

Selected Poetry

THE FRIENDLY TREE.

(For the *N.Z. Tablet*.)

Dear friendly tree, how kind in summer's heat

Thy pleasant shade, when toiling up the hill,
In thy oasis, from the desert street,
One stands to rest, to pause, to drink one's fill

Of cooler air; a gracious friend in days
Of gorgeous sunshine when the heart is light

And sings gay melodies of endless mirth,
Unshadow'd; how the soft wind crisply
plays
Among thy foliage, through which as bright
As mermaids' eyes, the sky peers down
on earth.

And still upon a rainy day, dost try
To keep thy faith and prove thyself a friend

To those who, storm-bound, thee descry,
And hasten where thy drooping boughs
extend

Kind shelter; 'neath thy green-clothed
arms, one feels

Secure, and looks forth, waiting for the
rain

To stay its wrath; but inch by inch, in
crawls

The dampness; in the dreary coldness
steals,

Unwelcome, selfish guests who forth again
The victim drive amid the rain that falls.

Like thine, do seem to me all human arms;
In days of sunshine giving rest, delight,
And soft allurements when no loud alarms

Of strife and turmoil sound; but of the
night

With storms tremendous blacken all the way
Of life, what then? What then? Ah!

Then

Doth fail mere human consolations, e'en
Of truest friend; 'tis God alone can lay

Sweet consolation's balm on souls of men,
He, Who, Samaritan, hath ever been.

—ANGELA HASTINGS.

THE PRIEST.

At the white altar he stands,
In his vestments of gold;
He will take Our Lord in his hands
Like Mary of old.

Bread of the wheat will be broken,
And wine in a cup be spilled;
He will speak as Christ hath spoken:
They shall be Christ, as He willed.

Anointed and like the saints, wise
With a wisdom which may not appear,
He will offer the Sacrifice
Of Calvary here.

He will go out from this place,
A Martha will welcome him
Still with that light on his face
Which her cares cannot dim.

He will go forth to the stricken,
Pastor keeping good ward;
Graces and blessings will quicken
From him of the Lord.

—P. J. O'CONNOR-DUFFY in the *Irish Rostrum*.

MY MORNING THRUSH.

Halfway up the incline
That leads to the railway station
I hear him, old friend of mine,
Bursting with jubilation.
The meeting is nothing new,
But he seems as surprised as ever
With his gay "What you? What you!
What you?
Well, I never!"

"Here again? Here again? Here again?"
'Tis a jest that he loves repeating.
But his heart, like mine, is fain
Of our regular morning meeting.
High from his tree-top there
His welcoming voice is ringing,
For whatever the weather, foul or fair,
He is singing.

Such liquid joy as he spills!
While he sits on his lofty perch he
Pours forth his phrases and trills
With the ease of a Galli-Curci.
Dear friend, as I pass along
Be sure I shall not forget you.
"So pleased, so pleased, so pleased," goes
the song.

"To have met you!"
"Touchstone," in the *Daily Mail*.

DUNCTON HILL

He does not die that can bequeath
Some influence to the land he knows,
Or dares, persistent, interweave
Love permanent with the wild hedgerows:
He does not die, but still remains
Substantiated with his darling plains.

The spring's superb adventure calls
His dust athwart the woods to flame;
His boundary river's secret falls
Perpetuate and repeat his name.
He rides his loud October sky:
He does not die, He does not die.

The beeches know the accustomed head
Which loved them, and a peopled air
Beneath their benediction spread
Comforts the silence everywhere:
For native ghosts return and these
Perfect the mysteries in the trees.

So, therefore, though myself be cross'd
The shuddering of that dreadful day
When friend and fire and home are lost,
And even children drawn away—

The passer-by shall hear me still
A boy that sings on Duncton Hill.
—HILAIRE BELLOC, in *An Anthology of
Modern Verse*.

LOVE NOT ME FOR COMELY GRACE.

Love not me for comely grace,
For my pleasing eye or face,
Nor for any outward part,
No, nor for a constant heart:
For these may fail or turn to ill,
So thou and I shall sever:
Keep, therefore, a true woman's eye,
And love me still but know not why—
So hast thou the same reason still
To doat upon me ever.

—From John Wilbye's *Second Set of Madrigals*, 1609.

SPLENDIDUS LONGUM VALEDICO NUGIS.

Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to
dust,
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things.
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust:
Whatever fades, but fading pleasure
brings.
Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy
might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms
be;
Which breaks the clouds and opens forth
the light
That doth both shine and give us sight to
see.
O take fast hold! let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth draws out
to death,
And think how evil becometh him to slide
Who seeketh Heaven, and comes of heav-
enly breath.
Then farewell world! thy uttermost I
see:
Eternal Love! maintain thy life in me.
—SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

TO RUPERT BROOKE.

In Seyros of the far Ionian Isles
There lies eternally a dust concealed—
An English dust within that foreign field
Whose lips God must have loved. Beyond all
trials,
All torturing dreams, disasters, and betrayals
He sleeps to whose clear gaze Beauty re-
vealed
Her lustrous eyes, to whom she lent her
shield
Of grace, and eloquence no hate defiles. . . .

He sleeps with the elect among the brave—
A golden youth of lineage too proud,
Too old, too English in reserved disdain
To share the burden of the modern slave,
To stand for peace against the madding
crowd,
Or for Truth's sake to wear a galling chain!
—BRENT DOW ALLINSON in *The World To
Morrow*.