

### PALGRAVE

# The Golden Treasury of English Songs and Lyrics

WITH A SUPPLEMENTARY BOOK OF MORE MODERN POETRY



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#### PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION

This little Collection differs, it is believed, from others in the attempt made to include in it all the best original Lyrical pieces and Songs in our language, by writers not living,—and none beside the best. Many familiar verses will hence be met with; many also which should be familiar:—the Editor will regard as his fittest readers those who love Poetry so well, that he can offer them nothing not already known and valued.

The Editor is acquainted with no strict and exhaustive definition of Lyrical Poetry; but he has found the task of practical decision increase in clearness and in facility as he advanced with the work, whilst keeping in view a few simple principles. Lyrical has been here held essentially to imply that each Poem shall turn on some single thought, feeling, or situation. In accordance with this, narrative, descriptive, and didactic poems,-unless accompanied by rapidity of movement, brevity, and the colouring of human passion,-have been excluded. Humorous poetry, except in the very unfrequent instances where a truly poetical tone pervades the whole, with what is strictly personal, occasional, and religious, has been considered foreign to the idea of the book. Blank verse and the ten-syllable couplet, with all pieces markedly dramatic, have been rejected as alien from what is commonly understood by Song, and rarely conforming to Lyrical conditions in treatment. But it is not anticipated,

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nor is it possible, that all readers shall think the line accurately drawn. Some poems, as Gray's Elegy, the Allegro and Penseroso, Wordsworth's Ruth or Campbell's Lord Ullin, might be claimed with perhaps equal justice for a narrative or descriptive selection: whilst with reference especially to Ballads and Sonnets, the Editor can only state that he has taken his utmost pains to decide without caprice or partiality.

This also is all he can plead in regard to a point even more liable to question; -what degree of merit should give rank among the Best. That a Poem shall be worthy of the writer's genius,—that it shall reach a perfection commensurate with its aim,—that we should require finish in proportion to brevity,—that passion, colour, and originality cannot atone for serious imperfections in clearness, unity, or truth,that a few good lines do not make a good poem,that popular estimate is serviceable as a guidepost more than as a compass,—above all, that Excellence should be looked for rather in the Whole than in the Parts,—such and other such canons have been always steadily regarded. He may however add that the pieces chosen, and a far larger number rejected, have been carefully and repeatedly considered; and that he has been aided throughout by two friends of independent and exercised judgment, besides the distinguished person addressed in the Dedication. It is hoped that by this procedure the volume has been freed from that one-sidedness which must beset individual decisions:-but for the final choice the Editor is alone responsible.

It would obviously have been invidious to apply the standard aimed at in this Collection to the Living. Nor, even in the cases where this might be done without offence, does it appear wise to attempt to anticipate the verdict of the Future on our contemporaries. Should the book last, poems by Tennyson, Bryant, Clare, Lowell, and others, will no doubt claim and obtain their place among the best. But the Editor trusts that this will be effected by other hands, and in days far distant.

Chalmers' vast collection, with the whole works of all accessible poets not contained in it, and the best Anthologies of different periods, have been twice systematically read through: and it is hence improbable that any omissions which may be regretted are due to oversight. The poems are printed entire, except in a very few instances where a stanza has been omitted. The omissions have been risked only when the piece could be thus brought to a closer lyrical unity: and, as essentially opposed to this unity, extracts, obviously such, are excluded. In regard to the text, the purpose of the book has appeared to justify the choice of the most poetical version, wherever more than one exists: and much labour has been given to present each poem, in disposition, spelling, and punctuation, to the greatest advantage.

For the permission under which the copyright pieces are inserted, thanks are due to the respective Proprietors, without whose liberal concurrence the scheme of the collection would have been defeated.

In the arrangement, the most poetically-effective order has been attempted. The English mind has passed through phases of thought and cultivation so various and so opposed during these three centuries of Poetry, that a rapid passage between Old and New, like rapid alteration of the eye's focus in looking at the landscape, will always be wearisome and hurtful to the sense of Beauty. The poems have been therefore distributed into Books corresponding,

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I to the ninety years closing about 1616, II thence to 1700. III to 1800. IV to the half century just ended. Or, looking at the Poets who more or less give each portion its distinctive character, they might be called the Books of Shakespeare, Milton, Grav, and Wordsworth. The volume, in this respect, so far as the limitations of its range allow, accurately reflects the natural growth and evolution of our Poetry. A rigidly chronological sequence, however, rather fits a collection aiming at instruction than at pleasure, and the Wisdom which comes through Pleasure:—within each book the pieces have therefore been arranged in gradations of feeling or subject. The development of the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven has been here thought of as a model, and nothing placed without careful consideration. And it is hoped that the contents of this Anthology will thus be found to present a certain unity, 'as episodes', in the noble language of Shelley, 'to that great Poem which all poets, like the cooperating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world'.

As he closes his long survey, the Editor trusts he may add without egotism, that he has found the vague general verdict of popular Fame more just than those have thought, who, with too severe a criticism, would confine judgments on Poetry to 'the selected few of many generations'. Not many appear to have gained reputation without some gift or performance that, in due degree, deserved it: and if no verses by certain writers who show less strength than sweetness, or more thought than mastery in expression, are printed in this volume, it should not be imagined that they have been excluded without much hesitation and regret,—far less that they have been

slighted. Throughout this vast and pathetic array of Singers now silent, few have been honoured with the name Poet, and have not possessed a skill in words, a sympathy with beauty, a tenderness of feeling, or seriousness in reflection, which render their works, although never perhaps attaining that loftier and finer excellence here required.—better worth reading than much of what fills the scanty hours that most men spare for self-improvement, or for pleasure in any of its more elevated and permanent forms.—And if this be true of even mediocre poetry. for how much more are we indebted to the best! Like the fabled fountain of the Azores, but with a more various power, the magic of this Art can confer on each period of life its appropriate blessing: on early years Experience, on maturity Calm, on age, Youthfulness. Poetry gives treasures 'more golden than gold', leading us in higher and healthier ways than those of the world, and interpreting to us the lessons of Nature. But she speaks best for herself. Her true accents, if the plan has been executed with success, may be heard throughout the following pages:-wherever the Poets of England are honoured, wherever the dominant language of the world is spoken, it is hoped that they will find fit audience.

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#### PUBLISHERS' NOTE

In the present Everyman edition of Palgrave's Golden Treasury a group of additional poems has been selected to represent the period that has elapsed since Palgrave's selection was made, though the work of no poet appears who was born later than the end of the nineteenth century. A very few of the earlier poems in this additional group fall within the later years of Palgrave's own selection. The poems are printed in the chronological order of the birth of the poets.

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EVERYMAN, I will go with thee,

and be thy guide,

In thy most need to go by thy side

#### FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE

Born 1824, son of Sir Francis Palgrave the historian. Examiner and assistant-secretary of the Education Department, 1855–84; Professor of Poetry at Oxford, 1885–95. Died in 1897.

#### BOOK FIRST

#### I SPRING

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king; Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring, Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing, Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay, Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day, And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay, Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo.

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet, Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit, In every street these tunes our ears do greet, Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

Spring! the sweet Spring!

T. Nash

# SUMMONS TO LOVE

Phoebus, arise!
And paint the sable skies
With azure, white, and red:
Rouse Memnon's mother from her Tithon's bed
That she may thy career with roses spread:
The nightingales thy coming eachwhere sing:
Make an eternal Spring!
Give life to this dark world which lieth dead;
Spread forth thy golden hair

In larger locks than thou wast wont before And emperor-like decore With diadem of pearl thy temples fair: Chase hence the ugly night Which serves but to make dear thy glorious light.

-This is that happy morn, That day, long-wished day Of all my life so dark, (If cruel stars have not my ruin sworn And fates my hopes betray), Which, purely white, deserves An everlasting diamond should it mark. This is the morn should bring unto this grove My Love, to hear and recompense my love. Fair King, who all preserves. But show thy blushing beams, And thou two sweeter eyes Shalt see than those which by Penéus' streams Did once thy heart surprize. Now, Flora, deck thyself in fairest guise: If that ye winds would hear A voice surpassing far Amphion's lyre, Your furious chiding stay; Let Zephyr only breathe, And with her tresses play. -The winds all silent are. And Phoebus in his chair Ensaffroning sea and air Makes vanish every star: Night like a drunkard reels Beyond the hills, to shun his flaming wheels: The fields with flowers are deck'd in every hue, The clouds with orient gold spangle their blue; Here is the pleasant place-And nothing wanting is, save She, alas! W. DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN III

#### TIME AND LOVE

I

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced The rich proud cost of out-worn buried age; When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed, And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;

When I have seen the hungry ocean gain Advantage on the kingdom of the shore, And the firm soil win of the watery main, Increasing store with loss, and loss with store;

When I have seen such interchange of state, Or state itself confounded to decay, Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate— That Time will come and take my Love away:

—This thought is as a death, which cannot choose But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

W. SHAKESPEARE

IV

2

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea, But sad mortality o'ersways their power, How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea, Whose action is no stronger than a flower?

O how shall summer's honey breath hold out Against the wreckful siege of battering days, When rocks impregnable are not so stout Nor gates of steel so strong, but time decays?

O fearful meditation! where, alack! Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?

# 4 The Passionate Shepherd

Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back, Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?

O! none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.
W. Shakespeare

V

# THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

Come live with me and be my Love, And we will all the pleasures prove That hills and valleys, dale and field, And all the craggy mountains yield.

There will we sit upon the rocks And see the shepherds feed their flocks, By shallow rivers, to whose falls Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses And a thousand fragrant posies, A cap of flowers, and a kirtle Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool, Which from our pretty lambs we pull, Fair lined slippers for the cold, With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds With coral clasps and amber studs: And if these pleasures may thee move, Come live with me and be my Love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat As precious as the gods do eat, Shall on an ivory table be Prepared each day for thee and me.