

Selected Poetry

Benedict XV.

Sole voice of peace amid the raging sea
Of hate and slaughter, cries and counter-cries
Of stricken, bought and sold humanity,
Sole voice of truth amid the storm of lies;

Sole voice of love amid the roar of hate
That sunders race from race and man from man;
When all the thoughtless world is desolate
Sole king and seer the Law of God to scan;

His Law thou meditating day and night,
Unto a blind bewilder'd world dost speak,
Unwearied, swerving never left or right,
Blessing and blest, rock-steadfast, valant, meek
—H. E. G. ROPE, in *Blackfriars*.

The Sundial (December)

So many days the Sun has made no sign,
Has veiled his face from his rapt worshipper,
Who stands unconscious of the passing year,
Remembering only moments, fierce, divine,
When rays of glory pierced the heavens to shine
Upon his face. Oh, what to him the whirl
Of Time's swift wings who listens for a stir
Of wind to lift the veil before the shrine?
Years and the flux of years are nought to him
Whose life is centred in the flux of light,
Who stands whole days bathed in a splendid flame
And waits long hours for the first dawning rim
Above the earth, absorbed by day and night—
Blest victim of the Sun-god's mystic game.

"To One Who Would Remain Friends"

What is this prate of friendship? Kings disrowned
Go forth, not citizens but outlawed men.
If love has ceased to give a loyal sound,
Let there at least be silence. Once again
I go, proscribed, exiled, dominionless
Out of your coasts, yet scorning to complain.
I grudge not your allegiance nor my bliss,
I yield the pleasure as I keep the pain.
Rebellion's rights are limited though strong.
The right to take gives not the right to give.
Mine are the sole right and prerogative
To give a title or forgive a wrong.
This gift of friendship was not yours to bring.
As I have lived in love I still will live
Or die, if needs must, and without reprieve,
Your lover yet, and kingdomless a king.

—WILFRED S. BLUNT.

On a Dead Child

Man proposes. God in His time disposes.
And so I wandered up to where you lay,
A little rose among the little roses,
And no more dead than they.

It seemed your childish feet were tired of straying,
You did not greet me from your flower-strewn bed.
Yet still I knew that you were only playing—
Playing at being dead.

I might have thought that you were really sleeping,
So quiet lay your eyelids to the sky,
So still your hair, but surely you were peeping,
And so I did not cry.

God knows, and in His proper time disposes,
And so I smiled and gently called your name,
Added my rose to your sweet heap of roses,
And left you to your game.

—RICHARD MIDDLETON.

The Convict of Clonmel

(From the Irish.)

"How hard is fortune
And vain my repining;
The strong rope of fate
For this young neck is twining!
My strength is departed,
My cheeks sunk and fallow,
While I languish in chains
In the gaol of Clonmala.

"No boy of the village
Was ever yet milder;
I'd play with a child
And my sport would be wilder;
I'd dance without tiring
From morning till even,
And the goal-ball I'd strike
To the light'ning of Heaven.

"At my bed foot decaying
My hurl bat is lying;
Through the boys of the village
My goal-ball is flying;
My horse 'mong the neighbors
Neglected may follow,
While I pine in my chains
In the gaol of Clonmala.

"Next Sunday the patron
At home will be keeping,
And the young active hurlers
The field will be sweeping;
With the dance of fair maidens
The evening they'll hallow,
While this heart, once so gay,
Shall be cold in Clonmala."

Ill-omened Gifts

Pride not yourself, O palm-tree,
That loftier you grow
Than almond-trees and laurels,
Whose green tops wave below!
The tempest is approaching,
And when the bolt shall smite,
The foreheads least uplifted
Are safest from its might.

O rose flower, wax not haughty
For hue and scent divine—
Because in field and garden
All others you outshine!
Beauty and scent betoken
Misfortune to a flower,
For hands will come to pluck you,
And insects to devour.

Sweet forest flute, wild songster!
You preen your feathers fair,
And jets of pearly music
Pour forth upon the air,
But grow not vain of warbling;
Be silent, men may hear!
Such trills, to birds that sing them,
Bring nets and trappers near.

Earth, envy not the Day Star
From which your warmth is drawn—
That scatters gold and purple
At sunset and at dawn!
Magnificence so mighty
From mighty torment flows;
A conflagration's brightness
Your light and life bestows.

How dear you buy, O spirit,
Your aureole of flame!
Your true offence is only
That you have wit and fame

—SALVADOR DIAZ MIRON, in the *Mexican Review*.

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