

# **New Poems**

William Butler Yeats

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# New Poems

## William Butler Yeats

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## The Gyres

THE GYRES! the gyres! Old Rocky Face, look forth;

## New Poems

Things thought too long can be no longer thought,  
For beauty dies of beauty, worth of worth,  
And ancient lineaments are blotted out.  
Irrational streams of blood are staining earth;  
Empedocles has thrown all things about;  
Hector is dead and there's a light in Troy;  
We that look on but laugh in tragic joy.

What matter though numb nightmare ride on top,  
And blood and mire the sensitive body stain?  
What matter? Heave no sigh, let no tear drop,  
A-greater, a more gracious time has gone;  
For painted forms or boxes of make-up  
In ancient tombs I sighed, but not again;  
What matter? Out of cavern comes a voice,  
And all it knows is that one word "Rejoice!"

Conduct and work grow coarse, and coarse the soul,  
What matter? Those that Rocky Face holds dear,  
Lovers of horses and of women, shall,  
From marble of a broken sepulchre,  
Or dark betwixt the polecat and the owl,  
Or any rich, dark nothing disinter  
The workman, noble and saint, and all things run  
On that unfashionable gyre again.

## Lapis Lazuli

(For Harry Clifton)

I HAVE heard that hysterical women say  
They are sick of the palette and fiddle-bow.  
Of poets that are always gay,  
For everybody knows or else should know  
That if nothing drastic is done  
Aeroplane and Zeppelin will come out.  
Pitch like King Billy bomb-balls in  
Until the town lie beaten flat.

All perform their tragic play,  
There struts Hamlet, there is Lear,  
That's Ophelia, that Cordelia;  
Yet they, should the last scene be there,  
The great stage curtain about to drop,

## New Poems

If worthy their prominent part in the play,  
Do not break up their lines to weep.  
They know that Hamlet and Lear are gay;  
Gaiety transfiguring all that dread.  
All men have aimed at, found and lost;  
Black out; Heaven blazing into the head:  
Tragedy wrought to its uttermost.  
Though Hamlet rambles and Lear rages,  
And all the drop-scenes drop at once  
Upon a hundred thousand stages,  
It cannot grow by an inch or an ounce.

On their own feet they came, or On shipboard,'  
Camel-back; horse-back, ass-back, mule-back,  
Old civilisations put to the sword.  
Then they and their wisdom went to rack:  
No handiwork of Callimachus,  
Who handled marble as if it were bronze,  
Made draperies that seemed to rise  
When sea-wind swept the corner, stands;  
His long lamp-chimney shaped like the stem  
Of a slender palm, stood but a day;  
All things fall and are built again,  
And those that build them again are gay.

Two Chinamen, behind them a third,  
Are carved in lapis lazuli,  
Over them flies a long-legged bird,  
A symbol of longevity;  
The third, doubtless a serving-man,  
Carries a musical instrument.

Every discoloration of the stone,  
Every accidental crack or dent,  
Seems a water-course or an avalanche,  
Or lofty slope where it still snows  
Though doubtless plum or cherry-branch  
Sweetens the little half-way house  
Those Chinamen climb towards, and I  
Delight to imagine them seated there;  
There, on the mountain and the sky,  
On all the tragic scene they stare.  
One asks for mournful melodies;  
Accomplished fingers begin to play.  
Their eyes mid many wrinkles, their eyes,  
Their ancient, glittering eyes, are gay.

## Imitated From The Japanese

A MOST astonishing thing –  
Seventy years have I lived;

(Hurrah for the flowers of Spring,  
For Spring is here again.)

Seventy years have I lived  
No ragged beggar–man,  
Seventy years have I lived,  
Seventy years man and boy,  
And never have I danced for joy.

## Sweet Dancer

THE girl goes dancing there  
On the leaf–sown, new–mown, smooth  
Grass plot of the garden;  
Escaped from bitter youth,  
Escaped out of her crowd,  
Or out of her black cloud.  
Ah, dancer, ah, sweet dancer.!

If strange men come from the house  
To lead her away, do not say  
That she is happy being crazy;  
Lead them gently astray;  
Let her finish her dance,  
Let her finish her dance.  
Ah, dancer, ah, sweet dancer.!

## The Three Bushes

## New Poems

An incident from the `Historia mei Temporis'  
of the Abbe Michel de Bourdeille

SAID lady once to lover,  
"None can rely upon  
A love that lacks its proper food;  
And if your love were gone  
How could you sing those songs of love?  
I should be blamed, young man.  
O my dear, O my dear.

Have no lit candles in your room,'  
That lovely lady said,  
"That I at midnight by the clock  
May creep into your bed,  
For if I saw myself creep in  
I think I should drop dead.'  
O my dear, O my dear.

"I love a man in secret,  
Dear chambermaid,' said she.  
"I know that I must drop down dead  
If he stop loving me,  
Yet what could I but drop down dead  
If I lost my chastity?  
O my dear, O my dear.

"So you must lie beside him  
And let him think me there.  
And maybe we are all the same  
Where no candles are,  
And maybe we are all the same  
That stip the body bare.'  
O my dear, O my dear.  
But no dogs barked, and midnights chimed,  
And through the chime she'd say,  
"That was a lucky thought of mine,  
My lover. looked so gay';  
But heaved a sigh if the chambermaid  
Looked half asleep all day.  
O my dear, O my dear.

"No, not another song,' said he,  
"Because my lady came  
A year ago for the first time  
At midnight to my room,  
And I must lie between the sheets  
When the clock begins to chime.'  
O my dear, O my dear.

"A laughing, crying, sacred song,

Imitated From The Japanese

A leching song,' they said.  
Did ever men hear such a song?  
No, but that day they did.  
Did ever man ride such a race?  
No, not until he rode.  
O my dear, O my dear.

But when his horse had put its hoof  
Into a rabbit-hole  
He dropped upon his head and died.  
His lady saw it all  
And dropped and died thereon, for she  
Loved him with her soul.  
O my dear, O my dear.  
The chambermaid lived long, and took  
Their graves into her charge,  
And there two bushes planted  
That when they had grown large  
Seemed sprung from but a single root  
So did their roses merge.  
O my dear, O my dear.

When she was old and dying,  
The priest came where she was;  
She made a full confession.  
Long looked he in her face,  
And O he was a good man  
And understood her case.  
O my dear, O my dear.

He bade them take and bury her  
Beside her lady's man,  
And set a rose-tree on her grave,  
And now none living can,  
When they have plucked a rose there,  
Know where its roots began.  
O my dear, O my dear.

## **The Lady's First Song**

I TURN round  
Like a dumb beast in a show.  
Neither know what I am

Nor where I go,  
My language beaten  
Into one name;  
I am in love  
And that is my shame.  
What hurts the soul  
My soul adores,  
No better than a beast  
Upon all fours.

## **The Lady's Second Song**

WHAT sort of man is coming  
To lie between your feet?  
What matter, we are but women.  
Wash; make your body sweet;  
I have cupboards of dried fragrance.  
I can strew the sheet.  
The Lord have mercy upon us.

He shall love my soul as though  
Body were not at all,  
He shall love your body  
Untroubled by the soul,  
Love cram love's two divisions  
Yet keep his substance whole.  
The Lord have mercy upon us.

Soul must learn a love that is  
proper to my breast,  
Limbs a Love in common  
With every noble beast.  
If soul may look and body touch,  
Which is the more blest?  
The Lord have mercy upon us.

## The Lady's Third Song

WHEN you and my true lover meet  
And he plays tunes between your feet.  
Speak no evil of the soul,  
Nor think that body is the whole,  
For I that am his daylight lady  
Know worse evil of the body;  
But in honour split his love  
Till either neither have enough,  
That I may hear if we should kiss  
A contrapuntal serpent hiss,  
You, should hand explore a thigh,  
All the labouring heavens sigh.

## The Lover's Song

BIRD sighs for the air,  
Thought for I know not where,  
For the womb the seed sighs.  
Now sinks the same rest  
On mind, on nest,  
On straining thighs.

## The Chambermaid's First Song

HOW came this ranger  
Now sunk in rest,  
Stranger with strangcr.  
On my cold breast?  
What's left to Sigh for?  
Strange night has come;  
God's love has hidden him  
Out of all harm,

Pleasure has made him  
Weak as a worm.

## **The Chambermaid's Second Song**

FROM pleasure of the bed,  
Dull as a worm,  
His rod and its butting head  
Limp as a worm,  
His spirit that has fled  
Blind as a worm.

## **An Acre Of Grass**

PICTURE and book remain,  
An acre of green grass  
For air and exercise,  
Now strength of body goes;  
Midnight, an old house  
Where nothing stirs but a mouse.

My temptation is quiet.  
Here at life's end  
Neither loose imagination,  
Nor the mill of the mind  
Consuming its rag and bone,  
Can make the truth known.

Grant me an old man's frenzy,  
Myself must I remake  
Till I am Timon and Lear  
Or that William Blake  
Who beat upon the wall  
Till Truth obeyed his call;

A mind Michael Angelo knew

That can pierce the clouds,  
Or inspired by frenzy  
Shake the dead in their shrouds;  
Forgotten else by mankind,  
An old man's eagle mind.

## What Then?

HIS chosen comrades thought at school  
He must grow a famous man;  
He thought the same and lived by rule,  
All his twenties crammed with toil;  
"What then?" sang Plato's ghost. "What then?"

Everything he wrote was read,  
After certain years he won  
Sufficient money for his need,  
Friends that have been friends indeed;  
"What then?" sang Plato's ghost. "What then?"

All his happier dreams came true –  
A small old house, wife, daughter, son,  
Grounds where plum and cabbage grew,  
poets and Wits about him drew;  
"What then.?" sang Plato's ghost. "What then?"

The work is done,' grown old he thought,  
"According to my boyish plan;  
Let the fools rage, I swerved in naught,  
Something to perfection brought';  
But louder sang that ghost, "What then?"

## Beautiful Lofty Things

BEAUTIFUL lofty things: O'Leary's noble head;  
My father upon the Abbey stage, before him a raging crowd:

What Then?

## New Poems

"This Land of Saints,' and then as the applause died out,  
"Of plaster Saints'; his beautiful mischievous head thrown back.  
Standish O'Grady supporting himself between the tables  
Speaking to a drunken audience high nonsensical words;  
Augusta Gregory seated at her great ormolu table,  
Her eightieth winter approaching: "Yesterday he threatened my life.  
I told him that nightly from six to seven I sat at this table,  
The blinds drawn up'; Maud Gonne at Howth station waiting a train,  
Pallas Athene in that straight back and arrogant head:  
All the Olympians; a thing never known again.

### **A Crazy Girl**

THAT crazed girl improvising her music.  
Her poetry, dancing upon the shore,  
Her soul in division from itself  
Climbing, falling She knew not where,  
Hiding amid the cargo of a steamship,  
Her knee-cap broken, that girl I declare  
A beautiful lofty thing, or a thing  
Heroically lost, heroically found.

No matter what disaster occurred  
She stood in desperate music wound,  
Wound, wound, and she made in her triumph  
Where the bales and the baskets lay  
No common intelligible sound  
But sang, "O sea-starved, hungry sea.'

### **To Dorothy Wellesley**

STRETCH towards the moonless midnight of the trees,  
As though that hand could reach to where they stand,  
And they but famous old upholsteries  
Delightful to the touch; tighten that hand  
As though to draw them closer yet.

Rammed full

Of that most sensuous silence of the night  
(For since the horizon's bought strange dogs are still)  
Climb to your chamber full of books and wait,  
No books upon the knee, and no one there  
But a Great Dane that cannot bay the moon  
And now lies sunk in sleep.

What climbs the stair?

Nothing that common women ponder on  
If you are worrh my hope! Neither Content  
Nor satisfied Conscience, but that great family  
Some ancient famous authors mistepresent,  
The proud Furies each with her torch on high.

## The Curse Of Cromwell

YOU ask what – I have found, and far and wide I go:  
Nothing but Cromwell's house and Cromwell's murderous crew,  
The lovers and the dancers are beaten into the clay,  
And the tall men and the swordsmen and the horsemen, where are they?  
And there is an old beggar wandering in his pride – –  
His fathers served their fathers before Christ was crucified.

O what of that, O what of that,  
What is there left to say?

All neighbourly content and easy talk are gone,  
But there's no good complaining, for money's rant is on.  
He that's mounting up must on his neighbour mount,  
And we and all the Muses are things of no account.  
They have schooling of their own, but I pass their schooling by,  
What can they know that we know that know the time to die?

O what of that, O what of that,  
What is there left to say?

But there's another knowledge that my heart destroys,  
As the fox in the old fable destroyed the Spartan boy's  
Because it proves that things both can and cannot be;  
That the swordsmen and the ladies can still keep company,  
Can pay the poet for a verse and hear the fiddle sound,  
That I am still their setvant though all are underground.

O what of that, O what of that,  
What is there left to say?

I came on a great house in the middle of the night,  
Its open lighted doorway and its windows all alight,  
And all my friends were there and made me welcome too;  
But I woke in an old ruin that the winds howled through;  
And when I pay attention I must out and walk  
Among the dogs and horses that understand my talk.  
    O what of that, O what of that,  
    What is there left to say?

## Roger Casement

(After reading 'The Forged Casement Diaries' by Dr. Maloney)

I SAY that Roger Casement  
Did what he had to do.  
He died upon the gallows,  
But that is nothing new.

Afraid they might be beaten  
Before the bench of Time,  
They turned a trick by forgery  
And blackened his good name.

A perjurer stood ready  
To prove their forgery true;  
They gave it out to all the world,  
And that is something new;

For Spring Rice had to whisper it,  
Being their Ambassador,  
And then the speakers got it  
And writers by the score.

Come Tom and Dick, come all the troop  
That cried it far and wide,  
Come from the forger and his desk,  
Desert the perjurer's side;

Come speak your bit in public

That some amends be made  
To this most gallant gentleman  
That is in quicklime laid.

## The Ghost Of Roger Casement

O WHAT has made that sudden noise?  
What on the threshold stands?  
It never crossed the sea because  
John Bull and the sea are friends;  
But this is not the old sea  
Nor this the old seashore.  
What gave that roar of mockery,  
That roar in the sea's roar?

The ghost of Roger Casement  
Is beating on the door.

John Bull has stood for Parliament,  
A dog must have his day,  
The country thinks no end of him,  
For he knows how to say,  
At a beanfeast or a banquet,  
That all must hang their trust  
Upon the British Empire,  
Upon the Church of Christ.

The ghost of Roger Casement  
Is beating on the door.

John Bull has gone to India  
And all must pay him heed,  
For histories are there to prove  
That none of another breed  
Has had a like inheritance,  
Or sucked such milk as he,  
And there's no luck about a house  
If it lack honesty.

The ghost of Roger Casement  
Is beating on the door.

I poked about a village church  
And found his family tomb  
And copied out what I could read  
In that religious gloom;  
Found many a famous man there;  
But fame and virtue rot.  
Draw round, beloved and bitter men,  
Draw round and raise a shout;

The ghost of Roger Casement  
Is beating on the door.

## The O'Rahilly

SING of the O'Rahilly,  
Do not deny his right;  
Sing a "the' before his name;  
Allow that he, despite  
All those learned historians,  
Established it for good;  
He wrote out that word himself,  
He christened himself with blood.  
How goes the weather?

Sing of the O'Rahilly  
That had such little sense  
He told Pearse and Connolly  
He'd gone to great expense  
Keeping all the Kerry men  
Out of that crazy fight;  
That he might be there himself  
Had travelled half the night.  
How goes the weather?

"Am I such a craven that  
I should not get the word  
But for what some travelling man  
Had heard I had not heard?"  
Then on Pearse and Connolly  
He fixed a bitter look:

"Because I helped to wind the clock  
I come to hear it strike.'  
How goes the weather?

What remains to sing about  
But of the death he met  
Stretched under a doorway  
Somewhere off Henry Street;  
They that found him found upon  
The door above his head  
"Here died the O'Rahilly.  
R.I.P.' writ in blood.  
How goes the weather.?

## **Come Gather Round Me, Parnellites**

COME gather round me, Parnellites,  
And praise our chosen man;  
Stand upright on your legs awhile,  
Stand upright while you can,  
For soon we lie where he is laid,  
And he is underground;  
Come fill up all those glasses  
And pass the bottle round.

And here's a cogent reason,  
And I have many more,  
He fought the might of England  
And saved the Irish poor,  
Whatever good a farmer's got  
He brought it all to pass;  
And here's another reason,  
That Parnell loved a lass.

And here's a final reason,  
He was of such a kind  
Every man that sings a song  
Keeps Parnell in his mind.  
For Parnell was a proud man,  
No prouder trod the ground,  
And a proud man's a lovely man,

So pass the bottle round.

The Bishops and the party  
That tragic story made,  
A husband that had sold his wife  
And after that betrayed;  
But stories that live longest  
Are sung above the glass,  
And Parnell loved his country  
And Parnell loved his lass.

## The Wild Old Wicked Man

BECAUSE I am mad about women  
I am mad about the hills,'  
Said that wild old wicked man  
Who travels where God wills.  
"Not to die on the straw at home.  
Those hands to close these eyes,  
That is all I ask, my dear,  
From the old man in the skies.  
Daybreak and a candle—end.

"Kind are all your words, my dear,  
Do not the rest withhold.  
Who can know the year, my dear,  
when an old man's blood grows cold?'  
I have what no young man can have  
Because he loves too much.  
Words I have that can pierce the heart,  
But what can he do but touch?'  
Daybreak and a candle—end.

Then Said she to that wild old man,  
His stout stick under his hand,  
"Love to give or to withhold  
Is not at my command.  
I gave it all to an older man:  
That old man in the skies.  
Hands that are busy with His beads  
Can never close those eyes.'

## New Poems

Daybreak and a candle–end.

"Go your ways, O go your ways,  
I choose another mark,  
Girls down on the seashore  
Who understand the dark;  
Bawdy talk for the fishermen;  
A dance for the fisher–lads;  
When dark hangs upon the water  
They turn down their beds.  
Daybreak and a candle–end.

"A young man in the dark am I,  
But a wild old man in the light,  
That can make a cat laugh, or  
Can touch by mother wit  
Things hid in their marrow–bones  
From time long passed away,  
Hid from all those warty lads  
That by their bodies lay.  
Daybreak and a candle–end.

"All men live in suffering,  
I know as few can know,  
Whether they take the upper road  
Or stay content on the low,  
Rower bent in his row–boat  
Or weaver bent at his loom,  
Horseman erect upon horseback  
Or child hid in the womb.  
Daybreak and a candle–end.

"That some stream of lightning  
From the old man in the skies  
Can burn out that suffering  
No right–taught man denies.  
But a coarse old man am I,  
I choose the second–best,  
I forget it all awhile  
Upon a woman's breast.'  
Daybreak and a candle–end.

## The Great Day

HURRAH for revolution and more cannon–shot!  
A beggar upon horseback lashes a beggar on foot.  
Hurrah for revolution and cannon come again!  
The beggars have changed places, but the lash goes on.

## Parnell

PARNELL came down the road, he said to a cheering man:  
"Ireland shall get her freedom and you still break stone.

## What Was Lost

I SING what was lost and dread what was won,  
I walk in a battle fought over again,  
My king a lost king, and lost soldiers my men;  
Feet to the Rising and Setting may run,  
They always beat on the same small stone.

## The Spur

YOU think it horrible that lust and rage

Should dance attention upon my old age;  
They were not such a plague when I was young;  
What else have I to spur me into song?

## **A Drunken Man's Praise of Sobriety**

COME swish around, my pretty punk,  
And keep me dancing still  
That I may stay a sober man  
Although I drink my fill.

Sobriety is a jewel  
That I do much adore;  
And therefore keep me dancing  
Though drunkards lie and snore.  
O mind your feet, O mind your feet,  
Keep dancing like a wave,  
And under every dancer  
A dead man in his grave.  
No ups and downs, my pretty,  
A mermaid, not a punk;  
A drunkard is a dead man,  
And all dead men are drunk.

## **The Pilgrim**

I FASTED for some forty days on bread and buttermilk,  
For passing round the bottle with girls in rags or silk,  
In country shawl or Paris cloak, had put my wits astray,  
And what's the good of women, for all that they can say  
Is fol de rol de rolly O.

## New Poems

Round Lough Derg's holy island I went upon the stones,  
I prayed at all the Stations upon my matrow-bones,  
And there I found an old man, and though, I prayed all day  
And that old man beside me, nothing would he say  
But fol de rol de rolly O.

All know that all the dead in the world about that place are stuck,  
And that should mother seek her son she'd have but little luck  
Because the fires of purgatory have ate their shapes away;  
I swear to God I questioned them, and all they had to say  
Was fol de rol de rolly O.

A great black ragged bird appeared when I was in the boat;  
Some twenty feet from tip to tip had it stretched rightly out,  
With flopping and with flapping it made a great display,  
But I never stopped to question, what could the boatman say  
But fol de rol de rolly O.

Now I am in the public-house and lean upon the wall,  
So come in rags or come in silk, in cloak or country shawl,  
And come with learned lovers or with what men you may,  
For I can put the whole lot down, and all I have to say  
Is fol de rol de rolly O.

## Colonel Martin

I

THE Colonel went out sailing,  
He spoke with Turk and Jew,  
With Christian and with Infidel,  
For all tongues he knew.  
"O what's a wifeless man?" said he,  
And he came sailing home.  
He rose the latch and went upstairs  
And found an empty room.  
The Colonel went out sailing.

II

"I kept her much in the country

## New Poems

And she was much alone,  
And though she may be there,' he said,  
"She may be in the town.  
She may be all alone there,  
For who can say?' he said.  
"I think that I shall find her  
In a young man's bed.'  
The Colonel went out sailing.

### III

The Colonel met a pedlar,  
Agreed their clothes to swop,  
And bought the grandest jewelry  
In a Galway shop,  
Instead of thread and needle  
put jewelry in the pack,  
Bound a thong about his hand,  
Hitched it on his back.  
The Colonel went out sailing.

### IV

The Colonel knocked on the rich man's door,  
"I am sorry,' said the maid,  
"My mistress cannot see these things,  
But she is still abed,  
And never have I looked upon  
Jewelry so grand.'  
"Take all to your mistress,'  
And he laid them on her hand.  
The Colonel went out sailing.

### V

And he went in and she went on  
And both climbed up the stair,  
And O he was a clever man,  
For he his slippers wore.  
And when they came to the top stair  
He ran on ahead,  
His wife he found and the rich man  
In the comfort of a bed.  
The Colonel went out sailing.

### VI

## New Poems

The Judge at the Assize Court,  
When he heard that story told,  
Awarded him for damages  
Three kegs of gold.  
The Colonel said to Tom his man,  
"Harness an ass and cart,  
Carry the gold about the town,  
Throw it in every patt.'  
The Colonel went out sailing.

### VII

And there at all street–corners  
A man with a pistol stood,  
And the rich man had paid them well  
To shoot the Colonel dead;  
But they threw down their pistols  
And all men heard them swear  
That they could never shoot a man  
Did all that for the poor.  
The Colonel went out sailing.

### VIII

"And did you keep no gold, Tom?  
You had three kegs,' said he.  
"I never thought of that, Sir.'  
"Then want before you die.'  
And want he did; for my own grand–dad  
Saw the story's end,  
And Tom make out a living  
From the seaweed on the strand.  
The Colonel went out sailing.

## A Model For The Laureate

ON thrones from China to Peru  
All sorts of kings have sat  
That men and women of all sorts  
proclaimed both good and great;  
And what's the odds if such as these  
For reason of the State

Should keep their lovers waiting,  
Keep their lovers waiting?

Some boast of beggar-kings and kings  
Of rascals black and white  
That rule because a strong right arm  
Puts all men in a fright,  
And drunk or sober live at ease  
Where none gainsay their right,  
And keep their lovers waiting,  
Keep their lovers waiting.

The Muse is mute when public men  
Applaud a modern throne:  
Those cheers that can be bought or sold,  
That office fools have run,  
That waxen seal, that signature.  
For things like these what decent man  
Would keep his lover waiting,  
Keep his lover waiting?

## The Old Stone Cross

A STATESMAN is an easy man,  
He tells his lies by rote;  
A journalist makes up his lies  
And takes you by the throat;  
So stay at home' and drink your beer  
And let the neighbours' vote,  
Said the man in the golden breastplate  
Under the old stone Cross.

Because this age and the next age  
Engender in the ditch,  
No man can know a happy man  
From any passing wretch;  
If Folly link with Elegance  
No man knows which is which,  
Said the man in the golden breastplate  
Under the old stone Cross.

But actors lacking music

Do most excite my spleen,  
They say it is more human  
To shuffle, grunt and groan,  
Not knowing what unearthly stuff  
Rounds a mighty scene,  
Said the man in the golden breastplate  
Under the old stone Cross.

## **The Spirit Medium**

POETRY, music, I have loved, and yet  
Because of those new dead  
That come into my soul and escape  
Confusion of the bed,  
Or those begotten or unbegotten  
Perning in a band,  
"I bend my body to the spade  
Or grope with a dirty hand."  
Or those begotten or unbegotten,  
For I would not recall  
Some that being unbegotten  
Are not individual,  
But copy some one action,  
Moulding it of dust or sand,  
(I bend my body to the spade  
Or grope with a dirty hand.)  
An old ghost's thoughts are lightning,  
To follow is to die;  
Poetry and music I have banished,  
But the stupidity  
Of root, shoot, blossom or clay  
Makes no demand.  
(I bend my body to the spade  
Or grope with a dirty hand.)

## **Those Images**

WHAT if I bade you leave  
The cavern of the mind?  
There's better exercise  
In the sunlight and wind.

I never bade you go  
To Moscow or to Rome.  
Renounce that drudgery,  
Call the Muses home.

Seek those images  
That constitute the wild,  
The lion and the virgin,  
The harlot and the child.

Find in middle air  
An eagle on the wing,  
Recognise the five  
That make the Muses sing.

## The Municipal Gallery Revisited

I

AROUND me the images of thirty years:  
An ambush; pilgrims at the water-side;  
Casement upon trial, half hidden by the bars,  
Guarded; Griffith staring in hysterical pride;  
Kevin O'Higgins' countenance that wears  
A gentle questioning look that cannot hide  
A soul incapable of remorse or rest;  
A revolutionary soldier kneeling to be blessed;

II

An Abbot or Archbishop with an upraised hand  
Blessing the Tricolour. "This is not,' I say,  
"The dead Ireland of my youth, but an Ireland  
The poets have imagined, terrible and gay.'  
Before a woman's portrait suddenly I stand,  
Beautiful and gentle in her Venetian way.

## New Poems

I met her all but fifty years ago  
For twenty minutes in some studio.

### III

Heart-smitten with emotion I Sink down,  
My heart recovering with covered eyes;  
Wherever I had looked I had looked upon  
My permanent or impermanent images:  
Augusta Gregory's son; her sister's son,  
Hugh Lane, "onlie begetter' of all these;  
Hazel Lavery living and dying, that tale  
As though some ballad-singer had sung it all;

### IV

Mancini's portrait of Augusta Gregory,  
"Greatest since Rembrandt,' according to John Synge;  
A great ebullient portrait certainly;  
But where is the brush that could show anything  
Of all that pride and that humility?  
And I am in despair that time may bring  
Approved patterns of women or of men  
But not that selfsame excellence again.

### V

My mediaeval knees lack health until they bend,  
But in that woman, in that household where  
Honour had lived so long, all lacking found.  
Childless I thought, "My children may find here  
Deep-rooted things,' but never foresaw its end,  
And now that end has come I have not wept;  
No fox can foul the lair the badger swept –

### VI

(An image out of Spenser and the common tongue).  
John Synge, I and Augusta Gregory, thought  
All that we did, all that we said or sang  
Must come from contact with the soil, from that  
Contact everything Antaeus-like grew strong.  
We three alone in modern times had brought  
Everything down to that sole test again,  
Dream of the noble and the beggar-man.

VII

And here's John Synge himself, that rooted man,  
"Forgetting human words,' a grave deep face.  
You that would judge me, do not judge alone  
This book or that, come to this hallowed place  
Where my friends' portraits hang and look thereon;  
Ireland's history in their lineaments trace;  
Think where man's glory most begins and ends,  
And say my glory was I had such friends.

## Are You Content?

I CALL on those that call me son,  
Grandson, or great-grandson,  
On uncles, aunts, great-uncles or great-aunts,  
To judge what I have done.  
Have I, that put it into words,  
Spoilt what old loins have sent?  
Eyes spiritualised by death can judge,  
I cannot, but I am not content.

He that in Sligo at Drumcliff  
Set up the old stone Cross,  
That red-headed rector in County Down,  
A good man on a horse,  
Sandymount Corbets, that notable man  
Old William pollexfen,  
The smuggler Middleton, Butlers far back,  
Half legendary men.

Infirm and aged I might stay  
In some good company,  
I who have always hated work,  
Smiling at the sea,  
Or demonstrate in my own life  
What Robert Browning meant  
By an old hunter talking with Gods;  
But I am not content.

New Year Poems – New Year is here, are you searching for Christmas poems ? Visit this page and find some beautiful New Year Poems by various famous poets. What can be said in New Year rhymes by Ella Wheeler Wilcox What can be said in New Year rhymes, That’s not been said a thousand times? The new years come, the old years go, We know we dream, we dream we know. We rise up laughing with the light, We lie down weeping with the night. We hug the world until it stings, We curse it then and sigh for wings. New Poems (German: Neue Gedichte) is a two-part collection of poems written by Bohemian-Austrian poet and novelist Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926). The first volume, dedicated to Elisabeth and Karl von der Heydt was composed from 1902 to 1907 and was published in the same year by Insel Verlag in Leipzig. The second volume (New Poems: The Other Part), dedicated to Auguste Rodin, was completed in 1908 and published by the same publisher. With the exception of eight poems written in Capri, Rilke composed New years poems - High quality New Year poetry, in rhyme and free verse, for greeting cards, toasts. A Christian poem and prayer and a New Year song. New Years Poems. Free New Years poems, poetry, New Year toasts, New Years Eve poems, New Years resolution verses, a Christian New Year poem, a New Year prayer and a New Year song. Happy New Year Wish. My Happy New Year wish for you Is for your best year yet, A year where life is peaceful, And what you want, you get.