Arthur W. Ryder

ORIGINAL POEMS

TOGETHER WITH

TRANSLATIONS

FROM THE

SANSKRIT

BY ARTHUR WILLIAM RYDER

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TO ARTHUR WILLIAM RYDER

The evening star for us was wont to bring
A quiet hour of talk, philosophy
Sometimes our theme, now man, the mystery
Of dust upcaught upon the viewless wing

Of spirit—wondrous union whence could spring
A being capable of sympathy,
Of joy, and of a poet's ecstasy
At finding beauty in some common thing.

Life's consummation, not by chance attained,
Comes only through our planning. Thou an aim
Didst set before thee, goals that had to wait
The slow arbitrament of toil. My friend,
Although the world should grudge thee its acclaim,
Thou art for me, and ever shalt be, great.

LEON J. RICHARDSON

Editorial Note

THE PRESENT BOOK contains (1) original poems (and one prose essay) published by Professor Ryder many years ago, mainly in the *University of California Chronicle;* (2) a few translations from the Sanskrit, and one from the French, which also appeared for the most part in the *University of California Chronicle;* (3) some translations from the Sanskrit, hitherto unpublished; (4) reprints of *Women's Eyes* and *Relatives,* two small volumes of "verses translated from the Sanskrit" that are now out of print and difficult to obtain. "Pot-ear's Awakening," one of the translations in the latter volume, has been expanded by the addition of verses found among Professor Ryder's papers.

For permission to reprint *Relatives* the University of California Press is indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Harry Robertson, the owner of the copyright on the volume. For similar permission to reprint Professor Ryder's sonnet on Kalidasa it is indebted to Messrs. E. P. Dutton and Company, the American publishers of Everyman's Library, in which Professor Ryder's volume of translations from Kalidasa is included. The title of the present book does not provide for the prose tribute to Professor Lanman ("Laboremus") and the verse translation from Leclerc; it seemed pedantic to draw up a long-winded title that would include them.

The account of Professor Ryder's life and work is by myself, but it is based to a large extent on conversations with his friends and students; I should like to acknowledge the special kindness of Dr. A. E. Hutson, Miss Dorothy Elise Madison, Dr. Rajko H. Ružić, and Mr. William A. P. White. Professor Walter E. Clark of Harvard University, also one of Professor Ryder's pupils, has written me a letter on his work, from which I have quoted passages, usually with no indication of the source. But I am particularly indebted to a glowing appreciation of Professor

Ryder's character and achievement that was written for me by his devoted pupil, Professor Harold Cherniss of Johns Hopkins University, and later privately printed by him. Parts of this I have inserted with quotation marks; other passages, in some of which I have slightly modified his wording, I have with his permission utilized without indication of the source. Professor Cherniss, and also Professor I. M. Linforth of the University of California, have been kind enough to read my work and they have made most valuable suggestions for the correction and improvement of it. Professor Leon J. Richardson, the friend to whom Ryder dedicated his volume, *Relatives*, has courteously permitted the use of his sonnet to Ryder as a dedication to the present book.

Professor Ryder occasionally varied in his transliteration of Sanskrit words, using for example both *Hitopadesha* and *Hitopadeça*. I have normalized his usage, employing such forms as *Hitopadesha* in order to avoid the use of diacritic marks.

Professor Ryder spoke to Professor Cherniss of his desire at some time to publish a collection of his own work; whether he had abandoned that intention before his death I do not know. To another pupil he protested vigorously against the custom of giving to the world compositions that the author had not intended for print. Under such circumstances it seemed safe to be guided by the wishes of his sister, Miss Winifred Ryder, with whose coöperation this volume has been compiled. Such of his unpublished work as she did not wish printed has not been included.

G. R. NOYES

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Arthur William Ryder

ARTHUR WILLIAM RYDER was born March 8, 1877, at Oberlin, Ohio. He was the son of William Henry Ryder, a Congregational clergyman, then Professor of the Greek Language and Literature at Oberlin College, later (1888–1908) Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Andover Theological Seminary (Massachusetts), still later (1908–18) Andover Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Harvard University. He thus grew up in an atmosphere of classical scholarship. He graduated from Phillips Academy (Andover) in 1894 and from Harvard College in 1897. In his college course his main interests were Greek and Latin literature, but in his last year he began the study of Sanskrit under Professor C. R. Lanman. During these early years, aside from his formal studies, he read extensively in Greek and Latin authors. In 1897–98 he taught Latin at Phillips Academy. In 1898–1901 he studied in Germany, one semester at the University of Berlin and three semesters at the University of Leipzig. Among his teachers were Professors Brugmann, Geldner, Pischel, and Windisch. He continued to work in Greek and Latin and began Old Persian, his minor subject for the doctorate. His chief study, however, was in Sanskrit; he received his doctor's degree from the University of Leipzig in 1901, his dissertation being on *Die Ṛbhu's im Ṛgveda*.

Returning to America in 1901, Ryder taught at Harvard University: during 1901–2 as Assistant in Sanskrit, from 1902 to December, 1905, as Instructor in Sanskrit. In his years at Harvard he assisted Professor Lanman in his work as editor of the Harvard Oriental Series. In January, 1906, he came to the University of California (Berkeley, California), as Instructor in Sanskrit; in 1908 he became an assistant professor, in 1919 an associate professor, and in 1925 a professor. At the time of the war he wished

to enter the United States service and he took lessons in French conversation preparatory to life in France. But, owing to high blood pressure, he could not obtain a government position of any sort. On March 21, 1938, he was seized by a heart attack while teaching, and died while being taken to the hospital.

Ryder was not in the conventional implications of the terms either a scholar, a man of letters, or even (except by title) a professor; he was a reader, a man of literature, and a teacher. He was a man of genius, but his genius was not of the academic type.

Ryder went to Germany, partly at least, to study comparative philology. But during a semester's work with Brugmann he discovered—or thought he discovered—that Brugmann, the acknowledged master of linguistic science, "could speak only one language and could understand none." Hence he acquired a profound contempt for comparative philology; he quoted with approval a remark by Pischel, a teacher for whom he had deep respect, that the subject was "the greatest fake of the nineteenth century." (Yet chance comments in his classes would show that he remembered more of the subject than he might have cared to admit.) Henceforth for Ryder grammar was merely a tool to be used, not something to be studied for its own sake. "In the formal structure of a complicated grammar," Professor Cherniss writes of him, "he took the same delight as does the mathematician in an elegant demonstration, and he could expound the whole of Sanskrit grammar with such intimate knowledge and loving understanding that it seemed to be a cosmic fugue constructed by a demiurgic organist; but he did not believe that such knowledge even supported by an exhaustive knowledge of 'vocabulary' and 'etymology' constituted knowledge of a language, for a language, he knew, is not analyzable into words and grammatical forms but consists of phrases, idioms, nuances of thought.* It was the language as it came alive from the author

* "Suppose I plan a long walk, and find a pebble in my shoe. Its removal is a necessary condition of success in my plan, yet of itself does not further that plan; hinders it indeed, if I imagine this action to be of itself meritorious, and become attached thereto. The same reasoning applies to the acquisition of the grammar of a language by one whose object is the enjoyment of poetry written in that language."—Introduction to the *Bhagavad-gita*, p. x.

that he desired to know. 'Not what this word *should* mean according to the philologists but what the author intended it to mean in this particular place,' this was his principle. It is measured by this standard that one must understand his serious statement that he knew only one language well, his native English. That he was a master of English his writings amply prove; that he came miraculously near to realizing the same standard in Sanskrit, however, is obvious to anyone who is capable of comparing his translations with their originals. His determination to approximate this standard in any language that he studied was the reason for his early decision to curtail the number of languages to which he would devote his energies. He soon abandoned all but Sanskrit, Latin, French, and German. Only the abandonment of Greek, he said, remained a matter of sorrow to him. What he called his 'abandonment of Greek,' however, would have been considered by most philologists the continuation of a lively interest and understanding; he would in the course of conversation recite whole choruses of Sophocles and long passages from Homer and discuss with penetrating intelligence both Greek literature and Greek philosophy. Yet he felt that it would be quixotic for him to attempt to master both Greek and Sanskrit; he had made his choice and he abode by it. His regret was due to his belief that in Greek was written one of the world's three truly great literatures, the other two being in Sanskrit and in English."

For all technical scholarship of the usual academic type Ryder soon came to cherish the same aversion (that is, as far as laboring on it himself was concerned) as for comparative philology. Of his doctoral dissertation, on a subject in Vedic mythology, he spoke with no great pride. His later contributions were two very brief articles in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* for 1902: one (two pages) on a *hapax legomenon* in the Veda, the other (five pages) on a modern Hindu commentary on the *Shakuntala* of Kalidasa; and a longer article (37 pages) in the same journal for 1906, containing notes on *The Little Clay Cart*.

The failure of well-read and reputedly brilliant university men to fulfill the promise of their youth in productive scholarship is

usually due to mere intellectual laziness or to a lack of any synthetic ability; they merely soak up information and perhaps use it in their class teaching, but do not organize it. They illustrate Milton's lines:

> Who reads
> Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
> A spirit and judgment equal or superior, . . .
> Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
> Deep-versed in books and shallow in himself.

This was by no means true of Ryder. He was emphatically not lazy; though deep-versed in books he was not shallow in himself, and he probably did not lack constructive capacity. But he thought that he could do better and more useful work in other ways than in technical scholarship. In an unpublished "lay sermon" he writes: "We know how in the universities the fetish of scholarship is held before the eyes of young men, and is used to pervert and crush all disinterested love for intellectual things." In the introduction to his translation of *The Ten Princes* he says (p. x): "Let us pay homage to the unknown artist of chapters i–v, who was zealous for art, not for self-exploitation; who stands a silent rebuke—needed, if unheeded—of any age greedy for scholarship and other stultifying self-advertisement." And again (*ibid.*): "Dismal studies in influences and sources may be securely left in the hands of those who have no love for literature, since the result is always the same. A great author uses what fits his purpose, and in using it, so transforms it as to make it his own." In his translations Ryder never used footnotes; the text, he thought, should speak for itself, without commentary. Yet Ryder could respect sound and honest work of a sort that he himself would never undertake. A proof of this is his brief article "Laboremus" (reprinted in the present volume), a noble tribute to Professor Lanman, a man who in temperament and in ideals of accomplishment was utterly different from Ryder himself.

Professor Cherniss cites Ryder's own explanation of his refraining from scholarly publication:

"He had been reading Sanskrit drama and had noticed a peculiarity of technique which he one day mentioned in conversation with an older Sanskritist. This scholar urged him to write a paper on the subject; and he, deferring to his older colleague, went home with the intention of following this advice. Upon sitting down to write, however, it occurred to him that for anyone who did not read the texts themselves the essay could have neither meaning nor legitimate interest, while anyone who did read the dramas must either observe the point himself or else be so obtuse that he could not profit by having it pointed out to him. From that time forth Ryder never published any 'scholarly research.'"

This reasoning most men will find fallacious, merely whimsical, not worth attention. A man who has not read *Beowulf* may have a legitimate interest in an account of its position in English literature and of the alliterative technique of its verse. And scholarship is a coöperative business. Even the most brilliant student may fail to observe all the peculiarities of a text that he is studying and may profit by the aid of others. The discovery of the composite authorship of the Pentateuch, for example, was the work of a whole series of scholars. But for Ryder the reasoning was characteristically satisfactory.

On the other hand, reading was for Ryder a controlling passion. Almost deaf to music, he was sensitive to all shades of expression in prose and poetry. Through his careful reading of English authors he became himself a master of English style.

But even in his native English Ryder's reading had curious gaps. He loved Shakespeare but apparently cared nothing for the other Elizabethan dramatists; neither did he care for English ballad literature. He was no more an omnivorous reader than an omnivorous student of languages. He followed his own inclinations, reading over and over again his favorite books; Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* he read six times. Nevertheless his taste was more catholic than, say, that of Matthew Arnold. He admired the high seriousness of Milton; he was equally devoted to W. S. Gilbert and Edward Lear. (Once, probably whimsically, he told a student that Walt Mason was the best American poet; his serious opinion gave that rank to Emerson.) Wit and humor were part of his nature as much as moral earnestness.

According to Ryder, literature should be read intelligently and thoughtfully, for its own sake, for instruction or amusement, or for both. Information about the lives of authors was in his eyes superfluous. "Dandin" [the author of *The Ten Princes*], he wrote, "has been as successful as Homer—more successful than Shakespeare—in baffling the impertinences of the 'Who's Who' brand of scholarship. And while a few more details might prove piquant, it is better to know too little than too much. In the case of truly great writers, both understanding and enjoyment are commonly enhanced when we have their works and have lost their lives." Hence most teaching of English literature in school and college was abhorrent to him: the language was that of the reader and the reader must make himself one with the author. Apparently he expected the average boy or girl to be of the same temperament as himself. He enjoyed biography for its own sake, in fact Boswell's *Johnson* was one of his best-loved books; but he objected to gossip on domestic details as a substitute for the sympathetic understanding of literature.

During his residence in Germany Ryder acquired a fine command of German; he could write the language well, with more than mere grammatical correctness. But for German literature, aside from Heine, Lenau, the romantic poets, and Schopenhauer, he cared little. He concurred in a colleague's verdict that Goethe was "a local celebrity"; the fact that Goethe should be regarded as the greatest German poet he deemed a definite proof of the poverty of the literature. Yet in his volume of translations from Kalidasa (p. xvii) he refers to Goethe as being in 1789, when Sir William Jones translated the *Shakuntala*, "the greatest living poet of Europe."

For French poetry, aside from Villon, Racine, and Molière, Ryder cared little, but French prose he thought the most consistently great of any in the world. Montaigne, Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, and Anatole France were ever in his hands or on his lips. Molière, however, he believed to be the greatest glory of France.

Among the Latins Ryder's favorites were Virgil, Lucretius, Horace, and Caesar, whom he regarded as the greatest writer of

prose in the language. These, with Catullus and Tacitus, he read and reread, and none of the other Latin writers did he believe really significant.

Though Ryder could read Italian, he apparently was little acquainted with Italian literature. Of Spanish literature he was ignorant. Of the Russian writers he read Tolstoi, whom, judging from his poem on him, he respected even more as a personality than as a novelist. Yet in his later years, when he himself had grown intensely conservative, he came to dislike the Russian genius because of his socialistic and anarchistic teachings.

The Sanskrit language Ryder valued solely as the vehicle of a great literature, a literature in his eyes of more worth than that of Greece. In it his tastes were as individual as they were in English literature. Despite his early study of the Vedas he cared less for them than for classical Sanskrit literature. Though his erudition in Hindu mythology was vast, he was not interested in its anthropological or historical aspects, only in its function in literature, in what the great poets had made of it. His attitude towards *Realien*, details of domestic and public life, was the same: a knowledge of them seemed to him interesting and valuable only as it aids one to understand the literary texts. The Rig-Veda, however, he never ceased to read, not merely because he felt that it is the stuff of which all Indian literature is made, but as a collection of great poems. Sanskrit drama and the "fable literature" he read exhaustively and repeatedly; but all this he took seriously even as he did Indian philosophy, not as a collection of primitive *curiosa* but as the work of real artists to whom he was not ashamed to go to school. When he read the *Mahabharata* or the *Ramayana* he read it from first to last; and that he *read* them thus not once but several times will furnish some notion of the way in which he read Sanskrit. He said to a student that if he were confined for life to a single book he should certainly choose the *Mahabharata*. He read for his own instruction and amusement, not merely as an aid to teaching or publication. He roundly condemned an eminent Sanskritist because he "never read any Sanskrit for fun." He would have scorned the attitude of a famous Spanish scholar who said: "I do not read ballads,

I study them." He was equally devoted to the high seriousness of the *Bhagavad-gita* and to the elegantly picaresque narrative of Dandin's *Ten Princes*.

Through and through a man of literature, Ryder was not to any great degree a man of letters. (Here he is in sharp contrast to Paul Elmer More, a man of similar training to his own and like him in many peculiarities of temperament.) The few original poems contained in this volume—all of them fine in their own way, and all of them self-revelatory—and the short introductions to his volumes of translation constitute his only claim to that title. Criticism in general he despised, though he could not resist indulging in bits of it in his introductions and though his conversation was full of it. In the introduction to his volume of translations from Kalidasa, after quoting a paragraph from Lévi's *Théâtre Indien*, he writes:

"It is hardly possible to say anything true about Kalidasa's achievement which is not already contained in this appreciation. Yet one loves to expand the praise, even though realizing that the critic is by his very nature a fool. Here there shall at any rate be none of that cold-blooded criticism which imagines itself set above a world-author to appraise and judge, but a generous tribute of affectionate admiration."

Ryder was passionately devoted to the Indian systems of philosophy, not as a subject for scholarly investigation, but as a guide of life. Western philosophy was for him "frivolous" because it does not discuss salvation. Of Aristotle he said: "He seems to me a man of great learning and industry, often acute, but rarely right as to what is really important. It is an open question whether his labors have done good or harm." On the other hand, he regarded the Sankhya system as "a nearer approximation to the truth concerning the soul's relation to the physical universe than [is] any Occidental philosophy." Yet, aside from the brief introduction to his translation of the *Bhagavad-gita* from which this quotation is taken, he wrote nothing on the Hindu philosophies. Perhaps he felt that his energies were better spent on translation; and, when he had ceased to translate, he had probably lost any impulse for constructive work.

History Ryder regarded as a pleasant and instructive subject for study and reflection but not a matter of equal importance with great literature, for he agreed fervently with Aristotle that poetry is more philosophical and more serious than history. For him history was an art, not a science. He knew best the history of Greece, Rome, the French Revolution, and (by "fortuity of birth," as he explained) the United States. He was specially interested in the period of the Civil War. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* remained for him the greatest work on Roman history. The notes added to it by later scholars he termed impertinences that merely demonstrated the greatness of Gibbon and the inability of his commentators to understand him. This is the point of view of a bright twelve-year-old lad poring over his Christmas Plutarch. Nothing could better illustrate Ryder's almost exclusive interest in literature and his dislike of scholarly disquisitions about it. It would seem that any truth-loving man with enough interest in history to read Gibbon from cover to cover would wish to know how far the statements and views of an eighteenth-century Englishman have been corrected by sources of information discovered since his time.

Ryder loathed the formal features of academic life; he detested the machinery of courses and grades, examinations and degrees. One of the bitterest gibes in his "Tolstoi" is:

> They of the Inquisition prayed
> To him of Galilee!
> The Renaissance of learning made
> A University!

His own examinations in his language courses were perfunctory; he appraised his students by his personal knowledge of them. Only one student ever received under his supervision a higher degree in Sanskrit, and that was only a master's degree. The student wanted the degree and had the requisite preparation for it. The Dean of the Graduate Division sent to Ryder the formal papers that must be filled out and Ryder tossed them in his wastebasket. The unfortunate student appealed for help to the Dean, who instructed him to capture Ryder and bring him to his office.

The student, finding Ryder in a mellow mood, did so. So after weeks of delay the proper documents were made out and filed. Ryder now loosened up; he conducted a formal examination and the student received his coveted degree. It is fair to state, however, that at least once Ryder encouraged a brilliant student to proceed to the doctorate in Sanskrit. But the student's main interest was in Greek, so that he offered Sanskrit only as a minor for the degree.

Nevertheless Ryder took part in the administration of the University, doing loyal service on the committees to which he was assigned—service of more value than that of the majority of his colleagues. The Dean of the Graduate Division testifies that there has been no better chairman than Ryder of the important Committee on Fellowships and Graduate Scholarships.

Ryder was a teacher of the most genuine worth; he hoped to be remembered primarily as a teacher. In his first-year class the students had to learn Sanskrit grammar, though Ryder did not drill it into them. They had to work. If they did not work, Ryder did not order them to leave the class; they just left, awed by the personality of the man. Ryder led his students; he did not drive them. Professor Clark remarks that he had "a gift for encouraging students to think that they could do things for themselves." After the first year the classes usually met, if no women were enrolled in them, in Ryder's room. Ryder would assign a lesson that he thought adequate, cover it in half an hour, and then chat for the rest of the time—or beyond the time—on topics suggested by the text or on topics not suggested by it: on literature, the general conduct of life, or the ways of the world. For students who seemed to have a genuine interest in Sanskrit literature and to be worth while in themselves Ryder would do anything. He enjoyed reading Sanskrit privately with students or ex-students more than he did the conduct of formal classes. He would listen respectfully to the opinions of the lowliest student, and he never tried to force his way of thinking upon anyone; for, although he might condemn with vehemence the actions or opinions of another, he staunchly upheld the right of every man to make his own mistakes in his own fashion.

Ryder believed that the only true foundation for a general education was a knowledge of Greek, Latin, and mathematics. He found the world fallen on evil days and coped with the situation as best he could, permitting students to start Sanskrit with him even if they had little previous experience in language study. Once a young woman who was intensely interested in Hindu philosophy, but who had never studied either Latin or Greek, enrolled in his elementary class. According to her own account she worked about eight hours on a lesson, and at that was "the dunce of the class." In her second year she was reading the *Bhagavad-gita* with intelligence and understanding. In her third year she started in on the *Upanishads;* sometimes Ryder would read with her only two verses and then discuss with her the Hindu philosophies.

Besides his courses in Sanskrit Ryder offered lecture courses on "The Veda and the Philosophical Systems" and "Classical Sanskrit Literature." These soon became crowded with miscellaneous and untrained students. He skillfully remedied affairs by limiting the registration to "students who for four years have studied ancient languages: Sanskrit, Latin, Greek."

Ryder was a man of wonderful personal charm and he displayed fascinating wit in conversation. Yet from the first he shunned general society; he was not seen at teas, though at least twice he gave them himself. He repeatedly expressed, for instance in his poem on Tolstoi, his scorn for "respectability." Yet his own offenses against it were no more than breaches of convention. He was no Bohemian; no breath of scandal was ever attached to his name. He belonged to no clubs except the Faculty Club of the University, where he would spend long hours playing chess or billiards, games at which he was an expert. He was intimate at different times with various colleagues; then he would suddenly drop the friendship, apparently not from any ill will but because the society of the person concerned no longer gave him pleasure; he might speak with warm appreciation of the individual from whom he had parted company. Nevertheless by his desertion he sometimes caused real pain to men who valued his friendship. To his students and to his brothers and sisters he was

always devotedly loyal and helpful. Frugal in his own habits, he was a man of generous nature, repeatedly giving assistance to friends who were in need of it.

Among Ryder's most attractive traits was his fondness for little girls. He had a whole series of small protégées, whom he usually deserted at the age of seven or so. But the last of them endured; she was eleven when he died: during his last years she perhaps meant to him more than any other human being. In an unpublished poem, "The Bachelor's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*" he counts among his blessings:

> The power of leaving happy thoughts
> In many children's minds,
> Than which an honest-hearted man
> No keener pleasure finds.

Ryder's peculiarities grew upon him with advancing years. When he came to Berkeley he spoke of his intense longing to visit India, quoting a fellow Sanskritist who had said that the long journey was worth while even if one never left the dock but returned home on the same steamer. Later, when he had ample means for a year in India, the desire to see the country had left him; he never took sabbatical leave from the University. His reading, his teaching, and his work as a translator sufficed him. He had become convinced that the sight of the actual life of modern India would disappoint him. To teaching he was so devoted that during the War he helped the University, depleted of many of its instructors, by taking over classes in French. At another period he taught Latin in a private school.

On coming to Berkeley Ryder was eager to build up a Sanskrit collection in the University Library. He received a small allowance for the purpose, but he soon ceased to spend even that, so that the allowance was canceled. He explained to a student that he "saw no reason for spending much of the University's money for things that the University really did not want; and to amass Sanskrit books which no one would ever read could serve only the purpose of ostentation." Here again the reasoning was whimsical; the ultimate value of apparently useless books is something

well proved by academic experience. In his youth Ryder likewise expressed admiration for men with large private libraries. Yet he himself at his death had only a small collection, well under two thousand volumes, and those mostly in cheap editions, for he had none of the collector's spirit. Four or five shelves would hold his Sanskrit books. These were mostly texts of the authors that he loved; he would study in Sanskrit, as in other languages, only works that he regarded as masterpieces, and he cared little for books about books. He lived in a small room, comfortable enough, but bereft of all beauty and without even the simplest luxuries. He desired nothing better.

Ryder hated mental arrogance, the spirit of persecution, as his poems on Torquemada and Ignatius Loyola amply testify. Yet he himself was by no means free from it. His words on the *Bhagavadgita,* "In its combination of sternness with tolerance, the Song is unique," might be applied to himself. Sometimes he passed the bounds of discretion in expressing his scorn for very worthy men. To a student he described one colleague, a man of more than ordinary ability as a teacher, scholar, and writer, as "a perfect fool"; another colleague, one of the finest scholars in the University and a man of genial and generous temperament, was "a menace to intellectual life." The basis for this last judgment was probably the fact that the man in question occupied himself with details of scholarship that Ryder thought frivolous. He castigated whole departments of study: economics was "vile," public speaking "not worth damning." In 1921, indignant at what seemed to him an unrighteous act of the Harvard University Press in raising the price of volumes of the Harvard Oriental Series that it held in stock, Ryder addressed to the Press violent letters of protest and was not appeased by the explanations offered him. He published and distributed the documents in the case, sending to the Harvard University Press a sarcastic bill for ninety-five dollars for "printing and distributing matter designed to raise the moral tone of the Press." The documents prove his singular wrongheadedness and singular command of vituperative language but also his own honesty of purpose.

Brought up after the most straitest sect of our American reli-

gion, New England Puritanism, Ryder early departed from the faith and the church of his fathers. He joined no other church, for he disbelieved in religious organization just as he disbelieved in academic organization, though he could never decide whether the Christian Church in its historic existence had benefited or injured mankind. In an unpublished "lay sermon," written under the obvious influence of Tolstoi and of William James, he divides mankind into three classes, the saints, the pious, and the heathen. The saint "is a man who is ready to sacrifice love, friendship, art, science, flowers, dogs, children, comfort, reputation for religion's sake." In particular, he is willing to renounce the supreme happiness of human life, that of the family. He can give comfort and inspiration to all men, because his affection is not concentrated on a few. Hence the celibacy of the clergy is the chief reason for the strength of the Roman Catholic Church. Among the saints have been Jesus, Buddha, St. Francis, men who dared reject the family. (Compare the poem, "Buddha's Wife," in the present volume.) By far the greatest saint of the modern world is Tolstoi.*

The heathen "is a man whom religious longings do not move to any considerable sacrifice. He commonly finds it hard to understand how religion can harass men."

The pious man "is genuinely moved by religious feeling, but not to the point of following Jesus' command: Sell all that thou hast and follow me. He spends his life in trying to find some middle ground where he may enjoy the great satisfactions of earth, plus the rewards of religion." The pious man believes in religious organization, in a church. And, Ryder tells us, "the church is an efficient organization, seeking to deliver a mediocre moral product on a large scale: 'Let us all think in the same way, let us all speak in the same manner if possible.'" Hence the church always leads to cruelty and persecution.† It rejects individual moral genius. Tolstoi was right, according to Ryder, when he wrote: "Every church, as a church, has always been, and always must be, an institution not only foreign, but absolutely hostile,

* See Notes, p. 179.
† See Notes, pp. 179–180.

to the doctrine of Christ." "But the heathen, no less than the saint," Ryder adds, "always perceives that the church is hostile to his ideal, because it works toward a standard."

Ryder classified himself among the heathen. As far as doctrine goes, if one may trust his endorsement of the atheistic Sankhya philosophy, he apparently had no faith in a personal God, but did believe in the immortality of the soul. As for morals: "I began to consider what goodness meant, and at last hit upon a definition which has ever since given me tolerable satisfaction. To be good, I thought, meant to do hard work and to add as much as possible to the happiness of others." And further: "Our first duty is that of clear, honest thinking, which is in practice not to be severed from courage. If we cannot bring ourselves to leave all and follow Jesus, let us not ... pretend to follow Jesus. If we believe that love and friendship are worth all they cost, let us be as brave as those who believe that saintship is worth what it costs. Let us rise to the courage of the magnificent challenge: He that is not with me is against me. Let us dare to say: We are not with you, therefore against you. That is, we believe that the religious ideal is an ideal full of truth and beauty and hardness, but one-sided and therefore crippling to all who are not called and chosen. We natural men believe, with Paul, that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him. And in this belief we find great comfort and joy. Secondly, it is our obvious duty to strive toward genuine sympathy with other human beings. This is the very cardinal point of our gospel. If we fail here, we have given up something of value [prayer], and gained nothing in its place.... Now sympathy and loving kindness would be easy if all felt as we do. The pinch comes when we feel the duty of sympathy toward the pious. This is our stern test. Here we must not fail. We must improve on the Golden Rule. It is not enough for us to do as we would be done by. Though this is hard enough, yet it requires no human sympathy. We must do as other people would be done by.... We must treat the pious—not as we would be treated, but as they would be treated. We must not talk frankly with them about serious things, for they do not like that. It is

very hard, particularly because there seems something of insincerity in using the terms of intimacy where we feel that real intimacy is lacking. But it can be done without sacrifice of delicate honor.... Perhaps I may be permitted one small piece of prudential wisdom. Gallio is more successful in pious surroundings than Robert Ingersoll."

Ryder in practice fell short of his "heathen" ideals, but probably not more so than the majority of the "pious" fall short of their ideals.

The record of a teacher is usually written in water. Aside from teaching, Ryder made translation from the Sanskrit the chief occupation of his life. His published volumes are: *The Little Clay Cart* (a drama attributed to King Shudraka: 1905), *Women's Eyes* (verses translated from the Sanskrit: 1910), *Kalidasa: Translations of Shakuntala and Other Works* (1913), *Twenty-two Goblins* (1917), *Relatives* (further verses translated from the Sanskrit: 1919), *The Panchatantra* (1925), *The Ten Princes* (a collection of prose tales, mainly by Dandin: 1927), *The Bhagavad-gita* (1929). Aside from these books, Ryder published many short bits of translation, and one long translation, the *Malavika* of Kalidasa. Most of these are included in the present volume. Taken as a whole, Ryder's work as a translator is probably the finest ever accomplished by an American. It is also probably the finest body of translation from the Sanskrit ever accomplished by one man, if translation be regarded as a branch of literary art, not merely as a faithful rendering of the meaning of the original text.

"Translation English," Ryder of course abhorred. With the exception of the proper names and of bits of Indian flora such as "red ashoka branches" his versions read like the work of an English master of many styles, in prose and in verse. His ideals for a translation were: first, that it should be accurate, giving correctly the sense of the original and adding nothing to it; second, that it should be in a form that would make the same esthetic effect on an English reader that the form of the original makes on a student skilled in Sanskrit. Prose should be translated as prose, verse as verse; but the form of the Sanskrit verse,

as alien to English, should not be copied, any more than Greek hexameters should be rendered into quantitative English hexameters, or even accentual English hexameters. Ryder decided that English rhymed verse best reproduced the effect of the Sanskrit meters, and he used it consistently, in stanza form.

These principles are illustrated in Ryder's translations of *The Little Clay Cart, Shakuntala,* and *Malavika.* The Sanskrit dramas had previously been rendered either into prose or into blank verse. But as Ryder explains in his introduction to *The Little Clay Cart* (p. xxiii):

"The Indian plays are written in mingled prose and verse; and the verse portion forms so large a part of the whole that the manner in which it is rendered is of much importance. Now this verse is not analogous to the iambic trimeter of Sophocles or the blank verse of Shakespeare, but roughly corresponds to the Greek choruses or the occasional rhymed songs of the Elizabethan stage. In other words, the verse portion of a Sanskrit drama is not narrative; it is sometimes descriptive, but more commonly lyrical: each stanza sums up the emotional impression which the preceding action or dialogue has made upon one of the actors. Such matter is in English cast into the form of the rhymed stanza; and so, although rhymed verse is very rarely employed in classical Sanskrit, it seems the most appropriate vehicle for the translation of the stanzas of a Sanskrit drama."

Granting skill in execution, which Ryder possessed to an eminent degree, one can see how vastly superior, from a literary point of view, his versions of the Sanskrit dramas are to those made by his predecessors.

Ryder's version of *The Little Clay Cart* was performed in the Greek Theatre of the University of California on April 10, 1907, and many times at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York, beginning December 5, 1924. (For these performances in New York Ryder characteristically refused to accept compensation.) His version of *Shakuntala* was performed in the Greek Theatre on July 18, 1914.

In his minor translations Ryder often deviated from his general principles. His versions from *Bhartrihari* are sometimes

even more brief than the originals. In an epigram brevity is the soul of wit and omission does no harm if the spirit of the original be preserved. His versions from the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* usually consist of single verses extracted from a long passage, sometimes with an occasional change of order. The result is a short cento, an English poem based on the Sanskrit. "The Lovers' Meeting," a translation of an episode in the *Kathasaritsagara* that tells a story of somewhat the same type as those in Dandin's prose work, *The Ten Princes*, is in prose, while the original is in verse.

Among his many books, the result of more than twenty-five years of toil, Ryder regarded *The Ten Princes* as his masterpiece. He reveled in his power to reproduce in some measure the elaborately artificial prose of the original. Professor Clark, an expert judge, writes of the version:

"Of all the translators Ryder is the most successful in rendering the elusive spirit and 'flavor' of the original Sanskrit style, in turning what is literature in one language into what is literature in another language. But even so the translator himself, however successful he may have been, must have a feeling of disappointment at the impossibility of giving in English more than a faint reflection of the brilliant original.... [He] has a happy facility in coining words and in picking out unusual words with which to render unusual words in the original. The captious critic might think that occasionally ... the renderings are more flippant and ironical than the author of the original intended them to be."*

The Ten Princes, both in the original and in the translation, is a work written solely for the amusement of the truly cultivated, of literary experts, judges of style. The *Panchatantra*, on the other hand, is addressed to the great reading public, to amuse and to instruct at the same time. It is a textbook on the conduct of life, couched in the form of entertaining beast fables, mingled with verse epigrams of the cleverest sort. Most readers will regard this book, with its mingling of wit and wisdom, as Ryder's masterpiece.

* *University of California Chronicle*, XXX: 474, 476 (Oct., 1928).

Professor W. Norman Brown, himself a specialist on the *Panchatantra*, writes that he does not always agree with Ryder's interpretation of the sense or the tone of individual passages:

"Yet there is a general literary character that charms. By ignoring the lexical and interpretative problems he has made a book that is definitely readable. His prose is sure; his verse at times almost as neat as that of the Sanskrit. Without the verses the Sanskrit text would be good fable, as is 'Aesop' or Babrius; with them it becomes rare and precious literature. Never, to my observation, does Professor Ryder miss a humorous point; in fact he seems at times to insert a Rabelaisian touch where none was intended."*

For the *Bhagavad-gita* Ryder had the greatest admiration, terming it "the most influential, and probably the greatest, among the many sacred books of India." He writes further: "Why do one's duty, in such a world as the present? How is it possible, in such a world, to see any profit or joy in duty done? Partial answers may be found in Homer, Ecclesiastes, Lucretius, the New Testament, and elsewhere; the full answer, satisfying both intellect and spirit, is given in the *Song of the Blessèd One*." Whether this *Song*, which takes for granted both the Indian caste system and the transmigration of souls, can become a practical guide for duty for us Occidentals, is a question that may be asked. Brushing this question aside, let us see what difficulties Ryder had to overcome in translating the *Song*.

He faced the same problem that confronts a man who attempts to translate the Hebrew Psalms into modern verse forms. No English poet has ever solved that problem for the Psalms with even tolerable success. Ryder's solution of it for the *Bhagavad-gita* was far from complete, but it merits our admiration. Ryder had a theory that only three meters in literary history could be read indefinitely without becoming monotonous: the classical hexameter, English blank verse, and the Sanskrit *shloka*. But he translated the *shlokas*, here as elsewhere, into English "eights and sixes," with a rhyme on the sixes. This meter is

* *Saturday Review of Literature*, II: 313 (Nov. 21, 1925). The sentences, taken from a long review, have been rearranged.

familiar to us in ballads, in humorous verse, and, with a rhyme on the eights, in hymns. It is rarely used in long poems; Chapman's translation of the *Iliad* is one of the few exceptions. For a long poem consisting of discourses on religious and ethical topics it seems incongruous, and it certainly becomes monotonous. Furthermore, as Professor Clark remarks, Ryder was at his best with works that had quaint humor or wit; he did not do so well with simplicity or with sustained seriousness.

Ryder states in his introduction to the *Bhagavad-gita:*

"Several of the prose translations into English have real excellence; they reproduce the substance of the text, insofar as substance can be divorced from form.... The present version aims, so far as is possible, at the exactness of the better prose translations, while holding as much of the original's poetic grace and power as could be captured."

Despite the drawbacks of Ryder's version, the splendor of his achievement may be seen by comparing two stanzas of the work, selected at random—they are the opening stanzas of the sixth canto—in two well-reputed prose translations with the same stanzas as he rendered them. Here is the version by Annie Besant (Theosophical Publishing House, 1914):

"He that performeth such action as is duty, independently of the fruit of action, he is an ascetic,[1] he is a Yogī, not he that is without fire, and without rites.

"That which is called renunciation know thou that as yoga, O Pāṇdava; nor doth any one become a Yogī with the formative will[2] unrenounced."

[1] The ascetic, the Sannyāsi, lights no sacrificial fire and performs no sacrifices nor ceremonies; but merely to omit these, without true renunciation, is not to be a real ascetic."

[2] Saṅkalpa, the imaginative faculty that makes plans for the future."

The version by Pramada Dasa Mitra, published by the Vedanta Society (ed. 2, n. d.), runs thus:

"Depending not upon the fruit of action, he who doeth the work that ought to be done is a Sannyâsi as well as a Yogî; not he who hath renounced the (sacrificial) fire, nor he who hath renounced action.

"What they call Sannyâsa (Renunciation), know, O Pândava, that to be Yoga; for never doth any one become a Yogî who hath not renounced his fancies."

Ryder's version is:

That man renounces *and* performs
  Who scorns his labor's price
Yet does his work, not he who shuns
  Fit work and sacrifice.

Renunciation, discipline
  As one we must admire:
No man is disciplined without
  Renouncing heart's desire.

In the prose versions, not to speak of their fatal lack of any beauty of expression, the letter killeth any emotional reaction to the impressive ideas of the original; it likewise leadeth Mrs. Besant into pedantic footnotes, as it doth even Pramada Dasa Mitra in some other places. No reader who has not steeped himself for years—or at least months—in Hindu philosophy will feel his heart leap up at the mention of "Sannyâsa," "Yoga," or for that matter "formative will." Ryder preserves the essential ideas of the original and expresses them with a poetic skill that at once evokes an emotional response.

After finishing his *Bhagavad-gita,* Ryder practically ceased his work as a translator. To a casual inquirer he would say simply, "I have done enough." To a student he gave a more satisfying explanation: For his work he must have a text that was worthy of translation, that had not hitherto been worthily rendered into English, and that was *within his own powers.* Nothing remained in Sanskrit literature that satisfied these three conditions. But perhaps he no longer felt the same joy in poetic expression that he had in his youth. It is noteworthy that his last original poem dates from 1917. He had longed to translate a drama by Bhavabhuti, but he felt that he could not write an English style that would be worthy of the original.

In his last years Ryder became more and more solitary. Probably no more than two close friends remained to him. His chief

relaxations were visits to his little protégée Virginia and the study of military tactics, which held a great if purely academic fascination for him. In his youth a fanatic idolater of Grover Cleveland, in his last years he was an equally fervent despiser of the New Deal. At heart a conservative and perhaps somewhat of an aristocrat, he was at odds with the world and with its ideals of education. Probably he parted from life with no regret.

This inadequate attempt to describe the achievement and the personality of Arthur William Ryder may fitly close with tributes from two of his pupils.

Professor Cherniss writes:

"Ryder . . . loved Sanskrit literature and it was his desire 'to extend an accurate and joyful acquaintance with the world's masterpieces.' This he could do in two ways, by teaching people to read the books themselves and by translating into English some of these masterpieces, in order that those who did not know Sanskrit might still gain a measure of the profit and enjoyment which these books contain, or even by enjoying this sample of the wealth of Sanskrit literature might be induced to learn the language which would put the original treasure into their possession. These two things he set himself to do; that he did them both supremely well is attested to by the best of witnesses: the translations themselves, which are now monuments of English literature and at the same time the best commentaries on their originals; the thousands of English readers who have gained delight and knowledge from these books; his students, to whom Sanskrit is not merely a language but a world of beauty over which broods forever the spirit of a teacher and a friend half divine in his great humanity."

Another pupil, Dr. Rajko Hariton Ružić, feels that Ryder's personality could not be better described than by the opening stanzas of his version of Canto XVI of the *Bhagavad-gita:*

A generous spirit, upright, strict;
  Pluck; purity within;
Study; self-conquest; sacrifice;
  Strong, wise self-discipline;

A truthful spirit, slow to wrath,
  Detached, just, peaceful, kind;
Good-will to life; a lack of greed;
  A shy, firm, gentle mind;

A radiant spirit, patient, pure;
  A loyal valor sage—
Are his, brave prince, succeeding to
  The godlike heritage.

Original Poems

ORIGINAL POEMS

AETIUS AT CHALONS, SEPTEMBER, 451

Yes, I have crushed them; yet a few more years
The empire staggers, free from sickening fears
Lest all the glory of its massive past,
Dishonored now, decaying to the last,
  By vermin Hun
  Poisoned, undone,
Should rot in death irreparably vast.

Nay, heaven could not decree that such a foe
Should win, that Caesar's Rome should perish so—
By witches' seed struck down, with black, lank hair,
Whom devils fathered in a desert lair,
  Their cheeks rough-gashed,
  Their noses pashed,
Moon-legs, and deep-slit eyes with lust aglare.

Yet why these labors for a dying state?
Why struggle briefly with a certain fate?
Why strive to keep the body still upright
When that is gone for which men love to fight?
  For well I know
  The Gothic woe
Engulfs the world, and superstitious night.

This Gothic and Germanic brotherhood
We hate, as always, both for ill and good;
Though all are brave and many of them chaste,
By vulgar vice each virtue is defaced;
  Their brutal, rude,
  Dull hardihood
Creeps low, by stern, artistic aim ungraced.

And they inherit man's great centuries—
The sombre dignity of Rameses,
Plato's clear light that calms us while it thrills,
And Caesar's splendid majesty, that fills
  The trump of time
  With breath sublime,
From Nile reëchoing to the Roman hills.

Dark days I see, when faith and grace are gone
And art that warms a man to look upon,
When Christian superstition onward creeps,
Obliterating human depths and steeps,
  When honor's prize
  With honor dies,
When priests and women rule, for manhood sleeps.

Religion is like empire; they alone
Are fit to keep it who create their own;
While worship borrowed from a foreign sky
Serves only to deceive and stupefy
  (For tyrants' use
  And priests' abuse)
Brave men, and at the last will surely die.

So is my question answered; I must fight
Just to abridge the inevitable night;
To bring some civilizing vision home
To these rough German brutes, of what was Rome,
  That they may see
  The mystery,
Ere all dissolve in froth and bloody foam.

What will the world be, when at last the dawn
Kindles, the sadness of the night is gone?
Decaying Egypt could not well foresee
What Greece, decaying Greece what Rome should be;
  And sudden change
  As great as strange,
Will startle men again and make them free.

In this assured belief I fight forlorn
For men whose parents' parents are unborn;
For men who never will be told that I
(And some few others) did not weakly cry,
  But conquering fears
  Shed blood for tears
And dared to fight unthanked, unpaid to die.

BUDDHA'S WIFE

Now the Future Buddha . . . thought to himself, "I will take just one look at my son" . . . Within the chamber . . . the mother of Rahula lay sleeping, . . . her hand resting on the head of her son . . .

"If I were to raise my wife's hand from off the child's head, and take him up, she would awake, and thus prevent my departure. I will first become a Buddha, and then come back and see my son." So saying, he descended from the palace.

—*Introduction to the Jataka, Warren's translation.*

The best-loved man that ever trod
  The ancient earth, is he who taught
That by denying wife and God
  Man's peace is won, nirvana bought.

Through fifty sacrificial years
  He lived his sweetly even life,
And prospered, and forgot the tears
  Of her he'd loved too well—his wife.

To all he brought nirvana rest,
  So could not spare a single heart
From love's peck-measure in his breast
  A disproportionable part.

For Buddha, like the Jewish saint—
  And every saintly soul agrees—
To hearts for special kindness faint
  Would murmur: *Love your enemies.*

She wore her life away in sorrows,
  Making her perfect sacrifice
Of sad todays, and sadder morrows;
  She, more than others, knew the price

At which the world might be redeemed;
  She even trained her orphaned son—
Not now the pledge of what she dreamed,
  But first-fruits of nirvana won—

And gave him to her faithless lord,
  His faithless father, bade him prove
A faithful follower of the Word,
  Forgetting home and mother's love.

What shall she have for recompense
  Of so great sacrifice that shook
The deep foundations of her sense?
  Some mention in a Pali book.

And what is his reward? That still
  Through twenty centuries and five,
While men forget his mastered will
  And love, they keep his name alive;

That all his myriad following
  From Singapore to Kandahar,
From Lion Island to Peking,
  Cares little what his teachings are.

Oh, tragedy the soul to flay,
  That through all near and distant lands
Though many study, preach, and pray
  Scarce one is found who understands!

There may be persons who believe
  One woman's deep-devoted soul
Would, in eternal justice' sieve,
  Outsift this more diluted whole.

No! He must sacrifice—'twas known
  To Buddha, as to every other
Who strives for light—not self alone,
  (Small task!) but son and wife and mother,

Preparing thus the perfect day
  When, to nirvana fully grown,
We put all loves of earth away
  And know, at last, as we are known.

TOLSTOI—A CRITICAL SYMPOSIUM

I. BY THE CLERGYMAN

This Tolstoi puzzles me a bit;
  Although an earnest man
He does not seem to be a whit
  Episcopalian.

He seems quite free from moral stain;
  Then why so oddly live?
Religious life is easy, plain,
  And mostly negative.

To trust in words, and not in things,
  To teach in Sunday-school,
Reject all brave imaginings,
  Love, think, and pray by rule:

Conventions dear to mine and me,
  From testing which we shrink;
Ah, where would true religion be,
  If everyone should think?

A young and fair parishioner,
  Too lovely to be chid,
Told me that Tolstoi seemed to her
  To do what Luther did,

And Paul, and Augustine, and all
  The saints of long ago:
He sacrificed at Heaven's call
  The things that pleased him so,

To find his Savior crucified,
  Contented though his search
For righteousness should end outside
  Of the Established Church.

A moment dashed, my spirits rose:
  "Dear sister, be not led
Astray by reasoning from those
  Long comfortably dead.

"Their duty was, to brave the powers
  Of darkness, and to die;
To be respectable, is ours,
  Nor ask the reason why."

I trust the godly will not mock;
  Doubts must not, shall not be
The robbers of my little flock—
  Yet Tolstoi puzzles me.

II. BY THE ENTOMOLOGIST

His thoughts are not the thoughts I love;
  Into the world he lugs
A God he cannot touch nor prove;
  I count the spots on bugs.

The world seems very plain to me;
  Full half its joy is missed
By him who feels no call to be
  An entomologist.

And no such call has Tolstoi known;
  At science' need he laughs—
The Hymenoptera alone
  Lack many monographs.

In classifying, much remains
  Today, to be made tidy.
A man of taste would find his pains
  Rewarded by Vespidae.

And here's a man of mighty brain
  Who spreads his writing thin
O'er such vague themes as love, and pain,
  And duty, God, and sin.

Strange, in a scientific age,
  To spend one's efforts thus!
As if the scientific page
  Were not enough for us!

Yet is it all so plain to me?
  His words, sincere and burning,
Have made me doubt that there may be
  At least two roads to learning.

Some broad, true highway have I missed,
  That Tolstoi's feet have trod?
Is he my fellow scientist,
  A specialist in God?

III. BY THE LADY

All men are queer: and Tolstoi seems
  Just half as queer again,
His novels haunt me in my dreams,
  And yet—these men! These men!

He lacks the decent, social pride
  That makes us better, sweeter;
I fear it cannot be denied,
  His linen might be neater.

He does not need to pinch and save
  And miser all the while—
He is not clean; he does not shave;
  His clothes are not in style.

Why should he labor with his hands?
  He might make more of life,
As every woman understands—
  His poor, unhappy wife!

She must be jealous of his books;
  A man who writes so clearly
Of Anna's fascinating looks,
  Might act a little queerly.

I wish I had the faintest trace
  Of Anna's power of pleasing;
I would not wear a double face,
  But just a little teasing

Would do my husband good today—
  How bitterly I cried
To read about the awful way
  In which poor Anna died.

I try to be a faithful wife;
  But Anna, mangled under
Those cruel wheels, makes all my life
  Seem strange. Could I, I wonder,

Learn duty from that dirty man?
  I wonder if I need it.
One thing I should do, and I can—
  My daughter shall not read it.

IV. BY THE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

Tolstoi, *qua* artist, is my theme;
  But I must travel far
To separate such things as seem
  From such as vital are.

The common herd heed common things;
  When they have understood
This man's evangel frightened kings,
  And helped to make men good,

They are impressed. The critic, no!
  His task, so subtly sure,
So poignantly elusive, so
  Strange, intimate, obscure,

Is this: in cultured phrase to tell
  An inattentive earth
The *pith* of books; to strip the shell
  And pierce to inner worth;

To classify, to eliminate
  All that may touch the heart,
Inform the mind, improve our state—
  The residue is Art.

In Tolstoi's work there is not much
  Of Art in evidence;
Why, people read his books as such,
  And understand the sense.

They love his drastic, vulgar scenes;
  Small chance for Art is there!
Now, no one knows what Pater means,
  And none but critics care.

An idle hour may well be spent
  On Tolstoi, it may be;
But let more earnest thought be bent
  On Arnold, Lamb, and me.

V. BY THE ENTHUSIAST

I cannot praise him as I ought;
  When I was sick of soul,
I found true peace in what he taught:
  He saved me, made me whole.

He helped me to be simple, pure,
  To do what good I can,
To laugh at mad ambition's lure,
  To trust in God and man.

Thus I found Tolstoi; he my guide
  Forevermore shall be;
The best of mortals, magnified
  In his humility.

And so I spend contented days
  In teaching what he taught,
Till all the world shall sound his praise,
  And think as Tolstoi thought.

'Twill be the climax of my joys
  When we shall down the fools,
And teach the truth to glad-faced boys
  In Tolstoi Sunday-schools.

VI. BY THE OLYMPIAN

The man by whom new fire is brought,
  Is never understood;
They praise his most imperfect thought,
  And blame him for the good.

Whatever fits their petty scheme,
  With flowers of praise they strew;
Whatever makes them think, they deem
  Fantastic and untrue.

Yet worse, the littler ones are sure
  To organize his truth—
Some school or church that shall endure
  In everlasting youth.

And thus they always kill at length
  The thing they organize;
The more the body gathers strength,
  The more the spirit dies.

They of the Inquisition prayed
  To him of Galilee!
The Renaissance of learning made
  A University!

None seeking forms, or praise of man,
  Or scholarship, or art,
Or any social glory, can
  Be quite sincere at heart.

This Tolstoi was sincere; his pride
  Of power and brain and birth
And glory, flickered out and died
  In the vision of an earth

Where men should save their souls by pain,
  Should conquer pride and bind it;
The ancient truth he taught again:
  Who loses life, shall find it.

This is his lesson to his race,
  Distort it as they can:
The world becomes a better place
  For one brave, honest man.

SONGS FROM NIRVANA

NIRVANA

What all have sought with mad or tame surmise,
  To India's seers was given—
A glad, serene, and lasting Paradise
Which, wisely known, the wisest most would prize,
  A satisfying heaven.

By none beside was such a vision found,
  Though many sought in vain;
The red man with his happy hunting ground,
The Arab in his sensual fetters bound,
  Stir wiser men to pain.

The Christian drops the clean, insipid scheme
  That John at Patmos saw;
For life's impetuous, turbid, Gothic stream
Makes more appeal to men than such a dream
  Of inadventurous awe.

Wise in our generation, very true,
  But too unpractical;
For all the thoughts we think and deeds we do
Are vain unless they lead us onward to
  That which should be and shall;

Nirvana, where the knower and the known
  Weave and compenetrate;
Where special name and personal form are gone,
Where, in a life-crammed desert, truth alone
  Broods in majestic state.

Not there the clawing after mysteries,
  The dull brain overborne,
The thirst, the fret, the chase of that which flees,
Until such bits of truth as we do seize
  Seem fragments soiled and torn,

But whole preception, living, free from flaw,
  Of truth forever growing;
Thus Heraclitus or Pythagoras saw
In *Things are numbers* an eternal law
  Or *Everything is flowing*.

When such light dawns, the truth is me, and so
  All petty aims of men—
All hate, all love and hope, all suffered woe
From friend desirèd or detested foe—
  Dissolve and perish then.

Nor kindly fate to lesser folk denies
  A glimpse of such a heaven.
The lover's paradise, his lady's eyes,
The book-worm's, incunabulary prize—
  To each, some hint is given.

Hints only! Yet a hint may be enough
  To burst the cage and flee,
Freed from this fettering and mortal stuff,
Past vice and virtue, earthly smooth and rough,
  Past thee and him and me,

Past all that separates and makes afraid,
  All good and ill ambition,
To find, when fears are stilled and doubts are laid,
Truth, from within unfolding and self-made,
  In one glad intuition.

DREAMS

Once upon a time, I, Chuang Tsu, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly, and was unconscious of my individuality as a man. Suddenly, I awaked, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.

—Butterfly Chuang

I dreamed I was a butterfly,
  And how, I wonder, can
I know for certain if I be
  A butterfly or man?

I dreamed I was a spider fierce,
  By Fabre classified;
I ate my husband with a will,
  And laid my eggs, and died.

I dreamed I was an ocean wave,
  Majestically slow;
I had a pleasant passage from
  Hongkong to Mexico.

Again, I was an emperor,
  With empress all my own;
And while the others worshiped me,
  I worshiped her alone.

Another night, 'twas radium,
  Endeavoring to dodge
The keen research that Soddy makes
  And Rutherford and Lodge.

And once I was a little child
  And happier by far
Than all the clergymen and kings
  And science teachers are.

I can't deny I am a man;
  And yet, with such a store
Of incarnations, I am sure
  That I am something more.

The man is but a thick cement
  Or skeleton, it seems,
To bind the bricks and blood and life
  Of never-ending dreams.

RENUNCIATION

Some austerity and wintry negativity, some roughness, danger, stringency, and effort, some 'no! no!'
—W. James

Some danger sought, some scorning of a part
  From what is offered whole,
Some self-contempt, some jolting of the cart,
  Preserves an unbribed soul.
Some hate of what is prudent, thrifty, mean,
  Some love for what is grim,
Some dusty plodding though the grass be green,
  Keeps men in fighting trim.

How else be man where sober judgment rules
  And artificial peace,
Where social cloisters give to weak and fools
  From Adam's curse release?
"Peace, peace!" they cry, where peace is none; so wild,
  So crammed with risk is life,
Where safety cradles man or youth or child,
  He looks within for strife.

Else, like the vulgar comfort-seekers in
  The hours they trade or pray
Or paint or love, he sinks in stagnant sin,
  Dribbling his soul away,
Until he loses all things fierce and warm,
  Grows shriveled, blunt, inane,
A flat distortion, like a solid form
  Projected on a plane.

And freedom is so cheap! Some hardy scorn
  Of death and thirst and pain,
Some willingness to love yet be forlorn,
  Will make a man again;
Some inner sympathy with dogs and tramps,
  Some readiness to flee
The age-old enemy that chains and clamps—
  Respectability.

A few can make the last, great sacrifice,
  All others far above,
Sweetly renounce the pearl beyond all price
  Of woman's special love,
Contented see the long years follow years,
  The loneliness, the sense
Of what might be, yet view them still through tears
  Of soft, glad reverence.

These are the heaven-foretelling salt of earth,
  The spray before the wave,
Hints of an age that struggles to the birth,
  More clean and free and brave,
More swayed by truer, deeper art, more warm
  And truthful and intense,
When special loves shall all dissolve to form
  One vast benevolence.

IGNATIUS LOYOLA TO THE COMPANY OF JESUS

"Let us all think in the same way, let us all speak in the same manner if possible."

Shoulder to shoulder, warriors, fight,
  Fight for the Prince of Peace!
The world is full of Jesus' foes,
And every Christian comrade knows
It is his privilege and right
To burn and torture, slay and fight,
  Fight for the Prince of Peace.

Well ye remember, comrades all,
  Ere God me gave release,
How I have fought for women's praise,
For gold and lust—ah, sinful days!
But never with the courage high
And love that fills my heart, while I
  Fight for the Prince of Peace.

For when in lazaret I lay
  (Fight for the Prince of Peace!)
My broken bones and sweating pain
Were, by God's mercy, not in vain;
'Twas then the shining Virgin came
With Christ, and set my blood aflame
  To fight for the Prince of Peace.

And from that consecrated hour
  Until my heart-beats cease,
I fight for Jesus—here at home,
In wicked Paris, holy Rome,
Where Gama and Columbus spy
New worlds for Christ to govern, I
  Fight for the Prince of Peace.

We dare not doubt, we must not think,
  We may not look for ease;
Our enemies are legion-strong
Who think—and thought is sinful wrong;
Chastise them, disobedient
To Jesus' orders, heaven-sent—
  Fight for the Prince of Peace.

The Jew, the Moor, the heathen all,
  (Fight for the Prince of Peace!)
The German monk who dares to flout
God's holy pope with canting doubt—
Uphold our Inquisition well
And give the curs a taste of hell
  Who scorn the Prince of Peace.

Dear Jesus loves His Spanish men;
  (Fight for the Prince of Peace!)
He has elected us to see
What He desired in Galilee,
To fill the world with slaughter grim
And render it, blood-washed, to Him,
  Our King, our Prince of Peace.

And when we gather at His throne,
  When earthly labors cease,
Perchance He'll bid us fly to hell
And souse in some deep, sulphurous well
Iscariot and the Roman throng
Who did the unpardonable wrong—
  Fight for the Prince of Peace!

JOB'S VALEDICTORY

One hundred years are gone and forty more
  Since God relaxed my toils,
Replaced my children and renewed my store,
  And freed me from my boils;
And better, solved my problem, when it seemed
  Solution grew more distant,
By simpler methods than I could have dreamed—
  He showed it nonexistent.

For I and other men accounted wise
  Had wondered what it meant
That good men suffered in the very eyes
  Of God omnipotent.
We searched out evil, whether it be true
  Or but illusive semblance;
We hugged our problem, as men ever do,
  Kept evil in remembrance.

Real evil came; I cried to God in tears,
  And He in storm replied;
I've proved His answer through a hundred years
  And forty years beside.
He showed how ignorant I was of fact
  In His detailed creation,
Showed moral problems soluble by act
  But not by speculation.

He told me wonders of Egyptian Nile
  Far from our land of Uz—
The quaintly imperturbable crocodile,
  And hippopotamus,
The wild ass, unsubdued to human laws,
  The war-horse proud, commanding,
The ostrich heedless of her eggs, because
  God gave no understanding.

What is my duty if young lions roar?
  To probe their mission here?
Nay, either win their pelts to deck my floor
  Or leave them far to rear.
What is my duty if a Shuhite friend
  Or Temanite reproach me?
Why, make my exit certain or his end,
  Ere Buzite friend approach me.

Evil is not a problem, but a fact;
  No need to seek its cause;
Our duty is to lessen it by act—
  To break the spoiler's jaws;
To save the fatherless and the oppressed;
  To see each sorrow tended:
And so to earn the grave's eternal rest.
  The words of Job are ended.

ECCLESIASTES

Stern, truthful figure of an antique day,
  Whose roughly tested plan
Of life stands firm, while others fade away,
  Endures, while man is man.
For, building an abiding monument,
  He builds it square and good,
Like other noble architects, content
  To be misunderstood.

Such doctrine, piled of massive blocks of fact,
  All cosmic weather spares;
Such fundament, the rock of righteous act,
  Brave superstructure bears.
Not his the higher stories; none the less
  Should firm foundation-stone
Have honor, not the added stateliness
  And ornament alone.

He shows us that the visions vast and vain
  Of prophets, saints, and seers
May topple down, yet certain truths remain
  Unshaken through the years;
And what abides to man, is still enough
  To save and fortify
In righteous doing through the journey rough,
  Until he comes to die.

No flabby God is his, conferring peace,
  Whereon a man may throw
Responsibilities, and find release
  From labor, danger, woe;
No quicksand God, glad to engulf and hide
  Things inconvenient;
No God who weak excuses will abide
  "It was not what we meant."

His God is built upon a sterner plan
  Deserving of man's awe,
Greater than man, and yet himself, like man,
  Bound by eternal law;
A God who knows that life worth living must
  A real adventure be;
That dust infallibly returns to dust,
  That none is wholly free.

But is it truth?. The insistent question moans,
  Must man forever grope,
Like-destined with them, in the sands and stones,
  Without a larger hope?
One answer, yet sufficient, Heaven can
  Vouchsafe us, tonic, grim—
Eternal truth is not, or not for man,
  But truths are given him;

And of the given truths, not least nor last
  Is that the Preacher saw,
When larger visions fade, and hopes are past,
  To instil courageous awe—
Let life be stripped of all we cannot touch,
  Of future joys be reft,
The life we live today availeth much,
  And righteousness is left.

TORQUEMADA

Why do they hate me? Me who only do
  My Christian duty?
Who, under God and Jesus, struggle to
Fill Spain with unity, with passion true,
  And holy beauty?

Yet scarcely will two hundred men suffice
  My life to guard,
When forth I fare to smite abjuring vice;
Thy service, with its strictly reckoned price,
  O God, is hard.

With stern devotion have I spent my life—
  For Jesus' sake—
In bringing heretics, with child and wife,
To sackcloth, dungeon, torture, rack, and knife,
  And to the stake.

Six thousand of the vermin have I burned—
  Thou know'st the story;
One hundred thousand, penitent, returned
With loss of goods, to thee whom they had spurned;
  Be thine the glory.

So has thy will been done throughout the land;
  No fear, no pain
Has stayed my toil for good King Ferdinand,
For tender-hearted Isabella, and
  For God and Spain.

And how, great God, could life be better spent
  Through length of days,
Than planting truth, than crying out "Repent!"
And sternly smiting the impenitent,
  Unto thy praise.

For if God's truth be truth, to us revealed,
  There cannot be
A task more urgent than to see them healed
By fire who err, that God's church may be sealed
  In unity.

Should I be lukewarm, godless men would blight
  The church's power;
It is for their salvation that I fight;
It is from deepest pity that I light
  The stake's red flower.

And still they hate me! Ah, my God, my God,
  The task is hard;
So may I have, when this beneath the sod
Is laid, when the last dusty mile is trod,
  My great reward.

THE YOUNG MOTHER

She seems a diamond set
  In gold of motherhood;
A rare, white violet
  Within the dark pine-wood;
A saint that never yet
  Need struggle to be good;

A spray of pink and white
  Unfolding hour by hour;
A river sparkling bright
  In answer to the shower;
A beam of purest light
  Whose gentleness is power;

A life awaking late
  To find how sweet is earth;
A happiness too great
  To show itself in mirth;
A young soul incarnate,
  New-born in giving birth.

KALIDASA

An ancient heathen poet, loving more
God's creatures, and His women, and His flowers
Than we who boast of consecrated powers;
Still lavishing his unexhausted store

Of love's deep, simple wisdom, healing o'er
The world's old sorrows, India's griefs and ours;
That healing love he found in palace towers,
On mountain, plain, and dark, sea-belted shore,

In songs of holy Raghu's kingly line
Or sweet Shakuntala in pious grove,
In hearts that met where starry jasmines twine

Or hearts that from long, lovelorn absence strove
Together. Still his words of wisdom shine:
All's well with man, when man and woman love.

PIERRE'S PRAYER:
THE PETITION OF A HUMBLE CITIZEN OF RHEIMS

Father, forgive. They know not what they do.
They who bombard thy dead saints' witness true,
Our shrine and very soul, with fire and steel,
Know neither what they do nor what we feel.
    Thy temple's wounds
    Cry without sounds,
Father, to thee. And only thou canst heal.

For human love and labor nevermore
Shall set upright again the battered door,
Renew the roof from black and moldering sticks,
Restore the murdered glass whose fragments mix
    With powdered stones
    And sacred bones,
Or piece again the shell-torn crucifix.

Oh, have we loved the symbol overmuch?
Our weakness, Father, loves to see and touch.
And if the sifted daylight let us win
Some heaven (with earthy colors mingled in)
    And helped us see,
    Though dimly, thee—
All-merciful, dost thou impute a sin?

If sin it was, thy chastisement is sore.
The thing we loved is dead forevermore.
Yes, worse than dead, for we can never lay
The rotting ruins decently away;
    Each deadly rent
    A monument
To them who hated God upon that day.

Why, Father, hast thou given power of late
To them whose hearts are full of childish hate?
Save France from that! May our brave soldiers still
Show condescending love for what they kill.
    If heathen must
    By France be crushed,
Let all be done according to thy will.

Help us, our Father, freely to forgive
Our martyrs' death, the rape of some that live;
Even as a mother with a child whose day
Was spent in selfishness and cruel play,
    Still hopes the best,
    Lays him to rest,
And prays that God may take his guilt away.

Then all the world shall send a happy glance
At Jesus' spirit shining over France.
Father of mercy! Let thy mercy shine
Upon us with a radiance divine.
    Let some dim rays
    Of prayer and praise
(Great things we ask) appear beyond the Rhine.

The saints of France have borne the cross afar
Wherever heathen sin and sorrow are;
And red men listened, black men turned to thee,
The brown and yellow pondered patiently.
    All these have heard
    Thy holy word,
But not the heathen by the Baltic sea.

For these last heathen, Father, do we pray.
Commend our preaching to their hearts today.
Bid them in sad humility repent
When they behold their sin, Thy temple rent,
    Which they, in scorn
    Of God, have torn.
Make men of them. Thou art omnipotent.

Original Prose

ORIGINAL PROSE

LABOREMUS

EVERYBODY likes a compliment, said Lincoln. I hope that C. R. Lanman, Professor of Sanskrit at Harvard, will like this, though it is not, strictly speaking, a compliment, as it contains no pleasant window-dressing. It is a mere statement of facts, plus a moral lesson for the rest of us—the writer is of New England ancestry.

Professor Lanman went to Harvard in 1880. His early years there were occupied as the years of professors are. His publication dating from those years enhances, but does not create, his lasting title to gratitude.

Then came the task that fitted his attainments and his nature. Mr. H. C. Warren, who was (I hope to be believed) an Orientalist and a man of substance, left a generous sum of money and an admirable volume on Buddhism from his own pen, as a foundation for the Harvard Oriental Series. For more than thirty years, Professor Lanman has been the editor of this series. It is hard to imagine a man and a task more fully absorbing each other.

The Series now comprises some twenty-five stately volumes. The contributors live in America, in Europe, in India. Every volume is competent, a fair percentage of high excellence.

Professor Lanman is the Napoleon of editors. If a contributor dies, Professor Lanman, with prodigious *sang-froid,* completes his volume. If any detail is wrong, he sets it right. If right, he makes triply sure that it is wholly right. He illustrates the manly sentiment of an old Hindu (all the verses quoted are translated from a Sanskrit text published in the Oriental Series):

> Mount Meru is not very high,
> Hell is not very low,
> The sea not shoreless, if a man
> Abounding vigor show.

Or, to put it otherwise, he runs the last snake to ground, realizing the wisdom of the Sanskrit saying:

In houses where no snakes are found,
One sleeps; or where the snakes are bound;
But perfect rest is hard to win
With serpents bobbing out and in.

Or, in yet another form:

The final penny of a debt,
The final foeman dire,
The final twinges of disease,
The final spark of fire—
Finality on these imposed
Leaves nothing to desire.

Of the difficulties, the heartbreaking delays and frustrations involved in this world-wide coöperative work, it is vain to give a list. Let one illustration stand for a thousand. Here is a recent note:

Volumes 21 and 22 and 23. . . . Dr. Belvalkar, when returning to India in 1914 from his studies at Harvard, shipped his manuscript-collations and other papers and his books by the German freighter, "Fangturm." In August, 1914, the "Fangturm" was interned at the port of Palma, Balearic Islands. In 1919, she was released. In May, 1920, Dr. Belvalkar recovered his papers.

Volume 21 was issued in 1915, complete.

Of volume 22, the first 92 pages . . . have been in print since January, 1915, awaiting for over five and one-half years the recovery of the material for the rest of the book. . . . manuscripts . . . from Nepal to Madras, from Calcutta to Bombay . . . the generous assistance of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council . . . There is hope now that volumes 22 and 23 may be issued.

Through the tangled mass of troubles raised by man's machinery and by cantankerous man, Professor Lanman ploughs his sturdy way, trampling obstacles like a rhinoceros in the jungle. It might be more graceful to proceed like a serpent, but there would then be no broad trail for followers. It is inspiring.

One bold and plucky fighter
Will give an army pluck;
One broken, routed blighter
Diffuses evil luck.

Now for the moral lesson. It is plain enough—nothing but the power of devoted work on worthy material to raise a massive memorial, if life be spared. But it is a needed lesson, when the natural sciences, having seized much ground from mathematics, find themselves defeated by the nature of their victory, themselves yielding in turn to baser things; when the modern foreign languages, having stolen upon the serene classics, themselves give way to the so-called "study" of English, while other subjects, nameless here, are beginning to make Shakespeare actually appear almost a "study," no longer the joyful recreation of the educated. The power of work is forgotten, the joy of work is missed. Hurrah for Professor Lanman! *Laboremus.*

Professor Lanman studied in early life under the direction of W. D. Whitney. Filled with veneration for his teacher, he would be indignant were it stated that his own native abilities or achievements attain the white grandeur of that Himalayan peak of philology. But in dogged work the two men are equal. Hence we may quote:

While water is given
By fate out of heaven,
If men dig a well,
It bubbles from hell.
Man's effort (sufficiently great)
Can equal the wonders of fate.

And since we like this, we shall continue the quotation:

Success complete
In any feat
Is sure to bless
True manliness.
Man's effort (sufficiently great)
Is just what a dullard calls fate.

And why not have the last stanza?

There is no toy
Called easy joy.
But man must strain
To body's pain.
Even Vishnu embraces his bride
With arms that the churn-stick has tried.

Beside the massive dignity of this laborious life, how mean seems all cleverness!

The lion's majesty derives
From nature, rich because he strives
To crown his feats with nobler feats.
What golden-collared dog competes?

Translation from the French

TRANSLATION FROM THE FRENCH

THE PASSION OF OUR BROTHER THE POILU

Translated from the French by A. W. Ryder
With an introduction by G. Chinard

Marc Leclerc

[The following poem was composed in March, 1916, by a soldier of the army of Verdun between two trips to the trenches. This name and this date might of themselves serve as introduction. They would not suffice to explain the success enjoyed in France by "La Passion de Notre Frère le Poilu." In the trenches at Verdun, among the simple territorials of Anjou, the Angevin poet, Marc Leclerc, has caused the spring of medieval popular poetry to gush anew from the soil torn by German shells. The enemy may furiously destroy the monuments of past centuries; our brother the Poilu has preserved the vision of Paradise which his ancestors endeavored to depict on cathedral windows. Toward God and the saints he feels the familiar confidence which the simple of former days felt for the Being, infinitely good, whom they found very near to them and, as it were, a portion of their daily life. The poem of Marc Leclerc is simple and somewhat sly, without being disrespectful; it is picturesque and highly colored, while still remaining deeply religious; with no claim to depict the French soul entire, it will prove pleasing, in its American dress, to all those who love to find, in the France of today, certain of the abiding characteristics of France.—G. C.]

I

He was a poor beggar, a poor Poilu,
Who went to the war, as he had to do.

No doubt he would have found it right
To be somewhere else than in the fight;
But since 'twas duty sent the call,
Well, he just went, and that was all.

For to the Poilu it was plain
There was no reasoning with his pain;
In wartime, lads who plough must serve,
Even the broken-down reserve.

'Tis plain to see not all the mob
Can hope to get a munition job;
'Tis clerks and workmen they must find
For duty on the Front Behind.

Sure, it's worse in the fighting van,
If you're only a common soldier man;
Most shells you *see* are from a gun
That's being handled by a Hun.

Our gunners send some too, you bet;
And everyone says they're better yet.

II

The Poilu and his comrades made
A night attack with hand grenade;
'Twas ugly weather for the raid.

Black night, and falling snow, and sleet,
And shell holes made to catch your feet,
And drop you on your face—or seat.

There were quite enough big holes around;
Farther you went and the more you found,
As if they'd rained all over the ground.

III

Crack! And the burst of a five-point-nine
A couple of rods from the fighting line.
The Poilu cried, "My God, I'm hit!"
And slipped to his knees from the shock of it,

Then flat. And on the earth a tide
Of blood from the poor lad's broken side.
"Pete," he said to the corporál,
"You must tell the wife at home, old pal.

"At first just say that I've fallen sick—
Don't tell her the worst at a single kick.
And in my purse—there's a bit of swag
For the chums—you know, the squad—a jag.
The hand grenades—are in—my bag."

So having made his final will,
He rendered up his soul—quite still.

IV

To heaven the Poilu's soul took flight,
With never a compass, through the night,
And came to Paradise-gates, all right.

There at the door he saw Saint Peter,
Hard at his job as carpet-beater,
Who cried in a voice that might have been sweeter:

"Before you enter, wipe your feet,
Then take the right-hand door," said Pete.
"Clear in you'll find the Judgment Hall;
Wait on the bench until they call."

He entered all a-tremble. Right
In front was an angel, dressed in white,
Who asked for his papers quick enough,
His name, his class, and all that stuff.

The poor boy felt an awful fool,
Dumb in the middle of the vestibule;
But the angel said, before he'd been
Waiting forever, "Walk right in!"

V

He'd never entered anywhere
The kind of church that he saw there—
Gold and vermillion-work, for fair.

He saw God sitting on a sun—
Mary at one hand, Christ at one—
Six bushels of candles to left and right,
And lots of saints in a dimmer light.

They were mostly soldier saints. How fine
To see their helmets and armor shine!
Saint George, and Hubert, and Michael's grace
(The devil was under him making a face).

Leonard and Marcel next appeared,
And Charles the Great with all that beard,
Sulpicius, and Martin the holy one,
Saint Barbara handling her little gun;

There were Maurice and friends in the usual manner,
And Joan of Arc with her splendid banner.

When he saw this military crowd,
The Poilu said, but not out loud:
"This *is* headquarters! Here's a row!
I'll bet I'm going to catch it now!"

But now 'twas much too late to run;
He had to stay and see the fun.

VI

"We wish to have a report from you,"
Said our dear God to the poor Poilu;
"Before the war what did you do?"

"Well, God, I ploughed and sowed the ground;
A job where not much cash is found,
And I had none too much around.

"But still, so long as I didn't shirk,
I had enough to pay my work—
Horse, cow, a wife, two oxen big,
Some hens, and (begging your pardon) a pig."

"Pigs! I should know one pig from t'other,"
Said good Saint Antony, "bless you, brother!"
God frowned, not liking that at all,
And good Saint Antony felt quite small.

"And since you have been a soldier-lad,
You haven't often been very bad?"
"Dear God, my faults were very small;
I'll tell you the truth about it all.

"At times I had too much aboard;
You know I come from Anjou, Lord.
And then 'twas wretched wine we had;
You couldn't call me very bad."

Then Father Noah he chimed in:
"I wouldn't call that much of a sin.
I used to make 'em toe the mark
By always shouting, 'Forward, ark!'"

"They locked me in the jail one night,
But *I* think I was in the right.
My pants were torn. All I could find
To cover up my poor behind

"Was a patch I took from the tail of my coat.
But the captain called me down. He wrote
A long report how I had went
And damaged goods of the government."

Saint Martin said: "I did no more;
I cut my robe to cover o'er
A paralytic once. And see!
They went and made a saint of me."

"And me they jugged," the Poilu said;
"But, then, I covered myself instead,
So that comes under a different head.

"And then the fleas that used to crawl—
So many I couldn't scrunch 'em all."
"Ah!" said Saint Labre, "do like me—
Scratch, scratch in all humility."

At this Saint Michael, sadly bored,
Moved Lab along with the flat of his sword.

VII

"Besides, dear Lord, if I did wrong,
My sufferings were dreadful strong,
And the misery it lasted long.

"I suffered things that were a fright
From cold, and heat, and hunger's bite,
And couldn't always sleep at night.

"Along the roads I used to drag
My poor skinned feet, and mustn't lag;
And great big drops of sweat would flow—
My knapsack wasn't light, you know.

"And sometimes I would carry still
The sacks of others up the hill,
To help a little when 'twas rough,
Though I myself was tired enough."

Saint Simon whispered to Jesus, "Ah!
Like us, dear Lord, at Golgotha!"

"Homeless before you at this hour,
A soul without a body's power,
If I, O Lord my God, did wrong,
Haven't I paid for it pretty strong?
You see me pale. My blood's full tide
Flowed from the wound upon my side."

Then these words from Saint Thomas came,
"In truth, Lord Jesus was the same."

VIII

But God said not a word. And so
The Poilu stretched his hand to show
The Virgin Mother's mantle blue,
The red robe of our Savior, too,

The Father's big white beard. "Oh, see!"
He cried. "There are my colors three—
The colors of my country France,
For whom I died. Those colors dance

"Upon my country's flag. And in
My love for her I lost my skin.
For her I cast my life away;
For her, Eternal God, today
See me, before you, kneel and pray."

IX

God smiled at that. And on each side
Heaven behind him opened wide.

X

And the Poilu saw the angels jumbled,
For something among them moved and tumbled.
Right in their midst there was a fearful
Crowd of the Poilus, mighty cheerful.

Their sky-blue coats made a kind of border,
Fitting as if they were made to order;
Helmets of gold on the heads of the soldiers,
And a great pair of wings on each pair of shoulders,

For easy, dry-shod transportation,
A hundred miles to the nearest station,
And never a blister for amputation.

XI

The Poilu sat in the midst of the crowd
And chanted among them, as loud as loud,
"Glory to God in the highest heaven!"
While the response, by the angels given,

In waves of light seemed ever to flow:
"And Peace be on the Earth below
To all good men who wish it so."

Translations from the Sanskrit

WOMEN'S EYES

BEING VERSES TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT

❦

Should fancy cease,
The world would be a forest dead and dry.
—BHAVABHUTI

TO THE MEMORY OF

IRVING STRINGHAM

THE MATHEMATICIAN

WE OF THE UNIVERSITY
OWE MORE TO HIM THAN EITHER WE COULD REPAY OR WHOLLY
COMPREHEND. TO HIS LIVING MEMORY THIS VOLUME IS
DEDICATED; A SLIGHT GIFT, MADE RICH ONLY BY
THE LOVING AND GRATEFUL THOUGHT OF
HIM, WHICH WENT TO ITS MAKING

The year sees many a birth and death
Of little folks like you and me:
His like has never yet drawn breath;
No future age his like will see.

—From the Sanskrit

Introduction

In short verses the Hindus excel. Their mastery of form, their play of fancy, their depth and tenderness of feeling, are all exquisite.

Of the many who wrote such verses, the greatest is Bhartrihari. He lived some fifteen hundred years ago as king of Ujjain, and lived most royally, tasting the sweets of life without thought of the morrow.

At last he was roused from his carefree existence by an event which surprised and shocked him. He gave a magic fruit to a girl whom he loved. She loved another, and passed the gift on to him. He presented it to his lady-love, who in her turn loved the king. When Bhartrihari received the magic fruit from her and learned of its travels, he was disgusted with the fleeting joys of the world, gave up his kingdom, and spent the rest of his life in a cave, writing poetry. The circumstance which led to his retirement is commemorated in the following verse:*

> The maid my true heart loves would not my true love be;
> She seeks another man; another maid loves he;
> And me another maid her own true love would see:
> Oh, fie on her and him and Love and HER and me!

Bhartrihari wrote three hundred verses: a hundred on the conduct of life, a hundred on love, a hundred on renunciation.

In the present collection, no less than eighty-five of the verses are taken from this master of Indian verse-writing. The remaining fifteen are from various sources. The arrangement of the verses is my own, as are also the titles prefixed to them.

I have striven faithfully for a literal rendering. Though a rendering into verse cannot be quite as close as a prose version, nothing has been willfully added or subtracted. One matter de-

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serves notice here; I have occasionally translated Indian god-names, Shiva or Brahma, by the word God. This is not wholly accurate, yet not, I think, unfaithful in spirit.

The present volume does not encroach unduly upon the excellent work of P. E. More: *A Century of Indian Epigrams*. Only a few of the verses chosen by him are translated here, and even these in a manner quite different.

I am under obligations to the *University of California Chronicle* for permission to reprint certain verses which first appeared in its pages.

ARTHUR W. RYDER

Berkeley, California,
February 19, 1910.

WOMEN'S EYES

WOMEN'S EYES

The world is full of women's eyes,
Defiant, filled with shy surprise,
Demure, a little overfree,
Or simply sparkling roguishly;
It seems a gorgeous lily-bed,
Whichever way I turn my head.

IF ONLY WE MIGHT DRESS IN AIR

If only we might dress in air,
And eat what begging brings,
And sleep outdoors, we should not care
For all the money-kings.

LOVE IS YOUNG

The wrinkles on my face are all untold;
My hair is gray and thin;
My limbs are sadly feeble grown, and old:
But love is young, and sin.

LOVE GROWS BY WHAT IT FEEDS ON

When she is far, I only want to see her;
When she is seen, I only want to kiss her;
When she is kissed, I never want to flee her;
I know that I could never bear to miss her.

GENTLE EYES

Candle, and fire, and star,
  Sun, moon, to give me light;
But her dear, gentle eyes are far—
  This world is night.

THE STUBBORN FOOL—I

A diamond you may draw
From an alligator's jaw;
You may cross the raging ocean like a pool;
A cobra you may wear
Like a blossom in your hair;
But you never can convince a stubborn fool.

THE STUBBORN FOOL—II

With sufficient toil and travail
You may gather oil from gravel;
The mirage perhaps your thirsty lips may cool;
If you seek it night and morn,
You may find a rabbit's horn;
But you never can convince a stubborn fool.

SEVEN ARROWS

Seven arrows pierce my heart:
The moonbeams that by day depart;
The maid whose youthful beauty flies;
The pool wherein the lotus dies;
The handsome man whose lips are dumb;
The rich man, miserly and glum;
The good man sunk in suffering;
The rogue in favor with the king.

SUBSTITUTES

What need of armor to the patient soul?
What need of foes, if temper spurns control?
If rogues are near, what need of snakes to harm you?
If relatives, what need of fire to warm you?
If friends, what need of magic draughts for health?
If blameless scholarship, what need of wealth?
If modesty, what need of gems and flowers?
If poetry, what need of kingly powers?

SWEET AND BITTER

Sweet are the moonbeams, sweet the grass-grown wood,
Sweet is the peaceful converse of the good,
The poet's song is sweet, the maiden's face
When angry tear-drops lend a sudden grace:
All would be sweet if human fate were fitter;
The thought of death turns all the sweet to bitter.

WHEN I KNEW A LITTLE BIT

When I knew a little bit,
Then my silly, blinded wit,
Mad as elephants in rut,
Thought it was omniscient; but
When I learned a little more
From the scholar's hoarded store,
Madness' fever soon grew cool,
And I knew I was a fool.

WHOM DOES SHE LOVE?

With one she gossips full of art;
  Her glances with a second flirt;
She holds another in her heart:
  Whom does she love enough to hurt?

ARROWS OF LOVE

Where are you going, winsome maid,
Through deepest, darkest night? (he said.)
I go to him whom love has made
Dearer to me than life (she said).
Ah, girl, and are you not afraid,
For you are all alone? (he said.)
The god of love shall be mine aid,
Arrows of love fly true (she said).

THE DANGER OF DELAY

In giving, and receiving too,
In every deed you have to do,
Act quickly; if you wait a bit,
Then time will suck the juice of it.

BETTER TO DWELL IN MOUNTAINS WILD

Better to dwell in mountains wild
  With beasts of prey
Than in the palaces of gods
  With fools to stay.

THE APRIL WIND

The wind of April is a lover bold:
He makes the women shiver hot and cold;
He shuts their eyes, he rumples up their hair,
And catches rudely at the gowns they wear;
Time after time he presses pretty lips
From which a cry indignant-joyful slips.

MY FOLLY'S DONE

Why should that girl still use her keen,
Coquettish eyes that steal the sheen
From lotus-flowers. What can she mean?

My folly's done. The fever-sting
Of love's soft arrow does not cling;
And yet she doesn't stop, poor thing!

DOES SHE LOVE ME?

Although she does not speak to me,
  She listens while I speak;
Her eyes turn not, my face to see,
  But nothing else they seek.

REMEDIES

A fire with water we defeat,
With parasols the midday heat,
Mad elephants with goads that prick,
Oxen and asses with a stick,
Sickness with draughts that banish harm,
Poison with many a spell and charm:
Science has cures for every ill
Except the fool; he prospers still.

THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE GOOD

You are a teacher of the youth
Who master philosophic truth;
I seek in the poetic art
What charms and ravishes the heart.
Yet we are honest and we see
The only good is charity;
And nothing charms us, fools or wise,
Except a maid with lotus-eyes.

THE POWER OF MONEY

His powers are still the same, his actions too,
His mind is quite as keen, his speech as true;
Yet he has undergone a wondrous change—
He lost his money. Do you think it strange?

DESIRE IS YOUNG

Not time, but we, have passed away;
  Not virtue, we ourselves grow cold;
Not joys, but we, no longer stay:
  Desire is young, but we are old.

THOU ART A FLOWER

Thou art a flower whose fragrance none has tasted,
  A gem uncut by workman's tool,
A branch no desecrating hands have wasted,
  A virgin forest, sweetly cool.

No man on earth deserves to taste thy beauty,
  Thy blameless loveliness and worth,
Unless he has fulfilled man's perfect duty—
  And is there such a one on earth?

THE DIVINE DECREE

Thy wise creator wrote upon thy brow,
  When thou wast born, what wealth should once be thine;
The sum was great perhaps, or small; yet now
  Thy fate is fixed, and sure the law divine.

For if thou dwell within the desert's bound,
  Thou shalt have nothing less than his decree;
Nor shall a single penny more be found,
  Although the golden mount thy dwelling be.

Ah, then be brave and play the manly part,
Nor be so fond to humble thy proud heart
And fawn before the rich with cringing art.

For see! A jar that in the ocean fell
Holds no more water in its little shell
Than when you lowered it in the meanest well.

TWO KINGS

Flee from the palace where they say:
The king is sleeping; go away—
He has no time for you today—
Or—he will see you if you stay—
He will be angry anyway.

Flee to another, greater king,
My soul, who rules each mortal thing,
Whose palace knows no bolt, no ring,
No porter's harsh, sarcastic fling,
No pain, no human suffering.

ABSENCE AND UNION

Absence is union dear,
  When hearts are one;
Union is absence drear,
  When love is done.

THE SERPENT-WOMAN

Avoid the poison-glance, my friends;
  The serpent-woman flee;
Her crooked path has crooked ends;
  Her hood is coquetry.

If you are stung by common snakes,
  Perhaps you will not die;
If poison from a woman takes,
  The doctors say good-bye.

CAN SHE BE DEAR?

The thought of her is saddening,
  The sight of her is fear,
The touch of her is maddening—
  Can she be really dear?

THE DECLINE OF TRUE LEARNING

Once, learning slew the living woe
Of wise men. That was long ago.
She then disdained such service rare,
Became a practical affair.
But nowadays she sees that kings
Despise all intellectual things,
And sinking lower day by day,
She seems to vanish quite away.

THE LAST DAY

When the celestial mount shall totter, burning
  In all-devouring flame,
When seas go dry, where crocodiles are turning
  And sharks no man may tame,
When the compact earth itself shall tumble sheer,
  Great mountains madly dance,
What of our bodies, quivering like the ear
  Of baby elephants?

LOGIC

How long may subtle logic play its part
In science and theology and art?
  So long as no young fawn-eyed maiden's glance
Shall find its way to the logician's heart.

THE ANGER OF THE KING

None from the anger of the king
  May be released;
The fire consumes the offering
  And burns the priest.

THE RAINS

And when the rainy days are come,
Your lady-love must stay at home;
She clings to you, a little bold
Because she shivers with the cold;
The breeze is fresh with heaven's spray
And drives her lassitude away:
When happy lovers are together,
The rainy time is fairest weather.

THE LOVERS' ALLY

Ye maids, exhaust your haughty scorn
  On lovers bending low;
For soon the breeze in southland born,
  With sandal sweet, will blow.

WHY?

The deer, the fish, the good man hunger
  For grass, for water, for content;
Yet hunter, fisher, scandalmonger
  Pursue each harmless innocent.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Child for an hour, and lovesick youth an hour,
  Beggar an hour, then fanned by riches' breath,
The wrinkled actor, Man, bereft of power,
  Creeps tottering behind the curtain, Death.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

In daily journeys of the sun
Our little life is quickly done;
In anxious duties of the day
The hours unnoticed slip away;
Though birth and age are ever near,
And grief, and death, we do not fear:
The world forgets its sore distress,
Goes mad with wine of heedlessness.

SHE ONLY LOOKED

She did not redden nor deny
  My entrance to her room;
She did not speak an angry word;
  She did not fret and fume;
She did not frown upon poor me,
  Her lover now as then;
She only looked at me the way
  She looks at other men.

WHO UNDERSTANDS A MAN?

Once he would follow at my feet,
  Obey my slightest word;
And black was black, if black to me,
  Or white, if I preferred;
And he began to walk or sit
  The moment I began;
But he is different now. Oh, dear!
  Who understands a man?

UNTRUSTWORTHY THINGS

The things that can claw, and the things that can gore,
  Are very untrustworthy things;
And a man with a sword in his hand, furthermore,
  And rivers and women and kings.

TWO VIEWS OF LIFE

When ignorance my life entwined,
Love's ointment made me strangely blind—
I thought the world was made of womankind.

But clearer judgment than of yore
The veil before my vision tore—
I knew that God is all the world and more.

PROCRASTINATION

By and by—
Never fret—
I shall try
By and by.

By and by—
Don't forget—
You must die
By and by.

SHOULD FANCY CEASE

The lover's patient fancy brings him peace,
  Paints her he loves before his inward eye,
And gives him comfort; but should fancy cease,
  The world would be a forest dead and dry,
  And hearts that shrivel in the burning chaff, must die.

WHAT THEN?—I

What if my life is fed
  With all that seems most sweet?
What if my foeman's head
  Is ground beneath my feet?
What if my wealth makes friends
  Again and yet again?
What if my soul ascends
  Through countless lives? What then?

WHAT THEN?—II

Old rags, or fine, white silk that flows and clings—
  Why should I care?
Poor wife, or horses, elephants, and things—
  What difference there?
Sweet rice, or wretched food when day is o'er—
  Why care again?
God's light, or groping in the dark once more—
  What then? What then?

THE QUEEN OF LOVE

Surely the love-god is the slave
  Of her sweet eyes;
For when they give a hint, the knave
  Obedient flies.

JOYOUS TREASURES

How hard a thing it is that they achieve
  Whose hearts the thought of God keeps pure and bright,
Who for His sake earth's joyous treasures leave
  Without a pang at losing such delight!

Those joyous treasures I could never get;
  I cannot get them now; I am not sure
That I shall ever win to them; and yet
  I cannot flout the thought, the hope, the lure.

VEXATIONS—I

The scholarship that grasps at straws,
  The woman's love that must be bought,
The life that hangs on tyrants' laws—
  These things are with vexation fraught.

VEXATIONS—II

The fear of dying vexes birth;
  Age vexes flashing youth;
The carper vexes honest worth;
  Irresolution, truth.

To vex our peace the women love;
  Our joy, ambition's sting;
Rogues vex the court, and snakes the grove;
  And something, everything.

LOVE, THE FISHER

Love, the fisher, casts his woman-hook
  Into the sea of lust and fond desire,
And just as soon as greedy men-fish look
  And snap the red bait, lips so sweet, so dire,
Then he is quick to catch them and to cook
  The hungry wretches over passion's fire.

EPHEMERAL POTIONS

If mouths are dry with thirst,
Men think of water first;
If hungry, bolt their rice
With many a toothsome spice;
If love flames bright and brighter,
They clasp the women tighter:
They have the strangest notions;
They think ephemeral potions
Will heal the soul's commotions.

ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED

What though she have a bosom sweet,
  A form to beauty wed,
A face in which the graces meet—
  She must not turn your head.

Nay, if her charm your fancy haunts,
  Then live on virtue's food;
One cannot have the things he wants
  Except by being good.

THE BLIND FOREST

The lady's body is a forest blind,
  With dangerous hills, her bosom fair;
Think not to wander there, my mind;
  The robber, Love, is lurking there.

THE LITTLENESS OF THE WORLD

Why should the truly wise man wish
  To hold the world in fee?
'T is but the leaping of a baby fish
  Upon the boundless sea.

FRIENDSHIP'S END

Yes, you were I, and I was you,
So fond the love that linked us two;
Alas, my friend, for friendship's end!
Now I am I, and you are you.

A WASTED LIFE--I

No stainless wisdom have I learned;
No honest money have I earned;
No fond obedience have I brought
To parents, with a heart well-taught;
I never dreamed of sweet embraces,
Of sparkling eyes and roguish faces:
My life was wasted like the crow's;
I lived on strangers' bread and blows.

A WASTED LIFE--II

I never learned to vanquish other men
  In conference, with the just and fitting word;
I never made high heaven ring again,
  Praising the elephant-hunter's sturdy sword;
I never tasted honey from the kind,
  Soft lips of maids when moonlight scatters gloom:
My youth is gone and left no good behind,
  A candle burning in an empty room.

A WASTED LIFE--III

The paths of thought I never trod
Which lead to unity in God;
Nor were my days to virtue given
Which opens wide the gates of heaven;
Delights of love that men esteem
Were mine not even in a dream:
I was a sorry axe in sooth
To cut the tree, my mother's youth.

FLAMING BANNERS

Learning and dignity,
  Wisdom and manners
Last till the god of love
  Plants flaming banners.

THE THIEF OF HEARTS

You practice theft by strangest arts
  Once and again;
In broad daylight you steal the hearts
  Of waking men.

TWO KINDS OF FRIENDSHIP

The friendship of the rogue or saint,
  Like shade at dawn or shade at noon,
Starts large and slowly grows more faint,
  Or starting faint, grows larger soon.

CHOOSING A VOCATION

What shall I do in these few hours of life?
Live humbly with a sweet, religious wife?
Renounce the world, the ties of kindred sever,
And spend my days beside the sacred river?
Drink deep of honeyed poems' nectar-flow?
Or learn philosophy? I hardly know.

THE GOOD ARE RARE

Through thoughts and words and deeds their virtues flow;
  To all the world their kindness brings delight;
They make a mote of good in others show
  Like a great mountain; for their hearts are bright,
And brighten all they touch with their own worth:
How many such are to be found on earth?

THERE WAS A NOBLE CITY

There was a noble city old,
A mighty king, and vassals bold;
And there were gathered scholars true,
And moon-faced ladies not a few;
And there were princes proud and free,
And stories told, and minstrelsy:
A memory now; we mourn their fall
And honor Time, who levels all.

WHERE EDUCATION FAILS

Though many youths a training get
In law, religion, etiquette,
Why are there few whose actions would,
Interpreted, seem wholly good?

Some arching brow is sure to be
As cunning as a master-key,
That serves its purpose passing well
In flinging wide the gates of hell.

ON GIVING A DAUGHTER IN MARRIAGE

A girl is held in trust, another's treasure;
  To arms of love my child today is given;
And now I feel a calm and sacred pleasure;
  I have restored the pledge that came from heaven.

STRUGGLING FANCIES

It is my body leaves my love, not I;
  My body moves away, but not my mind;
For back to her my struggling fancies fly
  Like silken banners borne against the wind.

OH, MIGHT I END THE QUEST!

I dug beneath the earth most greedily
  In search of hidden treasure;
I smelted ore; I crossed the mighty sea,
  Forgetting every pleasure;
I cringed to kings; and muddling all my brains
  With magic, lost my rest:
But never got a penny for my pains;
  Oh, might I end the quest!

WHAT DELIGHTS AND HURTS

It is the truth sans prejudice I speak;
  Ye people, heed this truth forever true;
All that delights in women you must seek,
  And all that hurts, you find in women too.

THE SWEETEST THINGS

The sweetest sight a man may see
  Is a maiden's loving face;
The sweetest thing to touch should be
  Her body's close embrace;

Her voice should be the sweetest sound;
  Her breath, the sweetest scent;
The sweetest taste, the honey found
  On lips to kisses lent;

The thought of her is fervent prayer,
  Religion's sweetest part;
The charm of her is everywhere
  Unto the pure in heart.

THE UNLUCKY MAN

A bald man once, whose hairless pate
  Felt inconveniently hot,
Fled to a cocoa-tree at noon—
  He hoped to find a shady spot.
And then a big nut fell, and crack!
  The poor, bald head was split in two.
Misfortunes almost always find
  The man whom evil fates pursue.

A REASON FOR RENUNCIATION

Possessions leave us at the end,
  However long they stay;
Then why not cast aside, my friend,
  What leaves us anyway?

And if they leave against our will,
  The heart takes time in mending;
If given willingly, they fill
  That heart with joy unending.

RENUNCIATION

What does renunciation mean?
It means a lonely woodland scene
Remote from men and human sin,
From woes of love, from love of kin,
Free from the world, a life apart
That slays the tortures of the heart
As fear of death and fear of birth:
It means the best of heaven and earth.

THE BETTER PART

Is there no splendid Himalayan height
  Cooled by the spray from Ganges' holy springs,
With rocks where fairies now and then alight,
  That men should fawn upon contemptuous kings?

THE FIVE ROBBERS

"Here are banquets, and singing sweet,
Perfumes, and glimpse of dancing feet,
And bosoms that on mine may beat."

Five rascal senses whisper this,
Lead me from virtue much amiss,
And cheat me of my highest bliss.

WHEN WOMAN WILLS

When loving woman wants her way,
God hesitates to say her nay.

A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE

A fool's opinion easily is bent;
  More easy 'tis to win the wise and great;
But God himself could never make content
  The man who feels himself elate
  With one small grain of knowledge in his pate.

THE WEAKER SEX

The classic poets make a great mistake;
  Forever of the weaker sex they speak;
When gods are subjugated for the sake
  Of starry glances, are the women weak?

YOUNG WOMANHOOD

Half-smiles that brighten on her face,
  Innocent, roving glances,
The wealth of budding charms that show
  In little steps and dances,
The flow of words that shyly prove
  The sweet, new woman-feeling:
Yes, all the fawn-eyed maiden does
  Is wondrously appealing.

THE BRAVEST OF THE BRAVE

A few brave men pursue
  Rogue elephants to death;
There are a braver few
  Who stop the lion's breath;
The bravest of the brave—
  And fewer yet they prove—
Are they who can enslave
  The haughty god of love.

DIGNITY

The dog will roll, and wag his tail, and fawn,
  Show mouth and belly, just to get some meat;
The majestic elephant gazes gravely on;
  Till coaxed a hundred times, he will not eat.

IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH

While life is vigorous and bright,
  While sickness comes not, nor decay,
While all your powers are at their height,
  While yet old age is far away,
Then, wise man, let your thoughts be turning
  To heaven's hopes and fears of hell;
For when the house is fired and burning,
  It is too late to dig a well.

THEY WANT THE EARTH

'Tis but a little ball of mud
  With a streak of water round;
Yet kings for it will shed their blood,
  As for a treasure found.

They cannot, will not leave the thing,
  So poor are they, so mean;
And men will fawn on such a king!
  Oh, shame upon the scene!

THE BEASTS THAT DON'T EAT GRASS

Unschooled in music, poetry, and art,
  Man is a beast, a hornless, tailless beast;
  He doesn't eat the grass; for this at least
The other beasts may well be glad at heart.

WHY MEN BEG

Is there a man of spirit who would beg
  In broken words that stumble with his sobbing,
Harsh sobs of him who fears a surly "No!"
  And all to ease his belly's empty throbbing?

None but the man who sees his wretched wife
  Sad always, sees her worn and ragged skirts,
Sees sad-faced babies tugging at their folds
  With screams that tell how fiercely hunger hurts.

THE WISE MISOGYNIST

The wise misogynist, poor soul,
  To self-deceit is given;
For heaven rewards his self-control,
  And women swarm in heaven.

NECTAR AND POISON

All nectar and all poison lives
  In woman's changing states;
For she is nectar when she loves,
  And poison when she hates.

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL

Why should I study scripture, sacred lore,
Or any good, big book? Why get a store
  Of pious actions, anxiously performed—
And win a humble tent in heaven, no more?

The knowledge of myself is all I need
To give me lasting joy, to burn the seed
  Of the interminable pain of life—
Let pious peddlers show their wares and plead.

THE TWO THINGS THAT MATTER

Why all this talk and foolish chatter?
There are just two things that really matter:
A buxom, young, and frisky wife;
Or else a lonely forest-life.

UNINTELLIGIBLE VIRTUE

Are palace-joys so incomplete?
  Is song a despicable pleasure?
And is there anything so sweet
  As clasping her you love and treasure?

Yet pious men account these things
  As vain as flickering candlelight
'Neath dancing moths on troubled wings;
  And to the woods they take their flight.

THE LINES OF FATE

If thorn-plants in the desert leafless be,
  The spring is not to blame.
If owls in broadest daylight cannot see,
  The sun should feel no shame.
If in the plover's bill no raindrops fall,
  'Twere wrong to blame the cloud.
The lines that fate has written once for all,
  Are never disallowed.

POVERTY

The moon by night, the sun by day
Continue in their heavenly way;
One rag they have, one ragged cloud
To serve them both as robe and shroud.
Poor things!

HOW HARD FATE GRIPS

The snake and elephant are caged;
  The moon and sun must meet eclipse;
The prudent are in strife engaged
  With poverty. How hard fate grips!

WHEN MY LOVE DRAWS NIGH

When my love draws nigh,
  When his voice I hear,
Why am I all eye?
  Why am I all ear?

THE HERMIT

I seem to see a hermit good:
He has no pride, he begs his food;
From man-made laws his acts are free;
He seeks no man's society;
He has no care for common ways
Of giving, getting all his days;
He stitches up his garment ragged
With wayside tatters, torn and jagged;
No false conceit his fancy haunts—
Eternal peace is all he wants.

WHY GO TO COURT?

I am not fashion's changing sport,
  I never acted, sang, nor hated;
What figure should I cut at court?
  I am no lady languid-gaited.

IMPOSSIBLE!

The consecrated saints of eld
  Who lived on water, leaves, and air,
Went mad with love when they beheld
  A face that showed how maids are fair.

And if the common men who eat
  Their rice and milk and curds and ghee,
Should curb the wish for things so sweet,
  The mountains would fly oversea.

HINDRANCES

'Twould not be hard, through life's gray sea
  To find the track;
But fawn-eyed women hinder me,
  And hold me back.

DIVINE VISION

My love is in a distant land,
And yet I see her where I stand.
The gods have vision less divine,
Because the eye of love is mine.

WHY MY POEMS DIED

The critics all were jealous,
  The patrons full of pride,
The public had no judgment;
  And so my poems died.

RELATIVES

BEING FURTHER VERSES TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT

For a self-conceited modish life, made up of trifles, clinging to a corporeal civilization, hating ideas, there is no remedy like the Oriental largeness.

—EMERSON

TO MY FRIEND

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Six things are done by friends:
To take, and give again;
To listen, and to talk;
To dine, to entertain.

—*From the* PANCHATANTRA

Introduction

THIS VOLUME is in some sense a sequel to the poems from the Sanskrit presented under the title *Women's Eyes.*

The present collection has less unity. Almost all of the verses of *Women's Eyes* were translated from Bhartrihari, the greatest Indian writer of epigrams. The verses here presented are from many sources, and the selections are of very different length and date. The only bond of union is this—that these poems are all taken from the ancient Sanskrit language, and all seemed to the translator worthy of an English rendering.

The oldest is the satirical "Hymn to Faith," which is found in the *Rigveda,* and may have been composed more than a thousand years before the beginning of the Christian era. The latest is "The Thief's Song," written in Kashmir in the eleventh century A.D. There are selections from *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana,* the two great epics whose beginnings precede by centuries the birth of Christ. There are poems by Bhartrihari and Kalidasa, poets for whom the date 500 A.D. is convenient, though probably only approximate. There are bits from the two fable books, *Hitopadesha* and *Panchatantra,* whose material is much more ancient than their present form.

I have striven faithfully for a literal rendering. Though a rendering into verse cannot be quite as close as a prose version, there are, in the shorter pieces and in "The Thief's Song," no willful additions or subtractions. In the longer narrative selections some condensation seemed desirable; here, too, nothing is added.

I am under obligations to the *University of California Chronicle* for permission to reprint certain verses which first appeared in its pages.

ARTHUR W. RYDER

Berkeley, California,
September 20, 1919.

RELATIVES

I saw some great, wild elephants who
  Were gathered in a ring;
They saw some men with a lassoo,
  And they began to sing:

"We fear no fire nor goad nor sling,
  Nor any man that lives;
We do not fear a single thing
  Except our relatives.

"For relatives are selfish, mean,
  And always setting traps:
We understand what we have seen;
  Perhaps we know—PERHAPS.

"Girls give us hopes, too often vain;
  Cows give us tallow grease;
Our relatives give us a pain;
  The clergy give us peace.

"A thirsty bee will kiss a flower,
  And then extract the honey;
A relative will praise your power,
  And carry off your money.

"An elephant will bathe his skin,
  Then dust it till it's black;
A relative will praise his kin,
  And stab them in the back.

"We fear no fire nor goad nor sling,
Nor any man that lives;
We do not fear a single thing
Except our relatives."

—From the *Ramayana*

A RULE OF LIFE

To wealth and wisdom give your days,
Like one whom age and death would spare;
Yet hourly walk in righteous ways,
As if Death had you by the hair.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

THE SLAVE TO HER MASTER

My love is all in vain;
Bid hope depart,
My heart!

Yet thrills in me again
What will not bear
Despair.

Belovèd, give to me
The joy unknown
Alone;

For slavery keeps from thee,
Lord of my life!
Thy wife.

—From KALIDASA'S *Malavika*

A FAITHFUL FRIEND

To bring hard matters to an end,
One needs to have a faithful friend:
To see an object in the night,
Even eyes must have a candle's light.

—From KALIDASA'S *Malavika*

A FAITHLESS FRIEND

Whoever trusts a faithless friend
And twice in him believes,
Lays hold on death as willingly
As when a mule conceives.

—From the *Panchatantra*

FRIENDSHIP'S BROTHERS

To give us birth we need a mother,
For second birth we need another:
And friendship's brothers seem by far
More dear than natural brothers are.

—From the *Panchatantra*

THE PERVERSITY OF FATE

I see a dog, but not a stone;
I find a stone, the dog is flown;
If dog and stone at once I view,
The king's dog! Damn! What can I do?

—From the *Anthology*

HEEDLESSNESS

Old age, an awful tigress, growls:
And shafts of sickness pierce the bowels;
Life's water trickles from its jar—
'Tis strange how thoughtless people are.

—From Bhartrihari

OLD AGE

Gone long ago are they who gave us birth;
Old friends are memories upon this earth;
Our lives are undermined and daily sink,
Like trees upon the river's sandy brink.

—From Bhartrihari

THE CHESS-GAME

Where there were scattered pieces on the board,
There now is one;
Next, many slaughtered pieces are restored,
Then all are gone:
The dice are day and night; the board is life;
Time and again
Death plays a fearful chess-game with his wife—
The pawns are men.

—From Bhartrihari

MANU AND THE FISH

I

There was a gentle, holy sage
Named Manu, in a former age.
The woes of life he would not blink;
For many years he did not wink.

With ragged clothes and frowsy hair
He lived beside a stream. And there
He saw a fish who thus began
To speak to him. "O holy man,

"I am a little fish, you see;
And bigger fishes frighten me.
For bigger fishes eat the small;
It is their nature, once for all.

"So dreadful terror weighs me down;
Besides, I fear that I shall drown.
Then save me. Some day I will do
An equal favor, sir, to you."

II

So Manu, when he heard his wish,
Stretched forth a hand, and took the fish,
And dropped him in a water-jar
That was as bright as moonbeams are.

And in the jar the little fish
Had everything his heart could wish.
He grew and thrived on food and fun,
For Manu loved him like a son.

At last he grew too big by far
To live within the water-jar.
He said: "Good Manu, I would thank
You very kindly for a tank."

So Manu took him to a tank
Eight miles in breadth from bank to bank,
And twice as long. There, free from fears,
He lived and grew for many years.

III

And when he grew too big to play
There in a comfortable way,
He said to Manu: "Pray deliver,
And put me in the Ganges River.

"And I will never show you spite,
But some day help you, as is right.
My growth has not been selfish; it
Has happened for your benefit."

Kind Manu, anxious to deliver
His friend, went to the Ganges River,
And left him happy. As before
He grew in time a little more.

And then he said to Manu: "Dear,
I can no longer wiggle here.
My holy friend, be good to me,
And take me quickly to the sea."

So Manu took him tenderly
And traveled quickly to the sea.
The fish tried not to weigh too much,
And to be nice to smell and touch.

IV

The fish, when he had reached the ocean,
Smiled at his holy friend's devotion,
And said: "O kind and holy man,
You do as much as fathers can.

"And now 'tis time for me to do
A little something, dear, for you.
For you must know, my holy friend,
The world is hastening to its end.

"A dreadful time is near at hand
For all the things that move or stand;
There comes a flood that has no bound,
And everybody will be drowned.

"So build a ship and build it strong:
Put ropes on board both stout and long.
And one thing further you will need,
Neat packages of every seed.

"Embark then with the seven seers,
And wait, good Manu, free from fears,
Until I come. And you will see
A horn upon the head of me.

"Till then, farewell. Do not delay.
The danger grows from day to day."

V

Then Manu packed most carefully
The seeds, and straightway put to sea.
His good ship gently rose and fell
Upon the ocean's mighty swell.

He longed to see the friendly fish,
Who came in answer to the wish.
He seemed a floating mountain dread;
A horn was growing on his head.

So Manu, feeling less forlorn,
Fastened a rope about the horn,
And felt the ship glide speedily
Over the dancing, salty sea.

But when the wind began to roar
And ocean thundered more and more,
The tossing, shaken ship began
To stagger like a drunken man.

No land remained to cheer them there,
But only water, sky, and air;
No life through all those many years
Save Manu, fish, and seven seers.

But Manu, all those many years,
Went sailing with the seven seers;
The fish pulled on with might and main
And did not weary nor complain.

At last he did, however, stop
Beside the highest mountain-top,
And bade them tie the ship; and they
Call it Ship Mountain to this day.

VI

And then, with wide, unwinking eyes,
The fish, to Manu's great surprise,
Declared: "I saved the seven seers
From death and agonizing fears;

"For I am Brahma. And my friend,
Kind Manu, who has seen the end
Of all the world, shall make again
Gods, devils, animals, and men."

And so he disappeared. But they,
Amazed, departed on their way,
While kindly Manu made again
Gods, devils, animals, and men.

Now all have heard who had the wish
The tale of Manu and the fish.
And everyone who takes it in,
Shall be forever free from sin.

—From the *Mahabharata*

THOUGHTS ON HAVING ONE'S WIFE STOLEN BY A GIANT

From the *Ramayana*. This is the lament of the hero Rama, when his wife Sita is carried away by Ravan, the giant king of Ceylon.

They say that as the seasons move,
  Our sorrow gently fades away;
But I am far from her I love
  And sorrow deepens every day.

That she is gone, is not my woe;
  That she was reft, is not my pain;
The thought that agonizes so
  Is this; her youth is spent in vain.

Blow, breezes, blow to her dear face;
  Blow back to me her kisses sweet:
Through you we taste a glad embrace,
  And in the moon our glances meet.

When she was torn away from me,
 "My lord! My love!" was all her cry,
Which tortures me incessantly;
  My heart is poisoned, and I die.

I burn upon an awful pyre;
  My body wastes by day and night;
Her loss is fuel to feed the fire
  That burns so pitilessly white.

If I could leave each loving friend,
  Could sink beneath the sea, and sleep,
Perhaps the fire of love would end,
  If I could slumber in the deep.

One thought consoles my worst distress;
  Through this I live: I cannot die
While she lies down in loveliness
  Upon the selfsame earth as I.

The sun-parched rice, no longer wet,
  Lives on, while earth her moisture gives;
The root of love supports me yet,
  For they have told me that she lives.

Though giants hem her round, yet soon
  She shall be freed, and shall arise
As radiantly as the moon
  From clouds that darken autumn skies.

When shall I pierce the giant's breast
  With shafts that suck his life away,
That give my tortured darling rest
  And all her absent griefs allay?

When shall I feel the close embrace
  Of my good goddess, as in dreams?
When kiss her smile, while on her face
  The water born of gladness gleams?

When shall I pluck from out my heart—
  A heart by woes of absence torn—
The pain of life from love apart,
  Forget it, like a garment worn?

THE FORTUNATE FOOL

God to the fool a way has shown,
A way unfailing, all his own,
  To hide his lack of sense;
For each, however great a fool,
Among the wise may wear the jewel
  Called Silence.

—From Bhartrihari

FORESIGHT

From loving girls, ye wise, refrain;
'Tis little pleasure, longer pain.
But love three females none the less,
Compassion, Wisdom, Friendliness.
For swelling breasts of lovely girls,
Trembling beneath their strings of pearls,
And hips with jingling girdles—well,
They do not help you much in hell.

—From Bhartrihari

PROXIES

When righteous acts must needs be done,
When time of service has begun,
  In caring for the servant crowd,
In the begetting of a son,
  No proxies are allowed.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

A PRAYER

O father wind, friend light, and earth my mother!
O kinsman water, heaven's space my brother!
I bow, I pray: with you in union blest
May I be good, in brightest wisdom smother
The dark, and sink at last in God to rest.

—From BHARTRIHARI

SIMPLE JUSTICE

If, maiden of the lotus eye,
Your anger hurts you so,
'Tis right you should not let it die,
You hardly could, you know.

But once I gave you an embrace,
To keep it would be pain;
And once I kissed your willing face,
Give me that kiss again.

—From AMARU

ONE FATE OF TWO

One fate of two for the jasmine flower,
The same for the wise and good;
To shine at the head of all the world,
Or to wither in the wood.

—From BHARTRIHARI

GENTLENESS

To gentleness the ruffians bend,
And gentlefolk no less;
It moves relentless to its end—
So fierce is gentleness.

—From the *Mahabharata*

POT-EAR'S AWAKENING

From the *Ramayana*. When the giant citadel in Ceylon was invested by Rama and his army, the giant king determined to call to his assistance his most redoubtable subject, Pot-ear. This giant was normally awake only one day every six months. He must therefore be awakened before he can employ his great strength and courage in the giant cause.

I

They started forth, the giant band
Obedient to their king's command,
With flesh and blood as tempting food,
With wreaths and perfumes, sweet and good.

And so they came to Pot-ear's door,
Where stretched the cave a league and more
On every side, where blossoms sweet
Poured fragrance forth, a guest to greet.

And all that mighty giant band
Before his snoring scarce could stand;
They tottered, but with spirit brave
They fought their way into the cave.

There Pot-ear stretched this way and that
Just like a mountain tumbled flat,
Hideous in his slumber deep,
For he was very sound asleep.

They saw him bristle, saw him shake;
They heard him hissing like a snake;
They felt his breathing like a storm
That blew them from his ugly form.

They saw his nostrils sink and swell,
His throat that yawned like gates of hell;
The dreadful, sprawling form they saw
That smelt of dinners eaten raw.

They made a mountain of the food
That they had brought, so sweet and good;
Beside his bed the mountain rose
Of deer and boars and buffaloes.

They grasped their trumpets glittering bright
As moonbeams shining in the night;
Impatiently they blew and blew,
And screamed and howled and shouted, too.

Through all the tumult loud and deep
Pot-ear lay snoring, fast asleep;
They saw he did not mind their clamor
And seized a stone, or club, or hammer.

They tumbled boulders on his chest,
To see if they could break his rest.
They beat a hundred rub-a-dubs
With fists and hammers, bars and clubs.

The only answer was a snore
A little deeper than before
That blew away the giant band;
Before his breath that could not stand.

More sternly yet the giants strove:
With sticks and whips and goads they drove
Horses and elephants abreast,
Asses and camels on his chest.

They clubbed and pounded without pity,
Until the tumult filled the city;
They made the woods and mountains shake,
But giant Pot-ear would not wake.

Then anger filled each giant breast;
They swore that they would break his rest.
One last attack they made at length
With all their might and wrath and strength.

And there were some to beat the drum,
While screamed and howled and shouted some;
Some bit his ears, while some would tear
Away great handfuls of his hair.

A hundred water-pots they poured
Into his ears, and still he snored;
They could not shake his slumber deep;
Pot-ear was very sound asleep.

Some took a hammer or a club,
With all their might began to drub
Upon his chest and limbs and head
To wake him from his drowsy bed.

They tied great, spiky stones to ropes
And dragged them over him; their hopes
Were disappointed still; for he
Slept on with peaceful dignity.

But when a thousand elephants
Upon his chest began to dance,
Then Pot-ear, gently tickled, broke
From bonds of slumber, and awoke.

He did not heed the falling stones
Or clubs that rattled on his bones,
But yawned and raised himself to see
What breakfast might provided be.

The giants pointed to the food
That they had brought, so sweet and good;
Then Pot-ear in his might arose
And ate some boars and buffaloes.

II

Now when the meat, with wine afloat,
Had vanished down his mighty throat,
Dull Pot-ear shook his heavy head,
And rolled his sleepy eyes, and said:

"Great matters surely are at stake,
Or I should hardly be awake;
And for our giant king, I will
Cool fire or overturn a hill.

"But tell me why I am awake;
Surely great matters are at stake."
Then giant Post-eye bent him low
And humbly answered: "Pot-ear, know

"That neither gods nor devils can
Affright us—but we fear a man.
He leads his mountainous apes across
The strait, for grief at Sita's loss.

"One ape has burned our splendid town
And he has struck Prince Aksha down.
While Ravan, heaven's scourge and thorn,
Has been by Rama overborne

"In single fight, and has been spared—
A thing no god or devil dared."
Then Pot-ear rolled his eyes, and said:
"Well, I will strike the monkeys dead,

"With Lakshmana and Rama, and
Before our king as victor stand.
And monkey flesh and blood shall be
Your food—the blood of men for me."

But when he heard this boasting grim,
The giant Great-paunch answered him:

"Nay, first consider everything,
And listen humbly to the king:
And after that, it will be right
To meet your enemy, and fight."

So Pot-ear, rising, took a cup
And drank, to keep his courage up;
He drank two thousand jars of wine,
And washed his face, and made it shine.

Eager, excited, haughty, proud,
He towered above the giant crowd;
And as he strode his king to greet,
Earth trembled underneath his feet.

III

On, to his brother's proud abode,
Half-drunk with sleep and wine, he strode;
Red-eyed with wrath, he bowed him low,
And asked: "Why was I wakened so?

"What danger threatens, or what ill?
Whom would you like to have me kill?"
And Ravan, maddened by his wrong,
Said: "Brother, you have slept too long;

"So all the wickedness and woe
That Rama works, you do not know;
How he has built a bridge, and crossed
The channel with a monkey host.

"Behold their strangely hideous shapes!
See Lanka's groves, one sea of apes!
They kill our bravest when we fight;
For who can conquer monkey might?

"Ah, brother, save your stricken nation,
Your king reduced to supplication;
You know I love you and adore you;
I know how devils flee before you.

"For there is none on earth so strong
As you, to right my grievous wrong;
Scatter and tear the monkey crowds
Like wind among the autumn clouds."

IV

Then Pot-ear laughed aloud and said:
"Refusing, Ravan, to be led
By us and our united sense,
You suffer now the consequence.

"Whoever scorns a mighty foe,
Is certain to be stricken low;
Whoever fails to guard his own
High place, is quickly overthrown."

Then Ravan frowned, and in his grim,
Gigantic fashion, answered him:
"Enough of sermonizing! Hold,
Be silent; do as you are told.

"Although it might be true I had
Been headstrong, ill-advised, or mad,
You, as a younger brother, should
Forget, and turn the sin to good.

"So, if you have a warrior's might,
Or if you love your brother, fight!
Or if you would not, sulk apart
While trouble makes me sad at heart.

"He only is a friend indeed
Who aids his sinful friend in need,
Who indefatigably gives
A helping hand to relatives."

V

Then Pot-ear felt his brother's woe,
And answered softly, soothing, slow:
"Forget your sorrow, O my king;
Take heart at my encouraging.

"Grieve not. Am I not here, to kill
The wretched man that thwarts your will?
And what I said, I said to prove
My sympathy and brother's love.

"In battle's forefront I will slay
Rama, and chase his apes away;
His severed head shall bring relief
And joy to you; to Sita, grief.

"The giants mourning for their slain
Shall soon forget their grief again;
For I will wipe their tears away
As joyfully I slay and slay.

"Then grieve not, brother mine, but send
Me forth, your toils and wars to end;
For none can stand before my face
With spear or arrow, sword or mace.

"Soon Rama and his brother shall
Be dead, with all inimical,
O King, to you—god, ape, or man;
I wish to kill them, and I can.

"Yes, I would drink the sea, eat fire,
Slay Death himself, should you desire;
Would crush the mountains, pierce the earth,
Smite sun and stars, to bring you mirth,

"And food to me. I sleep so long
And grow so hungry and so strong
That earth and heaven and hell would be
A not too bounteous meal for me.

"Rejoice, and let your heart incline
To every pleasure rare and fine,
And murmur, as you sip your wine:
'Sita is mine, forever mine.'"

VI

But giant Great-paunch counseled so:
"He likes to talk, but does not know
The right and wrong, this vulgar whelp;
King Ravan is our only help.

"Recall the havoc in our clan
That Rama wrought in Janasthan;
The angry lion would you wake,
Or irritate the sleeping snake?"

To Ravan turning then, he said:
"Sita you seized and hither led
Her; now subdue her to your will,
If you desire her beauty still.

"And listen to my plan, wherethrough
She may be made to favor you—
Proclaim in every street today
That heroes five go forth to slay

"Prince Rama—Pot-ear, Cleaver, and
Fork-tongue, Roarer, I who stand
Before you. We will bravely fight,
Struggling with all our main and might.

"And if we conquer, well and good;
At worst, we shall be dripping blood
When we return and say that we
Devoured your bitter enemy.

"And then proclaim throughout the town
That Rama has been stricken down
With Lakshman and the monkey host;
And give to them you honor most

"Garlands and slaves and such rewards
As your rich treasury affords.
Then, when the rumor has been spread
Of Rama and his army dead,

"Go, comfort Sita, speak her fair,
And give her jewels to deck her hair.
Her grief, combined with your deceit,
Will lay her grateful at your feet.

"She is a woman, helpless, bred
To ease; and if her lord is dead,
Or dead to her, she can but wive
With you, a lord to her alive."

VII

Then Pot-ear answered: "I will slay
Rama, and wipe your fear away;
When heroes promise you a wonder,
Their boasting is no empty thunder.

"While cowards and flatterers like you
Make ill anticipation true,
I fight, to win revenge again
For treasure lost and giants slain."

Then Ravan laughed aloud and said:
"I fancy Great-paunch is afraid;
Go forth, brave Pot-ear, fight, and save
My honor: you alone are brave.

"And when they see your awful shape,
Terror will seize on every ape;
And Rama's heart and Lakshman's too
Will split with dread on seeing you."

So Ravan, knowing Pot-ear's might,
Rejoiced, and felt his heart grow light;
While Pot-ear grasped, his foe to strike,
His trusty, gold-bespangled pike—

The pike that gods and devils feared,
Made of black iron, in spots besmeared
With many a stain and blotch of red,
By foemen's blood contributed.

Then, maddened by the reek of blood,
To the great city wall he strode,
While flowers and prayers upon him fell,
And drums and trumpets wished him well.

And there he paused and spoke: "Today
Shall all the monkeys fade away
Like moths in flame. I would not care
To hunt them in their forest lair;

"Indeed, the species often proves
Quite ornamental in our groves;
But Rama is the cause of all
Our woe; so he and his must fall."

He spoke, nor heeded signs of ill
That waited on his footsteps still—
The sky as red as asses' skin,
The clouds with lightning mingled in,

The jackals spitting fire on high,
The throbbing arm, the twitching eye,
The vulture on his pikestaff croaking,
The thunderbolt before him smoking.

He heeded not, but leaped the wall,
Obeying thus the certain call
Of Death; and straight the monkey crowds
Scattered and fled like riven clouds.

But Angad called: "Why would you flee
Like apes of mean or no degree?
Return, and prove your valor; thus
He shall not prove a match for us."

Ashamed, they seized upon great boulders
Or lifted trees upon their shoulders;
The trees were splintered, striking him;
Rocks split upon his every limb.

While underneath his blows they bled
And swooned and died, or turned and fled;
Till Angad called them back to fight,
Reproving thus their shameless flight:

"Why save your lives? Why run away
Like cowards? What will the women say?
For high-born monkeys may not flee
Like vulgar apes of no degree.

"And if we fight our best and die,
We win a hero's home on high;
If victory should crown our worth,
We win a hero's name on earth."

"But life is dear to us," they said,
"And Pot-ear quickly strikes us dead."
Yet, rallying to their prince's name,
They fought once more for very shame.

VIII

They sought for courage in despair;
For wounds and death they did not care,
Nor for their scores and hundreds slain
And eaten on the battle-plain.

Then great Hanuman hurled a shower
Of boulders, using all his power;
But Pot-ear answered with a blow
From that fierce pike, that laid him low.

The mountain crag that Nila hurled
He caught, as through the air it whirled,
And powdered it, till sparks and flame
Forth from the tortured missile came.

Then monkeys by the thousand poured
Upon him, bit and tore and roared;
Even as they clawed and gashed and smote,
They vanished in their hell, his throat.

Even King Sugriva could not kill
His foe, nor Angad, struggling still;
Even Lakshman with an arrow-shower
Could not subdue his giant power.

"With Rama only will I fight,"
Cried Pot-ear: "then will put to flight,
When he is dead, your warriors all";
And Rama answered Pot-ear's call

With shafts that pierced his shaggy chest;
Then, spitting fire, with bleeding breast,
He charged, but from his weakened hand
The weapons dropped upon the sand.

Yet with bare, weakened hands he slew
Two hundred monkeys as they flew
Upon him; then, with tempest-shock
He hurled a craggy, ponderous rock

At Rama, who evaded it,
While Pot-ear, in a foaming fit,
Turned, licking bloody chops, and slew
Of monkey warriors not a few,

And hoarsely laughing, shouted so:
"Rama, I am no common foe
Like those that you have slain; this club
With which I have been wont to drub

"The gods and devils, you shall feel
As it prepares you for my meal."
An answering arrow cut away
The right arm and the club: they lay

Immense: a second arrow sped
And shore away his bleeding head,
Which tumbled, grinning horribly,
Among the fishes in the sea.

Then choirs of heaven praised the might
Of Rama in that dreadful fight;
And monkey faces blossomed bright
Like lilies in the glad sunlight.

IX

But in the city Ravan kept
A tortured vigil, moaned, and wept:

"Ah, Pot-ear! Source of all my hope and gladness!
Where are you flown,
Leaving unplucked your brother's thorn of sadness,
Dying alone?

"My right arm were you; you I trusted only,
Death's match! And can
The tamer of high gods be sleeping lonely,
Slain by a man?

"The gods rejoice, forgetting all their anguish;
Foes not a few
Soon will assail the fortress where I languish,
Grieving for you.

"I am no king, nor Sita's lover longer—
Till I shall give
Battle to Rama, prove myself the stronger,
Vainly I live.

"And should it be his lot to slay another,
Gladly I die;
Beside the headless form that was my brother,
There let me lie."

FORTITUDE

From the *Mahabharata*. This is the consolation offered to those who have lost kinsmen in the great epic war.

All gathering ends in dissipation;
All heaps, at last, must fall;
All friendships melt in separation;
And death at last ends all.

The coward dies, the hero lives
A space, but none pass by
The appointed days that heaven gives—
Then let us fighting die.

All lives begin from nothingness,
  Stir for a time, and then
(No cause for grief) sink into less
  Than nothingness again.

Death has no enemy nor friend;
  Each in his turn must pass,
Must helpless to that bidding bend
  As wind-blown blades of grass.

Our goal is—there. And every day
  The one long caravan
Moves on with death to point the way.
  Why should it grieve a man?

For all the saints and scholars old
  Since first the world began
Are gone, with every fighter bold.
  Why should it grieve a man?

The fighter slain attains to heaven;
  The other wins the fight;
To each is much advantage given;
  Fighting is good and right.

And God, who loves a fighting man,
  Hailing a welcome guest,
Prepares with all the care he can,
  A seat among the blest.

Oh, trust yourself, and spare your tears
  For those who fell in strife;
Not all your sorrow, pain, and fears
  Can bring the dead to life.

Hundreds of parents, sons, and wives
  Loved you with passion true;
Gone are the loves of former lives—
  What do they mean to you?

Time makes us win our strength, and keep;
  Time tells us when to die;
Time is awake when others sleep;
  Time passes no man by.

Youth vanishes, and beauty, wealth,
  And love and friendship die
With life itself and living health;
  But wise men do not cry.

They do not cry, but fight; and then
  Forget their former woes;
For pain forgotten is not pain,
  But pain remembered, grows.

This wisdom heals the heart's dull woes
  As herbs the body's pain;
When palliating wisdom grows,
  We are not children then.

One thing remains of all our loves,
  Our wealth and honors won—
The character that onward moves,
  The deeds that we have done.

Man has no enemy nor friend
  Except himself; alone
He knows what deeds to virtue tend,
  What seeds of sin are sown.

HYMN TO FAITH

By Faith the holy fire is lit,
  And sung the liturgy;
We pray to Faith with all our wit
  For prosperous piety.

Give wealth, O Faith, to me who give
  Such worship as I can;
Make me respected, make me live
  A rich, religious man.

The gods have faith from imps, I see;
  For what they will, they can;
Enlarge my prosperous piety
  As a rich, religious man.

Gods worship Faith, and pious men
  Must worship every hour;
If faith first fills our bosoms, then
  Faith gives us wealth and power.

We call on Faith by morning's light,
  On Faith in glare of day,
On Faith when evening sinks to night:
  O Faith, give faith to pray!

—From the *Rig-Veda*

WIPE OUT DELUSION

Wipe out delusion, O my soul!
  Seek peace in Shiva ever;
Dwell on the banks whereunder roll
  Floods of the sacred river;

Who trusts in waves that break and crash,
  In bonfires' flaming flakes,
In bubble or in lightning-flash,
  In women, streams, or snakes?

—From BHARTRIHARI

LIFE

Here is the sound of lutes, and there are screams and wailing;
Here winsome girls, there bodies old and failing;
Here scholars' talk, there drunkards' mad commotion—
Is life a nectared or a poisoned potion?

—From BHARTRIHARI

HOW LONG, O LORD?

Alone, without desire, at rest,
In atmosphere of heaven drest,
My hand for spoon, when shall I be,
O Shiva, God! from *karma* free?

—From BHARTRIHARI

LITERARY CRITICISM

Established fame is not enough;
Not all the new is wretched stuff.
The wise approve where'er they may;
The fools repeat what critics say.

—From KALIDASA's *Malavika*

A JOY FOREVER

The poet-kings who know the art
To touch the chord that moves the heart,
  Secure may draw their breath;
Far from the body of their fame apart
  Lurk fears of age and death.

—From BHARTRIHARI

HOSPITALITY

A mat of straw upon the floor,
  Water, and kindly words as well:
These things at least, if nothing more,
  Are always found where good men dwell.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

HE CAN'T STAND PROSPERITY

The man who does not steel his heart
  To evil fates and fair,
Is crumbled by prosperity
  Like unbaked earthenware.

—From the *Mahabharata*

NO NEED OF BOASTING

The wise who conquer cities vast,
  Win wealth untold, and call
The mighty earth their own, are not
  Disposed to boast at all.

The fire cooks silently; the sun
  Shines, but he does not talk;
The dumb earth bears all moving things
  And all that do not walk.

—From the *Mahabharata*

DRONA'S DEATH

From the *Mahabharata*. Drona is the eighty-year-old hero who had instructed the heroes of both the opposing armies in the use of arms.

While Drona led the Kuru van,
The Pandu army to a man
Was beaten back and strove in vain
To dominate the battle-plain.

Where tramp and clash of battle grew
Like crackling flames in dry bamboo,
There Drona blazed, a smokeless fire
That fed on death and mounted higher.

Where aged Drona's arrows passed,
Horse, man, and tusker breathed their last.
Like hissing snakes his arrows sped
And left a trail of reeking red.

The Pandu army fought in vain
Against him. They had all been slain,
Had not they striven to beguile
Their foe with false and wicked wile.

For Bhima cried aloud and said:
"Old man, your son is stark and dead.

"As silly simpletons will fight
For wife and child and money bright,
So you have fought—and all for one,
Your dearly loved, your only son;

"Who studied in the school of strife,
And paid his lesson with his life.
Dead on the plain his body lies
A prey to all that creeps and flies."

The father heard the lie, and slow
His hand released the fatal bow;
He sank, yet roused himself again
In one strong cry: "Fight on, my men!

"Destroy the treacherous Pandu line,
But hope no more for aid of mine.
All hatred dies from out my breast;
Remains religion's peaceful rest."

His foe believed the Brahman's word
And darted with uplifted sword
To pierce him through, while all the men
And all the horses shrieked in pain.

But Drona, in ecstatic prayer,
Knew not his foe was standing there;
Wrapped in inviolable fire,
He thought on God with pure desire.

We saw his lifted face; we heard
His murmuring lips pronounce the word
"Amen!" We felt him pray; at last
We knew his hero soul had passed.

For while his body tumbled dead,
A flame flashed from his cloven head;
His soul flew in the flame above
To dwell with God in deathless love.

There were but five of mortal birth
Who saw his spirit leave the earth;
Who heard the choirs of angels sing
Divinely in their welcoming;

Saw heaven's everlasting fire
Flash out, and flicker, and expire;
And knew that he was with the saints
Where God's love wearies not nor faints.

But all could see the bloody corse,
By arrows torn and trampling horse;
All sorrowed for the evil done
Save one insatiate foe alone,

Who scorned our hero's eighty years
And scant hair gray behind the ears;
He hacked the body from the head,
To show his hatred for the dead.

And all the army fled away;
Where Drona died, they could not stay;
But Drona's spirit dwells on high
Among the stars that light the sky.

THE THIRSTY FOOL

A thirsty fool had labored much
To reach a river fair;
Then would not drink, perceiving such
A lot of water there.

"Why don't you drink?" a neighbor cried
Who saw the thing befall;
"How can I?" Simpleton replied;
"I couldn't drink it all."

"Suppose you leave a little bit,"
Said neighbor, "Do you think
The king would punish you for it?"
The booby would not drink.

Just like a fool! He sees a thing
  That terrifies his heart;
He loses time in dallying,
  And never gets a start.

—From the *Kathasaritsagara*

PESSIMISM

Our happiness is past; a curse
  On sin and lack of truth!
Yet each tomorrow will be worse,
  For earth has lost her youth.

Fraud and illusion crowd the time;
  Conduct and virtue flee;
Religion seeks a happier clime—
  The worst is yet to be.

—From the *Mahabharata*

OPTIMISM

Toward Death we move with every breath;
  Death dogs us every day;
However far we journey, Death
  Is never far away.

We laugh to see the rising sun,
  And laugh to see him set;
Nor think that when the day is done,
  Our days are fewer yet.

Our hearts are warm to each new spring,
  Each summer, winter, fall;
But what the passing seasons bring
  Is only Death to all.

As log collides with log upon
  The sea, and parts again,
So friend and gold and wife and son
  Love and abandon men.

As if a traveler should meet
  A hurrying caravan,
And say: "I too with willing feet
  Will follow as I can,"

So to the long parade we cleave
  That with the world began:
Then do not grieve, you cannot leave
  The social caravan.

The hours of youth grow ever less;
  No river climbs the hill;
Then turn your thoughts to happiness,
  Which is your portion still.

—From the *Ramayana*

THE THIEF'S SONG

The *Chaura-panchashika* of the poet Bilhana, who lived in Kashmir in the eleventh century. The thief has stolen a princess' heart, and has been thrown into prison, on the discovery of the intrigue, by the irate father. While awaiting the king's pleasure, he writes his song, which comes to the royal ear, procuring him liberty and the legitimation of his love. The verbal trick of the translation is found also in the Sanskrit.

As then she was, I think of her today:
  The face that blossomed as she woke from sleep,
The slender waist, the golden champaks gay,
  The self-surrendering love; and I must weep
  For magic happiness I could not keep.

If I could see her once again today,
  Fair as the moon, as beautifully pale,
Full-bosomed, love-sick, bearing queenly sway
  O'er youth and charm, that only would avail
  To heal my fever, and to make me hale.

If I could see her lotus-eyes today,
  The breast that into sloping shoulders slips,
Would I not clasp her in my arms straightway
  And drink the maddening honey of her lips,
  Drunk like the bee that from the lotus sips!

In prison I remember her today:
  Dark curls against the pallor of her cheek;
The soft resistance as she strove to stay
  My eager love with arms around my neck—
  Yet shamed, and even in her resisting, meek.

Awaiting death, I think of her today:
  Of her sweet face, her timid, downward glance,
Her eyes that in their restlessness betray
  The madness of love's long and waking trance—
  Queen-swan among love's flowering lily-plants!

If I could see her in my cell today,
  If arms that yearn for her could but receive her,
My best of love should comfort her, should slay
  The absence and the sorrows that bereave her,
  I'd close my eyes, and never, never leave her.

A vision comes to comfort me today,
  A slender form that gives to dance a grace
Unknown before with beauties that obey
  Love's bidding, and a pale but shining face,
  And earrings that in air strange patterns trace.

And I remember in my bonds today,
  How she, with soft, smooth sandal-powder sweet,
And musk diffusing pungent perfume, lay
  Upon her couch, how arching brows would greet
  Her lovely eyes, like lips that kissing meet.

Here, chained and fettered, I recall today,
  The slender form, eyes veiled in modest fear,
The wine-sweet lips I kissed in loving play,
  The musk, the saffron of my own Kashmir,
  Betel, and camphor, that to her were dear.

The crowning moment I recall today,
  When all her soul is given to my lips,
When, clad in love's warm, golden, glad array,
  My darling from the hated palace slips,
  Like to the moon delivered from eclipse.

But slighter joys are in my mind today,
  How once a lovers' quarrel checked our glee;
Then when I sneezed, the princess would not say
  "God bless you!" but with silent coquetry
  Stuck blossoms in her hair, to madden me.

Another picture visits me today:
  The drops of weariness that oft would seek
To make upon her face a pearl inlay
  When love had left her pale and worn and weak;
  The golden earring that would fret her cheek.

I seem to see her lovely breast today,
  The skirt that tripped her quick steps on the floor,
The glance that modesty would lead astray
  And love bring back to me, the lips grown sore
  Because I would be kissing evermore.

I seem to see my princess-bride today
  Moving with swanlike, undulating grace,
And in her hand a red ashoka-spray,
  Pearl necklace on her breast in close embrace,
  Quick smiles that light the pallor of her face.

I see her gold-bespangled dress today
  Held as a frail defending shield, the pain
Of my too eager passion to allay,
  Clutched tightly as she struggles once again
  For very shame to leave me—but in vain.

Her golden bracelets haunt my thoughts today,
  Her restless eyes that pierce a gloom like this
As memories that none can take away,
  The teeth of pearl, red lips, the secret bliss,
  The wealth of hair that fresh-picked blossoms kiss.

That wealth of hair I seem to see today
  When ribbons break and flowers begin to fall;
Then heaven is opened in the dazzling ray
  Of her dear smile; at love's imperious call
  We sink in bliss that none may share at all.

And I remember in my cell today
  How she would come to find me through the night,
Guided by beams illumining her way
  From lamps that glitter with a gemlike light
  On her shamed face, and mine with kindness bright.

Well I remember thee, my love, today:
  Thy startled eyes as of a gentle deer,
Thy body wasting at the least delay
  Of love, thy graceful gait, thy teeth so dear—
  Delights of heaven transplanted to Kashmir!

I hear the echo of thy laugh today:
  I see thy bosom quiver in sheer glee;
I see the necklace, darting beams that stray
  About thy neck; sure, Love has planted thee
  Upon a hill, his bright flower-flag to be!

Yes, I can hear through dungeon-walls today
  Sweet flatteries of thine, when, soon or late,
Passion grew weary in its house of clay;
  I hear the parrot quaintly imitate,
  Learning soft words to utter to her mate.

Even as in prison I recall today
  The limp, surrendered form, the luscious hair,
The half-shut eyes, the swanlike, queenly play
  In love's bright lotus-pool, I cannot bear,
  In death or life, to be without her there.

If I could see her once again today
  At sunset, see her fawnlike, gracious eyes,
If on her heavenly bosom I could lay
  My cheek and rest—oh, I should quite despise
  The saint, the king, the blest in Paradise.

For I remember fervently today
  Her beauty perfect in its every part,
To which all other lovely women pay
  Their homage, for 'tis far beyond their art—
  Queen of love's drama, mistress of my heart!

I could not, if I would, forget today
  Even for a moment, such a wondrous wife,
So young, so helpless that she seems to pray
  For pity, stabbed by love as by a knife,
  Nearer than garments are, more dear than life.

The vision of her beauty comes today
  To make all other beauty seem awry,
To shame the pride of women, and to slay
  Men's hearts by hundreds; and I know that I,
  Consumed by absent fires, shall surely die.

Heroic wisdom, teach me how today
  To act, to save a life than life more dear,
And deeds of heaven's heroes to outweigh;
  For well I know that death is creeping near,
  And for my bride, my brave, true bride, I fear.

My bride! And must I think of her today
  With bright eyes dimmed by sorrow and by fears,
With light feet treading slow the future gray;
  I hear her voice come stumblingly through tears,
  And see her bowed by woe through endless years.

For I have never seen, nor see today
  A face that with my darling's could compare,
Though all the rival world should challenge. Nay,
  The sweetness of Love's wife is not so rare;
  The moon itself is not so spotless fair.

Her wealth of wondrous hair I see today,
  Her teeth of pearl; and I remember well
How sorrow in her presence would not stay;
  How union with my bride would ever spell
  The bliss of heaven; one moment's absence, hell.

The last grim moment I recall today
  When from her palace slaves that seemed to be
Resistless slaves of Death, tore me away,
  And all her prayers for me were vain; yet she
  Still gazed and gazed. That gaze still tortures me.

I think with anguish of her face today—
  The face that in its beauty overbore
The wonder of the moon's unclouded ray—
  Because upon that face I may not pore
  Again, and yet again, and evermore.

I think of her, my hope of life, today,
  How she would listen with her mind and heart
To all I said. My maiden young and gay,
  Thy youth was mine alone, thine artless art,
  And shall be mine again, though death us part.

And I recall what I have lost today,
  How she would move in such sweet perfume clad
That bees would gather round her cheek alway;
  The very tinkle that her bracelets had
  When she would fix her hair, will drive me mad.

And I remember woefully today
  How gently I would waken her, while she
Would shiver, and her startled eyes would stray,
  Unable yet our love's new day to see—
  She wakes, starts back, then recognizes me.

And I recall another hour today
  When, jealous, she would leave me. I entreat
Her, and she does not turn her face away
  But weeps when kissed. I fall before her feet:
 "Be gracious to thine humble servant, sweet.

"Thou canst not think that I would fall today
  In thy bedchamber, victim to the glance
Of others, I, the subject of thy sway—
  Far rather would I perish in a trance
  Of thy dear kisses, playfulness, and dance."

I wonder, as I think of her today,
If she be heaven's queen come down to earth,
Or Shiva's bride, or Vishnu's. Or she may
Be God's own thought of beauty in mortal birth,
To drive men mad with woman's perfect worth.

There is no man that lives on earth today
Who could depict her; none but me has seen
Such beauty. Should the king of heaven essay
The task, with memories of his heavenly queen,
He might succeed. None other could, I ween.

And I remember in my cell today
How she would stop her ears in graceful fun.
No other face like hers is lovely. Yea,
And if her form blots out beneath the sun
All other beauty, why, what harm is done?

No doubt her heavenly features keep today
The pallid splendor of the autumn moon,
And trip the saint on his ascetic way:
Would I might gain the glory lost so soon,
And lose no more forever such a boon!

Ah, yes, if I might plunge again today
Beneath love's waters that so long I miss,
Might save love's lotus-blossom from decay
And share with her the heaven of a kiss,
I'd give my life for one such moment's bliss!

Though lovely women walk the world today
By tens of thousands, there is none so fair
In all that exhibition and display
With her most perfect beauty to compare—
This is my consolation, and my care.

As then she floated, so she floats today
A swan-queen, down the river of my mind
O'er waves that thrill beneath her plumage gay;
She leaves my admiration far behind,
And flying dust of blossoms turns me blind.

In sadness I remember her today,
The daughter of my king, whom love has driven
To me with timid, eager eyes—then say,
Was she a goddess, or a nymph of heaven,
Angel, or fairy, to my longings given?

I cannot for an hour forget today
From dawn until the evening sinks in night
How, sleeping, she would gather beauty; nay,
Her form seemed slenderer, her breast more white,
Her gems more radiant yet, by morning's light.

Her golden beauty comes to me today,
Her slow, coquettish grace, as she would lie
In shamed humility upon her couch, would pray
For maddening love and kisses. Oh, might I
Taste that elixir now, I could not die.

I could not die, might I enjoy today
That bliss so deep as almost to be woe;
We hardly knew if it were war or play,
So fiercely did we clasp each other, so
Fire-hot with passion did our faces glow.

How could I, after that, endure today
The subtlest fascinations of another?
Far rather would I end my life straightway;
Come quickly, Death! Come as a kindly brother,
With one swift act my spark of life to smother.

God Shiva has his poison even today;
  The ocean guards his awful, hidden fire;
The tortoise bears upon his back alway
  The burden of the earth. However dire
  The things they love, they keep what they desire.

THE STRENUOUS LIFE

Success the strenuous will reap,
  And not your pensive sinner;
For when the lion fell asleep,
  He had no deer for dinner.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

A SINGLE GRAB

Remember that a single grab
Suffices for a fish or crab,
For fool or woman; and 'tis so
For sot, cement, or indigo.

—From the *Panchatantra*

ART IN A PUPIL

Art in a pupil shows
  The artist doubly well;
The raindrop turns to pearl
  When falling in a shell.

—From KALIDASA's *Malavika*

FATALISM

What shall not be, will never be;
  What shall be, will be so:
This tonic slays anxiety;
  Taste it, and end your woe.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

EXTRAVAGANCE

They cook their grain in beryl kettles
  With fuel of sandal-shoots,
They plough with ploughs of precious metals
  To get the yercum-roots,
They make a hedge of camphor wood
  About the humblest corn,
Unhappy fools! who are not good
  On earth where they were born.

—From BHARTRIHARI

NATURE

The habits we acquire are little worth;
The nature that was ours before our birth
Will master us, while yet we live on earth.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

YOUR NATURE

Your nature is a thing you cannot beat;
  It serves as guide in everything you do:
Give a dog all the meat that he can eat,
  You can't prevent his gnawing at a shoe.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

PREACHING

He longs, with twigs from lotus-bowers
  To bind an elephant,
He strives, with softest siris-flowers
  To sever adamant,
He yearns, with honey-drops alone
  To sweeten ocean's taint,
Who hopes, with sugar-coated tone
  To make a rogue a saint.

—From BHARTRIHARI

DEAD LOVE

In early days, my husband, we
Were one unsevered entity,
And neither of the lovers knew
Were I the dearer half, or you.
Now you are tyrant of my life,
And I am nothing but your wife.
Oh, it was hard as stone for me,
The fruit of life's alluring tree!

—From AMARU

HEAVEN ABOVE AND HEAVEN BELOW

Oh, dwell by Ganges' holy wave
Where passion's slave his soul may lave;
Or on the bosom of a girl
Where strings of pearl would charm a churl.

—From BHARTRIHARI

THE BAD SON

What profits the begetting of a son,
  So he be neither good nor wise?
With sightless eyeballs what is to be done?
  They ache and yet they are not eyes.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

ENTER INTO THY CLOSET

Although thou sink to hell, fly through the air,
  Or flutter o'er the earth and never cease,
Think not, my soul, to find salvation there:
  Remember God at home, who gives thee peace.

—From BHARTRIHARI

TRY AGAIN

Do not despise yourself, my son,
  For early ill-success;
For things that were not, come to be,
  While things that are, grow less.

—From the *Mahabharata*

THE BLESSING OF SILENCE

The fool among the wise may shine
A moment, if his dress be fine;
But
One moment, while his mouth is shut.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

SIMPLE DEER-HORN

I

Young Deer-horn was a pious youth
Devoted to religious truth,
A hermit innocently good
Who grew to manhood in the wood.

His mother left him at his birth;
He only knew one soul on earth,
His austere father; therefore he
Grew up in natural piety.

Now in a kingdom near at hand
No rain had fallen on the land,
Prevented by the magic skill
Of priests the king had treated ill.

An aged priest advised the king:
"Propitiate the clergy; bring
Pure-minded Deer-horn from the wood,
That hermit innocently good.

"He dwells in purity afar;
He does not know what women are:
Fetch him, and then the rain will fall;
Of this I have no doubt at all."

The counsel pleased the king; he planned
To entertain the hermit, and
Invited women of the town
To go and bring young Deer-horn down.

But they refused the royal plan,
Fearing to meet a holy man;
At last an aged crone's ambition
Drove her to undertake the mission.

"If you will give me what I ask,"
She said, "I can fulfill the task;
But I require a rich reward
Of gold and gems, my royal lord."

With royal bounty richly laden,
She took her child, a youthful maiden
More known as beautiful than good,
And so departed to the wood.

II

She waited till the coast was clear,
And then she sent her daughter dear
To interview the hermit who
Had never learned what women do.

The maiden found the lad and said:
"I trust your pious life is led
Without offense, and that your food
Of roots and fruits is sweet and good.

"I trust your father's heart is blest
With deep religious peace and rest;
For I am hither come to see
Your unpretending piety."

And Deer-horn answered: "Sir, you are
As radiant as a beaming star;
I never saw a man like you;
Then tell me, sir, what shall I do

"To make you happy? Here are roots,
Water, a couch of skins, and fruits.
What vows are yours, most holy sage?
Where is your pious hermitage?"

"My hermitage," the maid replied,
"Is three long leagues from here, beside
The river; there I practice now
A fearfully ascetic vow.

"For I have sworn that I will greet
Such other hermits as I meet;
And I must clasp and kiss you too—
So my religion bids me do."

She spurned the fruits that he had offered,
And in their stead to him she proffered
Confectionery sweet and good
That she had brought into the wood.

She gave him fragrant garlands too,
And brilliant garments, clean and new;
She offered wine; and while he quaffed,
She played and swayed and danced and laughed.

She played about him with a ball,
And oft coquettishly would fall
Upon his bosom, until he
Took fire from her immodesty.

At last she saw the deed was done,
That she had charmed the hermit's son;
And, gazing o'er her shoulder, fled,
To make her sacrifice, she said.

When she had left him, peace and joy
Departed from the luckless boy;
Sadly he sighed, by love distressed,
An aching void within his breast.

His father, while he sighed, returned,
Whose eyes with fire ascetic burned,
Whose life was one devoted prayer,
Whose nails were overgrown with hair.

When he beheld his son distressed
With eye upturned and heaving breast,
With longing written on his face
And passion in contentment's place,

"What troubles you, my dearest son?"
He asked, "and are your duties done?
Who has been here with you today?"
And Deer-horn answered him straightway.

III

"A hermit youth with hanging hair,
Not short, nor very tall, but fair
And bright as gold, with lotus-eyes,
Some child of heaven, wondrous wise.

"He came in beauty like the sun,
Black eyes, sweet voice, his hair undone
And hanging soft, dark, fragrant, and
Encircled by a golden band.

"A relic on his neck was seen
That danced like flashing lightnings keen;
Below it, two soft swellings white
That thrilled me with a strange delight.

"Large hips he had, but slender waist
Which I could see was close embraced
By a golden belt; I saw it shine
And it was not at all like mine.

"And on his ankles something stirred
That jingled like a cooing bird,
While on his wrist there tinkled free
A novel kind of rosary.

"And as he moved, the beads would sing
Like gay flamingoes in the spring;
His pious robe was wondrous fair,
And quite unlike the garb we wear.

"His face was beautiful to see;
His speech was kind and gladdened me;
His voice was like the nightingale;
It made me sigh and yearn and pale.

"And as in spring the forest trees
Wave beautifully in the breeze,
So, father, when the wind blew, he
Shed fragrance like a flowering tree.

"His hermit locks—I wondered how
They parted on his noble brow;
And dangling from each ear, there stirred
And danced what seemed a brilliant bird.

"A round, elastic fruit he had
That bounded from the earth like mad
When he would strike it merrily—
'Twas very wonderful to see.

"He moved and swayed with graceful ease—
I thought of wind among the trees:
A wonderful delight and joy
Came when I saw the godlike boy.

"He held me in a tight embrace;
I felt his hair; he pressed his face
Against my face and made a noise
That waked in me the strangest joys.

"Our simple fruits he did not think
Were good, or water that we drink;
He gave me other fruits and rare,
And said: 'This is my humble fare.'

"They were not like the fruits we eat,
But tasted wonderfully sweet;
They had a different sort of skin,
And different was the pulp within.

"A strange, sweet kind of water he
Offered with noble piety;
It filled me with an odd delight,
And earth grew wobbly to my sight.

"Sweet garlands with a careless mirth
He wove, and scattered on the earth;
Then, glorious as an ancient sage,
Departed to his hermitage.

"And since he went, I feel distressed;
My limbs are burning and my breast;
I long to go to him today
Or have him here with me alway.

"Yes, I will tread the path he trod
And learn the way he worships God;
With him I long to make a trial
Of holy life and self-denial.

"I find no peace from him apart;
Religious yearnings fill my heart."

IV

"It was a devil, dear my son;
By foes like these we are undone;
They walk the earth in conquering charm
And work religious men much harm.

"They win us with their cunning wiles,
Their wondrous beauty and their smiles,
Then show themselves as demons fell
And plunge us in the pit of hell.

"The man who seeks religious peace
Should keep himself from such as these;
To ruin us is their delight,
My pious boy. Forget the sight.

"And those sweet waters that you had
Are tasted only by the bad;
And we ascetics never wear
A perfumed garland on our hair.

"Resist the devil, boy"; he said
And then he hunted for the jade;
Three days he sought without success
And ceased for very weariness.

Meantime, the tempting minx returned,
And seeing her, young Deer-horn burned;
"Come quick," he said, "and let us roam;
You see my father's not at home.

"Your hermitage I fain would view";
So, hand in eager hand, they flew
And found a boat and floated down
The river to the royal town.

No sooner did the hermit gain
The royal palace than the rain
Fell, drenching every thirsty part
And gladdening the sovereign's heart.

The joyful monarch to the brave,
Bewildered young ascetic gave—
Lest he should ever seek release—
A princess—and her name was Peace.

VISION

Who sees his life in others' life,
  In others' wealth a clod, a weed,
His mother in his neighbor's wife,
  He sees, he sees indeed.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

PEACE

I would not call a friend or foe mine own,
A gem or clod, a bed of flowers or stone,
A serpent or a string of precious pearls,
A bunch of grasses or a bunch of girls,
So might I see with calm, unwavering eye
My peaceful days move softly gliding by,
The while I murmured in a pious grove
To Shiva, Shiva, Shiva, all my love.

—From Bhartrihari

I LOVE THE WOODS

Girl, girl! What mean those tender glances
Like budding flowers in languid dances?
Stop, stop! Your art no more entrances.

I love the woods. My childish madness
Awakens memories of sadness.
The world? A straw brings equal gladness.

—From Bhartrihari

NO COMPROMISE

Oh, I would have her whole,
  Else leave her free;
Not clasp her, while her soul
  Is not for me.

No, let us rather die
  Hopeless, apart,
If in a lonely sigh
  Heart answers heart.

—From Kalidasa's *Malavika*

CAUSE AND EFFECT

As knowledge in the just
Increases self-distrust;
In others, pride and lust—

Just so, the saint will find
When lonely, peace of mind;
Not so the lovesick kind.

—From BHARTRIHARI

NATURAL BEAUTY

The color on the lily's face
Is natural. So is maiden grace.
The bee flits vainly round the flower,
The fool round beauty's virgin power.

—From BHARTRIHARI

WOMAN'S WEAPONS

The skillfully coquettish frown,
Bashfulness choking laughter down,
The love-word seeming free from guile,
The undulating step, the smile—
These things, to every woman true,
Are ornaments, and weapons too.

—From BHARTRIHARI

A NEGLECTED EDUCATION

Alas, my foolish, foolish boy,
Whose nights are spent in thoughtless joy,
Among the wise as ill you stand,
As some poor cow in boggy land.

—From the *Hitopadetha*

THE FAILURE OF EDUCATION

Uneducated moths will fly
  Into the blazing fire;
Ignorant fish will take the hook
  In the bait of their desire.
And we who know so many things
  Forget the price, and feed
The creeping lusts that coil us round—
  Oh! We are fools indeed.

—From BHARTRIHARI

YAYATI'S SONG

Desire is never satisfied
  By winning each desire;
As fuel, added to the blaze,
  Gluts not the hungry fire.

Not all the barley in the world
  And rice and gold and kine
And women, are enough for one—
  Remember, and resign.

For when our longings and our sins
  Toward every creature cease,
When deed and thought and word are pure,
  We find eternal peace.

When all things lose their fear of us,
  And when we find release
From fear of them, and hate, and hope,
  We have eternal peace.

—From the *Mahabharata*

GOOD-BYE TO SPRING

The mango trees are bending
  Beneath the fruits they bring;
The amaranths are spending
  Their flowers with lavish fling;
The heart of youth is sending
  A sad good-bye to spring.

—From KALIDASA's *Malavika*

USE THE ROD

The youngsters nowadays run wild
From petting; whipping makes them mild.
  And therefore I would never pet
But whip a pupil or a child.

—From the *Anthology*

STRIKE

Fear fearful things, while yet
  No fearful thing appears;
When dangers must be met,
  Strike, and forget your fears.

When all his safety lies
  In fighting, blow for blow,
The wise man fights and dies,
  And with him dies his foe.

—From the *Hitopadesha*

LITTLE CHILDREN

They show their little buds of teeth
  In peals of causeless laughter;
They hide their trustful heads beneath
  Your heart. And stumbling after

Come sweet, unmeaning sounds that sing
  To you. The father warms
And loves the very dirt they bring
  Upon their little forms.

—From KALIDASA's *Shakuntala*

WHY MEN FIGHT

Perhaps the warrior, smitten by his foe,
Will rise to heaven and leave the world below;
  Perhaps the fighting is its own reward;
No god has told us and we do not know.

We only know that the applauding beat
Of eager hands, the joyous shouts that greet
  The sturdy fighter from his foes and friends,
Are music in his ears, and very sweet.

—From BHARTRIHARI

AFTER LIFE'S FITFUL FEVER

My mind no longer loves philosophy
No longer seeks delight in poetry,
Contemns the paths of doubt so often trod,
And yearns to be united with its God.

—From BHARTRIHARI

THE INTELLIGENT CORPSE

A beggar in the graveyard cried:
"Awake, my friend, be satisfied
To live again and bear the weight
Of poverty; for I of late
Am weary grown; my heart is led
To crave the comfort of the dead."
The corpse was silent; he was sure
'Twas better to be dead than poor.

—From BHARTRIHARI

WISDOM'S SOUP

A scholar who can merely quote
Unmastered learning got by rote,
Is erudition's luckless dupe,
A spoon to ladle wisdom's soup.

The fool who hears but cannot prize
The wisdom of the truly wise,
He too is erudition's dupe,
A spoon to ladle wisdom's soup.

But you, dear reader, if you prize
This wisdom of the truly wise,
Will soon be added to the group
Of tongues that relish wisdom's soup.

—From the *Mahabharata*

FROM BHARTRIHARI

BEASTS

Men void of learning, character, and worth,
Religion, kindness, wisdom, piety,
Are but a mortal burden on the earth;
Such men are beasts allowed to wander free.

A CONSOLATION

If there are famous poets, fit
To teach the art of poesy,
So sweetly smooth their verses flit,
And if they live in poverty—

That shows the dullness of the king;
Poets, though poor, are rich in fame.
Where gems find undervaluing,
Only the jeweler is to blame.

❦

All men alike, birth after birth,
Enter upon a life on earth;
But he is born indeed, whose house
Gains glory from his sterling worth.

❦

The rich man is of noble birth,
Has learning, sense, and sterling worth;
Is eloquent, and beauty's mould—
For every virtue clings to gold.

ALL OR NOTHING

Vishnu or Shiva—but one god I crave;
One friend—a lordly king or hermit good;
One home—a city or a lonely wood;
One love—a beauty or a desert cave.

Although the strong man be disdained,
His purpose never bends:
As when a lighted torch is held
Flame-down, the flame ascends.

A noble soul, in days of power,
Is tender as a lotus-flower;
But when it meets misfortune's shock,
Grows hard as Himalayan rock.

THE FLATTERER

By stammering and tumbling down
You try to smooth the monarch's frown;
In the farce of life you play the clown.

What part, I wonder, will you play,
When age has sucked your strength away,
And when your ears are fringed with gray?

Hark to the counsel of the good,
Although irrelevant it looks;
Their simple talk is richer food
And wiser than the best of books.

WOMEN'S GLANCES

What will not women's glances do,
When man is moved by pity true
To yield the heart that they pursue?

They fascinate and gladden him,
Bewilder, mock, and madden him,
And at the end they sadden him.

NOBILITY

If fate should ever stay the birth
Of every lily on the earth,
Do you suppose that swans would scratch,
Like roosters, in the dunghill patch?

THE GOLDEN MOUNT

Why did God make the Golden Mount,
Fair riches' never-failing fount?
It never wakens longing in
Contented breasts that know not sin;

It never satisfied the mind
Of men with greedy passions blind;
Its wealth is for itself, I see;
It seems quite valueless to me.

SORROWS OF SPRING

When spring comes on the wanderer
  From her he loveth far,
With cooing songs of nightingales
  And winds from Malabar,

Though sweet the season, sweet the song,
  His sorrows are so grim
That even a cup of nectar seems
  A poisoned cup to him.

AN APRIL EVENING

A little lazy loitering
With her you love, in early spring,
Is not a despicable thing—

A little music in your ear
From nightingales that warble near
A smiling bower, is sweet to hear—

A little converse with a few—
Not many—first-rate poets who
Enjoy the moonlight as do you—

An April evening, taken so,
Is not without delights to show—
Believe me! to the few who know.

❦

The pious scholar talks and talks
  Of leaving girls alone;
With tinkling girdle in She walks
  And he must change his tone.

YOUTH

A bed of poison-flowers is youth,
A cloud that hides the moon of truth,
A linkèd chain of passions fell,
Source of the hundred woes of hell,
The dwelling-place of every badness,
The friend of Love, the seed of madness.

PERFECT LOVE

Then only is a perfect love,
  When hearts harmonious wed;
Love void of harmony must prove
  A union of the dead.

❦

Graceful amid the forest shade
Wandered a weary, weary maid;
Alone, by moonbeams sore opprest,
Lifting the garment from her breast.

WOMAN

Abode of wanton impudence,
Sin's palace, field of false pretense,
Whirlpool of doubts, and basket stored
With tricks and mean deception's hoard,
Bolt barring heaven's gate too well,
Wide portal to the house of hell—
Who made that strange contrivance, woman,
That poison sweet, which keeps us human?

THE FEAR OF DEATH

The joy I felt in life is dead,
And men's respect for me is fled;
My dear-loved friends are all in heaven
To whom my days were gladly given;
I rise up slowly with a stick,
And in my eyes the dark is thick:
But the body still is obstinate;
It feared Death soon, it fears him late.

VAIN EFFORT

The joys of home I have resigned,
  But not for higher ends;
To mercy I was not inclined
  In treating foes as friends;

Storm, heat, and cold I faced unbent,
  But not to save my soul;
My days in centered thought were spent,
  My heart in stern control.—

Alas! I did not think of God,
  But wealth, to win and guard;
The paths the pious tread, I trod,
  And fail of their reward.

EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

Suppose you have the sweetest song before you,
  The graceful poets of the south beside you,
Fan-girls behind who winsomely adore you
  With tinkling rings; if nothing be denied you,

Then you may well be most extremely greedy
  To taste each charming, mortal delectation;
But if you be in anything left needy,
  Renounce it all and plunge in meditation.

❦

Since kings are peevish, and their lords
  Like restive horses are,
I fix my wish and set my mind
  On a high place and far;

Since age will snatch my body, and
  There waits the final trial
Of death for all, naught else is wise
  And right but self-denial.

❦

Is he a Brahman, or a slave,
  Outcaste, or saint forsooth?
Or yet perchance a finished sage,
  Skilled in dividing truth?

Such doubtful chatter meets him, while
  The sage in contemplation
Pursues his course, devoid alike
  Of pleasure and vexation.

THE BETTER PART—II

Have mountains lost their running streams,
  The hillside nooks their roots,
The trees their bark-enveloped limbs
  And all delicious fruits?

Why else should man disgrace himself
  Before a loveless brow
That scowls in pride of scanty pelf,
  With pain acquired but now?

❦

"Another night, another day"—
  So thinks the foolish man,
Runs to the same old job again
  As briskly as he can.

Frustrations that reiterate
  How life is e'er the same,
Still leave him keen for stale delights.
  Mad, mad! Is there no shame?

JOY SUPREME

Forget society and clothes and food;
  Seek thou that knowledge sure
Which makes imperial power that men think good,
  Insipid and impure.
There is a higher joy, eternal, free—
  Self-knowledge is its name—
Whose taste makes universal sovereignty
  And such-like joys seem tame.

FROM THE MAHABHARATA

HOW TO LIVE HAPPILY ON NOTHING A YEAR

Imagine that what is
  Does not exist at all;
Then will you not be grieved,
  However low you fall.

Your deeds of yesterday
  And those that went before
Are past and gone; for them
  You need not sorrow more.

What was, no longer is;
  What was not, will not be:
The past need bring regret
  To none from blindness free.

Where is your father now?
  Where may his father be?
You do not see their life;
  Your life they do not see.

And you, O King, and I,
  With every foe and friend,
Will surely cease to be,
  Since all things have an end.

The men of twenty years,
  Or thirty years, or more,
Will all be dead when once
  A hundred years are o'er.

And even should riches cling
  To you, do not repine,
But seek for comfort in
  The thought, "They are not mine."

If man leave not his wealth,
  Then wealth the man will leave.
Since this is surely so,
  Why should the prudent grieve?

And poor men live today
  Who calm a nation's fears
By wisdom and by strength,
  Your betters or your peers.

They do not grieve like you;
  Then cease to grieve at length;
Surpass or equal them
  In wisdom and in strength.

Consider what the past
  And what the future teach,
Not grieving at events,
  Indifferent to each.

Desire the things you may,
  Not those you may not gain;
Enjoy the gifts of fate—
  Those lost deserve no pain.

And he is surely fool
  Who curses God and weeps
For what he had, and lost—
  Ingrate for what he keeps.

And be not troubled if
  Men show unworthiness
Of wealth they have; for thus
  Your sorrows grow no less.

Endure though riches smile
  On all but you alone;
For men of sense enjoy
  The wealth that others own.

Yea, brave and righteous men
  In willing sacrifice
Abandon wealth and home,
  Knowing salvation's price.

Even kings a kingdom leave
  And count their loss a gain:
In pain's extremity
  They seek the end of pain.

From such men learn to find
  In penury, relief:
Grief often comes as joy;
  Joy wears the form of grief.

Nay, who would set his heart
  On gold that ends as dross,
On life that ends as death,
  On love that ends as loss?

The pole-tusked elephant
  Is like the sage; for he
Lives lonely in the woods,
  Gladly, and frugally.

xii. 104

THE LAZY CAMEL

There was a camel once who prayed
To Brahma fervently. He said:
"O Brahma, if your lordship please,
I wish to browse with greater ease.

"I pray you make my neck to grow
Longer, a hundred miles or so."
"So be it," said the god. And he
Regained his forest, filled with glee.

From stupid pride at Brahma's grace
He sank in laziness apace.
He would not stir a foot to find
His provender. Fate made him blind.

One day he stretched his neck to eat
A hundred miles from legs and feet,
And browsed in comfort and repose
Until a mighty windstorm rose.

While freezing rain began to fall
On living things, and drenched them all,
The creature stored his neck and head
Upon a cavern's sheltered bed.

Just then a jackal with his wife
Entered the cave to save his life
From chilling cold and pelting rain,
Starvation, and exhausting pain.

Starving, fatigued, and furthermore
By nature's law a carnivore,
The jackal started in to eat
The camel's neck, as being meat.

But when the wretched creature knew
His neck was being eaten through,
He frantically used his strength
To shrink the neck to lesser length.

Yet while he tossed the neck about,
Upward and downward, in and out,
The starving jackal calmly ate—
The wife was not behind her mate.

At last the jackal and his wife
By eating took the camel's life,
And when the wind and rain were gone,
They left the cave and wandered on.

The camel died in consequence
Of foolish pride and indolence.
Behold how evil follows hard
On laziness, as its reward.

xii. 112

THE WAY OF PEACE

In shifting joy and grief
  Should I rejoice, repine,
I should despise the soul
  That I must still call mine.

Because this life, this world
  Are other men's no less
Than they are mine, I win
  An end to all distress.

As log meets log upon
  The sea, and parts again,
So kinsman, friend, and son
  Love and abandon men.

Grief starts and ends as joy;
  Joy starts and ends as grief.
The wheel, while whirling, finds
  Antipodal relief.

With countless bonds of love
  Men cling to objects, and
Assailed by failure's waves,
  Collapse like banks of sand.

To him with foe, with friend,
  Him lacking friend, or foe,
To wise or fool, comes joy,
  If fate will have it so.

To hero, sage, and coward,
  To poet, dullard, fool,
To weak and strong, comes joy
  By no discovered rule.

To him who drinks her milk—
  Obtained no matter how—
Calf, herdsman, king, or thief,
  A cow is still a cow.

The dullest wights on earth
  Live joyfully; and so
Do men supremely wise—
  The rest are sunk in woe.

For brave men love extremes,
  Never the prudent mean;
Extremes, they say, are joy;
  And grief, what lies between.

The dunce sleeps joyfully,
  Setting his deeds aside,
Wrapped in his foolishness
  As in a blanket wide.

The man supremely wise,
  Past opposites, and all
Mean envy, sees unmoved
  What good or ill befall,

While men not wholly fools,
  Yet something less than wise,
Are boisterous in success
  And writhe when fortune flies.

The fool is always gay
  As angels are in heaven,
Glad in his self-conceit,
  That gift by folly given.

Joy ends in sloth—and grief;
  Grief ends in skill—and joy.
And fortune dwells with skill,
  To sloth is ever coy.

Then greet whatever comes
  Of joy or grievous smart,
Delight or pain, with brave,
  Unconquerable heart.

A thousand sorrows and
  A hundred fears assail
The fool from day to day.
  The wise man does not quail.

For sorrow cannot touch
  The truly modest soul,
Long-suffering, peaceful, wise,
  Rooted in self-control.

If your own limb should be
  The seat of sorrow, doubt,
Wrath, or timidity,
  Cut roots, and cast it out.

Desires, departing, leave
  A void. Joy fills it higher.
But he who will pursue
  Must perish by desire.

All heart's desires of earth
  And heaven's great bliss fulfilled
Form one-sixteenth the joy
  That comes from passion stilled.

This wisdom clasp. Faint not
  Upon the righteous path.
Scorn all desires of sense,
  And put behind you wrath.

For love is death that lives
  And feeds within the heart:
And anger lives until
  The soul and body part.

As turtles pull inside
  Their shells, pull free from sin:
For glory, light, and peace
  Are only found within.

Whatever deeds are done
  By one who thinks " 'Tis mine,"
Slope downward through remorse
  To death, in sure decline.

When none has fear of you,
  And when you find release
From fear and hate and hope,
  You have eternal peace.

Leave true and false behind;
  Sorrow and glee control,
Pain, pleasure, safety, fear—
  Find rest unto your soul.

Be brave! Let sinful word
  And thought and action cease
Toward every living thing—
  So find eternal peace.

Passion—the fatal taint,
  The fool's enticing toy,
Still young in aged hearts—
  Abandon. This is joy.

xii. 173

THE JACKAL'S PRAYER

Oh, thrice and four times blest are they
  Who have a pair of hands!
I lift a fruitless prayer to heaven
  In envious demands.

I cannot pull a sliver out
  Because I have no hands,
Nor nab the lowly parasite
  Where sting or nipper lands.

While those to whom a kindly god
  Gave two five-fingered hands
Can catch a bug on any limb
  And smash him where he stands.

They get them beds and dress and food
  And shelter with their hands;
They build a house no frost or heat
  Or wind or rain disbands.

And they bestride the lesser world
  With all-contriving hands:
They make the bullock pull the cart
  In fear of reprimands.

Yes, all the rest of us on earth
  Must follow their commands;
For we are poor but honest folk,
  And weak. We have no hands.

Thank God you are not classified
  By bug or jackal brands,
Or mouse, or snake, or frog, or such.
  Thank Heaven, man, for hands!

xii. 178. 11–18

WISDOM OF BALI

I notice Time destroying all
  The creatures in his path;
If 'twere not so, I should indulge
  In joy and pride and wrath.

You see me living as an ass
  In lonely stall forlorn,
Devouring husks. And seeing this,
  You chuckle, filled with scorn.

And if I would, I could assume
  Some form so terrifying
That you, beholding it, would soon
  Be seen in terror flying.

If heaven's king in armor stood
  Here in a gleaming mist,
I could, if Time commanded, smite
  Him low with naked fist.

But this is not a time for fight;
  This is a time for peace:
Time causes every action; Time
  Bids every action cease.

I understand the ancient laws
  By which events unroll.
You too may understand. But first
  Make friends with your own soul.

xii. 231

MEDHAVIN'S WISDOM

He plucks a blossom here and there,
His thoughts directed otherwhere;
Before he sees desire or plan
Complete, Death comes upon a man.

Tomorrow's duty do today;
Let not the evening's task delay
Till evening hours. Death will not stay
To ask if it be done or nay.

Work out salvation. Do not wait;
Lest Death your thought anticipate.
Who knows the hour? or who can say
Whose fatal moment comes today?

Regardless of his settled plan,
Death seizes on the helpless man.
Then let your youth be given all
To virtue. Life is whimsical.

xii. 283

THE YOGA PATH

For as a steersman guides a ship,
  Holding the tiller down,
Who, leaving stormy seas behind,
  Sails to a lordly town,

Just so the wise and earnest man
  May guide his soul, and find
A far, high place of perfect peace,
  The body left behind.

Or as a careful driver yokes
  Good horses to his car
And quickly drives an archer to
  The spot desired, though far;

As arrows hit the target, when
  The bowstring gives release,
Just so the saint, with centered thought,
  Soon reaches perfect peace.

Yes, but the learnèd Brahman knows
  How hard that path may be,
And no man, so the wise declare,
  Can tread it easily.

For just as in a lonely wood
  That creeps and crawls with snakes,
Where pitfalls yawn and water fails,
  Tangled, with thorny brakes,

A wild and foodless wood whose trunks
  Are gnawed by forest fire,
A youth may seek, where robbers hide,
  The path of his desire,

So may a Brahman find and tread
  The Yoga path. Yet he
May quickly lose his footing there,
  So many snares there be.

To stand on whetted razor-blades
  Is easy. Not a soul
May stand upon the Yoga path
  Who lacks in self-control.

xii. 306

The dullest people in the world
  Live happily; and so
Do they whose wisdom is supreme:
  The rest are sunk in woe.

xii. 25. 28; also xii. 173. 34

But for their patience, self-control,
  But for their common sense,
And but for scorn of wealth, the wise
  Have no preëminence.

xii. 81. 26

There is no grief in others' grief—
  So fools proclaim aloud:
For they who never suffered much,
  Love babbling in the crowd.

He cannot speak who feels the stab
  That brings the stifled groan,
Who knows the taste of perfect grief,
  His neighbor's as his own.

xii. 139. 65, 66

Rate not too high your righteousness,
And preach to other men still less:
Great cattle drink the water cool,
Though frogs are croaking in the pool.

xii. 141. 82

An evil word, though men may shout
It loud, grows dim and flickers out.
A worthy word, though whispered low,
Pervades the world with steady glow.

xii. 293. 32

Speak not, unless you questioned be,
Nor speak, if questioned wrongfully:
The truly wise are able to
Sit quiet, just as boobies do.

xii. 293. 35

Fire, water, moonbeams, good, and ill—
We know them by the way they feel.

xii. 293. 39

Alone each creature sees the light;
Alone grows into youthful might;
His pains and pleasures are his own;
He journeys toward his death—alone.

xii. 294. 16

A calf can find its mother cow
  Among a thousand kine:
So good or evil done returns
  And whispers: "I am thine."

xii. 330. 16

FROM THE HITOPADESHA

THE ONE TREASURE

Many the treasures for which men sigh;
  One only is peerless forever:
Thieves cannot plunder, gold cannot buy
  The wisdom that perisheth never.

THE HYPOCRITE

The man who flatters you before your face,
  Then mars your plans, and lets affection drop,
Him from your list of friends you'd best erase:
  He is a poison-jug with cream on top.

Notes

Notes

Page 3. "Aëtius at Châlons." From the *University of California Chronicle*, XVI: 61, 62 (Jan., 1914).

Page 6. "Buddha's Wife." *Ibid.*, XVI: 63, 64 (Jan., 1914).

Page 9. "Tolstoi." *Ibid.*, XIV: 430–36 (Oct., 1912). This poem was read before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of the University of California on May 10, 1912. The following excerpts from Ryder's unpublished "lay sermon" are of interest in connection with it:

"The last generation produced in Tolstoi one of the great saints of Christian history. His life was sadly torn, for he had fallen on evil days for saintly living, and evil journalistic tongues were busy with him. Yet with less external encouragement, he suffered more for religion than Peary suffered for the North Pole. The mute, inglorious Tolstois cannot be numbered. . . .

"There are still occasional, very unclerical saints. By far the greatest of these is Tolstoi. For a variety of reasons, saintship came hard to Tolstoi. In the first place, it came late, and met vociferous obstacles in the shape of a numerous family, carried over from heathen days. Then, it was unpopular in Russian high society, if books may be trusted, and even the saint cannot wholly escape the fashion. More important than all else, Tolstoi had brains. The saint is usually a rather dull man, though he becomes majestic and even wise by hitching his wagon to a star. And having brains, Tolstoi was required to sacrifice more than the stupid saint. Francis probably felt no pangs at renouncing novel-writing and literary fame, Peter the Hermit was not troubled by giving up psychology and economics, vulgar old Stylites could without pain turn away from the fifth-century equivalents of Wagner and Baudelaire. Thus many things conspired to make saintship hard for Tolstoi, and his testimony becomes on that account doubly valuable. The whole world knows—perhaps too well—the sad wreck of family life that came, growing ever more hopeless as Tolstoi grew more religious. Nor does he fear to state his belief about the matter plainly. Thus, in the sequel to *The Kreutzer Sonata:*

" 'Being in love, and union with the beloved object, never makes [*sic*] it easier to gain any end worthy of man, but always makes it more difficult.'

" 'In Christ's teaching there is no basis for the institution of marriage.'

" 'Christian marriage never existed or could exist.'

" '. . . marriage is, . . . from the Christian point of view . . . a fall, a sin. . . .'

"Then, at the very end, came the strength to break away entirely. Tolstoi died as, with his beliefs, he should have died, away from his family. His last days proved him a true saint." [But see Introduction, p. xxiii.]

Page 17. Songs from Nirvana. From the *University of California Chronicle*, XVI: 172–80 (Apr., 1914).

With the poem on Ignatius Loyola may be compared a passage from Ryder's unpublished "lay sermon":

"People often speak as if religious persecution were a strange and illogical excrescence which happened to appear in the Spanish Inquisition, the execution of the Salem witches, and in a few other sporadic cases; as if religious persecution were now dead. Even a slight acquaintance with history, even a brief observation of the pious now living, shows that this is not the case, that on the contrary persecution has always been, and will always be, where men are pious, that is, are moved by religious feeling, yet do not withdraw from communion with their kind.

"Religion is antisocial. The pious man, whether consciously or not, separates himself from his family and friends. He gradually loses the power of human sympathy. He does not, he cannot know how other people suffer. At the same time, he is applying a daily stimulus to himself. This may lead him to the ascetic life, as it has often done historically. More often—for most men are timid and illogical—he remains among his kind, in whom some portion of his daily self-stimulation must find its object. These two things—the zeal which eats him up, and his inability to sympathize with other human beings—lead necessarily to an activity which has the results of conscious cruelty. The whole external history of religion is a history of asceticism and persecution, of cruelty to oneself and cruelty to others.

"It is necessary to use the word cruelty, and a little explanation is in order. It is by no means meant that religion leads a man to take pleasure in the sufferings of others; quite the opposite is often the case. But by blunting his human sensibilities, by making him blind to any kind of existence except his own kind, religion leads the pious man to do, or sanction, acts which cause exquisite suffering. Bloody Mary was by nature a gentle woman. Perhaps the monstrous Torquemada was not intentionally cruel. The everyday clergyman of the present is certainly not bent upon causing pain. Yet pain always results from the activity of such people; and the fact that their cruelty is not conscious, makes its effects none the less disastrous. Perhaps they save themselves, others they cannot save."

Page 28. "Torquemada." From the *University of California Chronicle*, XVII: 403, 404 (Oct., 1915). Compare the note just above.

Page 30. "The Young Mother." *Ibid.*, XVII: 405 (Oct., 1915).

Page 31. "Kalidasa." From *Kalidasa: Translations of Shakuntala and Other Works* (London, Dent, n. d. [1913]), p. xxiii.

A comment on Kalidas in the Introduction (p. xvi) to that volume is of interest in connection with Ryder's own ideals of life:

"Kalidasa preserves his intellectual balance and his spiritual initiative: what greatness of soul is required for this, every one knows who has ever had the misfortune to differ in opinion from an intellectual clique."

Page 32. "Pierre's Prayer." From the *University of California Chronicle*, XIX: 247–49 (July, 1917).

Page 37. "Laboremus." From the *University of California Chronicle*, XXIV: 269–72 (Apr., 1922). The Harvard Oriental Series now (1938) contains 32 volumes; but, alas, volumes 22 and 23 have not yet been issued.

Page 43. "The Passion of Our Brother the Poilu." From the *University of California Chronicle*, XX: 93–99 (Jan., 1918).

Page 55. WOMEN'S EYES. This collection of one hundred verses was published in San Francisco, by A. M. Robertson, in 1910. In his Introduction, Ryder states that eighty-five of the verses are by Bhartrihari, while "the remaining fifteen are from various sources." But in his own copy of the book he made penciled notes

that "Arrows of Love," "She Only Looked," "Who Understands a Man?" and "When My Love Draws Nigh" were from Amaru; that "The Thief of Hearts" and "Divine Vision" were from "Subhāṣ," which is probably an abbreviation for the *Subhāṣitāvali* of Vallabhadeva; that "The Danger of Delay," "Untrustworthy Things," and "Vexations—I" were from the *Hitopadesha;* that "Does She Love Me," "Thou Art a Flower," "On Giving a Daughter in Marriage," and "Struggling Fancies" were from the *Shakuntala* [by Kalidasa]; that "Logic" was from the *Bhāmini-vilāsa* [of Jagannātha]; that "Procrastination" was from an "Anthology"; and that "Should Fancy Cease" was from the *Uttararāmḥacarita*, a drama by Bhavabhūti]. This is a total of sixteen verses. The discrepancy may perhaps be explained by the statement in Keith's *History of Sanskrit Literature* (p. 175) that "the collections [of verses by Bhartrihari] contain stanzas from well-known works such as the . . . *Shakuntala* of Kalidasa . . . and stanzas which in the anthologies are ascribed to other authors than Bhatrihari." To the other eighty-four verses Ryder added numbers evidently referring to the edition of Bhartrihari that he used, except that "Vexations—II" is left unmarked. This present note smacks of a pedantry such as Ryder himself disliked; but the editor may remark that in *Relatives* Ryder indicates the sources of his translations.

Page 87. RELATIVES. This collection was published in San Francisco, by A. M. Robertson, in 1919. "Pot-ear's Awakening," however, has been given in a version found among Professor Ryder's papers. When he inserted the poem in *Relatives* he omitted many stanzas, apparently thinking the translation disproportionately long in comparison to the others that he included in the small volume.

Page 153. FROM BHARTRIHARI. Hitherto unpublished. "The Better Part—II" was evidently intended for *Women's Eyes*, but rejected: see p. 79.

Page 161. "How to Live Happily on Nothing a Year." From *Indian Studies in Honor of Charles Rockwell Lanman* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1929), pp. 213–15.

Page 164. "The Lazy Camel." Hitherto unpublished.

Page 165. "The Way of Peace." From the *University of California Chronicle*, XXIII: 31–34 (Jan., 1921).

Page 170. "The Jackal's Prayer." From the *Occident* (students' magazine of the University of California), LXXV: 336 (Mar., 1920).

Page 171. "Wisdom of Bali." Hitherto unpublished.

Page 172. "Medhavin's Wisdom." Hitherto unpublished.

Page 172. "The Yoga Path." Hitherto unpublished.

Page 174. "Verses." Hitherto unpublished. The first stanza is a variant translation of stanza 9 of "The Way of Peace" (p. 166).

Page 176. FROM THE HITOPADESHA. Hitherto unpublished.

List of Publications

List of Publications by Arthur William Ryder

(The following list does not include any material printed in this volume, or any translations printed in the *University of California Chronicle* that were later reprinted in the volumes *Kalidasa, The Panchatantra,* or *The Bhagavad-gita.*)

Latin Composition. Pp. 20. [Privately printed, probably in 1897 or 1898.]

Die Ṛbhu's im Ṛgveda: Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde der hohen philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Leipzig (Gütersloh, C. Bertelsmann, 1901). Pp. 50.

"Note on bṛhácchandas, AV. iii. 12. 3," *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* XXIII: 77–78 (1902).

"Kṛṣṇanātha's commentary on the Bengal recension of the Çakuntalā," *ibid.,* 79–83.

The Little Clay Cart [Mṛcchakaṭika]: A Hindu Drama Attributed to King Shūdraka, translated from the original Sanskrit and Prākrits into English prose and verse. Cambridge, Massachusetts, published by Harvard University. 1905. (Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 9.) Pp. xxx + 177.

The Little Clay Cart: A Hindu Drama Attributed to King Shudraka, . . . adapted for the occidental stage by Agnes Morgan. Version as produced at the Neighborhood Playhouse for the National Theatre Conference. (New York, Theatre Arts, Inc., 1934). Pp. vii + 107. (Illustrated.)

"Notes on the Mṛcchakaṭika," *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* XXVII: 418–54 (1906).

"The Old Tiger and the Traveller [from the *Hitopadeça*]," *University of California Chronicle,* X: 450–53 (Oct., 1908).

Kalidasa: Translations of Shakuntala and Other Works (London, Dent; New York, Dutton, n. d. [1913] [Everyman's Library, vol. 629]). Pp. xxv + 216.

Shakuntala: An Acting Version in Three Acts, by Garnet Holme and Arthur W. Ryder (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1914). Pp. 34 [Reprint from the *University of California Chronicle,* XVI: 249–80 (July, 1914).]

Malavika: A Five-act Comedy of Kalidasa (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1915). Pp. 47. [Reprint from the *University of California Chronicle,* XVII: 123–67 (Apr., 1915).]

"Fables from the *Hitopadeça*," *University of California Chronicle,* XIX: 15–29 (Jan., 1917).

"Lovers' Meeting, translated from the *Kathasaritsagara,* Canto 104," *ibid.,* XIX: 364–76 (Oct., 1917).

Twenty-two Goblins, Translated from the Sanskrit (London and Toronto, Dent; New York, Dutton, 1917). Pp. viii + 220. (With twenty illustrations in colour by Perham W. Nahl.)

A Correspondence with the Harvard University Press (Berkeley, California, 1921). Pp. 13. [Privately printed.]

The Bhagavad-gita: A Brief Analysis (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1921). Pp. 6.

The Panchatantra, Translated from the Sanskrit (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1925). Pp. vii + 470.

Gold's Gloom: Tales from the Panchatantra (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1925). Pp. vi + 151.

Stories from Gold's Gloom (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1925). Pp. iv + 26.

Dandin's Dasha-kumara-charita: The Ten Princes, Translated from the Sanskrit (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1927). Pp. xvi + 240.

The Bhagavad-gita (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1929). Pp. xxiv + 139.