contemplation of the Irish countryside to turn from everyday reality to the romantic consideration of the past and to fantasy. The hills, the countryside, the sea of his familiar West country acquired in his imagination a new symbolic significance. Yeats himself says how the Irish people associated legends with places and how every strange stone and little coppice has its legend preserved in written and unwritten tradition. The Irish romantic movement, he goes on to add, has arisen out of this tradition, and should always, even when it makes new legends about traditional people and things, be haunted by places. That provides the link between three important things in Yeats's work - the countryside, tradition and peasant belief. Yeats's early Poetry deals mainly with these, and into these symbolism, magic and the twilight are all interwoven. The resulting work at its best becomes the expression of a trance. The world of phantasy and legends

become a symbol for his imagination and acquire an irresistible fascination. And so we hear him saying in one of the earliest lyrics:

Come away, O human child!
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

And the man 'Who dreamed of Fairyland'

... stood among a crowd at Drumahair;
 His heart hung all upon a silken dress,
 And he had known at last some tenderness,
 Before Earth made of him her sleepy care;
 But when a man poured fish into a pile,
 It seemed they raised their little silver heads,
 And sang how day a Druid twilight sheds
 Upon a dim, green, well-beloved isle,
 Where people love beside star-laden seas;
 How Time may never mar their faery vows
 Under the woven roofs of quicken boughs:
 The singing shook him out of his new ease.

The enchanted 'Happy Townland' with its fruits and blossoms all the year round, and rivers 'running over with red beer ⁿ and brown beer' and Queens 'their eyes blue like the ice' dancing in a crowd is far away from actuality. Even Ireland he thought of as half-historical, half-legendary.

It is when he says in a slightly later poem¹ that the actual world with its uncomely things and discords is an unsatisfactory place even to nurse a broken heart:

All things uncomely and broken, all things worn out
and old,
The cry of a child by the roadway, the creak of a
lumbering cart,

The heavy steps of the ploughman, splashing the
wintry mould,

Are wronging your image that blossoms a rose ~~that~~
in the deeps of my heart

that we become aware of a real conflict which is not merely the dissatisfaction of the early poems. The aestheticism of Pater on which he had based his philosophy of Art led him on to the cultivation of the imagination as an end in itself. He had been conscious of its inadequacy, but ^{would} put above everything else the nobility and splendour of 'Imagination'. Frustrated love and its bitter memory bring him to earth. The lines:

Things said or done long ago,
Or things I did not do or say
But thought that I might say or do,
Weigh me down, and not a day
But something is recalled,
My conscience or my vanity appalled.

¹The Lover tells of the Rose in his heart'

are almost tragic in their passionate seriousness and show genuine penitence. The shallowness, perhaps even a sense of the futility of his inspiration oppresses him. 'The Green Helmet' (1910)

'The Green Helmet' (1910) has poems with such different titles as 'A Friend's Illness', 'At Galway Races', 'On hearing that the the students of our new University have joined the agitation against Immoral Literature', 'A Drinking Song' and 'Upon a House Shaken by the Land Agitation'. That is the beginning of the new phase in Yeats's career. Contemporary life becomes a very important theme and his interests gather in variety and strength. The Irish Revolution and his career as a member of the Irish Senate brought him close to political machinery and the intricacies of its workings.

Yet, in the main, his conception of life remained a fixed one, not static, but moving within a circle. In his early days he thought of legends in cycles. And now, in 'A Vision' he speaks of human history as a circle produced by the turning of two revolving cones upon each other. "One must bear in mind that the Christian Era, like the two thousand years, let us say, that went before it, is an entire wheel, and each half of it an entire wheel, that each half when it comes to its 28th Phase reaches the 15th Phase or the 1st Phase of the entire Era. It

follows therefore that the 15th Phase of each millenium, to keep the symbolic measure of time, is Phase 8 or Phase 22 of the entire era, that Aphrodite rises from a stormy sea, that Helen could not be Helen but for beleaguered Troy. The era itself is but half of a greater era and its Phase 15 comes also at a period of war or trouble".

Describing the scheme of life represented by the pattern of 'The Great Wheel', Yeats says: "According to Simplicius, a late commentator on Aristotle, the Concord of Empedocles fabricates all things into 'an homogeneous sphere', and then Discord separates the elements and so makes the world we inhabit, but even the sphere formed by Concord is not the changeless eternity, for concord or Love but offers us the image of that which is changeless. If we think of the vortex attributed to Discord as formed by circles diminishing until they are nothing, and of the opposing sphere attributed to Concord as forming from itself an opposing vortex, the apex of each vortex in the middle of the other's base, we have the fundamental symbol of my instructors."¹ One pole represents complete objectivity and the other complete subjectivity, and a circular journey between the two extremes along the circumference touches upon various

1. 'A Vision'(Macmillan, 1937) P.267-68.

phases of human personality. "The identification of time with subjectivity is probably as old as philosophy; all that we can touch or handle, and for the moment I mean no other objectivity, has shape or magnitude, whereas our thoughts and emotions have duration and quality, a thought recurs or is habitual, a lecture or a musical composition is measured upon the clock. At the same time pure time and pure space, pure subjectivity and pure objectivity -- the plane at the bottom of the cone and the point at its apex -- are abstractions or figments of the mind."¹

If the moon represents subjectivity and the sun objectivity, the phase of complete objectivity will be when the dark of the moon is closest to the sun. The phase of complete subjectivity will be represented by the Full Moon. There are only antipodal types of supernatural beings at the two poles as human beings cannot live there. And along the 'orbit of the moon' are situated the number of phases which represent different types of human personality.

"The subjective cone is called that of the 'antithetical tincture' because it is achieved and defended by continual conflict with its opposite;

1. 'A Vision'. P.70-71.

the objective cone is called that of the 'primary tincture' because whereas subjectivity . . . tends to separate man from man, objectivity brings us back to the mass where we begin".¹ The antithetical tincture is emotional and aesthetic whereas the primary tincture is reasonable and moral. "Within these cones move what are called the 'Four Faculties': 'Will' and 'Mask', 'Creative Mind' and 'Body of Fate'".²

All this is worked out with great care and ingenuity, and throughout, Yeats has paid great attention to his 'Instructors'. The explanations and the significance attached to these 'Symbols of Reality' are very complicated, but what is important is the fact that his imagination was moved profoundly by the Circle itself. Look at that very difficult Poem, 'The Phases of the Moon'³:

Robartes. Twenty-and-eight the phases of the moon,
 The full and the moon's dark and all the crescents,
 Twenty-and-eight, and yet but six-and-twenty
 The cradles that a man must needs be rocked in:
 For there's no human life at the full or the dark.
 From the first crescent to the half, the dream
 But summons to adventure and the man
 Is always happy like a bird or a beast;

1. 'A Vision' P.71-72

2. Ibid. P.73.

3. 'The Wild Swans at Coole'

But while the moon is rounding towards the full
 He follows whatever whim's most difficult
 Among whims not impossible, and though scarred,
 As with the cat-o'-nine-tails of the mind,
 His body moulded from within his body
 Grows comelier. Eleven pass, and then
 Athena takes Achilles by the hair,
 Hector is in the dust, Nietzsche is born,
 Because the heroes' crescent is the twelfth.
 And yet, twice born, twice buried, grow he must,
 Before the full moon, helpless as a worm.
 The thirteenth moon but sets the soul at war
 In its own being, and when that war's begun
 There is no muscle in the arm; and after,
 Under the frenzy of the fourteenth moon
 The soul begins to **frembje** into stillness,
 To die into the labyrinth of itself!

x x x x x x x x x x x

All thought becomes an image and the soul
 Becomes ~~a~~body: that body and that soul
 Too perfect at the full to lie in a cradle,
 Too lonely for the traffic of the world:
 Body and soul cast out and cast away
 Beyond the visible world.

x x x x x x x x x x x

When the moon's full those creatures of the full
 Are met on the waste hills by country men

They are cast beyond the verge, and in a cloud,
 Crying to one another like the bats;
 And having no desire they cannot tell
 What's good or bad, or what it is to triumph
 At the perfection of one's own obedience;
 And yet they speak what's blown into their mind;
 Deformed beyond deformity, unformed,
 Insipid as the dough before it is baked,
 They change their bodies at a word.

When all the dough has been so kneaded up
 That it can take what form cook Nature fancy,
 The first thin crescent is wheeled round once more.
 x x x x x x x
 Hunchback and saint and fool are the last crescents.
 The burning bow that once could shoot an arrow
 Out of the up and down, the wagon-wheel
 Of beauty's cruelty and wisdom's chatter -
 Out of that raving tide - is drawn betwixt
 Deformity of body and mind.

'The Phases of the Moon' describes the cycle so elaborately explained in 'A Vision' and the two should really be read together. A vein of pessimism keeps on intruding now and then, as for example when Aherne says:

'All dreams of the soul
 End in a beautiful man's or woman's body.'

Whether the 'Instructor' really provided 'metaphors

for Poetry' or not, the 'Vision' and the 'Great Circle' form an integral part of many of Yeats's later poems. And in some of them the metaphors are very striking indeed. Look at the diction and the imagery of the second verse of 'The Second Coming':

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness ~~drops~~ again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

Some of Yeats's best poems like the beautiful 'Leda and the Swan' can be fully understood only by looking back at 'A Vision'. "~~Image~~" I imagine the annunciation that founded Greece as made to Leda, remembering that they showed in a Spartan temple, strung up to the roof as a holy relic, an unhatched egg of hers; and that from one of her eggs came Love and from the other War. But all things are from antithesis, and when in my

ignorance I try to imagine what older civilisation that
 annunciation rejected I can but see bird and woman
 blotting out some corner of the Babylonian mathematical
 starlight".¹ says Yeats in 'A Vision' and we see how
 closely connected the poem is to that work. The
 connection of the poems 'Sailing to Byzantium' and
 'Byzantium' to 'A Vision' is not so direct; but the
 full and specific significance of 'Byzantium' to
 Yeats is again made clear in 'A Vision': "Each
 age unwinds the thread another age had wound and it
 amuses one to remember that before Phidias, and his
 westward-moving art, Persia fell, and that when Full
 Moon came round again, amid eastward-moving thought,
 and brought Byzantine glory, Rome fell; and that
 at the outset of our westward-moving Renaissance
 Byzantium fell; all things dying each other's life,
 living each other's death ".²

It is not far wrong to say that 'Byzantium'
 and 'Leda' in imaginative intensity rank very high
 in Yeats's output and these as well as 'The Second
 Coming' are conceived within the 'Wheel'. "Some will
 ask", he says, "Whether I believe in the actual existence
 of my circuits of sun and moon. Those that include,
 now all recorded time in one circuit, now what Blake
 called 'the pulsators of an artery', or plainly
 symbolical, but what of those that fixed like a
 butterfly upon a pin, to our central date, the first
 day of our Era, divide actual history into periods

1. 'A Vision' P.268. 2. Ibid. P 270-271

of equal length? To such a question I can but answer that if sometimes, overwhelmed by miracle as all men must be when in the midst of it, I have taken such periods literally, my reason has soon recovered; and now that ~~like~~ the system stands out clearly in my imagination I regard them as stylistic arrangements of experience comparable to the cubes in the drawing of Wyndham Lewis and to the ovoids in the sculpture of Brancusi. They have helped me to hold in a single thought reality and justice"¹.

Outside this, the sphere of Yeats's human sympathies does not seem to be very wide. When he turned from Pater's aestheticism to Politics and contemporary things, we find him occasionally impatient, railing at political factions and petty contentions:

They must to keep their certainty accuse
 All that are different of a base intent;
 Pull down established honour; hawk for news
 Whatever their loose phantasy invent
 And murmur it with bated breath, as though
 The abounding gutter had been Helicon
 Of calumny a song. How can they know
 Truth flourishes where the student's lamp
 has shone,

1. 'A Vision' P.24-25.

And there alone, that have no solitude?
 So the crowd come they care not what may come.
 They have loud music, hope every day renewed
 And heartier loves; that lamp is from the tomb.¹

Or again,

How could you dream they'd listen
 That have an ear alone
 For those new comrades they have found,
 Lord Edward and Wolfe Tone,
 Or meddle with our give and take
 That converse bone to bone?²

In other places it is controlled and dignified:

Violence upon the roads: violence of horses. . .

Perhaps 'Remorse for intemperate Speech' was the
 reason.

I ranted to the knave and fool,
 But outgrew that school.

Yeats's profoundest political outburst is in the
 memorable lines of 'The Second Coming' where his
 contemporary awareness becomes the prophetic utterance
 of a man who is no longer concerned with nationalism
 or patriotism in any narrow sense.

As the years went by, his bluntness of
 speech began to be more and more noticeable. The

1. 'The Leaders of the Crowd'. 2 'Sixteen Dead Men'

terrible nakedness of 'The Witch' is ~~repeated is~~ seen again and again. It is seen in the Crazy Jane poems as well as in the later 'The First, Second and Third Songs of the Chambermaid' in the 'New Poems'.

We also notice the increasing vein of pessimism. 'Coole and Ballylee' shows a complete disregard for religion. Both 'Vacillation' with its terrible challenge to Von Hügel and 'The Tower' conceal this pessimism under a cover of arrogance. Yeats's work has no unifying moral subject. The world of legend he has created, the cycles of thought and human history, his great utterances of noble egotism have no moral and no religion. Could he find no subject of moral significance in the social life of his time? Perhaps it was the quest for this that turned him to Purohit Swami and the Upanishads, Patanjali and Bhagwan Sri Hamsa. He had explored and experimented with a variety of subjects. That his insatiable curiosity gave him new interests at every stage of his life can be seen by examining the titles of his last volume of poems: 'A Bronze Head', 'Long-legged fly', 'News for the Delphic Oracle', 'The Statues', 'Politics', 'The Circus Animals' Desertion', 'Man and Echo', 'A Nativity', 'The Apparitions', 'High Talk', 'John Kinsella's Lament for Mrs. Mary Moore', 'Hound Voice'. If we compare them with the contents of an earlier

volume like 'The Wind Among the Reeds', the develop^vment of his 'interests' becomes pronounced:

. . . stilted boys, that burnished chariot,
Lion and woman and the Lord knows what.

And whether the thought is as profound as his curiosity and his awareness, we cannot but marvel at his technical mastery, his humanity, and his integrity as an artist.

THE TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT.

In dedicating his 'Early Poems and Stories' (1925) to Ashe King, Yeats wrote:

"A couple of days ago, while correcting the proofs of this book, I remembered a lecture you delivered in the year 1894 to the Dublin National Literary Society; a denunciation of rhetoric, and of Irish rhetoric most of all; and that it was a most vigorous and merry lecture and roused the anger of the newspapers. Thereon I decided to offer a book to you -- though I had years ago dedicated various sections to friends, some of whom are long dead -- for, a distaste for rhetoric was a chief characteristic of my generation, and gave the book its defects and qualities. The Irish form of Victorian rhetoric had declined into a patriotic extravagance that offended all educated minds, but Victor Hugo and Swinburne had so delighted our schooldays that we distrusted our habitual thoughts. I tried after the publication of 'The Wanderings of Oisin' to write of nothing but emotion, and in the simplest language, and now I have had to go through it all, cutting out or altering passages that are sentimental from lack of thought. Are we not always doomed to see our world as the Stoics foretold, consumed alternately by fire and water? Upon the other hand, I cannot have altogether failed in

simplicity, for these poems, written before my seven-
and-twentieth year, are still the most popular that
I have written. A girl/made profound by the first
pride of beauty, though all but a child still,
once said to me, 'Innocence is the highest achieve-
ment of the human intellect' and as we are encouraged
to believe that our intellects grow with our years
I may be permitted the conviction that -- grown a
little nearer innocence -- I have found a more appro-
priate simplicity."

This dedication is a confession of faith
which provides us with the clue to Yeats's technical
development as a poet. His hereditary passion for
refusing to regard any poem of his as quite finished¹
made him polish and repolish his early work a great
deal, even re_˙set them. But there was a plan behind
these re-writings. It was not merely an attempt to
give his poems better finish. "If I can be sincere
and make my language natural, and without becoming
discursive like a novelist and so indiscreet and
prosaic", I said to myself, "I shall, if good
luck or bad luck make my life interesting, be a
great poet. . ."²

That was the **frame** of mind in which he set
upon a great deal of the work of revision. The first

1. John B. Yeats, W.B.'s father, was notorious for his
inability to regard any of his pictures as finished.
2. 'Autobiographies'. P. 127.

revised versions of 'The Wanderings of Oisín' (1895, 1899) and The Rose poems bear testimony to that. In the earliest version Yeats seems to be striving for poetical effects and freedom of expression. The use of 'ye', 'thou' for the second person, inversions like 'Taller the trees grew', wrong prepositions for the sake of Poetic effect ('Chased of a phantom hound' for 'Chased by a phantom hound') are not merely unnatural, but strained. Compare the earliest (1889) version of the following song from the Second Book of 'The Wanderings of Oisín':

My brothers and my sisters live and thrive,
 And chase the wild bee homeward to his hive
 Afar in ancient Eri,
 By lakes and meadow lands and lawns afar,
 Where goes to gaze the restless-footed star
 Of twilight when he is weary.

They murmur like young partridge in the morn,
 When they awake upspringing; with loud horn
 They chase at noon the deer.

When the earliest dew-washed star from eve hath leant,
 Then muse they on the household wool intent,
 Or carve a dreadful spear.

Oh, sigh, awake and go you forth for me;
 Flutter along the froth-lips of the sea,
 And go you close to them.

From sleeper unto sleeper murmur you.
 If they still slumber, touch their eyelids blue,
 And ~~shake~~ their coverlet's hem,
 And tell them how I weep, until they weep;
 Then mounted on a heron, o'er the deep
 Return when you are weary,
 And tell me how my kindred's tears are welling,
 And one whom you will go to without telling,
 Say how he weeps in Eri.

with the final version(1933):

My brothers spring out of their beds at morn,
 A-murmur like young partridge:with loud horn
 They chase the noontide deer;
 And when the dew-drowned stars hang in the air
 Look to long fishing-lines, or point and pare
 An ashen hunting spear.
 O sigh, O fluttering sigh, be kind to me;
 Flutter along the froth lips of the sea,
 And shores the froth lips wet:
 And stay a little while, and bid them weep:
 Ah, touch their blue-veined eyelids if they sleep,
 And shake their coverlet.
 When you have told how I weep endlessly,
 Flutter along the froth lips of the sea
 And home to me again,
 And in the shadow of my hair lie hid,
 And tell me that you found a man unbid,
 The saddest of all men.

The 1895 version differs very little from the 1933 version except for the fact that it is divided up into three stanzas¹ which shows that most of the simplification was done in the period 1890-1900.

Let us examine now the various stages in the process of revision of a much-revised poem, 'A cradle song'. The earliest version we have access to :

The angels are sending
A smile to your bed.
They weary of tending
The souls of the dead.

Of tending the Seven -
The planets' old brood:
And God smiles in heaven
To see you so good.

My darling, I kiss you,
With arms round my own.
Ah, how shall I miss you
When heavy and grown.

is given in a letter to Mrs. Katherine Tynan Hinkson. The next revised version (1895) is considerably different:

The angels are bending
Above your white bed;
They weary of tending

1. Appendix

The souls of the dead.

God smiles in high heaven

To see you so good;

The old planets seven

Grow gay with his mood.

I kiss you and kiss you,

With arms round my own;

Ah, how shall I miss you,

When, dear, you have grown.

A still later version (1912) is again very different:

The angels are stooping

Above your bed;

They weary of trooping

With the whimpering dead.

God's laughing in heaven

To see you so good;

The Shining Seven

Are gay with his mood.

I kiss you and kiss you,

My pigeon, my own;

Ah, how I shall miss you

When you have grown.

The very final version (1933) is still different,

though the difference is only very slight from the 1912 version. 'The Cradle Song' is a very good example of a word by word revision in an attempt to achieve a precision of style. Most of the poems are revised in a similar manner, though some are completely rewritten. So much so that it is impossible to recognise the connection between the two but for the title. Thus the earliest version of 'The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner' (1892):

I had a chair at every hearth,
 When no one turned to see,
 With "look at that old fellow there,
 And who may he be?"
 And therefore do I wander on,
 And the fret lies on me.

The road-side trees keep murmuring,
 Ah, wherefore murmur ye,
 As in the old days long gone by,
 Green oak and poplar tree?
 The well-known faces are all gone
 And the fret lies on me.

is shorter than the revised version, and is totally different:-

Although I shelter from the rain
 Under a broken tree,
 My chair was nearest to the fire
 In every company,

That talked of love or politics
Ere time transfigured me.

Though lads are making pikes again
For some conspiracy,
And crazy rascals rage their fill
At human tyranny;
My contemplations are of time
That has transfigured me.

There's not a woman turns her face
Upon a broken tree,
And yet the beauties that I loved
Are in my memory;
I spit into the face of Time
That has transfigured me.

Here the difference between the two ~~poems~~ is that between two entirely different poems, both pleasant in their different ways. What is evident in these revisions as a whole is a quest for style, for precision, for economy. And their real importance is the fact that they show us how serious and conscious a craftsman Yeats was.

By 1900, the first period of pre-occupations with revisions is over. The Symbolist Movement, and Yeats's association with the French poets, Mallarmé in particular, create a middle period. In the essay, 'The Symbolism of Poetry' (1900) he

attempts to clarify his view of symbolic diction: 'With this return to imagination, this understanding that the laws of art, which are the hidden laws of the world, can alone bind the imagination, would come a change of style, and we would cast out of serious Poetry those energetic rhythms, as of a man running, which are the invention of the will with its eyes always on something to be done or undone; and we would seek out those wavering, meditative, organic rhythms, which are the embodiment of the imagination that neither desires nor hates, because it has done with time.' In 'The Wind Among the Reeds' Symbolism, Magic, and Legend are all interwoven in an attempt to create a style meant to suggest rather than describe. The symbols themselves, therefore, lose power and significance, because they are not sufficiently isolated. Look at such an unsatisfactory poem as 'The Cap and Bells'.

A change in interests and the nature of the themes employed always brings about a change in the expression of it. And with the beginning of the last phase we notice a corresponding change in Yeats's diction. In the later Yeats we never find lines like:

The love-tales wrought with silken thread
 By dreaming ladies upon cloth
 That has made fat the murderous moth;
 The roses that of old time were

Woven by ladies in their hair,
 The dew-cold lilies ladies love
 Through many a sacred corridor . . .

because there are no 'dew-cold lilies' and dreamy ladies in ~~the~~ his later Poetry. Nearer to contemporary life in his themes, his diction also develops in the same direction. It acquires the run of every day speech, and he succeeds in finding an idiom close enough to the world he lives in. He keeps it free from rhetorical ornament and works carefully towards making it less 'poetic'. He even uses bad rhyme, quite deliberately, afraid that rhyme sounds artificial and has ^a lulling effect. Look at~~x~~ the following lines from 'A Dialogue of Self and Soul':

A living man is blind and drinks his drop.
 What matter if the ditches are impure?
 What matter if I ~~love~~ it all once more?
 Endure that toil of growing up;
 The ignominy of boyhood; the distress
 Of boyhood changing into man;
 The unfinished man and his pain
 Brought face to face with his own clumsiness.

Here 'drop' rhymes with 'up'; 'impure' with 'more'; and 'man' with 'pain'. The effect of the bad rhyme is to create a kind of muted seriousness. Its comparative novelty also compels attention. Certain

bad rhymes , of course, have been permitted by convention in English Poetry like 'love' and 'prove' or'happily' and'tree'. But in the poem of Yeats just quoted it seems to be the rule rather than the exception. Yeats also uses internal rhymes, which is a modern device, as well as 'pararhymes' invented and brought into modern use by Wilfred Owen. All these give his lines something of the quality of a carefully conceived structure. Witness for example:

No longer in Lethean foliage caught
 Begin the preparation for your death
 And from the fortieth winter by that thought
 Test every work of intellect or faith,
 And everything that your own hands have wrought,
 And call those works extravagance of breath
 That are not suited for such men as come
 Proud, open-eyed and laughing to the tomb.

Yeats has a private meaning to attach to everything. How far he has used the 'striking metaphors' of the elaborate cycle explained in 'A Vision' has been discussed in the last chapter. Magical terms, spiritualistic code-words, Irish peasant dialect, Hindu philosophical terms (echoes of the Bhagavadgita), all come into his diction. The difficulty (one might even say unintelligibility) would have been greater if it had~~not~~ been for his

logical syntax and a recognisable metric. His verse 'sounds' so convincing that we do not bother about the exact meaning. The impression of a mystical faith, the movement within a Cycle, the sincerity, the passion are all conveyed to the reader with effect. The tower in 'The Tower' is at the same time an ordinary tower in Co. Galway as an intellectual symbol.

The language is always manipulated with great skill, and the whole structure is so masterly that the mere movement of the verse in a line like

'An ancient bankrupt master of this house ..'

smooths away the roughness of its meaning. Take the following lines from 'The Tower':

And certain men-~~at~~arms there were
 Whose images, in the Great Memory stored,
 Come with loud cry and panting breast
 To break upon a sleeper's rest
 While their great wooden dice beat on the
 board.

The last line has the intensity and suggestiveness conveyed to us by painting, drama, the ballet. If it does not express directly a fact of human experience, that is because his vision and his authority have been acquired through varied and sometimes inscrutable channels.

CONCLUSION.

In the Preface to 'The King of the Great Clock Tower' (1935) Yeats said: 'A year ago I found that I had written no verse for two years'. And he goes on to wonder whether it was the closing of Coole Park, the passing of its owner, or his own old age (he was 69 then) that was responsible for it. He gathered together some of his new poems and asked a friend for criticism. It is obvious from the *description* that the friend was Ezra Pound. Pound ~~replied~~ at him for reading Shakespeare and Chaucer and pointed out Major Douglas's works on Social Credit. In characteristic manner he gave his criticism of the poems in the one word, 'putrid'.

Some of those poems have since then appeared in 'New Poems' (1938) and prove the fallibility of many of Mr. Pound's sayings. They show no flagging in his powers. The astonishing growth of his Poetry from strength to strength continues. 'The Three Bushes' is a ballad related with a simplicity and a directness which cannot be surpassed. And 'Sweet Dancer' has the ripeness and sureness of touch of the master. The uncompromising way in which he expresses himself in The Chamber Maid's Songs, withholding nothing, has a terrible suggestiveness and beauty. It is the work of an adult who

has not forgotten youth.

'I was good-looking once . . . but my unpractised verse was full of infirmity, my Muse old as it were", he wrote in 'Bounty of Sweden'; 'and now I am old and rheumatic and nothing to look at, but my Muse is young. I am even persuaded that she is like those angels in Swedenborg's vision, and move perpetually "towards the day-spring of her youth"'

The Poet laureate, John Masefield, summed up Yeats's achievement beautifully when he said : 'I have thought of him as of a Greek poet from Byzantium who, having attained immortality in Arabia, came, seeking wisdom to Renaissance Italy, and then, having watched from some high tower the spectacle of the decline of life ~~in-the~~ during three centuries, descended in the late Victorian times to say that Unearthly Beauty lives, and that her Shadow, cast on the mind of some turbulent wanderer, whom the world slays, is lovelier than those great possessions which numb the mind, and redden the land with suburbs and blacken the towns with death'¹. And then went on to say: 'A simpler age would have canonised him; of course after first burning him at the stake.'

To the very last his mind remained quick

and alive, and his curiosity, stronger than ever.
And ^{it} is strange, but appropriate that simultaneously
with his death appeared two poems of his in 'The
London Mercury' which show that he had prepared for
his end.¹

Man.

....All that I have said and done,
Now that I am old and ill,
Turns into a question till
I lie awake night after night
And never get the answer right.
.
And all seems evil until I
Sleepless would lie down and die.

Echo.

Lie down and die.

'The Circus Animal's Desertion'¹ is in the nature of
a last will and testament.

What can I but enumerate old themes,
First that sea-rider Usheen led by the nose
Through three enchanted islands, allegorical dreams,
Vain gaiety, vain battle, vain repose,
Themes of the embittered heart, or so it seems,
That might adorn old songs or courtly shows;
But what cared I that set him on to ride,
I, starved for the bosom of his fairy bride.

1. Appendix.

And then a counter-truth filled out its play,
 'The Countess Cathleen' was the name I gave it,
 She, pity-crazed, had given her soul away
 But masterful Heaven had intervened to save it.
 I thought my dear must her own soul destroy
 So did fanaticism and hate enslave it,
 And this brought forth a dream and soon enough
 This dream had all my thought and love.

And when the Fool and Blind Man stole the bread
 Cuchullain fought the ungovernable sea,
 Heart mysteries there, and yet when all is said
 It was the dream itself enchanted me:

Character isolated by a deed
 To engross the present and dominate memory.
 Players and painted stage took all my love
 And not those things that they were emblems of.



Those masterful images because complete
 Grew in pure mind but out of what began?
 A mound of refuse or the sweepings of a street,
 Old kettles, old bottles, and a broken can,
 Old iron, old bones, old rags, that raving slut
 Who keeps the till. Now that my ladder's gone
 I must lie down where all the ladders start
 In the foul rag and bone shop of the heart.

He took count of his achievement as if with a prophetic vision of the coming end.



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A P P E N D I X - I

THE WANDERINGS OF OISIN.

PARTS I & II.

(An edition to illustrate the development of the diction of William Butler Yeats.)

(With a short introductory note)

THE WANDERINGS OF OISIN

The following pages are an attempt to indicate the nature of Yeats's revisions and how far they are an index to the advance in his diction. I have given the earliest version (1889) of 'The Wanderings of Oisin' on the left hand side and the final version (1933) on the right hand side with footnotes which give the intermediate versions. I have stopped with the first two parts as they were the ones which were entirely rewritten. The third part, which even in the earliest version is technically more advanced than the preceding ones has hardly been changed in later editions. The second edition of 'The Wanderings of Oisin' (revised) was published in 1895, the third in 1899, the fourth in 1901, the fifth in 1904, the sixth in 1908 and the seventh in 1912. I have referred to these editions in the footnotes as 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

The title in the earliest version runs — 'The Wanderings of Oisin and How a Demon trapped him'. The later ^t part is dropped in the later editions. The sub-titles of the three books (I 'The Island of the Living, II 'The Island of Victories', III 'The Island of Forgetfulness') have also been dropped in the later editions. The 1889 edition does not have the motto from Tulka — "Give me the world if thou wilt, but grant me an asylum for my affection".

The general trend of the revision is

towards a stricter simplicity and an almost fastidious avoidance of surplusage. I have indicated this as well as the gain in power in the later versions by Yeats's better understanding and knowledge of Irish mythology in the chapter on 'The Wanderings of Oisín'. The sequence of events, even of lines and paragraphs is, on the whole, retained.

There is little doubt that Yeats hated this work of revision and that he ~~was~~^{was} compelled to do it by an uncontrollable urge. In the notes to the Prefatory Poem to 'Responsibilities' he says — "'Free of the ten and four" (L.3) is an error I cannot now correct without more re-writing than I have a mind for.' Neither was he always prompted by the desire to be 'accurate'. In the notes to the Collected Poems (1933) he says: "In this edition of my poems I have adopted Lady Gregory's spelling of Gaelic names with, I think, two exceptions. The 'd' of 'Edain' ran too well in my verse for me, to adopt her perhaps more correct 'Etain' and for some reason unknown to me I have always preferred 'Aengus' to her 'Angus'.

The substantial changes began during the period 1890 to 1895. The difference between

175

the 1889 version and the 1895 version is far greater than that between 1895 and 1933. Thus most of the work of revision was done in the 'nineties[#], a period of intensive search for simplicity and naturalism in style in Yeats's career.

THE WANDERINGS OF OISIN
AND
HOW A DEMON TRAPPED HIM.

Part I

The Island of the Living.

Patrick.

Oisin, tell me the famous story
Why thou outlivest, blind and hoary,
The bad old days. Thou wert, men sing,
Trapped of an amorous demon thing.

Oisin.

'Tis sad remembering, sick with years,
The swift innumerable years
The long-lived warriors, the spread feast;
And love, in the hours when youth has ceased:
Yet will I make all plain for thee.
We rode in sorrow, with strong hounds three,
Bran, Sgeolan, and Lomair,
On a morning misty and mild and fair.
The mist-drops hung on the fragrant trees,
And in the blossoms hung the bees.
We rode in sadness above Lough Laen,
For our best were dead on Gavra's green.

THE WANDERINGS OF OISIN.

Book I.

S. Patrick. You who are bent, and bald, and blind,
 With a heavy heart and a wandering mind,
 Have known three centuries, poets sing,
 Of dalliance with a demon thing.

Oisin. Sad to remember, sick with years,
 The swift innumerable spears,
 The horsemen with their floating hair,
 And bowls of barley, honey, and wine,
 Those merry couples dancing in tune,
 And the white body that lay by mine; 10
 But the tale, though words be lighter than air,
 Must live to be old like the wandering moon.

2,3,4,5,6, have a motto:- 'Give me the world if Thou wilt,
 but grant me an asylum for my affections'.

Spellings. 1895 has St. Patrick.
 1899, 1901 S. Patrick.
 1908 S. Patric.
 1912 S. Patrick.

1895 has Usheen.
 1899, 1901, 1908 Oisin.
 1912 Usheen.

2,3,4,5,6, have "And feet of maidens dancing in tune"

The stag we chased was not more sad,
And yet, of yore, much peace he had
In his own leafy forest house,
Sleek as any granary mouse
Among the fields of waving fern.
We thought on Oscar's pencilled urn.
Than the hornless deer we chased that morn,
A swifter creature never was born,
And Bran, Sgeolan, and Lomair
Were lolling their tongues, and the silken hair
Of our strong steeds was dark with sweat,
When ambling down the vale we met
A maiden, on a slender steed,
Whose careful pastern pressed the sod
As though he held an earthly mead
Scarce worthy of a hoof gold-shod.
For gold his hooves and silk his reign,
And 'tween his ears, above his mane,
A golden crescent lit the plain,
And pearly-white his well-groomed hair.
His mistress was more mild and fair
Than doves that moaned round Eman's hall
Among the leaves of the laurel wall,
And feared always the bow-string's twanging.

Caolte, and Conan, and Finn were there,
 When we followed a deer with our baying hounds,
 With Bran, Sceolan, and Lomair,
 And passing the Firbolgs' burial-mounds,
 Came to the cairn-heaped grassy hill
 Where passionate Maeve is stony-still;
 And found on the dove-grey edge of the sea
 A pearl-pale, high-born lady, who rode
 On a horse with bridle of findrinny;

20

L.13. 1895, 1899, 1901, 1908, 1912 have Caolte. This holds true in almost all the places the name occurs.

L. 15. 1895, 1899, 1901, 1908, 1912 have Sgeolan. This too is true of all places where the name occurs later.

L.16. earlier editions - ----- burial mounds,

L.18. earlier editions have:- Maive is stony still;

L.19. earlier editions have:- dove-gray

Her eyes were soft as dewdrops hanging
Upon the grass blades' bending tips,
And like a sunset were her lips,
A stormy sunset o'er doomed ships.
Her hair was of a citron tincture,
And gathered in a silver cincture;
Down to her feet white vesture flowed,
And with the woven crimson glowed
Of many a figured creature strange,
And birds that on the seven seas range.
For brooch 'twas bound with a bright sea-shell,
And wavered like a summer rill,
As her soft bosom rose and fell.

Patrick.

Oisín, thou art half heathen still!

Oisín.

"Why, as ye ride, droops low each head?
Why do ye sound no horn?" she said.
"For hunting heroes should be glad.
The stag ye chase is not more sad,
And yet, of yore, much peace he had,
Sleek as any granary mouse,
In his own leafy forest house,
Among the waving fields of fern."

And like a sunset were her lips,
 A stormy sunset on doomed ships;
 A citron colour gloomed in her hair,
 But down to her feet white vesture flowed,
 And with the glimmering crimson glowed
 Of many a figured embroidery;
 And it was bound with a pearl-pale shell
 That wavered like the summer streams,
 As her soft bosom rose and fell.

S. Patrick. You are still wrecked among heathen dreams.

Oisin. 'Why do you wind no horn?' she said.

'And every hero droop his head?
 The hornless deer is not more sad
 Than many a peaceful moment had,
 More sleek than any granary mouse,
 In his own leafy forest house
 Among the waving fields of fern:
 The hunting of heroes should be glad.'

L. 32-39. The 1895 edition had
 'The hunting heroes should be glad'
 as the first line of the speech. The later editions
 have the same arrangement as the 1933 edition.

"We think on Oscar's pencilled urn,
 And those on Gavra lying low,
 Where round and round the ravens go.
 Now, pleasant maiden, tell to me
 Thy name, thy kin, and thy country,"
 Cried Finx; and cried she, "Men of fame,
 My house is far from where the tide
 Washes the shores where ye abide,
 Ye worn deed-doers, and my name
 Is Niam, daughter of the King
 Of the Young."

"Young maiden, what may bring
 Thy wandering steps across the sea?
 Is thy companion gone from thee?"
 Clear fluted then that goblin rare —
 "Not so, great King; for I have ne'er
 Been spoken of with any man.
 For love of Oisin my feet ran
 Across the glossy sea."

"Oh, wild
 Young princess, why wert thou beguiled
 Of Oisin, the young man, my son?
 Of princes there is many a one."
 "Good reason have I for my love,"
 She said; "for he is far above

'O pleasant woman,' answered Finn,
 'We think on Oscar's pencilled urn,
 And on the heroes lying slain
 On Gabhra's raven-covered plain;
 But where are your noble kith and kin,
 And from what country do you ride?'

'My father and my mother are
 Aengus and Edain, my own name
 Niamh, and my country far
 Beyond the tumbling of this tide.'

'What dream came with you that you came
 Through bitter tide on foam-wet feet?
 Did your companion wander away
 From where the birds of Aengus wing?
 Thereon did she look haughty and sweet:
 'I have not yet, war-weary king,
 Been spoken of with any man;
 Yet now I choose, for these four feet
 Ran through the foam and ran to this
 That I might have your son to kiss.'

'Were there no better than my son
 That you through all that foam should run?'

L.43. 2,3 have Gayra

L.45. 2,3,4,5,6 have 'And into what country

Us 46-49. I am Neave, a child of the mighty Shee,
 And was born where the sun drops down in the tide,
 O worn deed-doer'. (1895 version).

My father and my mother are
 Aengus and Adene, and my name
 Is Niam, and my land where tide
 And sleep drown sun and moon and star. (3,4,5,6.)

All men, and stronger of his hands,
And drops of honey are his words,
And glorious as Asian birds
At evening in their rainless lands.
Full many bowing kings besought me,
And many princes of high name.
I ne'er loved any till song brought me
To peak and pine o'er Oisín's fame."
There was, Oh Patrick, by thy head,
No limb of me that was not fallen
In love. I cried, "Thee will I wed,
Young Niam, and thou shalt be callen
Beloved in a thousand songs.
Before thy feet shall kneel down all
My captives, bound in leathern thongs,
And praise thee in my western hall."
"Oisín, thou must away with me
To my own kingdom in the sea -
Away, away with me," she cried,
"To shores by the wash of the tremulous tide,
Where the voice of change is the voice of a tune,
In the poppy-hung house of the twilight fluted;
To shores where dying has never been known,

'I loved no man, though kings besought,
 Until the Danaan poets brought
 Rhyme that rhymed upon Oisin's name,
 And now I am dizzy with the thought
 Of all that wisdom and the fame
 Of battles broken by his hands,
 Of stories builded by his words
 That are like coloured Asian birds
 At evening in their rainless lands.'

70

O Patrick, by your brazen bell,
 There was no limb of mine but fell
 Into a desperate gulph of love!
 'You only will I wed,' I cried,
 'And I will make a thousand songs,
 And set your name all names above,
 And captives bound with leathern thongs
 Shall kneel and praise you, one by one,
 At evening in my western dun.'

'O Oisin, mount by me and ride
 To shores by the wash of the tremulous tide,
 Where men have heaped no burial-mounds,

80

L.62. 2,3,4,5,6 have canns instead of kings.

Ls 63-66. The 1895 version is:-

And many a prince of lofty name,
 Until the Danaan poets came,
 Bringing me honeyed, wandering thought
 Of noble Usheen and his fame,

3,4,5,6 have the same version except that 'man' is substituted for 'prince' in the first of these lines.

The 1912 edition has

Love, ~~un~~till the Danaan poets brought
 Rhyme, that rhymed to Usheen's name
 etc etc.

L.82. no hyphen for 'burial-mounds' in the earlier editions.

And the flushes of first love never have flown;
And a hundred steeds, tumultuous-footed,
There shalt thou have, and a hundred hounds
That spring five paces in their bounds,
No mightier creatures bay at the moon;
And a hundred robes of the softest silk,
And a hundred calves, and a hundred sheep
Whose long wool whiter than sea-froth flows;
And a hundred swords and a hundred bows;
And honey, and oil, and wine, and milk,
And always never-anxious sleep;
And a hundred maidens wise and young,
And sweeter of voice than the pleasant birds,
And swifter than the salmon herds;
And a hundred youths, whose limbs are strung
In a vigour more than mortal measure,
And floating-haired and proud in strife;
And thou shalt know the immortals' leisure,
And I be with thee as thy wife."

We rode beyond the furze and heather,
And stood beside the sea together;
Then sighed she softly, "Late! 'tis late!
Mount my white steed, for the fairy state

And the days pass by like a wayward tune,
 Where broken faith has never **been** known,
 And the blushes of first love never have flown;
 And there I will give you a hundred hounds;
 No mightier creatures bay at the moon;
 And a hunderd robes of murmuring silk,
 And a hunderd calves and^a hundred sheep
 Whose long wool whiter than sea-froth flows, 90
 And a hundæed spears and a hunderd bows,
 And oil and wine and honey and milk,
 And always never-anxious sleep;
 While a hundred youths, mighty of limb,
 But knowing nor tumult nor hate nor strife,
 And a hundred ladies merry as birds,
 Who when they dance to a fitful measure
 Have a speed like the speed of the salmon herds,
 Shall follow your horn and obey your whim,
 And you shall knoe the Danaan leisure; 100
 And Niamh be with you for a wife.'
 Then she sighed gently, 'It grows late.
 Music and love and sleep await,
 Where I would be when the white moon climbs,
 The red sun falls and the world grows dim.'

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- L 87. 1895 edition has the line in parenthesis.
 L.90. No hyphen in sea-froth in the earlier editions.
 L.96. 2,3,4,5,6,7 have 'maidens' instead of 'ladies'
 L.103. 2 has 'And many a mile is the faery state'
 L.105. The earlier editions have a comma after 'falls'

Lies far". I mounted, and she bound me
In triumph with her arms around me,
And, whispering to herself, enwound me;
And when the white steed felt my weight,
He shook himself for travelling,
And neighed three times.

When, wondering
Near by, the Fenians saw, and knew
That I would go with her, they grew
Mournful, and gathered on the sands;
They wept, and raised lamenting hands.
When I had stooped and tenderly
Had kissed my father, long-armed Fin,
And the Fenians all had wept with me,
We rode across the oily sea,
For the sparkling hooves they sank not in;
And far behind us, slowly round
The Fenians on the human ground
Closed in the misty air profound.

In what far kingdom do ye go,
Ah, Fenians, with the shield and bow?
Or are ye phantoms white as snow,
Whose lips had life's most prosperous glow? (7)

And then I mounted and she bound me
 With her triumphing arms around me,
 And whispering to herself enwound me;
 But when the horse had felt my weight,
 He shook himself and neighed three times:

110

Caoilte, Conan, and Finn came near,
 And wept, and raised their lamenting hands,
 And bid me stay, with many a tear;
 But we rode out from the human lands.

In what far kingdom do you go,
 Ah, Fenians, with the shield and bow?
 Or are you phantoms white as snow,
 Whose lips had life's most prosperous glow?

L 110. , after shook himself in the earlier editions.

L.111. Spelt 'Caoilte' in the earlier editions.

Oh ye with whom, in sloping valleys
 And down the dewy forest alleys,
 I chased with hounds the flying deer,
 With whom I hurled the hurrying spear,
 And heard the foeman's bucklers rattle,
 And broke the heaving ranks of battle?
 And, Eran, Sgeolan, and Lomair,
 Where are ye with your long rough hair?
 Ye go not where the red deer feeds,
 Nor tear the foemen from their steeds.

Patrick.

Bard Oisin, boast not of thy deeds
 Nor thy companions. Let them rest,
 The Fenians. Let their deer-hounds sleep.
 Tell on, nor bow thy heathen crest
 In brooding memory, nor weep.

Oisin.

On, on, we galloped o'er the sea.
 I knew not if days passed or hours,
 For fairy songs continuously
 Sang Niam, and their dewy showers
 Of pensive laughter - unhuman sound -
 Lulled weariness; and closely round
 My human sadness fay arms wound.

O you, with whom in sloping valleys,
 Or down the dewy forest alleys, 120
 I chased at morn the flying deer,
 With whom I hurled the hurrying spear,
 And heard the foemen's bucklers rattle,
 And broke the heaving ranks of battle!
 And Bran, Sceolan, and Lomair,
 Where are you with your long rough hair?
 You go not where the red deer feeds,
 Nor tear the foemen from their steeds.

S. Patrick. Boast not, nor mourn with drooping head
 Companions long accursed and dead, 130
 And hounds for centuries dust and air.

Oisin. We galloped over the glossy sea:
 I know~~ed~~ not if days passed or hours,
 And Niamh sang continually
 Danaan songs, and their dewy showers
 Of pensive laughter, unhuman sound,
 Lulled weariness, and softly round
 My human sorrow her white arms wound.

L. 125. Sgeolan is the spelling in the earlier editions.
 L. 129. S. Patrick. See note on spelling before.
 L. 134. Niamh. -do-

On, on! and now a hornless deer
Passed by us, chased of a phantom hound
All pearly white, save one red ear;
And now a maid, on a swift brown steed
Whose hooves the tops of the surges grazed,
Hurried away, and over her raised
An apple of gold in her tossing hand;
And following her at a headlong speed
Was a beautiful youth from an unknown land.
"Who are the riding ones?" I said.
"Fret not with speech the phantoms dread",
Said Niam, as she laid the tip
Of one long finger on my lip.
Now in the sea the sun's rim sank,
The clouds arrayed them rank on rank
In silence round his crimson ball.
The floor of Eman's dancing hall
Was not more level than the sea,
As, full of loving phantasy,
We rode on murmuring. Many a shell

We galloped; now a hornless deer
 Passed by us, chased by a phantom hound 140
 All pearly white, save one red ear;
 And now a lady rode like the wind
 With an apple of gold in her tossing hand;
 And a beautiful young man followed behind
 With quenchless gaze and fluttering hair.
 'Were these two born in the Danaan land,
 Or have they breathed the mortal air?'

'Vex them no longer,' Niamh said,
 And sighing bowed her gentle head,
 And sighing laid the pearly tip 150
 Of one long finger on my lip.

But now the moon like a white rose shone
 In the pale west, and the sun's rim sank,
 And clouds arrayed their rank on rank
 About his fading crimson ball:
 The floor of Almuin's hosting hall
 Was not more level than the sea,
 As, full of loving fantasy,
 And with low murmurs we rode on,

L. 139. 'On!on! and now a hornless deer' is the reading of 2, 3,4,5,6,

L. 143. 2,3,4,5,6 have , instead of ; at the end of the line.

L.144-5. And with quenchless eyes and fluttering hair
 A beautiful young man followed behind.
 is the reading of 2,3,4,5,6.

L.156. Emen's is the spelling of the earlier editions.

L. 158. There is no , after As in 2,3,4,5,6.

L. 159. -do- murmurs in 2,3,4,5,6.

And pondered in a soft vain mood
On their own selves in the waters white,
And murmured snatches of delight;
And on the shores were many boats
With bending sterns and bending bows,
And carven figures on their prows
Of bitterns and fish-eating stoats,
And swans with their exultant throats.
Among them 'lighting from our steed,
Maid Niam from a little trump
Blew one long note. From over reed
And river, fern and flowery clump,
Ere long an answering whisper flew,
A whisper of impetuous feet
Among the woodland grasses sweet,
And ever nearer, nearer grew;
And from the woods there rushed a band
Of youths and maidens hand in hand,
And singing, singing all together.

And pondered in a soft vain mood
 Upon their shadows in the tide,
 And told the purple deeps their pride,
 And murmured snatches of delight;
 And on the shores were many boats
 With bending sterns and bending bows,
 And carven figures on their prows 190
 Of bitterns, and fish-eating stoats,
 And swans with their exultant throats:
 And where the wood and waters meet
 We tied the horse in a leafy clump,
 And Niamh blew three merry notes
 Out of a little silver trump;
 And then an answering whispering flew
 Over the bare and woody land,
 A whisper of impetuous feet,
 And ever nearer, nearer grew; 200
 And from the woods rushed out a band
 Of men and ladies, hand in hand,
 And singing, singing all together;

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- L. 193. 2 and 3 have 'woods' instead of 'wood'.
 L. 195. Niamh. See before about spelling.
 L. 202. The earlier editions had 'maidens'
 instead of 'ladies'.

Their brows were white as fragrant milk,
Their robes were all of yellow silk,
Trimmed round with many a crimson feather;
And when they saw my earthly dress,
They fingered it and gazed at me,
And laughed like murmurs of the sea.
But Niam, with a sad distress,
Bid them away and hold their peace;
And when they heard her voice, they ran
And knelt them, every maid and man,
And kissed, as they would never cease,
Her fingers and her garments' hem.
Now in the woods away with them,
Went we to find their prince's hall -

Their brows were white as fragrant milk,
 Their cloaks made out of yellow silk,
 And trimmed with many a crimson feather;
 And when they saw the cloak I wore
 Was dim with mire of a mortal shore,
 They fingered it and gazed on me
 And laughed like murmurs of the sea; 210
 But Niamh with a swift distress
 Bid them away and hold their peace;
 And when they heard her voice they ran
 And knelt there, every girl and man,
 And kissed, as they would never cease,
 Her pearl-pale hand and the hem of her dress.
 She bade them bring us to the hall
 Where Aengus dreams, from sun to sun,
 A Druid dream of the end of days
 When the stars are to wane and the world be done. 220

L. 204. as the fragrant milk (1895) .
 L. 205. 1895 had 'brattas' instead of cloaks.
 L. 206. The earlier editions had : at the end of the
 line instead of ;.
 L. 207. 1895 had: '. saw that the bratta I wore'
 L. 208. 1895 had: '. with the mire etc.'
 L. 214. 2,3,4,5,6,7 had '. . knelt them, every maid. . .'
 L. 218. The spelling in the 1895 edition was Angus.
 L. 220. 2 had ; at the end of the line.

Or in the woods, away with them,
Where white dewdrops in millions fall;
Or in the woods, away with them,
Where tangling creepers every hour
Blossom in some new crimson flower;
Or in the woods, away with them,
Where trees made sudden cavern-glooms
By roots that joined above our plumes -
Or in the woods, away with them!
And once a sudden laughter sprang
From all their lips, and ^{once} they sang
Together, while the dark woods rang,
And rose from all their distant parts,
From bees among their honeyed marts,
A rumour of delighted hearts.
And while they sang, a singer laid
A harp of silver in my hands,
And bade me sing of earthly lands;
And when I sang of human joy
They hushed them, every man and maid.
Oh, Patrick, by thy beard, they wept,
And one came close, a tearful boy.

They led us by long and shadowy ways
 Where drops of dew in myriads fall,
 And tangled creepers every hour
 Blossom in some new crimson flower,
 And once a sudden laughter sprang
 From all their lips, and once they sang
 Together, while the dark woods rang,
 And made in all their distant parts,
 With boom of bees in honey-marts,
 A rumour of delighted hearts.

230

And once a lady by my side
 Gave me a harp, and bade me sing,
 And touch the laughing silver string;
 But when I sang of human joy
 A sorrow wrapped each merry face,
 And, Patrick! by your beard, they wept,
 Until one came, a tearful boy;

L.224. 2 had a ; at the end of the line.

L.229. honey-marts. There was no hyphen in the earlier edns.

L.231. The earlier editions had 'maiden' for 'lady'.

"A sadder creature never stept
 Than this strange bard," he cried, and caught
 The harp away. A dolorous pool
 Lay 'neath us; of its hollow cool
 No creature had familiar thought
 Save deer towards noon that water sought.
 Therein the silver harp he hurled,
 And each one said, with a long, long sigh,
 "The saddest harp in all the world!"

And ^{now} still sad our troop drew nigh
 A firwood house, all covered over
 With antlers and the shaggy skin
 Of many a slaughtered forest rover.
 We passed the portals, and within,
 One hand beneath his beardless chin,
 wondrous
 There was a [^] young man sitting.
 Within his other hand were flitting
 Around a sceptre of all lights,
 Wild flames of red and creamy whites,
 With flames of red and gold and blue;
 And nigh unto him each one drew,
 And kissed the sceptre with hot lips,
 And touched it with his finger-tips.

'A sadder creature never stept
 Than this strange human bard,' he cried;
 And caught the silver harp away 240
 And, weeping over the white strings, hurled
 It down in a leaf-hid, hollow place
 That kept dim waters from the sky;
 And each one said, with a long, long sigh,
 'O saddest harp in all the world,
 Sleep there till the moon and the stars die!'

And now, still sad, we came to where
 A beautiful young man dreamed within
 A house of wattles, clay, and skin;
 One hand upheld his beardless chin, 250
 And one a sceptre flashing out
 Wild flames of red and gold and blue,
 Like to a merry wandering rout
 Of dancers leaping in the air;
 And men and ladies knelt them there
 And showed their eyes with teardrops dim,
 And with low murmurs prayed to him,
 And kissed the sceptre with red lips,
 And touched it with their finger-tips.

L.244. There was no , after said in the earlier editions.

L.248~~7~~ There were no comas ^w in the ear~~ly~~ earlier editions.

L.255. The earlier editions had 'maidens' instead of 'ladies'

With a clear voice the young man cried,
" 'Tis joy makes swim the sappy tide,
And 'waken, courtiers of the morn!'
Cries to the sluggard seeds of corn,
And stirs the young kid's budding horn,
And makes the infant ferns unwrap,
And for the peewit paints his cap.
For joy the little planets run
Round us, and rolls the unwieldy sun.
If joy were nowhere on the earth
There were an end of change and birth;
The universe herself wood die,
And in some urn funereal lie
Folded like a frozen fly.

"The soul is a drop of joy afar.
In other years from some old star
It fell, or ~~when~~ from the twisted moon
Dripped on the earth; but soon, ah! soon,
To all things cried, 'I am a slave!
Trickling along the earth, I rave;
In pinching ways I toil and turn'.
But, warrior, here there is no flaw;

He held that flashing sceptre up,
 'Joy drowns the twilight in the dew,
 And fills with stars night's purple cup,
 And wakes the sluggard seeds of corn,
 And stirs the young kid's budding horn,
 And makes the infant ferns unwrap,
 And for the peewit paints his cap,
 And rolls along the unwieldy sun,
 And makes the little planets run:

260

And if joy were not on the earth,
 There were an end of change and birth,
 And Earth and Heaven and Hell would die,
 And in some gloomy barrow lie
 Folded like a frozen fly;
 Then mock at Death and Time with glances
 And wavering arms and wandering dances.

270

'Men's hearts of old were drops of flame
 That from the saffron morning came,
 Or drops of silver joy that fell
 Out of the moon's pale twisted shell;
 But now hearts cry that hearts are slaves,
 And toss and turn in narrow caves;
 But here there is nor law nor rule,

280

L.270. earth and heaven spelt without capitals in the earlier editions.

L.275. 2&3 had 'waving' instead of 'wavering'.

The soul is free, and finds no flaw,
Nor sorrow with her osprey claw.

Then, warrior, why so sad and stern,
For joy is God and God is joy?

Among the ringing halls a shout
Arose from every maid and boy,
And through the doors, a rustling rout,
Swept on the dance's linked flow,
In every brain a wizard glow.

The murmuring birds in solemn pomp
Passed a-tiptoe up and down
In a long and shadowy row,
We hushed the singing and the romp,
And, gathering on our brows a frown,
Whispered to the sea whose flow
Bat away the sloping sod,
"God is joy and joy is God.

Everything that's sad is wicked -
Everything that fears tomorrow
Or the wild grey osprey sorrow".

Then onward in the winding thicket
We danced to where within the gloom
Hung, like meteors of red light,
Damask roses in the night,
And sang we lightly to each bloom
As we kissed each rose's head;

Nor have hands held a weary tool;
 And here there is no Change nor Death,
 But only kind and merry breath,
 For joy is God and God is joy.'
 With one long glance for girl and boy
 And the pale blossom of the moon,
 He fell into a Druid swoon.

And in a wild and sudden dance 290
 We mocked at Time and Fate and Chance
 And swept out of the wattled hall
 And came to where the dew-drops fall
 Among the foamdrops of the sea,
 And there we hushed the revelry;
 And, gathering on our brows a frown,
 Bent all our swaying bodies down,
 And to the waves that glimmer by
 That sloping green De Danaan sod
 Sang, 'God is joy and joy is God, 300
 And things that have grown sad are wicked,
 And things that fear the dawn of the morrow
 Or the grey wandering osprey Sorrow'.
 We danced to where ⁱⁿ the winding thicket
 The damask roses, bloom on bloom,
 Like crimson meteors hang in the gloom,
 And bending over them softly said,

L.287. 2,3,4,5,6 have 'With one long glance on maid and boy'
 L.288 2 has 'And the thin crescent of the moon'
 L.302. The earlier editions have a coma at the end of the line.
 L.303. Earlier editions have 'grey'

Sang we softly in the dance,
With a soft and friendly glance -
Sang we softly, "On the dead,
Fall the leaves of other roses,
On the dead the earth encloses.
Never, never on our graves
Heaved beside the glimmering waves,
Shall fall the leaves of damask roses;
For change and death they come not near us,
And we never fear the morrow
Or the wild grey osprey sorrow".

Then on among the windless woods,
The ever summered solitudes,
The many-coloured dancers rushed,
Till on the central hill we hushed
Once more the dance's linked flow,
And, gathered in a panting band,
Flung on high each waving hand,
And sang unto the starry broods.
In our raised eyes there flashed a glow
Of milky brightness to and fro,

Bending over them in the dance,
 With a swift and friendly glance
 From dewy eyes: 'Upon the dead 310
 Fall the leaves of other roses,
 On the dead dim earth encloses:
 But never, never on our graves,
 Heaped beside the glimmering waves,
 Shall fall the leaves of damask roses.
 For neither Death nor Change comes near us,
 And all listless hours fear us,
 And we fear no dawning morrow,
 Nor the grey wandering osprey sorrow'.

The dance wound through the windless woods; 320
 The ever-summered solitudes;
 Until the tossing arms grew still
 Upon the woody central hill;
 And, gathered in a panting band,
 We flung on high each waving hand,
 And sang unto the starry broods.
 In our raised eyes there flashed a glow
 Of milky brightness to and fro

L.312. There is a comma after 'dead' in 2 & 3.

L.319. Earlier editions have 'gray'.

L.321. 2 has the line in parenthesis.

L.326. Earlier editions have ':' at the end of the line.

As thus our song arose : "Ye stars,
Across your wandering ruby cars
Shake the loose reins! Ye slaves of God,
He rules with an iron rod,
He holds you with an iron bond,
Each one woven to the other,
Each one woven to his brother,
Like bubbles in a frozen pond.
But we, oh rolling stars, are free.
The ~~ev~~^e-winding wakeful sea,
That hides us from all human spying,
Is not so free, so free, so free.
Our hands have known no wearying tool,
Our lives have known no law nor rule;
Afar from where the years are flying
O'er men who sleep, and wake and die,
And peak and pine we do not know why,
We only know that we are glad
Aforetime, and shall not grow sad
Or tired on any dawning morrow,
Nor ever change or feel the clutches
Of grievous Time on his old crutches,
Or fear the wild grey osprey sorrow".

As thus our song arose: 'You stars,
 Across your wandering ruby cars 330
 Shake the loose reins: you slaves of God,
 He rules you with an iron rod,
 He holds you with an iron bond,
 Each one woven to the other,
 Each one woven to his brother
 Like bubbles in a frozen pond;
 But we in a lonely land abide
 Unchainable as the dim tide,
 With hearts that know nor law nor rule,
 And hands that hold no wearisome tool, 340
 Folded in love that fears no morrow,
 Nor the grey wandering osprey Sorrow'.

L.342. Earlier editions have 'gray'

Oh, Patrick, on that woody shore
A hundred years I chased the boar,
And slew the badger and the deer,
And flung the joyous hunting-spear!
Oh, Patrick, there a hundred seasons
I loved and sang, and in long wassails
I laughed at times unnumbered treasons,
And twice a hundred were the vassals
That followed my keen hunting-call -
For love they followed one and all!
Oh, Patrick, there a hundred years,
At evening, on the glimmering sands,
These now o'erworn and withered hands,
Beside the piled-up hunting-spears,
Wrestled among the island bands!
Oh, Patrick, for a hundred years
We went a-fishing in long boats
With bending sterns and bending bows,
And carven figures on their prows
Of bitterns and fish-eating stoats!
Oh, Patrick, for a hundred years
The gentle Niam was my wife!
And now have fallen on my life.
Two things that 'fore all else I hate,
Fasting and prayers.

O Patrick! for a hundred years
 I chased upon that woody shore
 The deer, the badger, and the boar.

O Patrick! for a hundred years
 At evening on the glimmering sands,
 Beside the piled-up hunting spears,
 These now outworn and withered hands
 Wrestled among the island bands.

350

O Patrick! for a hundred years
 The gentle Niamh was my wife
 We went a-fishing in long boats
 With bending sterns and bending bows,
 And carven figures on their prows
 Of bitterns and fish-eating stoats.

O Patrick! for a hundred years
 The gentle Niamh was my wife;
 But now two things devour my life;
 The things that most of all I hate:
 Fasting and prayers.

-
- L. 343, 348, 352, 356. 3 & 4 had 'Patric'
 L. 357. 2,3,4,5 have 'Neave' instead of 'Niamh'.
 L. 359. 2 had the line in parenthesis.

Patrick

Tell on.

Oisin.

Ay, ay!

For these were ancient Oisin's fate,
Loosed long ago from heaven's gate,
For his last days to lie in wait,
When once beside the shore I stood,
A sea-worm waif came floating by.
I drew it forth; the staff of wood,
It was of some dead warrior's lance.
I turned it in my hands; the stains
Of war were on it, and I wept,
Remembering how along the plains,
Equal to good or evil chance
In war, the noble Fenians stept.
Then softly to me Niam came,
And caught my hands and spoke no word,
Save only many times my name,
In murmurs like a frightened bird.
We passed in silence o'er the mead,
By woods of moss, by lawns of clover,
And once more saddled the white steed,
For well we knew the old was over,
And rode and stood beside the shore.

S. Patrick.

Tell on.

Oisin.

Yes, yes,

360

For these were ancient Oisin's fate
 Loosed long ago from Heaven's gate,
 For his last days to lie in wait.
 When one day by the tide I stood,
 I found in that forgetfulness
 Of dreamy foam a staff of wood
 From some dead warrior's broken lance:
 I turned it in my hands; the stains
 Of war were on it, and I wept,
 Remembering how the Fenians stept
 Along the blood-bedabbled plains,
 Equal to good or grievous chance:
 Thereon young Niamh softly came
 And caught my hands, but spake no word
 Save only many times my name,
 In murmurs, like a frightened bird.
 We passed by woods, and lawns of clover,
 And found the horse and bridled him,
 For we knew well that the old was over.

370

L.360. 2 has 'St. Patrick'; 3,4,5,6 'S.Patrick.

L.360 & 361. 2 has 'Usheen'; 3,4,5,6 have 'Oisin'
 1912 edition has 'Usheen'.

L.362. Earlier editions had no capital letters for 'heaven'

L.364. 2,3,4,5,6 have 'shore' for 'tide'

L.365-366. 2,3,4,5,6 have: I drew out of the numberless
 White flowers of the foam a
 staff of wood.

L.373. Earlier editions have 'Neave' for 'Niamh'

I heard one say, "Within his eyes
The human sadness dawns once more";
I saw not who; Beneath other skies
My dreams were living. Now the hoof
Pressed on the ever-trembling roof
Of murmuring ocean, and behind us
The isle loomed largely in the light
Of languid evening that entwined us.
The fairies moved among the fountains,
The rivers, and the wood's old night.
Some danced like shadows on the mountains,
And others sat them by the sea,
Each forehead, like an obscure star,
Bent low above each hooked knee,
And sang, and with a dreamy gaze
Watched the old sun that in sea-ways
Half slumbered with his saffron blaze;
And as they sang, the painted birds
Beat time with their bright wings and feet.
Like drops of honey came their words
Thus on the waters, far and sweet,
And fainter than a young lamb's bleat.

I heard one say, 'His eyes grow dim
 380
 With all the ancient sorrow of men';
 And wrapped in dreams rode out again
 With hoofs of the pale findrinny
 Over the glimmering purple sea.
 Under the golden evening light,
 The Immortals moved among the fountains
 By rivers and the woods' old night;
 Some danced like shadows on the mountains,
 Some wandered ever hand in hand;
 Or sat in dreams on the pale strand, 390
 Each forehead like an obscure star
 Bent down above each hooked knee,
 And sang, and with a dreamy gaze
 Watched where the sun in a saffron blaze
 Was slumbering half in the sea-ways;
 And, as they sang, the painted birds
 Kept time with their bright wings and feet;
 Like drops of honey came their words,
 And fainter than a young lamb's bleat.

-
- L. 381. 2 had a full stop at the end of the line.
 L. 384. Earlier editions had a colon at the end of the line.
 L. 38⁵. 2 had no com^{ma} at th^e end of the line
 L. 386. Earlier editions had no capitals for immortals
 L. 389. Earlier editions had a comma at the end of the line.
 L. 390. -do- -do- semi-colon -do-
 L. 392. -do- -do- colon -do-
 L. 395. No hyphen in 'sea-ways' in earlier editions.

"Swift are the years of a warrior's pride;

It passeth away, and is heard of no longer,

In honour soon by his master's side

Sits a younger and a stronger.

His toothless hound at his nerveless feet,

The warrior dreams in an aged leisure

Of the things that his heart still knows were sweet -

Of war, and the chase, and hunting, and pleasure;

And blows on his hands in the fire's warm blaze;

In the house of his friend, of his kin, of his brot

He hath over lingered his welcome; the days

Grown desolate, whisper and sigh to each other.

"But never with us where the wild fowl chases

His shadow along ⁱⁿ the fire's warm blaze,

With the softness of youth be gone from our faces,

Or love's first tenderness die in our gaze.

"A storm of birds in the Asian trees

Like tulips in the air a-winging,

And the gentle waves of the summer seas

That raise their heads and wander singing,

By age's weariness are slain,

And the long grey grasses, whose tenderest touches
Stroked the young winds as they rolled on the plain,

The osprey of sorrow goes after and clutches,

And they cease with a sigh of 'Unjust! unjust!'

And 'A weariness soon is my speed', says the mouse,

'An old man stirs the fire to a blaze, 400
 In the house of a child, of a friend, of a brother.
 He has over-lingered his welcome; the days,
 Grown desolate, whisper and sigh to each other;
 He hears the storm in the chimney above,
 And bends to the fire and shakes with the cold,
 While his heart still dreams of battle and love,
 And the cry of the hounds on the hills of old.

'But we are apart in the grassy places,
 Where care cannot trouble the least of our days,
 Or the softness of youth be gone from our faces, 410
 Or love's first tenderness die in our gaze.
 The hare grows old as she plays in the sun
 And gazes around her with eyes of brightness;
 Before the swift things that she dreamed of were done
 She limps along in an aged whiteness;
 A storm of birds in the Asian trees
 Like tulips in the air a-winging,
 And the gentle waves of the summer seas,
 That raise their heads and wander singing,
 Must murmur at last, "Unjust, unjust"; 420
 And "My speed is a weariness," falters the mouse,

L. 401. Earlier editions had a semi-colon at the end of the line.

L. 414. 2 & 3 had a comma at the end of the line.

L. 420. 2,3,4,5,6. 'Unjust' spelt with small letters.

L. 421. 2,3,4,5,6 have a semi-colon at the end of the line.

And the kingfisher turns to a ball of dust,

And the roof falls in of his tunnelled house.

"But never the years in the isle's soft places

Will scatter in ruin the least of our days,

Or the softness of youth be gone from our faces,

Or love's first tenderness die in our gaze.

"Old grows the hare as she plays in the sun,

And gazes around her with eyes of brightness;

Ere half the swift things that she dreamt on were done,

She limps along in an aged whiteness.

And even the sun, the day castle's warder,

That scares with his bustle the delicate night,

And shakes o'er the width of the sea-world border

The odorous weight of his curls of light,

Like a bride bending over her mirror adorning,

May sleep in the end with the whole of his fate done

And the stars shall arise and say in the morning,

As they gaze at each other, 'Oh, where is that great

But never the years in our isle's soft places

Shall blow into ruin our musical days,

Or the softness of youth be gone from our faces,

Or love's first tenderness die in our gaze."

The singing melted in the night;

The isle was over now and gone;

The mist closed round us; pearly light

On horse and sea and saddle shone.

And the kingfisher turns to a ball of dust,
And the roof falls in of his tunnelled house.
But the love-dew dims our eyes till the day
When God shall come from the sea with a sigh
And bids the stars drop down from the sky,
And the moon like a pale rose wither away'.

2 has the last four lines of the 1889 edition.
All the later editions omit them.

PART IITHE ISLAND OF VICTORIES.

Now, man of crosiers, phantoms drew around
Once more - the youth and lady, deer and hound;
Half lost in vapour, shadows called our names,
And then away, away like spiral flames.
"These forms?" "Vex not with speech the phantoms dread
And now sang Niam, swaying her bright head
And her bright body - now of fay and man;
Things done ere God first was or my old line began;
Wars shadowy, vast, exultant; fairy kings
Wedding the queens of earthly lands with rings
Of sea-sprung pearl, and queens of fairy lands
Taking the mortal warriors by the hands;
How such a warrior never turned his gaze
On the old sorrows of his human days.
They love and kiss in islands far away,
Rolled round with music of the sighing spray,
Those warriors of a long-forgotten day,
Happy as children with unwithering lips,
Unlanguid as the birds, in proud companionships;
They walk on shores unseen of oaring galleys,
Or wrestle with their peers in dewy valleys.
So sang young Niam, swaying her bright head,
No longer glad as on that morning, sped
To join his brothers in the home of years
A hundred seasons; for a sound of tears

BOOK II.

Now, man of croziers, shadows called our names
 And then away, away, like whirling flames;
 And now fled by, mist-covered, without sound,
 The youth and lady and the deer and hound;
 'Gaze no more on the phantoms,' Niamh said,
 And kissed my eyes, and, swaying her bright head
 And her bright body, sang of faery and man
 Before God was or my old line began;
 Wars shadowy, vast, exultant; faeries of old
 Who wedded men with rings of Druid gold; 10
 And how those lovers never turn their eyes
 Upon the life that fades and flickers and dies,
 Yet love and kiss on dim shores far away
 Rolled round with music of the sighing spray:
 Yet sang no more as when, like a brown bee
 That has drunk full, she crossed the misty sea
 With me in her white arms a hundred years
 Before this day; for now the fall of tears

L. 5. The earlier edns had 'Neave' instead of Niamh.

L. 10. 2 has 'druid'.

L. 13. Earlier edns have 'But' instead of 'Yet'

L. 15. - do -

Earlier edns. have a comma after 'more'.

Floated in all her singing. Half entranced
I lay, as over the sea the light hooves glanced
Flashing - I know not were it hours or days,
Yet dimly deem I that the morning rays
Shone many times among the glimmering flowers
In Niam's yhair - when rose a world of towers
And blackness in the dark. The sea rolled round,
Crazed with its own interminable sound,
And when the white steed saw what blackness gleamed,
He shivering paused, and raised his head and screamed.
But Niamh with her hands caressed his ears,
And called him sweetest names and soothed his fears.
Nearer the castle came we. A vast tide,
Whitening the surge afar, fan-formed and wide,
Sprang from a gateway walled around with black
Basaltic pillars marred with hew and hack
By mace and spear and sword of sea-gods, nails
Of some forgotten fiend. Now none assails
That old, sea-weedy, squared, three hundred feet
Uplifted gateway. With the flashing beat
Of Danaan hooves we urged our way between
Two walls, a roof, a flood: there trembling green
Of surging phosphorus alone gave light.
At last the moon and stars shone, and a flight
Of many thousands steps. Sat either side,
Fog-dripping, pedestalled above the tide,
Huge forms of stone; between the lids of one

Troubled her song.

I do not know if days

Or hours passed by, yet hold the morning rays 20
 Shone many times among the glimmering flowers
 Woven into her hair, before dark towers
 Rose in the darkness, and the white surf gleamed
 About them; and the horse of Faery screamed
 And shivered, knowing the Isle of Many Fears,
 Nor ceased until white Niamh stroked his ears
 And named him by sweet names.

A foaming tide

Whitened afar with surge, fan-formed and wide,
 Burst from a great door marred by many a blow
 From mace and sword and pole-axe, long ago 30
 When gods and giants warred. We rode between
 The seaweed-covered pillars; and the green
 And surging phosphorus alone gave light
 On our dark pathway, till a countless flight
 Of moonlit steps glimmered; and left and right
 Dark statues glimmered over the pale tide
 Upon dark thrones. Between the lids of one

L. 22. 2,3,4 have 'Woven' in her flower-like hair etc.'
 L. 24. Earlier edns. have 'faery'
 L. 25. -do- 'many'
 L.26. -do- Neave

The imaged meteors had shone and run,
 And had disported in the eyes still jet
 For centuries, and stars had dawned and set.
 He seemed the watcher for a sign. The other
 Stretched his long arm to where, a misty smother,
 The stream~~ed~~ churned, churned and churned. His lips were
 rolled apart,
 As though unto his never slumbering heart
 He told of every froth-drop hissing, flying.
 We mounted on the stair, the white steed tying,
 To one vast foot, froth-splashed, with curved toes lying
 Half in the unvesselled sea.

We'd mounted far;

So much remained that on the evening star
 I thought the end had rested, when these words
 From high above, like feathers of young birds
 That fan the pulses of delighted air,
 Came swimming sadly down the mighty stair.

"My brothers and my sisters live and thrive,
 And chase the wild bee homeward to his hive
 Afar in ancient Eri,
 By lakes and meadow lands and lawns afar,
 Where goes to gaze the restless-footed star
 Of twilight when he's weary.

"They murmur like young partridge in the morn,
 When they awake upspringing; with loud horn
 They chase at noon the deer.

When the earliest dew-washed star from eve hath lent,
 When were they on the household wool intent,

The imaged meteors had flashed and run
 And had disported in the stilly jet,
 And the fixed stars had dawned and shone and set, 40
 Since God made Time and Death and Sleep: the other
 Stretched his long arm to where, a misty smother,
 The stream churned, churned, and churned - his lips apart,
 As though he told his never-slumbering heart
 Of every foamdrops on its misty way.

Tying the horse to his vast foot that lay
 Half in the unvesselled sea, we climbed the stair
 And climbed so long, I thought the last steps were
 Hung from the ~~mor~~ning star; when these mild words
 Fanned the delighted air like wings of birds: 50
 'My brothers spring out of their beds at morn,
 A-murmur like young partridge: with loud horn
 They chase the noontide deer;
 And when the dew-drowned stars hang in the air
 Look to long fishing lines, or point and pare
 An ashen hunting spear.

L.44 Earlier edns. had no hyphen in 'never-slumbering'.

L.45. -do- a colon at the end of the line.

L. 56. 2,3,4,5,6 had 'A larch-wood hunting spear'
 The 1912 edn. had 'An ash-wood hunting' etc.
 2,3,4,5,6 had a separate paragraph after l.56.

"Oh, sigh, awake and go you forth for me;
Flutter along the froth-lips of the sea,
And go you close to them.

From sleeper unto sleeper murmur you.
If they still slumber, touch their eyelids blue,
And shake their coverlets' hem.

"And tell them how I weep, until they weep;
Then, mounted on a heron, o'er the deep
Return when you are weary.

And tell me how my kindred's tears are welling,
And one whom you will go to without telling,
Say how he weeps in Eri."

Crashed on the stones, upon the glimmering stones,
Our tread, as rose and fell the liquid tones
Of knitted music. Oft the fond repining
Flowed on anew, and oft, anew declining,
Sobbed into silence. We had mounted feet
Full many more, when peered a maiden sweet
Down on us with her eyes like funeral tapers.
Her face seemed fashioned all of moonlit vapours,
So pale! And sounds of wonder her lips uttered,
As like aruddy moth they waved and fluttered.
To eagles twain that, full of ancient pride,
Stood lonely, with dim eyeballs on each side,
With chain sea-rotted, round her middle tied,
Chained was she. On their wings the hundreth year
Scarce left a whitening feather, grey and sere:
And through their eyes no light of moon or day
Smote on their brains that dwelt remembering aye.

O sigh, O fluttering sigh, be kind to me;
Flutter along the froth lips of the sea,
And shores the froth lips wet:
And stay a little while, and bid them weep: 60
Ah, touch their blue-veined eyelids if they sleep,
And shake their coverlet.

When you have told how I weep endlessly,
Flutter along the froth lips of the sea
And home to me again,
And in the shadow of my hair lie hid,
And tell me that you found a man unbid,
The saddest of all men.'

A lady with soft eyes like funeral tapers,
And face that seemed wrought out of moonlit vapours, 70
And a sad mouth, that fear made tremulous
As any ruddy moth, looked down on us;
And she with a wave-rusted chain was tied
To two ^{old} eagles, full of ancient pride,
That with dim eyeballs stood on either side.
Few feathers were on their dishevelled wings,
For their dim minds were with the ancient things.

L. 59. Earlier edns. had a comma after 'shores'.
L.61. Earlier editions had no hyphen in 'blue-veined'.
L.69. -do- 'maiden' instead of 'lady'

And thus, my late-lost Niam, didst thou say:
 "Loring thee^a deliverer from far away,
 Oh maiden".

"Are ye spirits of the sea,
 Or of the flaked clouds?"

"Not so, for we
 Come from the Isle of the Living".

Then get ye
 Once more unto your flowers, for none may fight,
 With hope, mine enemy. As he by night
 Goes dropping from his eyes a languid light,
 The demons of the wilds and winds for fright
 Jabber and scream. Yet he, for all his bold
 And flowing strength, with age is subtle-souled.
 None may beguile him, and his passions cold
 Long while, are whips of steel".

"Is he so dread?"

Said Niam.

"Ay, and huge. When ye have led
 A jubilant life among the leaves, return,
 Young warrior".

"Nay", I answered; "My hands burn
 For battle".

"Fly ye from a thing so dread.
 It brings no shame upon a human dead
 To fly a spirit", Niam weeping said.
 Though from beseeching they desisted not,
 They stirred my spacious soul in me no jot -

'I bring deliverance,' pearl-pale Niamh said.

'Neither the living, nor the unlabouring dead,
Nor the high gods who never lived, may fight 80
My enemy and hope; demons for fright
Jabber and scream about him in the night;
For he is strong and crafty as the seas
That sprang under the Seven Hazel Trees,
And I must needs endure and hate and weep,
Until the gods and demons drop asleēp,
Hearing Aed touch the mournful strings of gold.'

'Is he so dreaful?'

'Be not over-bold,

But fly while you still may.'

And thereon I:

'This demon shall be battered till he die, 90
And his loose bulk be thrown in the loud tide.'

'Flee from him,' pearl-pale Niamh weeping cried,

'For all men flee the demons;' but moved not

My angry king-remembering soul one jot.

L. 78. Earlier editions had 'Neave' for 'Niamh'.
L. 81. 2 and 3 had a colon after 'hope'.
L. 88. Earlier edns. had no hyphen in 'over-bold'.
L. 89. 2 had 'But flee while you still may.'
Then I
3;4,5 had 'But flee while you may flee from him'
Then I
1912 edn. same as '33, but has 'then' for 'there'
L. 90. Earlier edns. had 'This demon shall be pierced
and drop and die'.
L. 93. Earlier edns. had a comma at the end of the line
L. 94. Earlier edns. had 'Nor shook my firm and
spacious soul one jot'.

My soul, once glory of its ancient line,
Now old and mouselike. For an answering sign
I burst the chains. Still earless, nerveless, blind,
Rolled in the things of the unhuman mind,
Wrapt round in some dim memory, it seemed —
Still earless, nerveless, blind, the eagles dreamed.
And up the stair we toiled to a high door,
Wherethrough a hundred horsemen on the floor
Basaltic, might have paced. We held our way
And stood within the hall. A misty ray
Clothing him round, I saw a seagull float
Drifting on high, and with a straining throat
Shouted and hailed him. Still he hung content,
For never mortal eye hath so far sent.
Not e'en thy God could have thrown down that hall;
Stabling His unloosed lightnings in their stall,
He had gone whispering forth with cumbered heart,
As though His hour were on Him. To the part
Most distant strode we. On the floor lay slime,
Greenish and slippery. Time after time
The netted marks of crawling scales sea-sprung
We saw, some new, some printed when the place was young
Grey in the midst like a small rivulet's flow,
The captives' footsteps written to and fro;

There was no mightier soul than of Heber's line;
 Now it is old and mouse-like. For a sign
 I burst the chain: still earless, nerveless, blind,
 Wrapped in the things of the unhuman mind,
 In some dim memory or ancient mood,
 Still earless, nerveless, blind, the eagles stood. 100

And then we climbed the stair to a high door;
 A hundred horsemen on the basalt floor
 Beneath had paced content: we held our way
 And stood within: clothed in a misty ray
 I saw a foam-white sea-gull drift and float
 Under the roof, and with a straining throat
 Shouted, and hailed him: he hung there a star,
 For no man's cry shall ever mount so far;
 Not even your God could have thrown down that hall;
 Stabling His unloosed lightnings in their stall, 110
 He had sat down and sighed with cumbered heart,
 As though His hour were come.

We sought the part
 That was most distant from the door; green slime
 Made the way slippery, and time on time
 Showed prints of sea-born scales, while down through it
 The captive's journeys to and fro were writ

L.96 Earlier edns. had a colon after mouse-like.
 L.99. -do- no comma at the end of the line.
 L.101. 2,3,4,5,6 had a comma at the end of the line.

And where our footfall 'lighted last there came
A momentary glimmer of phosphorous flame.
Feebler and feebler shone the misty glare.
Who brought us found a torch, and, with its flare,
Making a world about her, passed from sight
Awhile, and came again, a second light
Burning between her fingers, and in mine
Laid it and sighed — a sword whose wizard shine
Not loaded centuries might vapour. Ran
Deep sunken on the blade's length, "Mananan!"
Sea-god, that once, to give his slaves content,
Sprang dripping, and, with captive demons sent
From the whole seven seas, those towers set
Rooted in foam and clouds. Their mightier masters met
To rule more mightier men, and to the world
Shouted.

With fire of hair about her swirled,
The stranger watched the sword; but Niam far,
Scared of its glittering like a meteor star,
Stood timidly. Lest they should see some sight
Of fear, I bade them go; and for the fight

Like a small river, and where feet touched came
 A momentary gleam of phosphorus flame,
 Under the deepest shadows of the hall
 That woman found a ring hung on the wall,
 And in the ring a torch, and with its flare
 Making a world about her in the air,
 Passed under the dim doorway, out of sight,
 And came again, holding a second light
 Burning between her fingers, and in mine
 Laid it and sighed: I held a sword whose shine
 No centuries could dim, and a word ran
 Thereon in Ogham letters, 'Manannan';

120

That sea-god's name, who in a deep content
 Sprang dripping, and, with captive demons sent
 Out of the seven-fold seas, built the dark hall
 Rooted in foam and clouds, and cried to all
 The mightier masters of a mightier race;
 And at his cry there came no milk-pale face
 Under a crown of thorns and dark with blood,
 But only exultant faces.

130

Niamh stood

With bowed head, trembling when the white blade shone,
 But she whose hours of tenderness were gone
 Had neither hope nor fear. I bade them hide

L.117. The punctuation in the earlier editions was:

Lie a small river, and, where feet touched, came

L.120. Earlier edns. had 'maiden' instead of 'woman'

L.123. -do- 'a dim doorway' instead of 'the dim --'

L.127 -do- a colon after 'dim'.

L.128. -do- spelt 'Mananan'

L.136 -do- had 'Neave' instead of 'Niamh'

Anointing, torch jammed down the flage,
Waited. Above, in endless carven jago,
Lifted the dome, where face in carven face
Melted and flowed; and in the self-same place
Hour after hour I waited, and the dome
Windowless, pillarless, multitudinous home
Of faces, watched me, and the leisured gaze
Was loaded with the memory of days
Buried and mighty. Thence I journeyed not
Till the far doorway grew a burning blot
Of misty dawn; when, circling round the hall,
I found a door deep-sunken in the wall,
The least of doors; beyond the door a plain,
Dusky and herbless, where a bubbling strain
Rose from a little runnel on whose edge
A dusk demon, dry as a withered sedge,
Swayed, crooning to himself an unknown tongue.
In a sad revelry he sang and swung,
Bacchant, and mournful, passing to and fro
His hand along the runnel's side, as though
The flowers still grew there. Moved beyond him the sea's

Under the shadows till the tumults died 140
 Of the loud-crashing and earth-shaking fight,
 Lest they should look upon some dreadful sight;
 And thrust the torch between the slimy flags.
 A dome made out of endless carven jags,
 Where shadowy face flowed into shadowy face,
 Looked down on me; and in the self-same place
 I waited hour by hour, and the high dome,
 Windowless, pillarless, multitudinous home
 Of faces, waited; and the leisured gaze
 Was loaded with the memory of days 150
 Buried and mighty. When through the great door
 The dawn came in, and glimmered on the floor
 With a pale light, I journeyed round the hall
 And found a door deep sunken in the wall,
 The least of doors; beyond on a dim plain
 A little runnel made a bubbling strain,
 And on the runnel's stony and bare edge
 A dusky demon dry as a withered sedge
 Swayed, crooning to himself an unknown tongue:
 In a sad revelry he sang and swung 160
 Bacchant and mournful, passing to and fro
 His hand along the runnel's side, as though
 The flowers still grew there: far on the sea's waste

L.141. Earlier edns. had 'loud crashing' and earth shaking'.
 L.147. 2,3,4,5,6 had no comma at the end of the line.
 L.151. -do- a colon after mighty.
 L. 163 -do semi-colon at the end of the line.

Shaking and waving vapours vapours chased;
 Dawn passioned; fed with a faint green light,
 Like drifts of laurel leaves immovable and bright
 Hung the frail loftier cloudlets. Turned he slow —
 A demon's leisure. Eyes first white as snow,
 Kingfisher colour grew with rage. He rose
 Barking. Along the herbless plain, with blows
 Mingling of sword and war-axe, while the day
 Gave to the noon, and noon to eve gave way,
 We trampled to and fro. When his mind grew,
 Evading, turning; once did I hew and hew
 A fir tree roaring in its leafless top,
 Once held between my arms, with livid chop
 And sunken shape, a nine-days' corpse sea-dashed —
 Forms without number! When the live west flashed
 With surge of plummy fire, lounging I drove
 Through heart and demon spine, and in the wave
 Cast the loose bulk, lest Niam fear him dead;
 And they who to a far-off place had fled,
 Hoping and fearing, brought me wine and bread.

Shaking and waving, vapour vapour chased,
 While high frail cloulets, fed with a green light,
 Like drifts of leaves, immovable and bright,
 Hung in the passionate dawn. He slowly turned:
 A demon's leisure: eyes, first white, now burned
 Like wings of kingfishers; and he arose
 Barking. We trampled up and down with blows 170
 Of sword and brazen battle-axe, while day
 Gave to high noon and noon to night gave way;
 And when he knew the sword of Manannan
 And the shades of night, he changed and ran
 Through many shapes: I lunged at the smooth throat
 Of a great eel; it changed, and I but smote
 A fir-tree roaring in its leafless top;
 And thereupon I drew the livid chop
 Of a drowned dripping body to my breast;
 Horror from horror grew; but when the west 180
 Had surged up in a plummy fire, I drave
 Through heart and spine; and cast him in the wave
 Lest Niamh shudder.

Full of hope and dread

Those two came carrying wine and meat and bread,

L. 173-175. 2,3,4,5,6 had

But when at withering of the sun he knew
 The Druid sword of Mananan, he grew
 to many shapes:

1912 edn. had 'And' instead of 'But' at the
 beginning of L. 173.

L. 178-181. 2 had

I held a dripping corpse, with livid chop
 And sunken shape, against my face and breast,
 When I had torn it down; but when the west
 Surged up in plummy fire, I lunged and drave

(3,4,5,6 had 'And I tore down the tree: but when etc
 L. 180.)

The sea-shine on our faces, we our way
Held to the towers with boasting songs and gay.
With witchery and unguents from the flowers
That lackey the worn moon in midnight hours,
Feeding some white moths around some Eastern shrine
They healed my wounds; and on the skin supine
Of wolves, of boreal bears, we quaffed the wine
Brewed of the sea-gods, from huge cups that lay
Upon the lips of sea-gods in their day,
And on the skins of wolves and bears we slept;
And when the sun in all his flagrant saffron stept,
Rolling his wheel, we sang beside the deep
The spacious loves, the anger without sleep
Of ancient warriors, the labours of the strong.
Patrick, before thy craft dies each old song.
Liar and flatter of the weak, in what strange clime
Shall they turn wrath or pluck the wings of Time?
Hopeless for ever, they alone shall seek
And never find, though ye in music speak.
Ay, Oisín knows, for he is of the weak,
Blind and nigh deaf, with withered arms he lies
Upon the anvil of the world.

And healed my wounds with unguents out of flowers
 That feed white moths by some De Danaan shrine;
 Then in that hall, lit by the dim sea-shine,
 We lay on skins of otters, and drank wine,
 Brewed by the sea-gods, from huge cups that lay
 Upon the lips of sea-gods in their day; 190
 And then on heaped-up skins of otters slept.
 And when the sun once more in saffron stept,
 Rolling his flagrant wheel out of the deep,
 We sang the loves and angers without sleep,
 And all the exultant labours of the strong.
 But now the lying clerics murder song
 With barren words and flatteries of the weak.
 In what land do the powerless turn the beak
 Of ravening Sorrow, or the hand of Wrath?
 For all your croziers, they have left the path 200
 And wander in the storms and clinging snows,
 Hopeless for ever: ancient Oisín knows,
 For he is weak and poor and blind, and lies
 On the anvil of the world.

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- L.187. Earlier edns. had 'sea shine'.
 L.189 -do- 'sea gods'
 L. 192. -do- 'But ' instead of 'and'
 L. 195. -do- a colon at the end of the line,
 and a new paragraph.

Patrick.

The skies

Darken; Heaven is angry. Cease!.

Oisin.

Unto my mind,

Old and remembering, what avails the wind

And lightning flash for ever?

Patrick.

Cease and hear.

God shakes the world with restless hands. More hear

The darkness comes. A cloud hangs overhead —

A hush. Ah, me! it hangs to strike us dead.

(A song of monks without.)

"Each one a horsehair shirt hath on,

And many Paternosters said since dawn.

Trembling, on the flags we fall,

Fearful of the thunder-ball

Yet do with us what'er thou wilt,

For great our error, great our guilt."

Oisin.

Saint, dost thou weep? I hear amid the thunder

The horses of Fenians — tearing asunder

Of armour — laughter and cries — the armies' shock.

'Tis over; far with memory I sway and rock.

Ah, cease, thou mournful, laughing Fenian horn!

Three days we feasted, when on the fourth morn

I found, foam-oozy on the vasty stair,

Hung round with slime, and whispering in his hair,
 That demon dull and unsubduable,
 And we once more unto our fighting fell.
 And in the eve I threw him into the surge,
 To lie there 'till the fourth day saw emerge
 His healedshape; and for a hundred years
 So warred, so feasted we. No dreams, no fears,
 No languor, no fatigue; an endless feast,
 An endless war.

The hundre^dth year had ceased.

I stood upon the stair; the surges bore
 A beech bough to me, and my heart grew sore,
 Remembering how I paced in days gone o'er,
 At Eran, 'neath the beech trees, on each side,
 Fin, Conan, Oscar, many more, the tide
 Of planets watching, watching the race of hares
 Leap in the meadow. On the misty stairs,
 Immediate, mournful, white with sudden cares,
 Holding that horse long seen not, Niam stood.
 With no returning glance, in wordless mood
 I mounted, and we rode across the lone

And hung with slime, and whispering in his hair,
That demon dull and unsubduable;

And once more to a day-long battle fell,

And at the sundown threw him in the surge,

To lie until the fourth morn saw emerge

220

His new-healed shape; and for a hundred years

So warred, so feasted, with nor dreams nor fears,

Nor languor nor fatigue: an endless feast,

An endless war.

The hundred years had ceased;

I stood upon the stair: the surges bore

A beech-bough to me, and my heart grew sore,

Remembering how I had stood by white-haired Finn

Under a beech at Almuin and heard the thin

Outcry of bats.

And then young Niamh came

Holding that horse, and sadly called my name;

230

I mounted, and we passed over the lone

L.220. 2 had ' . . . fourth morn sun emerge'

L.221. Earlier edns. had 'sun healed'

L.222. 2,3,4,5,6 had a comma after 'dreams'

L.223. 2 had a comma after 'languor'.

L.226. Earlier edns. had 'beech bough'

L.228-229. 2, 4,5,6 had:

While the woodpecker made a merry din,

The hare leaped in the grass.

1912 edn., the same as '33 except 'Eman' for 'Almuin'

L.229. 2 had 'Neave' instead of 'Niamh'

And drifting greyness. Came this monotone
 Rising and falling, mixed inseparably,
 Surly and distant, with the winds and the sea:-

"Age after age I feel my soul decay
 Like rotted flesh, and stone by stone my hall
 Gathers sea-slime and goes the seaward way,
 Thundering, and the wide useless waters fray
 My pillars towards their fall.

"Last of my race, three things I rule alone -
 My soul, my prey, and this my heaped pile.
 I pace remembering. From my misty throne
 I bellow to the winds when storms make moan,
 And trample my dark isle.

"With all in all the world I battle wage.
 The strongest of the world, to snatch my prey,
 Came to my tower as age dragged after age.
 Light is man's love and lighter is man's rage -
 His purpose drifts away".

It died afar. Grey sleet those towers hid
 And thickened all the whirling air. Then did
 Lost Niam mourn and say, "Ah, love, we go
 To the Island of Forgetfulness; for lo,
 Isles of the Living and of Victories,
 Ye have no power". "And, Niam, say, of these
 Which is the Isle of Youth?" "None know", she said,
 And on my bosom laid her weeping head.

241
And drifting greyness, while this monotone,
Surly and distant, mixed inseparably
Into the clangour of the wind and sea.

'I hear my soul drop down into decay,
And Manannan's dark tower, stone after stone,
Gather sea-slime and fall the seaward way,
And the moon goad the waters night and day,
That all be overthrown.

'But till the moon has taken all, I wage 240
War on the mightiest men under the skies,
And they have fallen or fled, age after age.
Light is man's love, and lighter is man's rage;
His purpose drifts and dies.'

And then lost Niamh murmured, 'Love, we go
To the Island of Forgetfulness, for lo!
The Islands of Dancing and Victories
Are empty of all power.'

'And which of these
Is the Island of Content?

'None know,' she said;
And on my bosom laid her weeping head. 250

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- L. 232. Earlier edns. had 'grayness'.
L. 236. -do- 'Mananan'.
L. 237. -do- 'seaxx slime'.
L. 242. -do- a colon at the end of the line
L. 244. 2 had 'His purpose drifts away'.

A P P E N D I X - II

SOME POEMS OF YEATS UNPUBLISHED

in

BOOK FORM.

In Two Parts:

Part I - First Poems.

Part II- Last Poems.

(With a short introductory note)

SOME UNPUBLISHED POEMS OF
WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

All the poems in this collection have appeared in periodicals, but none of them have yet been published in book form. Part I consists of early poems which Yeats did not wish to preserve, and contains all such poems except 'Love and Death' which appeared in the Dublin University Review for May 1885 and 'A Ballad Singer' which appeared in the Boston Pilot for September 12, 1891. I have also been unable to refer to a poem, 'Dream of the World's End', which appeared in the Green Sheaf for autumn 1903 which Allan Wade mentions in his bibliography. These poems make up Yeats's juvenilia and they represent the somewhat shy and arrested expression of his gentle and youthful fancies.

Part II is at the opposite pole and consists of his very latest poems which have not yet been gathered into book form.

CONTENTS

Part I

1. The Island of Statues (in part).
(From the Dublin University Review,
April - July 1885)
2. The Two Titans.
(From the Dublin University Review,
March 1886)
3. Remembrance.
(From the Irish Monthly, July 1886)
4. A Dawn Song.
(From the Irish Fireside, February 5,
1887)
5. In the Firelight.
(From the Leisure Hour, February 1891)
6. Mourn --- and then Onward.
(From the United Ireland October 10, 1891)
7. The Danaan Quicken Tree.
(From the Bookman, May 1893)
8. Wisdom and Dreams.
(From the Bookman, December 1893)
9. The Song of the Rosy Cross.
(From the Bookman, October 1895)
10. Spinning Song.
(From the A Broadsheet, January 1903)

Part II

(All the following poems appeared in
The London Mercury)

1. Hound Voice. (December 1938)
2. John Kinsella's Lament for Mrs. Mary Moore.
(December 1938)
3. High Talk. (December 1938)
4. The Apparitions. (December 1938)
5. A Nativity. (December 1938)

6. Mand and the Echo. (January 1939)
 7. The Circus Animal's Desertion. (January 1939)
 8. Politics. (January 1939)
 9. The Statues. (March 1939)
 10. News for the Delphic Oracle. (March 1939)
 11. Long-legged fly. (March 1939)
 12. A bronze-head. (March 1939)
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THE ISLAND OF STATUES.

An Arcadian Faery Tale - In Two Acts.

Dramatis Personae.

Naschina, Shepherdess.

Colin, Shepherd.

Thernot, Shepherd.

Almintor, A Hunter.

Antonio, His Page.

Enchantress of the Island.

And a company of the Sleepers of the Isle.

ACT I

Scene i.

Before the cottage of NASCHINA. It is morning; and away in the
depth of heaven the moon is fading.

Enter THERNOT with a lute.

Thernot. Maiden, come forth: the woods keep watch for thee;
Within the drowsy blossom hangs the bee;
'Tis morn: thy sheep are wandering down the vale -
'Tis morn: like old men's eyes the stars are pale,
And thro' the odorous air love-dreams are winging -
'Tis morn, and from the dew-drench'd wood I've sped
To welcome thee, Naschina, with sweet singing.

(Sitting on a tree-stem, he begins to tune his lute.

Enter COLIN, abstractedly.

Colin. Come forth: the morn is fair; as from the pyre
 Of sad Queen Dido shone the lapping fire
 Unto the wanderers' ships, or as day fills
 The brazen sky, so blaze the daffodils;
 As Argive Clytemnestra saw out-burn
 The flagrant signal of her lord's return,
 Afar clean-shining on the herald hills,
 In vale and dell so blaze the daffodils;
 As when upon her cloud-o'er-muffled steep
 OEnone saw the fires of Troia leap,
 And laugh'd, so, so along the bubbling rills
 In lemon-tinted lines, so blaze the daffodils.
 Come forth, come forth, my music flows for thee,
 A quenchless grieving of love melody.

(Raises his lute.

Theriot. (sings) Now her sheep all browsing meet

By the singing water's edge,
 Tread and tread their cloven feet
 On the ruddy river edge,
 For the dawn the foliage fingereth,
 And the waves are leaping white,
 She alone, my lady, lingereth
 While the world is roll'd in light.

Colin. Shepherd, to mar the morning hast thou come?
 Hear me, and, shepherd, hearing me, grow dumb.

(sings) Where is the owl that lately flew
 Flickering under the white moonshine?
 She sleeps with owlets two and two,
 Sleepily close her round bright eyne;

O'er her nest the lights are blending;

Come thou, come, and to this string -

Though my love-sick heart is **rending**,

Not a sad note will I sing.

Theriot. I am not dumb: I'd sooner silent wait
Within the fold to hear the creaking gate -

(sings) The wood and the valley and sea

Awaken, awaken to new-born lustre;

A new day's troop of wasp and bee

Hang on the side of the round grape-cluster;

Blenching on high the dull stars sicken

Morn-bewildered, and the cup

Of the tarn where young waves quicken

Hurls their swooning lustre up.

Colin. I'll silence this dull singer -

(sings) Oh, more dark thy gleaming hair is

Than the peeping pansy's face,

And thine eyes more bright than faery's,

Dancing in some moony place,

And thy neck's a poised lily;

See, I tell thy beauties o'er,

As within a cellar chilly

Some old miser tells his store;

And thy memory I keep,

Till all else is empty chaff,

Till I laugh when others weep,

Weeping when all others laugh.

Theriot. I'll quench his singing with loud song -

(sings wildly) Come forth, for in a thousand bowers

Blossoms open dewy lips;

Over the lake the water-flowers

Drift and float like silver ships;

Ever ringing, ringing, ringing,

With unfaltering persistence,

Hundred-throated morn is singing,

Joy and love are one existence.

Colin. (sings) Lone, and wanting thee, I weep;

Love and sorrow, one existence,

Sadness, soul of joy most deep,

Is the burthen and persistence

Of the songs that never sleep.

Colin. Love from heaven came of yore

As a token and a sign,

Singing o'er and o'er and o'er

Of his death and change malign.

Theriot. With fiery song I'll drown yon puny voice.

Theriot. (Leaping to his feet.)

(sings) Passeth the moon with her sickle of light,

Slowly, slowly fadeth she,

Weary of reaping the barren night

And the desolate shuddering sea.

Colin. (sings) Loud for thee the morning crieth,

And my soul in waiting dieth,

Ever dieth, dieth, dieth.

Theriot. (sings) Far the morning vapours shatter,

As the leaves in autumn scatter.

Colin. (sings) In the heart of the dawn the rivers are singing,
Over them crimson vapours are winging.

Thernot. (sings) All the world is ringing, ringing;
All the world is singing, singing.

Colin. (sings) Lift my soul from rayless night -

Thernot (sings) Stricken all the night is past -

Colin (sings) Music of my soul and light -

Thernot (sings) Back the shadows creep aghast -

(They approach one another, while singing, with angry gestures)

Enter NASCHINA.

Naschina. Oh, cease your singing! wild and shrill and loud,
On my poor brain your busy tumults crowd.

Colin. I fain had been the first of singing things
To welcome thee, when o'er the owlet's wings
And troubled eyes came morning's first-born glow;
But yonder things, yon idle noise, yon crow,
Yon shepherd -

Thernot. Came your spirit to beguile
With singing sweet as e'er round lake-lulled isle
Sing summer waves. But yonder shepherd vile,
All clamour-clothed --

Colin. Was't clamour when I sung,
Whom men have named Arcadia's sweetest tongue.

(A horn sounds.

A horn! some troop of robbers winding goes

Along the wood with subtle tread and bended bows.

(An arrow passes above.

Fly.

Thernot. Fly.

(Colin and Thernot go.

Naschina. So these brave shepherds both are gone;
Courageous miracles!

As fair as any that on Ida's mount

Enter ALMINTOR and ANTONIO, talking together.

Almintor. The sunlight shone
Upon his wings. Thro' yonder green abyss
I sent an arrow.

Antonio. And I saw you miss;
And far away the heron sails, I wis.

Almintor. Nay, nay, I miss'd him not; his days
Of flight are done.

(Seeing Naschina, and bowing low.

Naschina. Most fair of all who graze

Their sheep in Arcady, Naschina, hail!

Naschina, hail!

Antonio. (mimicking him) Most fair of all who graze
Their sheep in Arcady, Naschina, hail!

Naschina, hail!

Almintor. I'd drive thy woolly sheep,
If so I might, along a dewy vale,

Where all night long the heavens weep and weep,
Dreaming in their soft odour-laden sleep;

Where all night long the lonely moon, the white
Sad Lady of the deep, pours down her light;

And 'mong the stunted ash-trees' drooping rings,
 All flame-like gushing from the hollow stones,
 By day and night a lonely fountain sings,
 And there to its own heart for ever moans.

Naschina. I'd be alone.
 Almintor. We two, by that pale fount,
 Unmindful of its woes, would twine a wreath

As fair as any that on Ida's mount
 Long ere an arrow whizzed or sword left sheath
 The shepherd Paris for Oenone made,
 Singing of arms and battles some old stave,
 As lies dark water in a murmurous glade,
 Dreaming the live-long summer in the shade,
 Dreaming of flashing flight and of the plumed wave.

Antonio. Naschina, wherefore are your eyes so bright
 With tears?

Naschina. I weary of ye. There is none
 Of all on whom Arcadian suns have shone
 Sustains his soul in courage or in might,
 Poor race of leafy Arcady, your love
 To prove what can ye do? What things above
 Sheep-guiding, or the bringing some strange bird,
 Or some small beast most wonderfully furr'd,
 Or sad sea-shells where little echoes sit?
 Such quests as these, I trow, need little wit.

Antonio. And the great grey lynx's skin!

Naschina. In sooth, methinks

That I myself could shoot a great grey lynx.

(Naschina turns to go.

Alminton. O stay, Naschina, stay!

Naschina. Here, where men know the gracious woodland joys,
 Joy's brother, Fear, dwells ever in each breast -
 Joy's brother, Fear, lurks in each leafy way.
 I weary of your songs and hunter's toys.
 To prove his love a knight with lance in rest
 Will circle round the world upon a quest,
 Until afar appear the gleaming dragon - scales:
 From morn the twain until the evening pales
 Will struggle. Or he'll seek enchanter old,
 Who sits in lonely splendour, mail'd in gold,
 And they will war, 'mid wondrous elfin-sights:
 Such may I love. The shuddering forest lights
 Of green Arcadia do not hide, I trow,
 Such men, such hearts. But, uncouth hunter, thou
 Knowest ~~not~~ naught of this,

(she goes.

Antonio. And, uncouth hunter, now --

Alminton. Ay, boy.

Antonio. Let's see if that same heron's dead.

(The boy runs out, followed by Alminton.

their lives inventing o' the dead;

The birds that battle in the leaves are sad,

poor sad wood-rhapsodists.

Antonio. Not for they're glad,

Alminton. All rhapsody hath sorrow for its soul,

Scene ii.

Sundown - A remote forest valley.

Enter ALMINTOR, followed by ANTONIO.

Antonio. And whither, uncouth hunter? Why so fast?

So! 'mid the willow glade you pause at last.

Almintor. Here is the place, the cliff-encircled wood;

Here grow that shy, retiring sisterhood,

The pale anemones. We've sought all day,

And found.

Antonio. 'Tis well! - another mile of way

I could not go.

(They sit down.)

Almintor. Let's talk, and let's be sad,

Here in the shade.

Antonio. Why? why?

Almintor. For what is glad?

For, look you, sad's the murmur of the bees,

Yon wind goes sadly, and the grass and trees

Reply like moaning of imprisoned elf:

The whole world's sadly talking to itself.

The waves in yonder lake where points my hand

Beat out ~~their~~ their lives lamenting o'er the sand;

The birds that nestle in the leaves are sad,

Poor sad wood-rhapsodists.

Antonio. Not so: they're glad.

Almintor. All rhapsody hath sorrow for its soul.

Antonio. Yon eager lark, that fills with song the whole
 Of this wide vale, embosomed in the air,
 Is sorrow in his song, or any care?

Doth not yon bird, yon quivering bird, rejoice?

Almōntor. I hear the whole sky's sorrow in one voice.

Antonio. Nay, nay, Almōntor, yonder song is glad.

Almīntor. 'Tis beautiful, and therefore it is sad.

Antonio. Have done this phrasing, and say why, in sooth,
 Almīntor, thou hast grown so full of ruth,
 And wherefore have we come?

Almīntor. A song to hear.

Antonio. But whence, and when?

Almīntor. Over the willows sere
 Out of the air.

Antonio. And when?

Almīntor. When the sun goes down
 Over the crown of the willows brown.

Oh, boy, I'm bound on a most fearful quest;
 For so she willed - thou heard'st? Upon the breast
 Of yonder lake, from whose green banks alway
 The poplars gaze across the waters grey,
 And nod to one another, lies a green,
 Small island, where the full soft sheen
 Of evening and glad silence dwelleth aye,
 For there the great Enchantress lives.

Antonio. And there
 Groweth the goblin flower of joy, her care,
 By many sought, and 'tis a forest tale,

How they who seek are ever doomed to fail.

Some say that all who touch the ~~iximad~~ island lone

Are changed for ever into moon-white stone.

Alminton. That flower I seek.

Antonio. Thou never wilt return.

Alminton. I'll bring that flower to her, and so may earn

Her love: to her who wears that bloom comes truth,

And elvish wisdom, and long years of youth

Beyond a mortal's years. I wait the song

That calls.

Antonio. O evil starred!

Alminton. It comes along

The wind at evening when the sun goes down

Over the crown of the willows brown.

See, yonder sinks the sun, yonder a shade

Goes flickering in reverberated light.

There! There! Dost thou not see?

Antonio. I see the night,

Deep-eyed, slow-footing down the empty glade.

A Voice. (sings) From the shadowy hollow

Arise thou and follow!

Alminton. Sad faery tones.

Antonio. 'Tis thus they ever seem,

As some dead maiden's singing in a dream.

Voice. When the tree was o'er-appled

For mother Eve's winning

I was at her sinning.

O'er the grass light-endappled

I wandered and trod,

O'er the green Eden-sod;

And I sang round the tree

As I sing now to thee:

Arise from the hollow,

And follow, and follow!

Away in the green paradise,

As I wandered unseen,

(How glad was her mien!),

I saw her as you now arise;

Before her I trod

O'er the green Eden-sod,

And I sang round the tree,

As I sing now to thee:

From the shadowy hollow

Come follow! Come follow!

(Almintor goes.

(The Voice sings, dying away.)

And I sang round the tree,

As I sing now to thee:

From the green shaded hollow

Arise, worm, and follow!

Antonio. I, too, will follow for this evil-starred one's sake

Unto the dolorous border of the fairy lake.

Scene iii.

THE BIRTH OF NIGHT -- THE ISLAND -- Far ~~away~~ into the distance reach shadowy ways, burdened with the faery flowers. Knee-deep amongst them stand the immovable figures of those who have failed in their quest.

First Voice. See! oh, see! the dew-drowned bunches

Of the monk's-hood how they shake,

Nodding by the flickering lake,

There where yonder squirrel crunches

Acorns green, with eyes awake.

Second voice. I followed him from my green lair,

But awake his two eyes were.

First Voice. Oh, learned is each monk's-hood's mind,

And full of wisdom is each bloom,

As, clothed in ceremonial gloom,

They fear the story of the wind,

That dieth slow with unsick doom.

Second Voice. The South breeze now in dying fears

Tells all his sinning in their ears.

First Voice. He says 'twas he, and 'twas no other,

Blew my crimson cap away

O'er the lake this very day,

Hark! he's dead -- my drowsy brother,

And has not heard Absolvo te.

(A pause.

First Voice. Peace, peace, the earth's a-quake. I hear

Some barbarous, un-faery thing draw near.

Enter ALMINTOR.

Almintor. The evening gleams are green and gold and red
 Along the lake. The crane has homeward fled.
 And flowers around in clustering thousands are,
 Each shining clear as some unbaffled star;
 The skies more dim, though burning like a shield,
 Above those men whose mouths were sealed
 Long years ago, and unto stone congealed.
 And, oh! the wonder of the thing! each came
 When low the sun sank down in clotted flame
 Beyond the lake, whose smallest wave was burdened
 With rolling fires, beyond the high trees turbaned
 With clinging mist, each star-fought wanderer came
 As I, to choose beneath day's dying flame;
 And they are all ^{now} stone, as I shall be,
 Unless some pitying God shall succour me
 In this my choice.

(Stoops over a flower, then pauses.)

Some God might help; if so
 Mayhap 'twere better that aside I throw
 All choice, and to give to chance for guiding chance
 Some cast of die, or let some arrow glance
 For guiding of the gods. The sacred bloom
 To seek not hopeless have I crossed the gloom,
 With that song leading where harmonic woods
 Nourish the panthers in dim solitudes;
 Vast greenness, where eternal Rumour dwells,
 And hath her home by many-folded dells.

I passed by many caves of dripping stone,
 And heard each unseen Echo on her throne,
 Lone regent of the woods, deep muttering,
 And then new murmurs came new uttering
 In song, from goblin waters swaying white,
 Mocking with patient laughter all the night
 Of those vast woods; and then I saw the boat,
 Living, wide winged, on the waters float.

Strange draperies did all the sides adorn,
 And the waves bowed before it like mown corn,

The winged wonder of all Faery Land.

It bore me softly where the shallow sand

Binds, as within a girdle or a ring,

The lake-embosomed isle. Nay, this my quest

Shall not so hopeless prove: some god may rest

Upon the wind, and guide mine arrow's course.

From yonder pinnacle above the lake

I'll send mine arrow, now my own resource;

The nighest blossom where it falls I'll take.

(Goes out, fitting an arrow to his bow.

A Voice. Fickle the guiding his arrow shall find!

Some goblin, my servant, on wings that are fleet,

That nestles alone in the whistling wind,

Go pilot the course of his arrow's deceit!

(The arrow falls. Re-enter Almintor.

Almintor. 'Tis here the arrow fell: the breezes laughed

Around the feathery tip. Unto the shaft

This blossom is most near. Statue! Oh, thou

Whose beard a moonlight river is, whose brow
 Is stone: old sleeper! this same afternoon
 O'er much I've talked: I shall be silent soon,
 If wrong my choice, as silent as thou art.
 Oh! gracious Pan, take now thy servant's part.
 He was our ancient God. If I speak low,
 And not too clear, how will the new god know
 But that I called on him?

(Pulls the flower and becomes stone. From among the
 flowers a sound as of a multitude of horns.

A Voice. Sleeping lord of archery,
 No more a-roving shall thou see
 The panther with her yellow hide,
 Of the forest's all the pride,
 Or her ever burning eyes,
 When she in a cavern lies,
 Watching o'er her awful young,
 Where their sinewy might is strung
 In the never-lifting dark.
 No! Thou standest still and stark,
 That of old wert moving ever,
 But a mother panther never
 O'er her young so eagerly
 Did her lonely watching take
 As I my watching lest you wake,
 Sleeping lord of Archery.

Antonio. Grief needs much feeding when
 We've talked and talked, and not a whit more rare.

Act II

Scene i.

The wood in the early morning.

Enter ANTONIO and NASCHINA.

Naschina. I, as a shepherd dressed, will seek and seek
 Until I find him. What a weary week,
 My pretty child, since he has gone, oh say
 Once more how on that miserable day
 He passed across the lake.

Antonio. When we two came
 From the wood's ways, then, like a silver flame,
 We saw the dolorous lake; and then thy name
 He carved on trees, and with a sun-dry weed
 He wrote on the sands (the owls may read
 And ponder it if they will); then near at hand
 The boat's prow grated on the shallow sand,
 And loudly twice the living wings flapt wide,
 And, leaping to their feet, far Echoes cried,
 Each other answering. Then between each wing
 He sat and then I heard the white lake sing,
 Curving beneath the prow; as some wild drake
 Half lit; so flapt the ~~ix~~ wings across the lake -
 Alas! I make you sadder, shepherdess.

Naschina. Nay, grief in feeding on old grief grows less.

Antonio. Grief needs much feeding them. Of him I swear
 We've talked and talked, and not a whit more rare

Your weeping fits!

Naschina. Look you, so very strait

The barred woodpecker's mansion is and deep,

No other bird may enter in.

Antonio. Well?

Naschina. Late -

Aye, very lately, sorrow came to weep

Within my heart; and nought but sorrow now

Can enter there.

Antonio. See! See! above yon brow

Of hill two shepherds come.

Naschina. Farewell! I'll don

My shepherd garments, and return anon.

(Goes.

Enter COLIN and THERNOT.

Thernot. Two men who love one maid have ample cause

Of war. Of yore, two shepherds, where we pause,

Colin Fought once for self-same reason on the hem

Of the wide woods.

Colin. And the deep earth gathered them.

Thernot. We must get swords.

Colin. Is't the only way? Oh, see,

Yon is the hunter's, Sir Alminton's, page;

Let him between us judge, for he can gauge

And measure out the ways of chivalry.

Thernot. Sir Page, Alminton's friend, and therefore learned

Naschina.

In all such things, pray let thine ears be turned,

And hear, and judge.

Antonio. My popinjay, what now?

Colin. This thing we ask: must we two fight? Judge thou.

Each came one morn, with welcoming of song,

Unto her door; for this, where nod the long

And shoreward waves, we nigh have fought; waves bring

The brown weed burden, so the sword brings fear

To us.

Theriot. Oh wise art thou in such a thing,

Being Almintor's page. Now judge you here.

We love Naschina both.

Antonio. Whom loves she best?

Colin. She cares no whit for either, but has blest

Almintor with her love.

Enter NASCHINA, disguised as a shepherd boy.

Colin. Who art thou? - speak,

As the sea's furrows on a sea-tost shell,

Sad histories are lettered on thy cheek.

Antonio. It is the shepherd Guarimond, who loveth well

In the deep centres of the secret woods.

Old miser hoards of grief to tell and tell:

Young Guarimond he tells them o'er and o'er,

To see them drwned by those vast solitudes,

With their unhuman sorrows.

Naschina. Cease! no more!

Antonio. No, no; when that shall be, then men may call
Down to their feet the stars that shine alone,
Each one at gaze for eye upon his whirling throne.

(They go.)

Scene ii.

A remote part of the forest - Through black and twisted trees the
lake is shining under the red evening sky.

Enter NASCHINA, as a shepherd boy and ANTONIO.

Antonio. Behold, how like a swarm of fiery bees
The light is dancing o'er the knotted trees,
In busy flakes; re-shining from the lake,
Through this night-vested place the red beams break.

Naschina. From the deep earth unto the lurid sky
All things are quiet in the eve's wide eye.

Antonio. The air is still above, and still each leaf,
But loud the grasshopper that sits beneath.

Naschina. And, boy, saw you, when through the forest we
Two came, his name and mine on ~~x~~ many a tree
Carved; here beyond the lake's ~~x~~ slow-muffled tread,
In sand his name and mine I've also read.

Antonio. Yonder's the isle in search whereof we came;
The white waves wrap it in a sheet of flame,
And yonder huddling blackness draweth nigh -
The faery ship that swims athwart the sky.

Naschina. Antonio, if I return no more,

Then bid them raise my statue on the shore;
 Here where the round waves come, here let them build,
 Here, facing to the lake, and no name gild;
 A white, dumb, thing of tears, here let it stand,
 Between the lonely forest and the sand.

Antonio. The boat draws near and near. You heed me not!

Naschina. And when the summer's deep, then to this spot
 The Arcadians bring, and bid the stone be raised
 As I am standing now - as though I gazed,
 One hand brow-shading, far across the night,
 And one arm pointing thus, in marble white.
 And once a-year let the Arcadians come,
 And 'neath sit, and of the woven sum
 Of human sorrow let them moralize;
 And let them tell sad histories, till their eyes
 All swim with tears.

Antonio. The faery boat's at hand;

You must be gone; the rolling grains of sand
 Are 'neath its prow, and crushing shells.

Naschina. (turning to go) And let the tale be mournful each one tel

(Antonio and Naschina go out.)

Reenter Antonio.

Antonio. I would have gone also; but far away
 The faery thing flew with her o'er the gray
 Slow waters, and the boat and maiden sink
 Away from me where mists of evening drink
 To ease their world-old thirst along the brink
 Of sword-blue waves of calm; while o'er head blink

The mobs of stars in gold and green and blue,
 Piercing the quivering waters through and through,
 The ageless sentinels who hold their watch
 O'er grief. The world drinks sorrow from the beams
 And penetration of their eyes.

(starting forward.
 Where yonder blotch
 Of lilac o'er the pulsing water gleams,
 Once more those shepherds come. Mayhap some mirth
 I'll have. Oh, absent one, 'tis not for dearth
 Of grief. And if they say, 'Antonio laughed',
 Say then, - 'A popin jay before grief's shaft
 Pierced through, chattering from habit in the sun,
 Till his last wretchedness was o'er and done'.

A Voice from the trees. Antonio!

Enter Colin and Thernot.

Thernot. We have resolved to fight.
 Antonio. To yonder isle, where never sail was furled,
 From whose green banks no living thing may rove,
 And see again the happy woodland light,
 Naschina's gone, drawn by a thirst of love,
 And that was strange; but this is many a world
 More wonderful!

Thernot. And we have swords.

Antonio. O night
 Of wonders! eve of prodigies!

Colin. Draw! draw!

Antonio. (aside). HE'll snap his sword.

Thernot. Raised ~~is~~ the lion's paw.

(Colin and Thernot fight.)

Antonio. Cease! Thernot's wounded, cease! They will not heed.

Fierce thrust! A tardy blossom had the seed,
But heavy fruit. How swift the argument
Of those steel tongues! Crash, swords! Well thrust! Well bent
Aside! --

(A far-off multitudinous sound of horns.)

The wild horns told Almintor's end,
And of Naschina's now they tell - rend! rend!
Oh, heart! Her dirge! With rushing arms the waves
Cast on the sound, on, on. This night of graves,
The soinning stars - the toiling sea - whirl round
My sinking brain! - Cease! - Cease! Heard ye yon sound?
The dirge of her ye love. Cease! - Cease!

(An echo in a cliff in the heart of the forest sends mournfully
back the blast of the horns. ANTONIO rushes away, and the scene
closes on COLIN and THERNOT still fighting.)

As round her, slow on feet that used to dance,
The phantoms of her faded pleasures walk
And trailing crimson vans, a wondrous crew,
Ghosts of her vanished glories, muse and stroll
About the sea. Before her lies the rocky
fern with long straggling and the waves have sung
Their passion and their restlessness and with
Through his sad soul for ever old and young,
Fill their fierce likeness within his eyes
Save his lone tapers.

THE TWO TITANS.

A political poem.

The vision of a rock where lightnings whirled
 Bruising the darkness with their crackling light;
 The waves, enormous wanderers of the world,
 Beat on it with their hammers day and night.
 Two figures crouching on the black rock, bound
 To one another with a coiling chain;
 A grey-haired youth, whose cheeks had never found,
 Or long ere this had lost their ruddy stain;
 A sybil, with fierce face as of a hound
 That dreams. She moveth, feeling in her brain
 The lightnings pulse - behold her, aye behold -
 Ignoble joy, and more ignoble pain
 Cramm'd all her youth; and hates have bought and sold
 Her spirit. As she moves, the foam-globes burst
 Over her spotted flesh and flying hair
 And her gigantic limbs. The weary thirst
 Unquenchable still grows in her dull stare,
 As round her, slow on feet that have no blood,
 The phantoms of her faded pleasures walk;
 And trailing crimson vans, a mumbling brood,
 Ghosts of her vanished glories, muse and stalk
 About the sea. Before her lies that youth,
 Worn with long struggles; and the waves have sung
 Their passion and their restlessness and ruth
 Through his sad soul for ever old and young,
 Till their fierce miseries within his eyes
 Have lit lone tapers.

Now the night was cast,

Making all one o'er rock and sea and skies;

And when once more the lightning Genii passed,

Strewing upon the rocks their steel-blue hair,

I saw him stagger with the clanking chain,

Trailing and shining 'neath the flickering glare.

With little cries of joy he kissed the rain

In creviced rocks, and laughed to the old sea,

And, nodding to and fro, sang songs of love,

And flowers and little children. Suddenly

Dropt down the velvet darkness from above,

Hiding away the ocean's yelping flocks.

When flash on flash once more the lightning came,

The youth had flung his arms around the rocks,

And in the sibyl's eyes a languid flame

Was moving. Bleeding now, his grasp unlocks,

And he is dragged again before her feet.

Why not? He is her own; and crouching nigh

Bending her face o'er his, she watches meet

And part his foaming mouth with eager eye --

To place a kiss of fire on the dim brow

Of Failure, and to crown her crownless head,

That all men evermore may humbly bow

Down to the mother of the foiled and dead.

For this did the Eternal Darkness bring

Thither by dust, and knead it with a cry,

Gathered on her own lips, Oh youth, and fling

Failure for glory down on thee and mould

Thy withered foe, and with the purple wing

Of ocean fan thee into life, and fold

For ever round thy waking and thy sleep

The darkness of the whirlwind shattered deep.

While o'er the buds, and o'er the grass-blades, bright
 And glancing with the dew of morning showers.

With purple sandals sweep the grave-eyed hours -

Remembering thee, I muse, while faded in flight

The honey-hearted pleasure of the light,

And hanging o'er the hush of willow bowers,

Of ceaseless loneliness and high regret

Sings the young elvish spirit of a star

Unfolded in the shadows of the east,

And silences holding revelry and feast;

Just now my soul rose up and touched its, far

In space, made equal with a sigh, so soft.

REMEMBRANCE.

Remembering thee, I search out these faint flowers
 Of rhyme; remembering thee, this crescent night,
 While o'er the buds, and o'er the grass-blades, bright
 And clinging with the dew of odorous showers,
 With purple sandals sweep the grave-eyed hours -
 Remembering thee, I muse, while fades in flight
 The honey-hearted leisure of the light,
 And hanging o'er the hush of willow bowers,

 Of ceaseless loneliness and high regret
 Sings the young wistful spirit of a star
 Enfolden in the shadows of the East,
 And silence holding revelry and feast;
 Just now my soul rose up and touched it, far
 In space, made equal with a sigh, we met.

and leaves, two and two,

following shadows in the day,

 the hazy, rising, with

 showered away the keen dew drops;

 wernal warm air on my path,

 half asleep the old pop trees,

 the fairy-haunted rath,

 dew-tanned, the daisy tops -

A DAWN-SONG

From the waves the sun hath reeled,
 Proudly in his saffron walking;
 Sleep in some far other field
 Goes his poppies now a-hawking;
 From the hills of earth have pealed --
 Murmurs of her children talking --
 My companions, two and two,
 Gathering mushrooms in the dew.
 Gently and softly in the dew,
 Wake, ma cushla, sleepy headed;
 Trembles as a bell of glass
 All heaven's floor, with vapours bedded ---
 And along the mountains pass,
 With their mushrooms lightly threaded
 On their swaying blades of grass,
 Lads and lasses, two and two,
 Gathering mushrooms in the dew.

Wake! the heron, rising, hath
 Showered away the keen dew drops;
 Weasel warms him on the path,
 Half asleep the old cow crops,
 In the fairy-haunted rath,
 Dewy-tongued, the daisy tops --

We will wander, I and you,
Gathering mushrooms in the dew.

For your feet the morning prayeth:

We will find her favourite lair,
Straying as the heron strayeth,

As the moorfowl and the hare,
While the morning star decayeth

In the bosom of the air --
Gayest wanderers, I and you,
Gathering mushrooms in the dew.

In The Firelight.

Come and dream of kings and kingdoms,
Cooking chestnuts on the bars -
Round us the white roads are endless,
Mournful under mournful stars.

Whisper lest we too may sadden,
Round us herds of shadows steal -
Care not if beyond the shadows
Flieth Fortune's furious wheel.

Kingdoms rising, kingdoms falling,
Bowing nations, plumed wars -
Weigh them in an hour of dreaming,
Cooking chestnuts on the bars.

MOURN -- AND THEN ONWARD

Ye on the broad high mountains of old Eri,
Mourn all the night and day,
The man is gone who guided ye, unwearied,
Through the long bitter way.

Ye by the waves who close in our sad nation,
Be full of sudden fears,
The man is gone who from his lonely station
Has moulded the hard years.

Mourn ye on grass-green plains of Eri fated,
For closed in darkness now
Is he who laboured on, derided, hated,
And made the tyrant bow.

Mourn -- and then onward, there is no returning
He guides ye from the tomb;
His memory now is a tall pillar, burning
Before us in the gloom!

THE DANAAAN QUICKEN TREE.

It is said that an enchanted tree grew once on the little lake-island of Innisfree, and that its berries were, according to one legend, poisonous to mortals, and according to another, able to endow them with more than mortal powers. Both legends say that the berries were the food of the 'Tuatha de Danaan', or faeries. Quicken is the old Irish name for the mountain ash. The Dark Joan mentioned in the last verse is a famous faery who often goes about the roads disguised as a clutch of chickens. Niam is the famous and beautiful faery who carried Oisín into Faeryland. 'Aslauga Shee' means faery host.

Beloved, hear my bitter tale!-

Now making busy with the oar,

Now flinging loose the slanting sail,

I hurried from the woody shore,

And plucked small fruits on Innisfree.

(Ah, mournful Danaan quicken tree!)

A murmuring faery multitude,

When flying to the heart of light

From playing hurley in the wood

With creatures of our heavy night,

A berry threw for me - or thee.

(Ah, mournful Danaan quicken tree!)

And thereon grew a tender root,

And thereon grew a tender stem,

And thereon grew the ruddy fruit

That are a poison to all men

And meat to the Aslauga Shee.

(Ah, mournful Danaan quicken tree!)

If when the battle is half won,

I fling away my sword, blood dim,

Or leave some service all undone,

Beloved, blame the Danaan whim,

And blame the snare they set for me.

(Ah, mournful Danaan quicken tree!)

Cast out all hope, cast out all fear,

And taste with me the faeries' meat,

For while I blamed them I could hear

Dark Joan call the berries sweet,

Where Niam heads the revelry.

(Ah, mournful Danaan quicken tree!)

WISDOM AND DREAMS.

I pray that I ever be weaving
An intellectual tune,
But weaving it out of threads
From the distaff of the moon.

Wisdom and dreams are one,
For dreams are the flowers ablow,
And Wisdom the fruit of the garden:
God planted him long ago.

A SONG OF THE ROSY-CROSS

He who measures gain and loss,

When he gave to thee the Rose,
Gave to me alone the Cross;

Where the blood-red blossom blows
In a wood of dew and moss,

There thy wandering pathway goes,
Mine where waters brood and toss;

Yet one joy have I, hid close,
He who measures gain and loss,

When he gave to thee the Rose,
Gave to me alone the Cross.

SPINNING SONG

There are seven that pull the thread
One lives under the waves,
And one where the winds are wove,
And one in the old gray house
Where the dew is made before dawn;
One lives in the house of the sun,
And one in the the house of the moon,
And one lives under the boughs
Of the golden apple tree;
And one spinner is lost.
Holiest, holiest seven,
Put all your power on the thread
I have spun in the house this night!

PART II

271
HOUND VOICE.

BECAUSE we love bare hills and stunted trees
And were the last to choose the settled ground,
Its boredom of the desk or of the spade, because
So many years companioned by a hound,
Our voices carry; and though slumber bound,
Some few half wake and half renew their choice,
Give tongue, proclaim their hidden name - "hound voice".

The women that I picked spoke sweet and low
And yet gave tongue. "Hound voices" were they all.
We picked each other from afar and knew
What hour of terror comes to test the soul,
And in that terror's name obeyed the call,
And understood, what none have understood,
Those images that waken in the blood.

Some day we shall get up before the dawn
And find our ancient hounds before the door,
And wide awake know that the hunt is on;
Stumbling upon the blood-dark track once more,
That stumbling to the kill beside the shore;
Then cleaning out and bandaging of wounds,
And chants of victory amid the encircling hounds.

JOHN KINSELLA'S LAMENT FOR MRS. MARY MOORE.

I

A BLOODY and a sudden end,
 Gunshot or a noose,
For death who takes what man would keep,
 Leaves what man would lose.
He might have had my sister
 My cousins by the score,
But nothing satisfied the fool
 But my dear Mary Moore,
None other knows what pleasures man
 At table or in bed.
What shall I do for pretty girls
 Now my old bawd is dead?

II

Though stiff to strike a bargain
 Like an old Jew man,
Her bargain struck we laughed and talked
 And emptied many a can;
And O! but she had stories
 Though not for the priest's ear,
To keep the soul of man alive
 Banish age and care,
And being old she put a skin
 On everything she said.

What shall I do for pretty girls
Now my old bawd is dead?

III

The priests have got a book that says
But for Adam's sin
Eden's garden would be there
And I there within.
No expectation fails there
No pleasing habit ends
No man grows old, no girl grows cold,
But friends walk by friends.
Who quarrels over halfpennies
That plucks the trees for bread?
What shall I do for pretty girls now
Now my old bawd is dead?

HIGH TALK

PROCESSIONS that lack high stilts have nothing that catches the eye.
What if my great-granddad had a pair that were twenty foot high,
And mine were but fifteen foot, no modern stalks upon higher,
Some rogue of the world stole them to patch up a fence or a fire.

Because piebald ponies, led bears, caged lions, make but poor shows,
Because children demand Daddy-long-legs upon his timber toes,
Because women in the upper stories demand a face at the pane
That patching old heels they may shriek, I take to chisel and plane.

Malachi Stilt-Jack am I, whatever I learned has run wild,
From collar to collar, from stilt to stilt, from father to child.
All metaphor, Malachi, stilts and all. A barnacle goose
Far up in the stretches of night; night splits and the dawn breaks
loose;
I, through the terrible novelty of light, stalk on, stalk on;
Those great sea horses bare their teeth and laugh at the dawn.

THE APPARITIONS

BECAUSE there is safety in dèrision
I talked about an apparition,
I took no trouble to convince,
Or seem possible to a man of sense,
Distrustful of that popular eye
Whether it besbold or sly.
Fifteen apparitions have I seen;
The worst a coat upon a coat-hanger.

I have found nothing half so good
As my long-planned half solitude,
Where I can sit up half the night
With some friend that has the wit
Not to allow his looks to tell
When I am unintelligible.
Fifteen apparitions have I seen;
The worst a coat upon a coat-hanger.

When a man grows old his joy
Grows more deep day after day,
His empty heart is full at length
But he has need of all that strength
Because of the increasing Night
That opens her mystery and fright.
Fifteen apparitions have I seen;
The worst a coat upon a coat-hanger.

A NATIVITY.

What woman hugs her infant there?

Another star has shot an ear.

What made the drapery glisten so?

Not a man but Delacroix.

What made the ceiling waterproof?

Landor's tarpaulin on the roof.

What brushes fly and moth aside?

Irving and his plume of pride.

What hurries out the knave and dolt?

Talma and his thunderbolt.

Why is a woman terror-struck?

Can there be mercy in her look?

MAN AND THE ECHO.

MAN

In a cleft that's christened Alt
 Under broken stone I halt
 At the bottom of a pit
 That broad noon has never lit,
 And shout a secret to the stone.
 All that I have said and done,
 Now that I am old and ill,
 Turns into a question till
 I lie awake night after night
 And never get the answers right.
 Did that play of mine send out
 Certain men the English shot?
 Did words of mine put too great strain
 On that woman's reeling brain?
 Could my spoken words have checked
 That whereby a house lay wrecked?
 And all seems evil until I
 Sleepless would lie down and die.

ECHO

Lie down and die.

MAN

That were to shirk
 The spiritual intellect's great work
 And shirk it in vain. There is no release

In a bodkin or disease,
Nor can there be a work so great
As that which cleans man's dirty slate.
While man can still his body keep
Wine or love drug him to sleep,
Waking he thanks the Lord that he
Has body and its stupidity,
But body gone he sleeps no more
And till his intellect grows sure
That all's arranged in one clear view
Pursues the thoughts that I pursue,
Then stands in judgement on his soul,
And, all work done, dismisses all
Out of intellect and sight
And sinks at last into the night.

ECHO

Into the night.

MAN

O rocky voice

Shall we in that great night rejoice?
What do we know but that we face
One another in this place?
But hush, for I have lost the theme
Its joy or night seem but a dream;
Up there some hawk or owl has struck
Dropping out of sky or rock,
A stricken rabbit is crying out
And its cry distracts my thought.

THE CIRCUS ANIMAL'S DESERTION

I

I sought a theme and sought for it in vain,
I sought it daily for six weeks or so.
Maybe at last being but a broken man
I must be satisfied with my heart, although
Winter and summer till old age began
My circus animals were all on show,
Those stilted boys, that burnished chariot,
Lion and woman and the Lord knows what.

II

What can I but enumerate old themes,
First that sea-rider Usheen led by the nose
Through three enchanted islands, allegorical dreams,
Vain gaiety, vain battle, vain repose,
Themes of the embittered heart, or so it seems,
That might adorn old songs or courtly shows;
But what cared I that set him on to ride,
I, starved for the bosom of his fairy bride.

And then a counter-truth filled out its play,
"The Countess Cathleen" was the name I gave it,
She, pity-crazed, had given her soul away
But masterful Heaven had intervened to save it.
I thought my dear must her own soul destroy
So did fanaticism and hate enslave it,
And this brought forth a dream and soon enough

This dream itself had all my thought and love.
And when the Fool and Blind Man stole the bread
Cuchullain fought the ungovernable sea,
Heart mysteries there, and yet when all is said
It was the dream itself enchanted me:
Character isolated by a deed
To engross the present and dominate memory.
Players and painted stage took all my love
And not those things that they were emblems of.

III

Those masterful images because complete
Grew in pure mind but out of what began?
A mound of refuse or the sweepings of a street,
Old kettles, old bottles, and a broken can,
Old iron, old bones, old rags, that raving slut
Who keeps the till. Now that my ladder's gone
I must lie down where all the ladders start
In the foul rag and bone shop of the heart.

POLITICS

"In our time the destiny of man presents its meanings
in political terms." _____ THOMAS MANN

How can I, that girl standing there,
My attention fix
On Roman or on Russian
Or on Spanish politics,
Yet here's a travelled man that knows
What he talks about,
And there's a politician
That has both read and thought,
And maybe what they say is true
Of war and war's alarms,
But O that I were young again
And held her in my arms.

THE STATUES

Pythagoras planned it. Why did the people stare?
His numbers, though they moved or seemed to move
In marble or in bronze, lacked character.

But boys and girls pale from the imagined love
Of solitary beds, knew what they were,
That passion could bring character enough;
And pressed at midnight in some public place
live lips upon a plummet-measured face.

No! Greater than Pythagoras, for the men
That with a mallet or a chisel modelled these
Calculations that look but casual flesh, put down
All Asiatic vague immensities,
And not the banks of oars that swam upon
The many-headed foam at Salamis.

Europe put off that foam when Phidias
Gave women dreams and dreams their looking-glass.

One image crossed the many-headed, sat
Under the tropic shade, grew round and slow,
No Hamlet thin from eating flies, a fat
Dreamer of the Middle Ages. Empty eye-balls knew
That knowledge increases unreality, that
Mirror on mirror mirrored is all the show.
When gong and conch declare the hour to bless
Grimalkin crawls to Buddha's emptiness.

When Pearse summoned Cuchullain to his side,

What stalked through the Post Office? What intellect,
 What calculation, number, measurement, replied?
 We Irish, born into that ancient sect
 But thrown upon this filthy modern tide
 And by its formless, spawning, fury wrecked,
 Climb to our proper dark, that we may trace
 The lineaments of a plummet-measured face.

NEWS FOR THE DELPHIC ORACLE

I

There all the golden codgers lay,
There the silver dew,
And the great water sighed for love
And the wind sighed too.
Man-picker Niamh leant and sighed
By Oisin on the grass;
There sighed amid his choir of love
Tall Pythagoras.
Plotinus came and looked about,
The salt flakes on his breast,
And having stretched and yawned awhile
Lay sighing like the rest.

II

Straddling each a dolphin's back
And steadied by a fin
Those Innocents re-live their death,
Their wounds open again.
The ecstatic waters laugh because
Their cries are sweet and strange,
Through their ancestral patterns dance,
And the brute dolphins plunge
Until in some cliff-sheltered bay
Where wades the choir of love
Proffering its sacred laurel crowns,
They pitch their burdens off.

305

III

Slim adolescence that a nymph has stripped,
Peleus on Thetis stares,
Her limbs are delicate as an eyelid,
Love has blinded him with tears;
But Thetis' belly listens.
Down the mountain walls
From where Pan's cavern is
Intolerable music falls.
Foul goat-head, brutal arm appear,
Belly, shoulder, bum,
Flash fishlike; nymphs and satyrs
Copulate in the foam.

306

LONG-LEGGED FLY

That civilization may not sink
Its great battle lost,
Quiet the dog, tether the pony
To a distant post.

Our master Caesar is in the tent
Where the maps are spread,
His eyes fixed upon nothing,
A hand under his head.

Like a long-legged fly upon the stream
His mind moves upon silence.

That the topless towers be burnt
All men recall that face,
Move most gently if move you must
In this lonely place.

She thinks, part woman, three parts a child,
That nobody looks; her feet
Practise a tinker shuffle
Picked up on the street.

Like a long-legged fly upon the stream
Her mind moves upon silence.

That girls at puberty may find
The first Adam in their thought,
Shut the door of the Pope's Chapel,
Keep those children out.

There on that scaffolding reclines

Michael Angelo.

With no more sound than the mice make

His hand moves to and fro.

Like a long-legged fly upon the stream

His mind moves upon silence.

A BRONZE HEAD

Here at right of the entrance this bronze head,
Human, super-human, a bird's round eye,
Everything else withered and mummy-dead.
What great tomb-haunter sweeps the distant sky;
(Something may linger there though all else die;)
And finds there nothing to make its terror less
Hysterico-passio of its own emptiness?

No dark tomb-haunter once; her form all full
As though with magnanimity of light
Yet a most gentle woman; who can tell
Which of her forms has shown her substance right,
Or may be substance can be composite,
Profound McTaggart thought so, and in a breath
A mouthful hold the extreme of life and death.

But even at the starting-post, all sleek and new,
I saw the wildness in her and I thought
A vision of terror that it must live through
Had shattered her soul. Propinquity had brought
Imagination to that pitch where it casts out
All that is not itself. I had grown wild
And wandered murmuring everywhere "my child, my child!"

Or else I thought her supernatural;
As though a sterner eye looked through her eye
On this foul world in its decline and fall;

On gangling stocks grown great, great stocks run dry,
Ancestral pearls all pitched into a sty,
Heroic revery mocked by clown and knave,
And wondered what was left for massacre to save.

A P P E N D I X - III

A B I B L I O G R A P H Y
of the Works of
W I L L I A M B U T L E R Y E A T S .

(With a short introductory Note)

A Bibliography of the Writings of
William Butler Yeats.

I have endeavoured to include in this bibliography everything that Yeats wrote or edited and most of the works he contributed to. Of his contributions to periodicals, I have mentioned only the poetry. The enormous bulk of his reviews, sketches, letters and essays contributed to Irish, English and ~~American~~ Periodicals, especially during the eighteen-nineties, will fill many volumes. I have not included the numerous anthologies in which his work has appeared except some significant early ones like the anthology of Gill and Son (1888) where he himself made his contributions a part of the general scheme of the book. I have described every book I have had access to and merely mentioned the others. Several of the first editions are limited in number and printed privately, and are inaccessible at libraries and even at the British Museum. But between Yeats and his sister Miss Elizabeth Yeats, of the Cuala Press, it is possible to see practically all of them. The latter has again a gap between

Poole's admirable 'Index to Periodical Literature' came to an end with its Fifth supplement in 1907. And it was 1915 before the Library Association published the first volume of 'Subject Index to Periodicals'. The latter has again a gap between

between 1922 and 1926. Both these publications mention works on authors more than by them. But I have made use of them a great deal. If this bibliography is incomplete, it is mainly due to the gaps in these publications as well as the difficulty of access to several American journals. I know definitely of at least one omission, of a poem which appeared first in the excellent American magazine, 'Poetry'.

The plan of dividing up the work into four columns is intended to provide an index to the nature of his creative activity during 1885 -1939. The following are the abbreviations used in naming the various periodicals:

The Dublin University Review:	D. U. R.
The Irish Monthly:	Ir. Mon.
The Irish Fireside:	Ir. Fir.
The Leisure Hour:	Leis. Hr.
The Scots Observer:	Sc. Obs.
The National Observer:	Nat. Obs.
United Ireland:	Un. Ir.
The Bookman:	Bookman.
The Saturday Review:	Sat. Rev.
The Fortnightly Review:	Fort. Rev.
The Monthly Review:	Mon. Rev.
The Dial:	Dial
The London Mercury:	Lon. Merc.

I have made use of A.J.A Symons's Bibliography of the 1st editions of Yeats's Works(First Editions Club)'24, and Allan Wade's Bibliography published in 1908 in

the eighth volume of the Collected Works (Shakespeare
Head Press, Chapman and Hall) every now and then.

1885.

WORKS : ENGLISH EDITIONS.

WORKS : AMERICAN EDITIONS.

1886.

Mosada/A Dramatic Poem/By/
W.B.Yeats/With a/Frontispiece
Portrait of the author/By
J.B.Yeats/Reprinted from the
Dublin University Review/
Dublin:/Printed by Sealy,
Eryers, and Walker,/94,95 &
96 Middle Abbey Street./1886.
8vo, pp ii & 12. Light brown
paper covers.

1885.

WORKS EDITED BY YEATSCONTRIBUTIONS TO PERIODICALS.

Song of the Fairies.
Voices.
(D.U.R. March)

The Island of Statues. (D.U.R.
April-July)

Love and Death.(D.U.R.May)

The Seeker.(D.U.R.September)

An Epilogue.(D.U.R.October)

1886.

In a Drawing Room.(D.U.R.January).

Quatrains.(D.U.R.February)

The Two Titans.(D.U.R.March)

On Mr.Nettleship's Picture at the
Royal Hibernian Academy(D.U.R.Apr)

Mosada (D.U.R.June)

Remembrance (Ir.Mon. July)

Miserrimus (D.U.R.October)

From the Book of Kauri the Indian,
Section V. On the Nature of God.
(D.U.R.October)

Meditation of an old Fisherman.
(Ir.Mon. October)

The Stolen Child (Ir.Mon.December)

An Indian Song (D.U.R.December)

1887.

A Dawn Song (Ir.Fir. Feb.5)

1887 contd.

The Fairy Pedant (Ir. Mon. Mar.)

King Goll (Leis. Hr. September)

She who dwelt among the
sycamores. (Ir. Mon. September)

The Fairy Doctor. (Ir. Fir. Sep 10)

1888

Poems and Ballads/of/
 Young Ireland/1888/We're
 one at heart if you be
 Ireland's friend,/Though
 leagues asunder our
 opinions tend;/There are
 but two great parties in
 the end!/Allingham/
 O'Connell Street/1888.
 Fcap. 8vo, ppviii & 80.
 White buckram.

Fairy and Folk Tales/of
 the Irish Peasantry:/
 Edited and selected by/
 W.B. Yeats/London:/Walter
 Scott, 24 Warwick Lane/New
 York: Thomas Whittaker/
 Toronto: W.J. Gage & Co./
 1888.
 Sm. cr. 8vo, xx & 326. cloth.

1889.

The Wanderings of Oisín/and
other Poems/by/W.B.Yeats/
London/Kegan Paul, Trench
& Co., 1, Paternoster Sq./
1889.

Fcap. 8vo, vi & 156. cloth.

1888 contd.

(Same edition repeated in
in 1893 with 12 illustrations
by James Torrance)

. 1889.

Stories from Carleton:/
With an introduction/by W.
B.Yeats./London:Walter Scott
24 Warwick Lane/New York &
Toronto:/W.J.Gage &Co.
Sm.cr.8vo,xx&302.

The Pallad of the Old Fox-
hunter (East and West,Nov)

1890.

Representative/Irish Tales/
Compiled, with an intro-
duction and Notes/by/W.B.
Yeats/First(second)series/
(ornament)/New York & Lon-
don/G.P.Putnam's Sons/The
Knickerbocker Press.

(entire title printed on a
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Decorated boards,cloth backs

Street Dancers(Leis.Hr.Mar)
A Cradle Song (Sc.Obs.Apr19)
Father Gilligan(Sc.Obs.
July5)
The Old Pensioner (Sc.Obs.
Nov.15)
The Lake Isle of Innisfree
(Nat.Obs.Dec.13)

1891.

Ganconagh/John Sherman/
and/Dhoya/London/T.Fisher
Unwin/Paternoster Square/
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24 mo, iv & 196.

1892.

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Various Legends and Lyrics/
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the stars and all/the
heavens"/Paracelsus ab
Hohenheim/Cameo Series/T.
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Sq/London E.C. MDCCCXCII.

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1891.

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A man who dreamed of fairyland.
(Nat. Obs. Feb. 7)

A Fairy Song (Nat. Obs. Sep. 12)

A Ballad Singer (The Boston
Pilot, Sep 12)Mourn - and then Onward (Un. Ir.
Oct 10)

Kathleen (Nat. Obs Oct. 31)

An Epitaph. (Nat. Obs. Dec. 12)

1892.

Irish/Fairy Tales/edited
with an introduction/by/
W. B. Yeats/author of The
Wanderings of Oisín, etc/
Illustrated by Jack B.
Yeats/London/T. Fisher
Unwin/1892.
Fcap. 8vo, viii & 236 cloth.

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Paper boards.

Rosa Mundi (Nat. Obs. January 2)

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Obs. Feb. 13)

The White Birds. (Nat. Obs. May 7)

Fergus and the Druid (Nat. Obs.
May 21)

A mystical prayer to the Masters
of the Elements - Finvarra,
Feacára, and Caolte (Michael,
Gabriel and Raphael)
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The Rose in my Heart (Nat. Obs.
Nov. 12)

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The Twisting of the Rope (Nat.
Obs. Dec. 24)

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Men and Women, Dhouls and
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a frontispiece by J.B.
Yeats/(Press mark of
Lawrence and Eullen)/
London:/Lawrence and
Eullen,(in red)/16,
Henrietta Street, Covent
Garden./1893.
18 mo,xii & 212. cloth.

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The/Poets(in red)/and the
Poetry(in red)of the/
Century(in red)/Charles
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Square,London.

(This and its companion
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Baillie to Mathilde
Blind have short notes
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1893.

The Works/of/William
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and critical/Edited with
Lithographs of the
Illustrated/"Prophetic
Books", and a Memoir/and
Interpretation/by/Edwin
John Ellis/Author of
"Fate in Arcadia"etc./and/
William Butler Yeats/Author
of 'The Wanderings of
Oisín','The Countess

The Danaan Quicken Tree (Ekman
May).

The Celtic Twilight (Nat.Obs.
July 29)

The Moods (Ekman August)

The Fairy Host (Nat.Obs.Oct.7)

The Stolen Bride(Ekman Nov.)

Wisdom and Dreams (Ekman Dec)

1894.

The Land/of Heart's/Desire/
by/W.B.Yeats/London:T.Fisher/
Unwin, Paternoster/Square.
MDCCCXCIV.

The/Land of Heart's
Desire/Ey/W.B.Yeats/
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Chicago/Stone and

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Kathleen' etc./"Bring me
to the test/ And I the matter
will re-word, which madness/
Would gamble from"/Hamlet/
In Three Volumes/Vol I(II,III)/
London/Bernard Quaritch,15
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Three Volumes.

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London

New York.

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16Henrietta St,W.C.
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1894.

The Second Book/of/The
Rhymers' Club/London:
Elkin Mathews and John
Lane/New York: Dodd,

Cap and Bell (Nat.Obs.March17)

The Song of the Old Mother
(Bkman April)

~~To some I have talked by the
Fire (Bkman May)~~

325
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Kimball/Caxton Building/

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The Celtic Twilight/Men
and women, Dhouls and/
Faeries/ By W.B.Yeats/
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1895.

Poems/By W.B.Yeats/London:

Published by T.Fisher

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(the whole forms part of
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of Copeland and Day, Boston
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1896.

1894 contd.

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writers/with an intro-
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Yeats/Methuen & Co./36
Essex Street, W.C./London/

1895.

Cr. 8vo, xxviii & 260 linen

To some I have talked by
the Fire (Ekmen May)

A song of the rosy-cross
(Ekman October)

The Twilight of Forgiveness
(Michael Robartes asks for-
giveness because of his
many moods)
(Sat. Rev)

1896.

The shadowy horses (He bids
his beloved be at Peace)
(Sevoy January)
(A French version appeared
in **VERS** et Prose March-
May)

1897.

The Secret Rose:(in red)/
By W.B.Yeats, with/Illus-
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(Press mark of Lawrence &
Bullen)/Lawrence & Bullen
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don, MDCCCXCVII.
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The Travail of Passion
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 (French version in Vers et
 Prose March-may 1905)

Everlasting Voices (New Review,
 January)

O'Sullivan the Red to Mary
 Lavell (Aedh tells of the perfect
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 (The Senate, March)

Two Poems concerning Peasant
 Visionaries:- i. A cradle song
 ii. The valley of the black pig.
 (Savoy April)

O'Sullivan Rua to Mary Lavell
 (He remembers forgotten Beauty)
 (Savoy July)
 (French version in Vers et Prose
 March-May 1905)

Windlestraws i. O'Sullivan Rua
 to the Curlew (Hanrahan reproves
 the curlew).ii. Out of the old
 days (To my heart, bidding it
 have no fear)
 (Savoy, November)

1897.

The Valley of lovers.(Aedh
 tells of a valley full of lovers)
 (Sat. Rev. January 9)

The Blessed.(The Yellow Bk.April)

The Desire of man and woman
 (Mongan laments the change that
 has come upon him and his beloved)
 (The Dome, June)

Song.(The poet pleads with his
 Friend for old friends)
 (Sat. Rev. July 24)

1897 contd.

The Tables of the Law/The
 Adoration of the Magi/By
 W.B.Yeats/(Press mark)/
 Privately printed/MDCCCXCVII.
 (110 copies)
 Cr. 8vo 48. cloth.

1898.

1899.

The Wind/Among the Reeds/
 By/W.B.Yeats/London:Elkin
 Mathews/Vigo Street,W.,1899.
 Cr. 8vo viii & 108 cloth.

(American edition
 practically the same.
 Published by John
 Lane:The Bodley
 Head. New York & London.

(second edition of Poems, 1895)

1897 contd.

O'Sullivan the Red upon his Wanderings (Hanrahan laments because of his wanderings; and in later editions, Maid Quiet) (The New Review, August)

1898.

A Book of Images/drawn by
W.T./Horton & introduced by
W.B.Yeats/London at the
Unicorn/Press VII Cecil
Court St./Martin's Lane
MDCCCXCVIII
Fcap quarto.62.cloth.

Aodh to Dectora Three songs
(Aedh hears the cry of the sedge,
Aedh laments the loss of love,
Aedh thinks of those who have
spoken evil of his beloved)
(The Dome, May)

Song of Mongan (Mongan thinks
of his past Greatness)
(The Dome. October)

Aodh pleads with the Elemental
Powers.(The Dome December)

Bressel, the Fisherman
(The Cornish Magazine, December)

1899.

Literary/Ideals in/Ireland/
by John Eglinton;/W.B.Yeats/
A.E.;/W.Larminie/Published
by T. Fisher Unwin, London/
And at the Daily Express
Office, Dublin.
Long 8vo. ii & 88.paper covers.

1900

The Shadowy Waters/By W.B.

Yeats/London: Hodder and/

Stoughton/27 Paternoster

Row: MCM.

Cr. Quarto. 60. cloth.

1899 contd.

BELTAINE . An occasional
publication edited by
W.B.Yeats.
No. 1. May 1899.

1900

BELTAINE. No. 2. February.
BELTAINE No.3. April

The Shadowy Waters (The
North American Review, May)

(The three numbers of
'Beltaine' were issued
later in one volume with
wrappers by the Unicorn
Press in 1900)

A Treasury/of/Irish
Poetry/in the/English
Tongue/edited by/Stpford A.
Brooke/and3T.W.Rolleston/
London/Smith,Elder,& Co.,
15 Waterloo Place/1900/ All
rights reserved.
Cr. 8vo xlv & 580 cloth.

A new revised edition of
'A Book of Irish verse'.

1901.

Third (new and revised)
edition of 1895 edition
of Poems.

The Shadowy Waters/By/
W.B.Yeats/(ornament)/
New York/Dodd, Mead and
Company/1901.
Cr. quarto. 62. Grey boards.

1902.

The Celtic Twilight(in red)/
By W.B.Yeats/A.H.Bullen,(in
red) 18 Cecil Court/St.
Martin's Lane, London W.C./
MCMII.
Cr. 8vo. x & 236. cloth.

Where There is/nothing/A
Drama/in Five Acts/By/W.B.
Yeats; John Lane/MCMII
Cr. 8vo. viii & 100. grey
paper cover.
Limited edition.

Cathleen ni Hoolihan/A
play in One Act/in Prose
by W.B.Yeats/(ornament
in red)/Printed at the
Caradoc Press Chiswick for
A.H.Bullen 18 Cecil Court
Lon/don MDCCCCII
Pott 8vo. vi & 34 Paper boards.

Ideals 1901

Ideals in/Ireland/Edited
by Lady Gregory/Written
by "A.E.", D.P./Moran,
George Moore,/Douglas
Hyde, Standish/O'Grady,
and W.B.Yeats/London: At
the Unicorn Press/VII
Cecil Court MDCCCXI.
Cr. 8vo. 108 cloth.

Under the Moon (The Speaker,
June 15)

SAMHAIN edited/for the
Irish Theatre/by W.B.Yeats/
Published in October 1901
by/Sealy Bryers & Walker and/
by T. Fisher Unwin.
Fcap. quarto 40. Brown paper.
1902.

Cuchulain of Muirthemne:/
The story of the men of/
The Red Branch of Ulster/
Arranged and put into/
English by Lady Gregory/
With a preface by W.B.
Yeats/London/John Murray,
Albemarle Street/1902.
Large cr. 8vo. xx & 364
cloth

Spinning Song (Broadsheet, Jan)
The Folly of being Comforted
(The Speaker, January 11)
'Away' (Fort. Rev. April)
Baile and Aillinn (The Monthly
Review, July)
Adam's Curse (Month. Rev. Dec)

1903.

Ideas of Good and(in red)/
 Evil(in red) by W.B.Yeats/
 A.H.Bullen(in red) 47 Great
 Russel/Street, London, W.6.
 MCMIII

cr. 8vo. viii & 342. Paper
 boards with cloth back.

Where There is Nothing:/
 being Volume One of Plays/
 for an Irish Theatre: by/
 W.B.Yeats/London:A.H.

Bullen, 47, Great/Russell
 Street, W.C.1903.

Cr. 8vo. xii & 132. Paper
 boards with cloth back.

A new edition of 'Where
 There is Nothing' (Macmillan
 and Company New York)
 Also a large paper edition
 on Japan paper limited
 to 100 copies.

Revised and enlarged
 edition of The Celtic
 Twilight.

Ideas of Good and/Evil.
 By W.B.Yeats/The Mac-
 millan Company/New
 York MCMIII.

(same as English edition)

1902 contd.

Samhain: An occasional/
 review edited by W.B.
 Yeats/Published in October
 1902 by/Sealy Bryers & Walker
 and/by T.Fisher Unwin.
 Fcap. quarto. 32. paper.

1903.

Samhain: An occasional/
 Review edited by W.B.
 Yeats/Published in Sept-
 ember 1903/by Sealy Bryers
 & Walker/and by T.Fisher
 Unwin.
 Fcap. quarto. 36. paper.

The Old men admiring themselves
 in the Water (The Pall Mall
 Magazine, Jan.)

The Old Age of Queen Maeve
 (Fort. Rev. April)

Cathleen, the daughter of
 Hoolihan (song of Red Hanrahan)
 (A Broadsheet, April)

The Happy Townland (Rider from
 the north)
 (The Weekly critical Review,
 June)

The Dream of the World's End
 (The Green Sheaf No.11)

1903 contd.

In the Seven Woods: being
poems/chiefly of the Irish
Heroic Age/By William Butler
Yeats/The Dun Emer Press/
Dundrum/MCMIII
8vo. viii & 68. Linen with
paper label.
(325 copies only)

The Hour Glass/a Morality/
By/W.B.Yeats/London/Wm.
Heinemann, 21 Bedford St.,
W.C./1903.
Demy 8vo. 16.
(only 12 copies printed
for purposes of copyright).

In the Seven Woods/
Being Poems chiefly of
the/Irish Heroic Age/
By/W.B.Yeats/New York/
The Macmillan Company/
London:Macmillan & Co.,
Ltd./1903/All rights
reserved.

Cr.8vo vi & 90 cloth.

1904.

The Hour-Glass, Cathleen/
ni Hoolihan, The Pot of/
Broth: Being volume Two
of/ Plays for an Irish
Theatre:/By W.B.Yeats/
London:A.H.Bullen, 47,
Great/Russell Street, W.C.
1904.

Cr.8vo.viii&84.paper boards
and cloth back.

The Hour-Glass/And other
plays/Being volume 2 of
plays for/an Irish
Theatre/By/W.B.Yeats/
New York/The Macmillan
Company/London:Macmillan
& Co., Ltd./1904/all
rights reserved

Globe 8vo viii & 116 cloth.
(another edition of 100)

1904.

Gods and Fighting Men: The
story of the Tuatha de Danaan
and of the Fianna of Ireland,
arranged and put into English
by Lady Gregory. With a preface
by W.E. Yeats. London: John Murray,
Albemarle Street, W. 1904.
Large Cr. 8vo. xxviii & 480.

1904 contd.

The King's Threshold:and/
On Baile's Strand: Being/
Volume Three of Plays/for
an Irish Theatre: By/W.B.
Yeats/London: A.H.Bullen,
47, Great/Russell Street,
W.C. 1904.

Cr. 8vo. viii & 120. paper
boards with cloth back.

The King's Threshold/A
Play in verse/By/W.B.
Yeats/New York/Printed
for private circulation/
1904.

medium 8vo x & 58.

Grey boards.

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coloured paper, hand-
made,(Italian). Only
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Stories of Red Hanrahan by/
William Butler Yeats/The Dun
Emer Press/Dundrum MCMIV.

8vo. viii & 64. paper
boards with linen back.

(500 copies only)

(New and revised edition of
'Poems', 1895)

1904 contd.

Samhain: An occasional/
 review edited by W.B.Yeats/
 Published in December 1904/
 Sealy Bryers & Walker/and
 T.Fisher Unwin.
 Fcap quarto. 56. paper.

1905.

Samhain: An occasional/
 review edited by W.B.Yeats/
 Published in November 1905/
 by Maunsel & Co. Ltd.,/And
 A.H.Bullen.

The Well of the Saints/By

Trois Poèmes d'Amour: Le
 Travail de la Passion; Les
 Chevaux de l'ombre; O'Sullivan
 Rua à Marie Lavell (Translated
 by Stuart Merrill)
 (Vers et Prose, March-May)
 Queen Edaine (Maclure's maga-
 zine, September)
 Do not love too long ('The
 Acorn, October)

1906.

Poems, 1899-1905(in red)/
By W.B.Yeats/London: A.H.
Bullen/Dublin: Maunsel &
Co. Ltd/1906.
Cr. 8vo. xvi & 280. cloth

The Poetical Works/of/
William B. Yeats/In Two
Volumes/Volume I/Lyrical
Poems/New York/The Mac-
millan Company/London:
Macmillan & Co.Ltd./
1906/All rights reserved.
cr. 8vo. xiv & 340. cloth

1905 contd.

J.M.Synge. With an intro-/
duction by W.B.Yeats. Be-/
ing Volume Four of Plays/
for an Irish Theatre/
London: A.H.Bullen, 47,/
Great/Russell Street,
W.C. 1905.

Cr. 8vo. xviii & 92. Paper
boards with cloth back.

Never give all the heart.
(Maclure's magazine, December)

1906.

Poems/of/Spenser/selected
and with/an Introduction
by/W. B. Yeats./T.C. & E.C.
Jack/Edinburgh.

(The whole forms part of a
design by A. S. Harcourt)

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Against Witchcraft ('The
Shanachie' Spring)

The praise of Deirdre ('The
Shanachie' Spring)

Samhain: An occasional/review
edited by W.B.Yeats/Published
in December 1906/by Maunsel
& Co. Ltd./Dublin.

Fcap. quarto. 40. paper.

1907.

The Shadowy Waters/By W.B.
Yeats/Acting version,/As
first played at the Abbey
Theatre, December 8th,1906/
A.H.Bullen,/47 Great Russell
Street, London, W.C./1907.
cr. 8vo. 28. paper cover.

Deirdre by W.B.Yeats/Being
Volume Five of Plays/for an
Irish Theatre/London: A.H.
Bullen/Dublin:Maunsel & Co.
Ltd./1907.

cr. 8vo. viii & 48.Paper boards
with cloth back.

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By William Butler Yeats/(woodcut)/
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Volumes/Volume II/
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(The Arrow. Edited by
W. B. Yeats)

1907.

The Arrow No.3.(February
23, 1907)

Poems Lyrical and Narrative/Being the First volume of The/Collected Works in Verse and/Prose of William Butler Yeats/Imprinted at the Shakespeare/Head Press Stratford-on-Avon/MCMVIII/London:/Chapman & Hall/Limited.

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Demy.8vo. Vellum. ix & 244.

The King's Threshold.On/Baile's Strand.Deirdre/Shadowy Waters. Being/The Second Volume of/The Collected Works in/Verse & Prose of William/Butler Yeats.Imprinted/at the Shakespeare Head/Press Stratford-on-Avon/MCMVIII/London:/Chapman & Hall/Limited.

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New York 1908.

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1909.

(An American edition of
Land of Heart's Desire was
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other editions by French
and Dodd)

1910

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1912.

1910

Two Poems

1. Youth and Age

(The Coming of
Wisdom).

2. To a Certain

Country House in

Time of Change

(Upon a House Shaken

by the Land of

Agitation).

(McLure's Magazine, Dec.)

1912

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(Song offerings)/By/

Rabindranath Tagore/

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(in red)/London/T.Fisher

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The Countess/Cathleen/ By/

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Author of 'Ideas of Good

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(Macmillans had an

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1913.

Poems written in Discourage-/

ment, by W.B.Yeats/1912-1913/

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$6\frac{2}{5}$ X $5\frac{1}{4}$. p.8. grey paper wrappers.

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Yeats was published by The Cuala Press
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1912 contd.

a Collection of Prose
Translation made/by the
Author from the/Original
Bengali/with an Intro-
duction by/W.B. Yeats/
London/Printed at the
Chiswick Press for/The
India Society/1912

1914.

The Hour Glass/By/W.B.Yeats/
(privately printed)/50 copies
only.
8vo. iii & 37. grey paper
wrappers.

(An American edition
of 'Stories of Red
Hanrahan etc.' was
published by Macmillan)

The edition, limited to 50
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MCMXIV.

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Youth by William Butler Yeats/
(woodcut)/The Cuala Press/
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(425 copies only)

1916.

Responsibilities/and other
poems/by/William Butler
Yeats/Macmillan and Co.,
Limited/St.Martin's Street,
London/1916.

8vo. xii & 188.

(Macmillans brought out
an American edition of
'Responsibilities' and
'Reveries over Childhood
and Youth')

Easter, 1916/By/W.B.Yeats.

(title page wording en-
closed in black line border).

10 X 7 $\frac{1}{2}$. p.vi & 10. paper

wrappers.

The edition, which consisted
of 25 copies, was not for sale.

Reveries over/childhood and
youth/By/William Butler Yeats/
Macmillan and Co., Limited/St.
Martin's Street,/London/1916.
8vo. x & 213. cloth.

Eight/Poems/by/W B Yeats/Tran-
scribed by/Edward Pay/Published
by/Formⁿ/at the MOrland Press Ltd./
190 Ebury Street London S.W. (the
title page is printed in red).

353
1916 contd.

Quarto. p.24. wrappers.

(200 copies of which 8 were on Dutch hand-made paper, 70 on Japanese vellum, and 122 on Italian hand-made paper)

1917.

The Wild Swans at Coole,/Other verses and a Play/in verse, by W.B.Yeats/The Cuala Press/Churchtown/Dundrum/MCMXVII.
Quarto. xii & 52. paper boards..
400 copies.

1918.

Nine Poems/by/W.B.Yeats/London/
Privately printed by Clement Shorter/October 1918. (all in black line border)
10 X 7 $\frac{1}{2}$. p.ii & 18. paper wrappers.
The edition, which consisted of 25 copies, was not for sale.

(An American edition of 'Per Amica Silentia Lunae, published by Macmillans. Limited edition)

Per Amica/Silentia Lunae/By/
William Butler Yeats/Macmillan and Co. Limited/St. Martins's Street, London/1918.
8vo. viii & 96. cloth.

1918.

(An American edition of
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Library of the world's best
Books' series)

1919.

The Cutting of/An Agate/By
W.B.Yeats/Macmillan and Co.
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8vo. viii & 223. cloth.

(An American edition
of 'The Wild Swans
at Coole' published
by Macmillans)

Two plays for Dancers/By
W.B.Yeats/(woodcut)/The
Cuala Press/MCMXIX.
Quarto. viii & 44. paper
boards and linen back.
400 copies.

1920.

Michael Robartes and the/Dancer,
By William Butler/Yeats/(woodcut
in red)/The Cuala Press/Churchtown/
Dundrum/MCMXX.
Quarto. xii & 40. paper boards with
linen back.
400 copies.

(An American edition
by Macmillans appear-
ed simultaneously)

1921.

Four Plays/for dancers/by/W.B.
Yeats/Macmillan and Co.Limited/
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Yeats/(woodcut in red)/The
Cuala Press/Chuechtown/
Dundrum/MCMXXI.

Quarto. iv & 96. paper boards
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400 copies.

1922.

Plays in/Prose and verse/written
for an Irish Theatre,/and
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and Co. limited/St. Martin's
Street, London/1922.

8vo. xii & 452. cloth.

Later Poems/by/W.B.Yeats/Mac-
millan and Co.Limited/St.
Martin's Street, London/1922.

8vo. xvi & 368. cloth.

The/Player Queen/by/W.B.Yeats/
Macmillan and Co. Limited/St.
Martin's Street, London/1922.

357
1921.

'All Souls' Night' (Printed as
an epilogue to 'A Vision')
The London Mercury. March.

'Thoughts upon the State of
the World'
The Dial. September.

'Thoughts upon the present State
of the World' (Nineteen Hundred
and Nineteen)
London Mercury. November.

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8vo. x & 248. paper boards.

1923.

1924.

The Cat and the Moon and/certain
Poems: by William/Butler Yeats/

(There were several
American editions:

1923.

'Meditations in time of Civil
War'.(The Dial, January)
(The same poem appeared in
The London Mercury)

1924.

'The Cat and the Moon'
(The Dial, July)

(The same poem appeared in
'The Criterion' of July)

1925 contd.

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 meditation, and a lecture/
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'More songs of an Old Countryman'
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1927.

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trated by/Jacynth	men'.
Parsons/(drawing)/With	(The London Mercury, May)
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Yeats/London and Boston/	
The Medici Society.	

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1927.

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by Macmillan and Company
Ltd. New York)

(An American edition
of Oedipus for the modern
stage. Macmillan.
12mo. vi & 61

1927 contd.

'The Tower'
(The Criterion, June)

'Among Schoolchildren'
(The London Mercury, August)
(The same poem appeared in
'The Dial' for August)

1928 contd.

An old/Diary, By William Butler
Yeats/(drawing)/The Cuala Press/
Dublin, Ireland/MCMXXVIII.
Quarto. xx & 35. Paper boards
with linen back.

1929.

Three things/By W.B.Yeats/
(drawing)/Drawings by Gilbert
Spencer.
p.4. paper wrapper.

Selected Poems/Lyrical and
Narrative/By/W.B.Yeats/
(illustration of Yeats by
Sargent)/Macmillan and
Co., Limited/St. Martin's
Street, London/1929.
8vo. x & 203. cloth.

Benn's Essex Library/Edited
by Edward G. Hawke, M.A./
W.B.Yeats/The Land of Heart's
Desire/The Countess/Cathleen/
London: Ernest Benn Ltd./

(A limited autographed
edition of The Winding
Stair (octavo, 40ps) was
published by Cayme
Press)

The/Winding Stair/By/
W.B.Yeats/(publisher's
mark)/New York/The
Fountain Press/MCMXXIX
Quarto. viii & 28. cloth.
(642 copies of which
600 numbered and signed
by the author)

366

1928.

Sophocles'/King Oedipus/A

Version for the Modern Stage/

By/W.E.Yeats/Macmillan and Co.,

Limited/St. Martin's Street,

London/1928.

Paper wrapper. P.61.

1929 contd.

Bouverie House, Fleet Street.
 (The whole set in a line design)
 8vo. P.156. cloth.

1930

1931.

Stories of Michael Robartes and/
 His friends: An extract from a/
 Record made by his pupils:And/
 a play in prose by W.B.Yeats/
 (woodcut)/The Cuala Press/Dublin,
 Ireland/MCMXXXI.

Quarto. xviii & 46. Paper boards
 with linen back.

1932.

Words for music perhaps and/Other
 Poems:by W.B.Yeats/The Cuala Press/
 Dublin, Ireland/MCMXXXII.

Quarto. xxii & 42. Paper boards
 and linen back.

1930.

Eight Poems.

A song for music.
Love's loneliness.
Her Dream.
His bargain.
Meditations upon Death.
Crazy Jane & the dancers
Crazy Jane & the bishop.
Crazy Jane reproved.

(The London Mercury, November)

1931

Bishop Berkeley/His
life, writings, and/
Philosophy/By/J.M.Hone and
M.M.Rossi/With an introduction/
by/W.B.Yeats/London/Faber
and Faber Limited/24
Russell Square.
8vo. xxx & 286. cloth.

1933.

The/Winding Stair/And other
Poems/by/W.B.Yeats/Macmillan
and Company Ltd/St. Martin's
Street,London/1933.

8vo. x & 101. cloth.

The/Collected Poems/of/W.B.
Yeats/Macmillan and Co.,Limited/
St. Martin's Street, London./ 1933.

8vo. xvi & 474.

(reprinted, 1934 & 1935)

(Macmillans published
two volumes:

1.Collected Poems.12mo
xvii & 478. cloth.

2.Selected Poems. 12mo.
P.202 cloth.

1934

The/Collected Plays/of/
W.B.Yeats/Macmillan and Co.,
Limited/St.Martin's Street,
London/1934

8vo. vi & 618. cloth.

Wheels/and/Butterflies/by/
W.B.Yeats/(woodcut)/Macmillan
and Co.,Limited/St.Martin's
Street,London/1934.

8vo. x & 181. cloth.

Letters to the New Island/
By/William Butler Yeats/
Edited with an intro-
duction/by/Horace Reynolds/
(publisher's mark)/
Cambridge, Massachusetts/
Harvard University Press/
1934.

P. xiv & 222. cloth.

1934.

The/Holy Mountain/Being
 the story of A/Pilgrimage
 To the Lake Mānas/And of
 Initiation/On Mount Kailas
 in Tibet/By/Bhagwān Shri
 Hamsa/Translated/From the
 Marāthi By/Shri Purohit
 Swāmi/With an introduction
 By/W.B.Yeats/London/Faber and
 Faber Limited/24 Russell
 Square.
 Svo. P.243. cloth.

'Supernatural Songs'

Ribh at the tomb of Baile and
 Aillinn.
 Ribh prefers an older Theology.
 Ribh considers Christian love
 insufficient.
 He and she.
 The four ages of Man.
 Conjunctions.
 A needle's Eye.
 Meru.
 (The London Mercury, December)

1935 contd.

A Full Moon/in March/ by /
 W.B.Yeats/Macmillan and Co Ltd/
 1935.
 8vo. viii & 70. cloth.

(new edition of collected
 Poems.)

1936.

Dramatis Personae/1896-1902/
 Estrangement/The Death of
 Synge/The Eounty of Sweden/
 Macmillan and Co.Ltd./1936.
 8vo. viii & 130. paper
 boards with linen back.

(An American Edition
 by Macmillan)

(American edn. of 'The
 Oxford Book of Modern
 Verse' Oxford
 University Press, Toronto.

1937

The/King's Threshold/By/W.B.
 Yeats/Macmillan and Co., Limited/
 St. Martin's Street, London/1937.
 Ps. 65-114. paper covers.

(An American edition
 of the Ten Principal
 Upanishads) Published
 by Macmillans.

1936.

Selections/from/The Poems/of/
 Dorothy Wellesley/With an intro-
 duction by/W.B.Yeats/and a Draw-
 ing by/Sir William Rothenstein/
 London/Macmillan and Co.Ltd/
 1936. 8vo,xviii+ 126.cloth.

The Oxford Book/of Modern Verse/
 1892 - 1935/Chosen by/W.B.Yeats/
 Oxford/At the Clarendon Press/1936.
 8vo. xlviii & 450. cloth.

1937.

The Ten/Principal Upanishads/Put
 into English by/Shree Purohit Swāmi/
 and/W.B.Yeats/Faber and Faber Limited/
 24 Russell Square/London.
 8vo. P.159. cloth.

1937 contd.

Nine One-Act Plays/by/W.B.Yeats/Macmillan and Co., Ltd./St.Martin's Street,London/1937.

8vo. vi & 217. cloth.

Essays/By W.B.Yeats/1931 to 1936/
(device)
(device)/The Cuala Press/Dublin,
Ireland/1937.

Quart. P.132.paper bds.&linen back.

1938.

The Herne's Egg/A stage Play/
by/W.B.Yeats/London/Macmillan
and Co.Ltd/1938.

8vo. vi & 73. cloth.

('Autobiography,consisting
of'Reveries over Child-
hood and Youth,'The
Trembling of the Veil',
and 'Dramatis Personae'
Macmillan).

New Poems:By W.B.Yeats/(drawing)/
The Cuala Press/Dublin,Ireland/
MCMXXXVIII.

Quarto. xxxii & 39. Paper
boards with linen back.

(Herne's Egg and other
Plays. 8vo. 136.
Macmillan)

(Herne's Egg. Macmillan)

1937.

The Lemon Tree/Margot
Ruddock/With an intro-
duction by/W.B.Yeats/
London:J.M.Dent and Sons
Ltd.

'The Three Bushes'
(The London Mercury, January)

8vo, xiv & 29. paper boards.

1938.

Aphorisms of Yoga/by/
Bhagwān Shree Patanjali/
done into English/from the
original in Samskrit/with
a commentary/by/Shree
Purohit Swāmi/ and an intro-
duction/by/W.B.Yeats/Faber
and Faber Limited/24
Russell Square/London.
Octavo. P.94. cloth

Four Poems.

The Wild old Wicked Man.
An Acre of Grass.
Are you content?
Sweet dancer.
(Lnd.Merc. April).

Eight Poems.

Lapis Lazuli.
Those images.
To a friend.
The old Stone Cross.
The Great Day.
Parnell
What was lost.
The spur.
(Lon.Merc. March)

Poems.

Hound Voice.
John Kinsella's Lament for
Mrs. Mary Moore.
High Talk.
The Apparitions.
A Nativity.
(Lond.Merc. December)

1939.

'Man and the Echo'
'The Circus Animal's Desertion'
'Politics'.
(Lond.Merc. January)

Four Recent Poems.

The Statues; News for the Delphic
Oracle; Long-legged Fly; A bronze
Head.(Lond.Merc. March)