

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen  
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo  
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm  
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller  
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka  
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Willis  
Baum Henry Nietzsche Hall  
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Turgenev Balzac Willis  
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane  
Burroughs Verne  
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch  
Homer Tolstoy Whittman  
Darwin Thoreau Twain  
Potter Zola Lawrence Plato Scott  
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Dickens Harte  
Andersen London Descartes Cervantes Burton Hesse  
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# **The Nuts of Knowledge Lyrical Poems Old and New**

George William Russell

# Imprint

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The Manager of the Dun Emer Press has to thank  
Mr. John Lane for permission to reprint ten poems  
from *Homeward Songs By The Way*, and ten from  
*The Earth Breath*.

**FOR BRIAN WHEN HE IS GROWN UP  
THIS HANDFUL OF THE NUTS OF  
KNOWLEDGE I HAVE GATHERED ON  
THE SECRET STREAMS.**



I thought, beloved, to have brought to you  
A gift of quietness and ease and peace,  
Cooling your brow as with the mystic dew  
Dropping from twilight trees.

Homeward I go not yet; the darkness grows;  
Not mine the voice to still with peace divine:  
From the first fount the stream of quiet flows  
Through other hearts than mine.

Yet of my night I give to you the stars,  
And of my sorrow here the sweetest gains,  
And out of hell, beyond its iron bars,  
My scorn of all its pains.

[3]



## THE NUTS OF KNOWLEDGE

A cabin on the mountain side hid in a grassy nook  
Where door and windows open wide that friendly stars may  
look.  
The rabbit shy can patter in, the winds may enter free,  
Who throng around the mountain throne in living ecstasy.

And when the sun sets dimmed in eve and purple fills the  
air,  
I think the sacred Hazel Tree is dropping berries there  
From starry fruitage waved aloft where Connla's Well o'er-  
flows;  
For sure the enchanted waters pour through every wind that  
blows.

I think when night towers up aloft and shakes the trembling  
dew  
How every high and lonely thought that thrills my being  
through  
Is but a ruddy berry dropped down through the purple air,  
And from the magic tree of life the fruit falls everywhere.

[4]



## IMMORTALITY

We must pass like smoke or live within the spirit's fire;  
For we can no more than smoke unto the flame return  
If our thought has changed to dream, our will unto desire,  
As smoke we vanish though the fire may burn.

Lights of infinite pity star the grey dusk of our days:  
Surely here is soul: with it we have eternal breath:  
In the fire of love we live, or pass by many ways,  
By unnumbered ways of dream to death.



## THE HERMIT

Now the quietude of earth  
Nestles deep my heart within;  
Friendships new and strange have birth  
Since I left the city's din.

Here the tempest stays its guile,  
Like a big kind brother plays,  
Romps and pauses here awhile  
From its immemorial ways.

Now the silver light of dawn  
Slipping through the leaves that fleck  
My one window, hurries on,  
[5] Throws its arms around my neck.

Darkness to my doorway hies,  
Lays her chin upon the roof,  
And her burning seraph eyes  
Now no longer keep aloof.

Here the ancient mystery  
Holds its hands out day by day,  
Takes a chair and croons with me  
By my cabin built of clay.

When the dusky shadow flits,  
By the chimney nook I see  
Where the old enchanter sits,  
Smiles, and waves, and beckons me.



## THE GREAT BREATH

Its edges foamed with amethyst and rose,  
Withers once more the old blue flower of day:  
There where the ether like a diamond glows  
Its petals fade away.

A shadowy tumult stirs the dusky air;  
Sparkle the delicate dews, the distant snows;  
The great deep thrills for through it everywhere  
The breath of beauty blows.

[6] I saw how all the trembling ages past,  
Moulded to her by deep and deeper breath,  
Neared to the hour when Beauty breathes her last  
And knows herself in death.

