

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
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Hall Willis
Baum Henry Kipling Doyle
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche
Stockton Turgenev Balzac
Burroughs Vatsyayana Crane
Curtis Tocqueville Verne
Homer Tolstoy Gogol Busch
Darwin Thoreau Whitman Twain
Potter Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato Scott
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
London Descartes Cervantes Voltaire Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells Bunner Shakespeare Cooke
Richter Chekhov Chambers Irving
Doré Dante Shaw Wodehouse
Swift Pushkin Alcott
Newton



tredition®

tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, tredition offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. tredition is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

TREDITION CLASSICS

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series. The creators of this series are united by passion for literature and driven by the intention of making all public domain books available in printed format again - worldwide. Most TREDITION CLASSICS titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades. At tredition we believe that a great book never goes out of style and that its value is eternal. Several mostly non-profit literature projects provide content to tredition. To support their good work, tredition donates a portion of the proceeds from each sold copy. As a reader of a TREDITION CLASSICS book, you support our mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion. See all available books at www.tredition.com.



Project Gutenberg

The content for this book has been graciously provided by Project Gutenberg. Project Gutenberg is a non-profit organization founded by Michael Hart in 1971 at the University of Illinois. The mission of Project Gutenberg is simple: To encourage the creation and distribution of eBooks. Project Gutenberg is the first and largest collection of public domain eBooks.

**Poems and Ballads (Third Series)
Taken from The Collected Poetical
Works of Algernon Charles
Swinburne—Vol. III**

Algernon Charles Swinburne

Imprint

This book is part of TREDITION CLASSICS

Author: Algernon Charles Swinburne

Cover design: Buchgut, Berlin - Germany

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg - Germany

ISBN: 978-3-8472-2665-9

www.tredition.com

www.tredition.de

Copyright:

The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations, such as Project Gutenberg, worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

POEMS AND BALLADS

Third Series

[Pg vii] March: an Ode

The Commonweal

The Armada

To a Seamew

Pan and Thalassius

A Ballad of Bath

In a Garden

A Rhyme

Baby-Bird

Olive

A Word with the Wind

Neap-Tide

By the Wayside

Night

[Pg viii] In Time of Mourning

The Interpreters

The Recall

By Twilight

A Baby's Epitaph

On the Death of Sir Henry Taylor

In Memory of John William Inchbold

New Year's Day

To Sir Richard F. Burton

Nell Gwyn

Caliban on Ariel

The Weary Wedding

The Winds

A Lyke-wake Song

A Reiver's Neck-Verse

The Witch-Mother

The Bride's Tragedy

A Jacobite's Farewell

A Jacobite's Exile

The Tyneside Widow

Dedication

TO

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT

POET AND PAINTER

I DEDICATE THESE POEMS

IN MEMORY OF MANY YEARS

MARCH: AN ODE

1887

I

Ere frost-flower and snow-blossom faded and fell, and the splendour of winter had passed out of sight,
The ways of the woodlands were fairer and stranger than dreams that fulfil us in sleep with delight;
The breath of the mouths of the winds had hardened on tree-tops and branches that glittered and swayed
Such wonders and glories of blossomlike snow or of frost that outlightens all flowers till it fade
That the sea was not lovelier than here was the land, nor the night than the day, nor the day than the night,
Nor the winter sublimer with storm than the spring: such mirth had the madness and might in thee made,
March, master of winds, bright minstrel and marshal of storms that enkindle the season they smite.

[Pg 170]

II

And now that the rage of thy rapture is satiate with revel and ravin and spoil of the snow,
And the branches it brightened are broken, and shattered the tree-tops that only thy wrath could lay low,
How should not thy lovers rejoice in thee, leader and lord of the year that exults to be born
So strong in thy strength and so glad of thy gladness whose laughter puts winter and sorrow to scorn?
Thou hast shaken the snows from thy wings, and the frost on thy forehead is molten: thy lips are aglow

As a lover's that kindle with kissing, and earth, with her rai-
ment and tresses yet wasted and torn,
Takes breath as she smiles in the grasp of thy passion to feel
through her spirit the sense of thee flow.

III

Fain, fain would we see but again for an hour what the wind
and the sun have dispelled and consumed,
Those full deep swan-soft feathers of snow with whose lu-
minous burden the branches implumed
Hung heavily, curved as a half-bent bow, and fledged not as
birds are, but petalled as flowers,
Each tree-top and branchlet a pinnacle jewelled and carved,
or a fountain that shines as it showers,
But fixed as a fountain is fixed not, and wrought not to last
till by time or by tempest entombed,
[Pg 171] As a pinnacle carven and gilded of men: for the date
of its doom is no more than an hour's,
One hour of the sun's when the warm wind wakes him to
wither the snow-flowers that froze as they bloomed.

IV

As the sunshine quenches the snowshine; as April subdues
thee, and yields up his kingdom to May;
So time overcomes the regret that is born of delight as it
passes in passion away,
And leaves but a dream for desire to rejoice in or mourn for
with tears or thanksgivings; but thou,
Bright god that art gone from us, maddest and gladdest of
months, to what goal hast thou gone from us now?
For somewhere surely the storm of thy laughter that lightens,
the beat of thy wings that play,
Must flame as a fire through the world, and the heavens that
we know not rejoice in thee: surely thy brow

Hath lost not its radiance of empire, thy spirit the joy that
impelled it on quest as for prey.

V

Are thy feet on the ways of the limitless waters, thy wings on
the winds of the waste north sea?
Are the fires of the false north dawn over heavens where
summer is stormful and strong like thee
[Pg 172] Now bright in the sight of thine eyes? are the basti-
ons of icebergs assailed by the blast of thy breath?
Is it March with the wild north world when April is waning?
the word that the changed year saith,
Is it echoed to northward with rapture of passion reiterate
from spirits triumphant as we
Whose hearts were uplift at the blast of thy clarions as men's
rearsen from a sleep that was death
And kindled to life that was one with the world's and with
thine? hast thou set not the whole world free?

VI

For the breath of thy lips is freedom, and freedom's the sense
of thy spirit, the sound of thy song,
Glad god of the north-east wind, whose heart is as high as
the hands of thy kingdom are strong,
Thy kingdom whose empire is terror and joy, twin-featured
and fruitful of births divine,
Days lit with the flame of the lamps of the flowers, and
nights that are drunken with dew for wine,
And sleep not for joy of the stars that deepen and quicken, a
denser and fierier throng,
And the world that thy breath bade whiten and tremble re-
joices at heart as they strengthen and shine,
And earth gives thanks for the glory bequeathed her, and

knows of thy reign that it wrought not wrong.

[Pg 173]

VII

Thy spirit is quenched not, albeit we behold not thy face in
the crown of the steep sky's arch,
And the bold first buds of the whin wax golden, and witness
arise of the thorn and the larch:
Wild April, enkindled to laughter and storm by the kiss of
the wildest of winds that blow,
Calls loud on his brother for witness; his hands that were
laden with blossom are sprinkled with snow,
And his lips breathe winter, and laugh, and relent; and the
live woods feel not the frost's flame parch;
For the flame of the spring that consumes not but quickens is
felt at the heart of the forest aglow,
And the sparks that enkindled and fed it were strewn from
the hands of the gods of the winds of March.

[Pg 174]

THE COMMONWEAL

1887

I

Eight hundred years and twenty-one
Have shone and sunken since the land
Whose name is freedom bore such brand
As marks a captive, and the sun

Beheld her fettered hand.

II

But ere dark time had shed as rain
Or sown on sterile earth as seed
That bears no fruit save tare and weed
An age and half an age again,
She rose on Runnymede.

III

Out of the shadow, starlike still,
She rose up radiant in her right,
And spake, and put to fear and flight
The lawless rule of awless will
That pleads no right save might.

[Pg 175] IV

Nor since hath England ever borne
The burden laid on subject lands,
The rule that curbs and binds all hands
Save one, and marks for servile scorn
The heads it bows and brands.

V

A commonweal arrayed and crowned
With gold and purple, girt with steel
At need, that foes must fear or feel,
We find her, as our fathers found,
Earth's lordliest commonweal.

VI

And now that fifty years are flown
Since in a maiden's hand the sign
Of empire that no seas confine
First as a star to seaward shone,
We see their record shine.

VII

A troubled record, foul and fair,
A simple record and serene,
Inscribes for praise a blameless queen,
For praise and blame an age of care
And change and ends unseen.

[Pg 176] VIII

Hope, wide of eye and wild of wing,
Rose with the sundawn of a reign
Whose grace should make the rough ways plain,
And fill the worn old world with spring,
And heal its heart of pain.

IX

Peace was to be on earth; men's hope
Was holier than their fathers had,
Their wisdom not more wise than glad:
They saw the gates of promise ope,
And heard what love's lips bade.

X

Love armed with knowledge, winged and wise,
Should hush the wind of war, and see,
They said, the sun of days to be
Bring round beneath serener skies
A stormless jubilee.

XI

Time, in the darkness un beholden
That hides him from the sight of fear
And lets but dreaming hope draw near,
Smiled and was sad to hear such golden
Strains hail the all-golden year.

[Pg 177] XII

Strange clouds have risen between, and wild
Red stars of storm that lit the abyss
Wherein fierce fraud and violence kiss
And mock such promise as beguiled
The fiftieth year from this.

XIII

War upon war, change after change,
Hath shaken thrones and towers to dust,
And hopes austere and faiths august
Have watched in patience stern and strange
Men's works unjust and just.

XIV

As from some Alpine watch-tower's portal
Night, living yet, looks forth for dawn,
So from time's mistier mountain lawn

The spirit of man, in trust immortal,
Yearns toward a hope withdrawn.

XV

The morning comes not, yet the night
Wanes, and men's eyes win strength to see
Where twilight is, where light shall be
When conquered wrong and conquering right
Acclaim a world set free.

[Pg 178] XVI

Calm as our mother-land, the mother
Of faith and freedom, pure and wise,
Keeps watch beneath unchangeful skies,
When hath she watched the woes of other
Strange lands with alien eyes?

XVII

Calm as she stands alone, what nation
Hath lacked an alms from English hands?
What exiles from what stricken lands
Have lacked the shelter of the station
Where higher than all she stands?

XVIII

Though time discrown and change dismantle
The pride of thrones and towers that frown,
How should they bring her glories down—
The sea cast round her like a mantle,
The sea-cloud like a crown?

XIX

The sea, divine as heaven and deathless,
Is hers, and none but only she
Hath learnt the sea's word, none but we
Her children hear in heart the breathless
Bright watchword of the sea.

[Pg 179] XX

Heard not of others, or misheard
Of many a land for many a year,
The watchword Freedom fails not here
Of hearts that witness if the word
Find faith in England's ear.

XXI

She, first to love the light, and daughter
Incarnate of the northern dawn,
She, round whose feet the wild waves fawn
When all their wrath of warring water
Sounds like a babe's breath drawn,

XXII

How should not she best know, love best,
And best of all souls understand
The very soul of freedom, scanned
Far off, sought out in darkling quest
By men at heart unmanned?

XXIII

They climb and fall, ensnared, enshrouded,
By mists of words and toils they set
To take themselves, till fierce regret
Grows mad with shame, and all their clouded
Red skies hang sunless yet.

[Pg 180] XXIV

But us the sun, not wholly risen
Nor equal now for all, illumines
With more of light than cloud that looms;
Of light that leads forth souls from prison
And breaks the seals of tombs.

XXV

Did not her breasts who reared us rear
Him who took heaven in hand, and weighed
Bright world with world in balance laid?
What Newton's might could make not clear
Hath Darwin's might not made?

XXVI

The forces of the dark dissolve,
The doorways of the dark are broken:
The word that casts out night is spoken,
And whence the springs of things evolve
Light born of night bears token.

XXVII

She, loving light for light's sake only,
And truth for only truth's, and song
For song's sake and the sea's, how long

Hath she not borne the world her lonely
Witness of right and wrong?

[Pg 181] XXVIII

From light to light her eyes imperial
Turn, and require the further light,
More perfect than the sun's in sight,
Till star and sun seem all funereal
Lamps of the vaulted night.

XXIX

She gazes till the strenuous soul
Within the rapture of her eyes
Creates or bids awake, arise,
The light she looks for, pure and whole
And worshipped of the wise.

XXX

Such sons are hers, such radiant hands
Have borne abroad her lamp of old,
Such mouths of honey-dropping gold
Have sent across all seas and lands
Her fame as music rolled.

XXXI

As music made of rolling thunder
That hurls through heaven its heart sublime,
Its heart of joy, in charging chime,
So ring the songs that round and under
Her temple surge and climb.

[Pg 182] XXXII

A temple not by men's hands builded,
But moulded of the spirit, and wrought
Of passion and imperious thought;
With light beyond all sunlight gilded,
Whereby the sun seems nought.

XXXIII

Thy shrine, our mother, seen for fairer
Than even thy natural face, made fair
With kisses of thine April air
Even now, when spring thy banner-bearer
Took up thy sign to bear;

XXXIV

Thine annual sign from heaven's own arch
Given of the sun's hand into thine,
To rear and cheer each wildwood shrine
But now laid waste by wild-winged March,
March, mad with wind like wine.

XXXV

From all thy brightening downs whereon
The windy seaward whin-flower shows
Blossom whose pride strikes pale the rose
Forth is the golden watchword gone
Whereat the world's face glows.

[Pg 183] XXXVI