A Selection of Poems from recent volumes published by Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd.
3 Adam Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.

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A Selection of Poems from recent volumes published by Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd.

Second Impression

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The Fallen Subaltern.

The starshells float above, the bayonets glisten;
We bear our fallen friend without a sound;
Below the waiting legions lie and listen
To us, who march upon their burial-ground.

Wound in the flag of England, here we lay him;
The guns will flash and thunder o’er the grave;
What other winding sheet should now array him,
What other music should salute the brave?

As goes the Sun-god in his chariot glorious,
When all his golden banners are unfurled,
So goes the soldier, fallen but victorious,
And leaves behind a twilight in the world.

And those, who come this way in days hereafter,
Will know that here a boy for England fell,
Who looked at danger with the eyes of laughter,
And on the charge his days were ended well.

One last salute; the bayonets clash and glisten;
With arms reversed we go without a sound:
One more has joined the men who lie and listen
To us, who march upon their burial-ground.

From The Volunteer and other Poems.
(1915. 1s. net.)
BREATHLESS, we flung us on the windy hill,  
Laughed in the sun, and kissed the lovely grass.  
You said, “Through glory and ecstasy we pass;  
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,  
When we are old, are old. . . .” “And when we die  
All’s over that is ours; and life burns on  
Through other lovers, other lips,” said I,  
—“Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!”

“We are Earth’s best, that learnt her lesson here.  
Life is our cry. We have kept the faith!” we said;  
“We shall go down with unreluctant tread  
Rose-crowned into the darkness!” . . . Proud we were,  
And laughed, that had such brave true things to say,  
—And then you suddenly cried, and turned away.

From Poems (first published December, 1911.  
Fifteenth Impression, October, 1916.  
2s. 6d. net.)
The Dead.

Sonnet IV of "1914."

These hearts were woven of human joys and cares, Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth. The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs, And sunset, and the colours of the earth. These had seen movement, and heard music; known Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended; Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone; Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. All this is ended.

There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after, Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance, A width, a shining peace, under the night.

From 1914 and other Poems. (First published July, 1915. Sixteenth Impression, November, 1916. 2s. 6d. net.)
Gathering Song.

A WORD for you of the Prussian boast,
   Or never a word, but under the drum
The limber tread of a tramping host
   Out of the English counties come—
There are men who could count you the Warwick spires,
   And fishermen turning from Severn and Ouse;
They gather from half a hundred shires,
   And never a man of them all to choose.

They are coming out of the northern dales,
   Out of the sound of Bow they come,
Lomond calls to the hills of Wales—
   Hear them tramping under the drum:
From Derry to Cork, from Thames to Dee,
   With Kentish Hob and Collier Tyne,
They come to travel the Dover sea,
   A thousand thousand men of the line.

They come from the bright Canadian snows,
   And Brisbane’s one with proud Bengal;
Over the Vaal and the Orange goes
   To the cape of the south a single call;
Though the term shall be for a year or ten
   You still shall hear it under the drum,
The limber tread of the marching men:
   They come, you lords of the boast, they come.

From Swords and Ploughshares  (May, 1915.  2s. 6d. net.)
John Drinkwater

To the Defilers.

Go, thieves, and take your riches, creep
To corners out of honest sight;
We shall not be so poor to keep
One thought of envy or despite.

But know that in sad surety when
Your sullen will betrays this earth
To sorrows of contagion, then
Beelzebub renews his birth.

When you defile the pleasant streams
And the wild bird’s abiding-place,
You massacre a million dreams
And cast your spittle in God’s face.

From Olton Pools. (October, 1916. 2s. 6d. net.)

"His delight in England of the English is very grateful in time of war."—Saturday Review.

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The Observer.
If We Return.  

(Rondeau)

If we return, will England be  
Just England still to you and me?  
The place where we must earn our bread?  
We, who have walked among the dead,  
And watched the smile of agony,

And seen the price of Liberty,  
Which we have taken carelessly  
From other hands.  Nay, we shall dread,  
If we return,

Dread lest we hold blood-guiltily  
The things that men have died to free.  
Oh, English fields shall blossom red  
For all the blood that has been shed  
By men whose guardians are we,  
If we return.
In Flanders.

I'm homesick for my hills again—
My hills again!
To see above the Severn plain
Unscabbarded against the sky
The blue high blade of Cotswold lie;
The giant clouds go royally
By jagged Malvern with a train
Of shadows. Where the land is low
Like a huge imprisoning O
I hear a heart that's sound and high,
I hear the heart within me cry:
"I'm homesick for my hills again—
My hills again!
Cotswold or Malvern, sun or rain!
My hills again!"

From A Gloucestershire Lad, at Home and Abroad. (September, 1916. 2s. net.)

Most of these poems were written at the Front, and appeared in the Fifth Gloucester Gazette—the first paper ever published from the trenches.

The author was then a Lance-Corporal in the 5th Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment, and as such gained the Distinguished Conduct Medal in August, 1915.
Elinor Jenkins

Sursum Corda.

Oh faint and feeble-hearted, comfort ye!
Nor shame those dead whose death was great indeed,
Greater their life in death. It doth not need,
Since we seek strength where healing may not be,
Faith in fair fables of eternal rest,
Nor seer's eyes to look beyond the grave.
That they endured and dared for us shall save
Our souls alive:—they met, our tenderest,
Pain without plaint and death without dismay,
Bore and beheld sorrows unspeakable,
Yet shrank not from that double-edged distress,
But, eyes set steadfastly where ends the way,
They through all perils laughed and laboured well,
Nor ceased from mercy on the merciless.
Elinor Jenkins

Epitaph.

On a Child left Buried Abroad.

Father, forget not, now that we must go,
A little one in alien earth low laid;
Send some kind angel when thy trumpets blow
Lest he should wake alone, and be afraid.

From Poems. (November, 1915. 2s. 6d. net.)

“The spirit of the time breathes through one and all, and in more than one of them the author has expressed with rare inspiration the secret thoughts of thousands of women bereaved or in the throes of parting.”

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I LOOK on my Belovèd sleeping; he is beautiful in his strength.
There is a hush upon his eyes where the lids fall down like wings. There is a hush upon his lips; a fearful hush upon his body.
He is like an enchanted spirit; like a house from which the inhabitant has gone.
I long to stoop and wake him lest death should find him lying so.
I grow afraid when I think how far am I from my Belovèd. Though I give him my body, we remain separate: that which is the soul of us cannot meet.
Awake or sleeping, we are like creatures suffering enchantment. We grope blindly to possess each other; we grope blindly in the dark.
Yet here and there are lamps set to guide us. For a moment they shine like warm stars, then flicker and die out.
And so we are ever seeking, as blind men seek each other in a large room.
I think of these things as I watch my Belovèd sleeping. I tremble and grow afraid.
Elizabeth Kirby

A Song of Farewell.

My Belovèd leaned down and caught me to him; he held me very fast.
He kissed me on the lips; he kissed my body; his fingers wandered in my hair.
We spoke no word; our bodies trembled; we clung together in the dark.
The night was gentle to us; there was no moon at all.
Only the stars looked on us, marvelling at the wildness of our love.
And all the while we held each other; we could not fall apart.
But at daybreak my Belovèd left me; he went to do battle in a strange land.
And now I sit alone and am glad for my body that has been kissed by him.

From The Bridegroom. (June, 1916. 2s. 6d. net.)

“Rhapsodies of love in free rhythms—which, in their self-abandonment, show that the writer can yet grasp and express well and clearly, and even with reticence, the visions and fancies in which it takes shape.”—Times.
WHEN the paths of dream were mist-muffled,
   And the hours were dim and small
(Through still nights on wet orchard grass
   Like rain the apples fall),
Then naked-footed, secretly,
   The thief dropped over the wall.

Apple-boughs spattered mist at him,
   The dawn was as cold as death,
With a stealthy joy at the heart of it,
   And the stir of a small sweet breath,
And a robin breaking his heart on song
   As a young child sorroweth.

The thief’s feet bruised wet lavender
   Into sweet sharp surprise;
The orchard, full of pears and joy,
   Smiled like a gold sunrise;
But the blind house stared down on him
   With strange, white-lidded eyes.

He stood at the world’s secret heart
   In the haze-wrapt mystery;
And fat pears, mellow on the lip,
   He supped like a honey-bee;
But the apples he crunched with sharp white teeth
   Were pungent, like the sea.
And this was the oldest garden joy,
Living and young and sweet.
And the melting mists took radiance,
And the silence a rhythmic beat,
For the day came stealing stealthily,
A thief, upon furtive feet.

And the walls that ring this world about
Quivered like gossamer,
Till he heard, in the other worlds beyond,
The other peoples stir,
And met strange, sudden, shifting eyes
Through the filmy barrier. . . .

From The Two Blind Countries.
(March, 1914. 2s. 6d. net.)

"Out of familiar things she contrives to draw a magic which sets all our definitions tottering. . . . This specific gift is so rare in modern poetry that we may well hail it with enthusiasm. The rambling rhythms are cunningly adapted to further the strange power of a fancy which seeks, not to delight or to illumine or to build, but to disquiet. Yet it delights in spite of itself, for the blurring of common outlines gives the reader the freedom of great spaces."—Spectator.
Everard Owen

Three Hills.

THERE is a hill in England,
Green fields and a school I know,
Where the balls fly fast in summer,
And the whispering elm trees grow,
A little hill, a dear hill.
And the playing fields below.

There is a hill in Flanders,
Heaped with a thousand slain,
Where the shells fly night and noontide
And the ghosts that died in vain,
A little hill, a hard hill
To the souls that died in pain.

There is a hill in Jewry,
Three crosses pierce the sky,
On the midmost He is dying
To save all those who die,
A little hill, a kind hill
To souls in jeopardy.

Harrow, December, 1915.

From Three Hills and other Poems.
(September, 1916. 6d. net.)
PAST the marching men, where the great road runs,
Out of burning Ypres, three pale women came.
One was a widow (listen to the guns!)—
She wheeled a heaped-up barrow. One walked lame
And dragged two tired children at her side,
Frightened and coughing with the dust. The third
Nestled a dead child on her breast, and tried
To suckle him. They never spoke a word. . . .

So they came down along the great Ypres road.
A soldier stayed his mirth to watch them pass,
Turned, and in silence helped them with their load,
And led them to a field and gave them bread . . .
I saw them hide their faces in the grass
And cry, as women cried when Christ was dead.

From Ypres and other Poems.
(May, 1916. 2s. net.)

"The majority of Captain Shakespeare's little collection, *Ypres, and other Poems*, do not touch on the war, but the three Ypres sonnets, one of which, 'The Refugees,' has appeared in the *Spectator*, are particularly attractive and show a high level of accomplishment. All Captain Shakespeare's verse is pleasant, and 'The Red Nun' proves that he can strike the tragic note with much effect."—*Spectator*. 
Edward Shanks

Song for an Unwritten Play.

The moon's a drowsy fool to-night,
Wrapped in fleecy clouds and white;
And all the while Endymion
Sleeps on Latmos top alone.

Not a single star is seen:
They are gathered round their queen,
Keeping vigil by her bed,
Patient and unwearied.

Now the poet drops his pen
And moves about like other men:
Tom o' Bedlam now is still
And sleeps beneath the hawthorn'd hill.

Only the Latmian shepherd deems
Something missing from his dreams
And tosses as he sleeps alone.
Alas, alas, Endymion!
Edward Shanks

On Trek.

UNDER a grey dawn, timidly breaking,
Through the little village the men are waking,
Easing their stiff limbs and rubbing their eyes;
From my misted window I watch the sun rise.
In the middle of the village a fountain stands,
Round it the men sit, washing their red hands.
Slowly the light grows, we call the roll over,
Bring the laggards stumbling from their warm cover,
Slowly the company gathers all together
And the men and the officer look shyly at the weather.
By the left, quick march! Off the column goes.
All through the village all the windows unclose:
At every window stands a child, early waking,
To see what road the company is taking.

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“Mr. Edward Shanks ranges widely . . . the most varied in mood and manner, the most wilful and the most vivid in the surprises of loveliness and wonder which he gives us.”—Observer.
THEY hunt, the velvet tigers in the jungle,
The spotted jungle full of shapeless patches—
Sometimes they’re leaves, sometimes they’re hanging flowers,
Sometimes they’re hot gold patches of the sun:
They hunt, the velvet tigers in the jungle!

What do they hunt by glimmering pools of water,
By the round silver Moon, the Pool of Heaven:
In the striped grass, amid the barkless trees—
The Stars scattered like eyes of beasts above them!

What do they hunt, their hot breath scorching insects,
Insects that blunder blindly in the way,
Vividly fluttering—they also are hunting,
Are glittering with a tiny ecstasy!

The grass is flaming and the trees are growing,
The very mud is gurgling in the pools,
Green toads are watching, crimson parrots flying,
Two pairs of eyes meet one another glowing—
They hunt, the velvet tigers in the jungle.
Marah.

Blue and golden was her robe of mosaic,
Blue and golden the tips of her shoes,
The blurred wall gathered crystal lilies round her,
Green lilies, lilies of dimmed water:
There was no white, no milk-white touch about her,
All was lucent, was green and blue and gold.
There is no white about the name Mary,
Mary that is Marah—that is bitter,
Mary that sounds like running water
Tinkling like a host of muted bells
In cavities of tinkling-atomed limestone
Where, in a round clear drop of water,
Hang the tiny voices, the voices of the atoms,
Singing of Stalactites, of the loveliness of Mary.
Mary it is they dream of in the darkness of the grotto,
Mary is the vision and the song inaudible
Where grow the Stalactites,
And the dimmer Stalagmites;
It cannot be seen that they are growing,
In the darkness there is no glint or glitter,
Only the loveliness of Mary,
The conception and the bones of Mary.

From The Hunter and other Poems.
(October, 1916. 2s. 6d. net.)
Katharine Tynan

Flower of Youth.

LEST Heaven be thronged with grey-beards hoary,
    God, who made boys for His delight,
Stoops in a day of grief and glory
    And calls them in, in from the night.
When they come trooping from the war
Our skies have many a new gold star.

Heaven's thronged with gay and careless faces,
    New-waked from dreams of dreadful things,
They walk in green and pleasant places
    And by the crystal water-springs
Who dreamt of dying and the slain,
And the fierce thirst and the strong pain.

Dear boys! They shall be young for ever.
    The Son of God was once a boy.
They run and leap by a clear river
    And of their youth they have great joy.
God who made boys so clean and good
Smiles with the eyes of fatherhood.

Now Heaven is by the young invaded;
    Their laughter's in the House of God.
Stainless and simple as He made it
    God keeps the heart o' the boy unflawed.
The old wise Saints look on and smile,
They are so young and without guile.

Oh, if the sonless mothers weeping,
And widowed girls could look inside
The glory that hath them in keeping
Who went to the Great War and died,
They would rise and put their mourning off,
And say: "Thank God, he has' enough!"

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