

MEN AND BOYS

An Anthology

Note that the "Introduction" by Donald H. Mader which followed "An Appreciation by Timothy d'Arch Smith" and preceded the poems themselves has been omitted from this PDF. However, Mader wrote a much longer version of his introduction, including considerable information gathered afterwards, in an essay posted online titled "[On Men and Boys](#)".

# MEN AND BOYS

*An Anthology*

Edward M. Slocum (Ed.)



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## AN APPRECIATION

*by Timothy d'Arch Smith*

If, as Holy Writ observes, “Of making many books there is no end,” then equally true it is to say “Of making anthologies of pederastic verse there is no beginning.” It is not going too far to suggest that *Men and Boys* is the only twentieth-century attempt at such a compilation and that to find an equivalent we have to go back to the times of the Emperor Hadrian whence originated the *Greek Anthology*.

Some indication of the paucity of such material is the need that has been felt in recent times for translations of that part of the *Greek Anthology* which is mainly pederastic. The French probably popularized it as much as any and in the early part of this century a version of it appeared in the excellent “Bibliothèque des curieux” series edited by Guillaume Apollinaire, in a volume entitled *Le Livre d'amour des anciens*. It is from this translation, I suspect, and not from the original text, that the late Sir Shane Leslie, under the pseudonym of “Ion Ionicos,” put out his English version under the aegis of the Fortune Press, London, embellished with some rather sketchy but quite appealing etchings by Jean de Bosschere, whom the publisher had just then (1932) signed to illustrate an ambitious series of limited editions, not all of which appeared. French translations, in typescript, had been circulating in England for some time. So had another, printed, version, a verse translation by Sydney Frederick McIlree Lomer (1880-1926), a selection from which appears in *Men and Boys*. Under the pseudonym of Sydney Oswald he issued it privately in 1914. An Army officer, he was a friend of Edmund John, some of whose work also appears in the present anthology. The “Mousa Paidike” had not escaped the attention of Frederick William Rolfe, “Baron Corvo.” In search of the “divine friend much desired” he had, with his usual lack of

perspicacity, lighted on a young man, Sholto Douglas, who proved, to Rolfe's chagrin, a far better classical scholar. Rolfe's literary genius extended only to descriptions of his own paranoia, and the gaudy parcel of his and Douglas's well-nigh unrecognizable translations from the *Greek Anthology* failed to find a publisher until A. J. A. Symons produced it in 1937.

What is very often forgotten is that it is not only the twelfth book of the *Greek Anthology* which is concerned with pederasty. Out of its fifteen books no fewer than eleven contain such verses and, to confound confusion, the famous twelfth book includes a dozen or so epigrams which seem to be either love-songs to girls included because editors mistook female names for male (e. g. , Timarion in XII, 109, and Phanion, XII, 53) or are drinking songs or verses misplaced by one editor whose work others blindly followed. To a clergyman, Samuel Elsworth Cottam, fell the task of translating all the pederastic epigrams from the whole *Anthology*, but his typescript of some 250 pages never found publication, as we shall see below. In 1973 the French writer Roger Peyrefitte published a French translation of the twelfth book, and this seems to be the latest modern rendering.

There have, however, been many anthologies of erotic verse which have included pederastic material. We may mention *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599) with contributions by Richard Barnfield; Mercier de Saint-Leger's *Quinque Illustrium Poetarum ... Lusus* (1791) with verses by Pacifico Massimi, and several little anthologies of French "faceties" and "gaillardises" put out by the Belgian publisher Jules Gay in the nineteenth century, down to the collection of limericks by Gershon Legman. But where in the English language to look for the first pederastic, even the first homosexual, anthology? Perhaps it is lost. In a booklist of 1749 appears the title *Ancient and Modern Pederasty Investigated and Exemplified*. Compiled, apparently, by the son of a dean and grandson of a bishop, it has quite vanished. But perhaps it was an anthology.

In 1902, Edward Carpenter, social reformer and author of the long Whitmanesque prose-poem *Towards Democracy*, published *Iolaus: An Anthology of Friendship*. Here we are nearer the mark, although *Iolaus* has much prose as verse and contains Greek, Latin, French and German material as well as English extracts. It became very popular and several editions were called for. It also gained a certain reputation and was known in the book-trade as “The Buggers’ Bible.” In 1961 was announced for publication *Eros: An Anthology of Friendship* compiled by Alistair Sutherland. Shortly before publication was due, the distraught publisher was forced to put an advertisement in *The Times* in an attempt to find the itinerant anthologist whose material, it seems, was hopelessly jumbled together in a large trunk. At last, in despair, a less unreliable editor was found in the person of Patrick Anderson and the book at last came out. It lacks an index but is otherwise a thoroughly excellent work, updating and adding to Carpenter’s work.

Another anthology, included in a bookseller’s catalogue of pederastic literature clandestinely circulated in 1924, is *Love in Idleness* (1883). It was the work of only three men, John William Mackail, John Bowyer Nichols and Henry Charles Beeching. The last is responsible for the well-known ‘Prayer’ printed in the poets’ companion volume, *Love’s Looking Glass*:

God who created me  
Nimble and light of limb,  
In the elements free,  
To run: to ride: to swim: ...

Take the thanks of a boy.

The man who circulated the catalogue was a publisher of pederastic poetry, Francis Edwin Murray. He earned a sharp word from the editor of *Men and Boys*, who wrote to a prospective purchaser, the Rev. A. R. T. Winckley, that production costs had



exceeded three hundred dollars. “It is printed on imported 100% rag paper, with generous margins. It is hand sewn and bound with a cloth back—not the flimsy glued affairs that Murray gets out.”

The original edition of *Men and Boys*, of which this is a reimpression, contained no limitation notice, but we are authoritatively told that only one hundred copies were printed. The information comes from the late Charles Reginald Dawes, whose superb collection of erotica was bequeathed, with a few exceptions, to the British Library. Dawes wrote lives of the Marquis de Sade and of Restif de la Bretonne, but his history of English erotica, which contains the information about this limitation, has not been published. The manuscript is also in the British Library. Little is known of Dawes, who, by all accounts, was the most charming of men. He would gladly show his amazing library of erotica to friends, but only the foreign books were on open shelves for he feared his charwoman might be shocked by some of the English titles. Montague Summers, in his autobiography, *The Galanty Show* (shortly to be published by Cecil Woolf, London), recalls dinner parties at Dawes’s flat in Southwest London and waxes lyrical about the library. “Most of us have to be content with our workaday volumes, our handicraft tools,” says Summers. “Mr Dawes has the gallants of literature.”

We must now return to S. E. Cottam. Of his life I have treated in my book on pederastic poetry, *Love in Earnest* (1970), and I will say nothing of that here. He was an assiduous collector of such books and had leanings towards creative writing himself, issuing a volume of verse, *Cameos of Boyhood*, in 1930 and leaving his executor instructions to issue another collection after his death. About the time he published *Cameos*, and inspired perhaps by the publication of *Men and Boys*, he submitted to a small publishing firm, the Fortune Press, his *Greek Anthology* translation and his own anthology of modern verse which he called *Golden Flame*. While he correctly chose a firm interesting itself in pederastic writings—we have mentioned the edition of Strato—Cottam had not reckoned with the personality of the director. Son of wealthy,

dotting grocers, Reginald Ashley Caton (1897-1971) from an early age had grown withdrawn and introspective. In admiration of the limited editions being put out in the twenties by the Nonesuch Press, he left his job on his father's magazine, an organ for the tobacco trade, and founded the Fortune Press. His early books were far too imitative of the Nonesuch books, so much so that the Nonesuch proprietors had to take out an injunction against one production, *The Symposium*, but he settled into a good house style and produced some handsome volumes. As a person, alas, he was to all appearances an out-and-out miser, a recluse and, to his long-suffering authors, Dylan Thomas, Philip Larkin and Kingsley Amis included, an abominable businessman.

The truth of the matter is that Caton, a tall, gaunt figure often to be seen in the streets of Victoria wearing terribly torn and stained trousers (I once observed him wearing two such pairs at once) and an old R. A. F. Mackintosh, needed constant bullying and badgering into printing and publishing the manuscripts submitted to him, and most of his authors were incapable of so doing and gave up in despair. Towards the end of his life I helped Caton while he was recovering from a stroke. In one of his three depositories in Southwest London were the two parcels from Cottam still in the paper and string (red tape, to be exact) in which Cottam had secured them for dispatch to the Press. They lay mouldering in a corner of Caton's basement storeroom at 58 Jermyn Street, a dusty, ill-lit room with several bays containing books, dust-jackets, manuscripts and more esoteric materials such as prewar tins of anchovy paste and a modest collection of threepenny bits. The floor was carpeted with pages torn from an illustrated catalogue of a manufacturer of children's undergarments. There the typescripts had lain for some forty years.

Whether or not Cottam's anthology is a better one than *Men and Boys* matters not. What is important is that it includes five poems by its editor both from the present anthology and from the author's own book of poems, *Lads of the Sun*, and that it gives his real name. In *Love in Earnest* I suggested the editor of *Men and Boys*

might be the same man who published verse translations of the German homosexual poet August von Platen. He was an American named Reginald Bancroft Cooke and it seemed to me that such an enterprising author—no one has ever yet attempted to render much of Platen's work into English—might well have compiled *Men and Boys* and was quite talented enough to have written *Lads of the Sun*. What is ironic is that the real name was in Cottam's typescript, only the wrappings of which I had seen, and that it was noted also in Cottam's own copy of his *Cameos of Boyhood* which I owned, where he quotes from several letters the American anthologist had sent him. I will now leave my colleague, who, through my misattribution, has been along many a blind alley, to take up the narrative.

*London, 1975*

## POEMS FROM ANCIENT HEBREW LITERATURE

### David's Lamentation for Jonathan

Jonathan and David made a covenant as he loved David as his own soul Jonathan stripped himself of his robe and gave it to David, and his garments, even his sword, his bow and his girdle.

Soon after, the Philistines made war against Israel and they slew Jonathan the King's son. Then David lamented with this lamentation over Jonathan.

### **THE LAMENTATION FOR JONATHAN**

The beauty of Israel is slain on the high places;  
How are the mighty fallen!  
I am distraught for you, my brother Jonathan;  
Very pleasant have you been with me!  
Your love was wonderful : passing the love of women!  
How are the mighty fallen:  
And the weapons of war perished!

### **SONGS FROM THE SONG OF SONGS WHICH IS SOLOMON**

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth:  
For his love is better than wine.  
As the Apple-tree among the trees of the wood,  
So is my Beloved among the sons.  
I sat down under his shade with great delight

And his fruit was sweet to my taste.  
He brought me to the banqueting-house:  
And his banner over me was Love.  
Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples,  
For I am sick with love.  
His left hand is under my head  
And his right hand embraces me!

My beloved is white and ruddy  
Chief among ten thousand!  
His head is as the finest gold;  
His locks are bushy and shine as the raven's wing,  
His eyes are as the eyes of doves,  
Washed with milk,-fitly set:  
His cheeks are as beds of spices, as sweet Bowers,  
His lips as lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.  
His belly is as bright ivory overlaid with white sapphires,  
His mouth most sweet:  
He is altogether lovely!

SOLON

(B. C. 638-558)

Solon, the great law-giver of Athens, one of the Seven Sages of Greece, has left a number of epigrams on the love of boys. The following are examples.

**BOYS AND SPORT**

Blest is the man who loves and after early play  
Whereby his limbs are supple made and strong,  
Retiring to his house, with wine and song  
Toys with a fair boy on his breast the livelong day!

*Translated by J. A. Symonds*

## THE LOVE OF BOYS

In the flower-time of youth  
Thou shalt love boys,—  
Yearning for their honied mouths.

*(Plutarch cap. 5, p. 751)*

## THEOGONIS

(B. C. 570-490)

Theognis, one of the earliest of the Greek poets, devoted a great part of his verse to his young friend Kumos. As an aristocrat he was exiled from his home city, Megara, upon the triumph of the Democratic party. But he was allowed to return before his death in 490 B. C.

Harsh and sweet,  
Alluring and repellant,  
Is the love for young men.  
If one brings it to perfection,—  
Then it is sweet ;  
But if a man pursues and does not win,

Then it is of all things  
The most painful!

*(Bergh, line 1,353)*

O Boy, so long as your chin remains smooth,  
Never will cease my slavery to you,—  
Not if it is appointed to me to die.

*(line 1,327)*

May I have Youth's prime,  
By Apollo's favor,  
Delight my spirit with sweet boys.

*(line 1,115)*

Theognis uttered a prophesy (lines 237-254) that his love for and celebration of his friend young Kumos, would immortalize this young man's name. Two thousand years later, Shakespere in his sonnets made the same prophesy regarding his beloved friend, Mr. W. H. Both predictions have come true.

Lo, I have given thee wings wherewith to fly  
Over the boundless ocean and the earth;  
Yea, on the lips of many shalt thou lie  
The comrade of their banquet and their mirth.  
Youths in their loveliness shall make thee sound  
Upon the silver lute's melodious breath;  
And when thou goest darkling underground  
Down to the lamentable house of death  
Oh yet not then from honor shalt thou cease,  
But wander, an imperishable name,

Kurnos, about the isles and shores of Greece!

*Translated by G. Lowes Dickenson*

ANACREON

(B. C. 650-464)

Anacreon was the court poet of King Potycrates of Samos. In his poems he celebrated the beauty of the boys, Ceobulos, Smerdies, Bathyllus and Leucaspis. Smerdies was a Thracian boy who for his great beauty was presented to King Polycratea.

**TO CLEOBULOS**

Cleobulos, I love;  
For Cleobulos, I'm wild:  
Cleobulos I watch  
And follow with mine eyes!

**TO BATHYLLUS**

O Boy with a maiden's eyes  
I seek and worship thee!

*Translated by E. E. Bradford*

PINDAR

(B.C. 518-438)



Pindar, one of the greatest of the Greek poets, the inventor of the Pindaric ode, was held in extraordinary reverence by the people of his day. He loved the handsome youth Theoxenos whom he celebrates in his poems. Pindar died in Theoxenos' arms when the great poet was suddenly stricken in the gymnasium at Argos.

### **TO THEOXENOS**

Right it were, fond heart,  
To cull love's blossoms in life's prime!  
For whosoe'er when he has seen  
The rays that flash from Theoxenos' eyes  
Does not right straightway swell with mad desire,  
His black heart was surely forged  
Of Adamant or Iron!

*Translated by E. E. Bradford*

### **THE BLOOM OF SOFT-LIMBED BOYS**

I, like the wax of holy bees  
That melted is by heat of sun,  
Waste clean away when I behold  
The bloom of soft-limbed boys.

*Translated by E. E. Bradford*

PLATO

*Statesman and Philosopher*

(B.C. 427~347)

Plato, one of the greatest philosophers the world has seen, was also a poet. Plato's devotion to youths is well known through Jowett's translation of his Dialogues. The term "Platonic Love" is misused when it is applied to a cold friendship between a woman and a man. It rightly applies to a high minded and spiritual devotion between a man and a boy, as developed in Plato's philosophy.

Several epigrams of Plato regarding his boy friends are preserved. One makes a play on the boy's name "Aster", and its meaning in Greek, a star.

### **TO ASTER**

Thou wert the morning star among the living  
Ere thy fair light had fled;  
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving  
New splendor to the dead.

*Translated by P. B. Shelley*

### **TO AGATHON**

Thee as I kist, behold! on my lips my own soul was trembling;  
For, bold one, she had come, meaning to find her way through!

*Translated by Edw. Carpenter*

**THEOCRITUS**

(flourished 283-243 B.C.)

Theocritus, the most famous poet of Sicily, was the first to celebrate in his verse the simple love stories of the Sicilian contadini. He shows the shepherd in love with his fellow shepherd, the country boys worshipping at the shrine of a favorite boy of one of the Gods. He tells the story of Hercules' love for Hylas and its sad ending. He was the first preacher of the "simple life", a thesis so many after preachers have reiterated.

And best of all he has taught us the real meaning of Sicily, that magic isle of the "Middle Sea". Theocritus has told us the secret of the Sicilian ethos, and when we think of Sicily we think of it in terms of Theocritus, so attractive has been the loveliness of his "Idylls". He has had hosts of imitators and translators, from Vergil to Andrew Lang.

## HYLAS

What pool is this by galingale surrounded,  
With parsley and tall iris overgrown?  
It is the pool whose wayward nymphs confounded  
The quest of Herakles to glut their own  
Desire of love. Its depths hath no man sounded  
Save that young Mysian Argonaut alone:  
When round his drooping neck he felt, astounded,  
The cruel grasp that sunk him like a stone.  
Throughout the land, the Hero wandered, crying,  
"Hylas" and "Hylas" till the close of day:  
And thrice there came a feeble voice replying  
From watery caverns where the prisoner lay!  
Yet to the ear it seemed but as the sighing

Of zephyrs through the forest far away!

*Translated by E. C. Lefroy*

VERGIL

(B.C. 70-19)

Publius Vergilius Maro, the most famous of the Latin poets, has devoted the second of his Eclogues to a celebration of the devotion of the shepherd Corydon to the young Alexis. In this he is supposed to be portraying his own affection for the youthful Alexander.

In the ninth book of Vergil's masterpiece, the *Aeneid*, he relates the love of the two friends Nisus and Euryalus. The great poet died in B. C. 19, before the completion of the *Aeneid* having never married.

### THE SECOND ECLOGUE OF VERGIL

Corydon, keeper of cattle, once loved the fair lad Alexis;  
But he, the delight of his master, permitted no hope to  
the shepherd.

Corydon, lovesick swain, went into the forest of beeches  
And then to the mountains and woods—the one relief of  
his passion—

With useless effort outpoured the following artless  
complaining:

“Alexis, barbarous youth, say, do not my mournful lays  
move thee?

Showing me no compassion, thou'lt surely compel me to  
perish.

Alone in the heat of day am I left with the screaming  
cicalas,  
While patient in tracking thy path, I ever pursue thee,  
Beloved.

*Translated by J. W. Baylis*

CATULLUS  
(B. C. 84-54)

Gaius Valerius Catullus, one of the greatest of the Latin poets, amid his various amours, seems to have had a deep devotion to his boy friend Juventius. Several of Catullus' most characteristic poems are addressed to this boy. Two of them, translated by Sir Richard Burton, are here given.

### **TO JUVENTIUS UPON A STOLEN KISS**

E'en as you played by the road side,  
O honey-sweet Juventius,  
Love-tempted, a swift kiss I snatched  
From your red lips so glorious,—  
of food of gods is half so sweet,  
Nor nectar half so marvelous!

Yet then for my rash, reckless theft  
Did I a bitter penance do,-  
For half an hour upon the cross  
Of your Unlove I fully knew  
The wrath you heaped upon my head

Who did it all for love of you!

The instant that our lips disjoined

You fiercely washed my kiss away!—

Scrubbing your lips with fingers all

To spurn the kiss I gave in play:

So that my Nectar turned to Gall

That you with scorn should love repay!

### **To JUVENTIUS**

Those honied eyes of thine, Juventius,

If any suffer me, “sans stint” to “buss” (kiss)

I’ll kiss of kisses hundred thousands three

Nor ever deem I’d reached satiety,—

Not albeit thicker than wheat sheaves grow

The kissing harvests our embraces know!

### **TIBULLUS**

(B. C. 54-19)

Albus Tibullus wrote his two books of Elegies about the year B. C. 20. Besides his infatuation with divers women, Tibullus appears to have been very devoted to a young lad named Marathus. Of Marathus Tibullus wrote his 8th and 9th Elegies.

The friendship was a very stormy one and the ninth Elegy is an invective against Marathus for his unfaithfulness to the poet.

## OF THE BOY MARATHUA

Gold is less precious than a lad  
Whose face is smooth and bright;  
Under his shoulders place thine arms,  
And thus look down on all the treasures of a King!

*Translated by E. E. Bradford*

## TO MARATHUS UNFAITHFUL

Didst dare, mad boy, to sell caresses  
That belonged to me?  
And to take to others  
Kisses that were mine?  
Thou sure wilt weep when other lad  
Hath captured me,  
And proudly reigns in realms  
That once were thine!

*Translated by E. E. Bradford*

## PHILOSTRATUS (3rd Century A. D.)

The philosopher Philostratos flourished in the time of the Emperor Severus. Besides his biographical and philosophical writings he left a very charming series of amatory letters to young boys. These have been an inspiration to many poets.

## EPISTLE I.

### SENT TO A FAIR BOY WITH A PRESENT OF ROSES

Fledged with the rose leaves as with wings  
My roses hasten to thy feet.  
Take graciously a gift that brings  
Remembrance of Adonis sweet :  
Nay, take them as the Paphian dyes,  
Or as the Earth's enamoured eyes!  
Olives become the athlete best,  
Great princes the tiara wear,  
Meet for the soldier is his crest,  
But roses for a stripling fair,  
The rose doth kindred colours show  
And kindred fragrance she discloses,  
Nor will my flowers adorn thee; no  
'Tis thou who will adorn the roses.

*Translated by Percy Osborn*

## THE PALATINE ANTHOLOGY

(Tenth Century A. D.)

Of this wonderful collection of Greek poetry, J. A. Symonds says that were the whole of other Greek verse lost but this, the life of ancient Greece could be reconstructed from these lovely poems and epigrams.

It is interesting that one of the most significant books in recent American literature, Master's "Spoon River Anthology", arose directly from the author's devotion to the Palatine Anthology.



Although epigrams and poems regarding the love of boys are found in most sections of the Anthology, one Book, the Twelfth, is particularly devoted to this type of verse. This Book, the “Mouse Paidike,” or “Boy-lover’s Muse” was put together by a Byzantine poet, Constantine Cephalas, of the Tenth Century. The main sources were the Garland of Meleager and the “Crown” of Strato and other anthologies, all of which have disappeared.

### **BOYHOOD’S CHARMS**

*By Rhianus*

Boys are a labyrinth  
From which there’s no way out,  
For wheresoe’ er cast thou thine eyes  
They’re snared by some fair sight:  
Here Theodorus draws thy gaze  
By the plump ripeness of his flesh,—  
There Philocles with golden face  
Shines with a nimbus crowned:  
And if thou look’st on Leptines  
Fast to the spot thou’lt rooted be;  
Such power so hath his eyes’ fierce flame  
To fire thee through and through!  
All hail, thrice hail, ye wondrous boys!  
May Youth’s fair prime be fully yours  
Till white hairs’ snows ye see!

*Translated by E. E. Bradford*

### **ANTIOCHUS**

*By Meleager*

In summer heat my thirst to slake  
I called my Love a kiss to take  
And on his tender lips did slake  
Desire, and parching thirst abate.

O, Father Zeus, dost thou not feed  
Thy thirsty lips on Ganymede,  
Who bears thee nectar in thy need?

So when my kisses blushes call  
From sweet Antiochus whom all  
Most fair among the youths extol  
'Tis sweetest honey of the soul!

*Translated by Sydney Oswald*

**“A BOY AND ROSES”**

*By Strato*

Today when dawn was dim I went  
Before the garland-weavers stall  
And saw a boy whose beauty sent  
Like stars of Autumn when they fall  
An arrow of swift fire that left  
Glory upon the gloom it cleft.

Roses he wove to make a wreath  
And roses were his cheeks and lips,

And faintly flushed the flowers beneath  
The roses of his fingertips.  
He saw me stand in mute amaze  
And rosy blushes met my gaze.

“O flower that weavest flowers” I said,  
“Fair Crown where myrtle blossoms white  
Mingle with Cyprian petals red  
For love’s ineffable delight.”—  
“Tell me, what God or Hero blest  
Shall bind thy garland to his breast?”

“Or can it be that even I  
Who are thy slave to save or slay,—  
With price of prayers and tears may buy  
Thy roses ere they fade away?”  
He smiled and deeper blushed and laid  
One finger on his lips and said:

“Peace, lest my father hear” then drew  
A blossom from the crown and pressed  
Its perfume to the pinks that blew  
Upon the snow-wreath of his breast,  
And kissed and gave the flower to be  
Sweet symbol of assent to me!

Roses and wreaths with shy pretense  
As for a bridal feast I bought,  
And veiling all love’s vehemence  
In langour, bade the flowers be brought  
To deck my chamber by the boy

Who brings therewith a greater joy!

*Translated by J. A. Symonds*

## THE PERSIAN SUFISTS

Abu-Nowas (756-810 A. D.)

Saadi (1184-1292 A. D.)

Hafiz (1310-1388 A. D.)

Djami (1414-1492 A.D.)

When the Persian people became Mohametans under the conquest of the successors of Mohamet, there gradually arose a school of mystics called Sufists. These under the guise of glosses on orthodox Mohamedanism taught an esoteric philosophy in which the devotion toward boys played a prominent part. The compositions of the four poets listed above, as well as many others, are filled with poems praising the beauty and loveliness of boys. These were interpreted as allegorical when objection was made to their theme, but there is no doubt but that a very real and deep seated devotion to the paidophillic ideal permeates all this school of poets.

Few of these poems have been translated into English un mutilated. Generally the redactor has substituted "she" and "her" for "he" and "him" wherever they occur. There is great need for a courageous translator to handle Persian poetry with the same honesty that Sir Richard Burton showed in his translation of the 1001 Nights and similar Arabic literature.

### **"THE DOOR OF FRIENDSHIP"**

Once came a youth to the doorway of friendship and knocked

“Ah” cried a voice from within “faithful heart, is it thou?”  
“Yea” the youth answered, “ ’tis I” But the door remained  
locked.

“There is no room for thee then!” cried the other, “Go thou!”

Weeping the youth turned away: for a year remained lone  
Burning, he hung all on fire for the waiting to end;  
Till with no self in him left, no heart of his own,  
Back like a swallow came he to the house of his friend.

Quick at the portal he knocked, and trembled for fear  
Lest from his lips there should fall any word but the true:  
“Ah” cried the friend from within, “who is this that I hear?”  
Spake he that waited without, “O Beloved, it is you”.

“If it be I, then let me come in” the friend cried;  
“Under one roof was no room for two ‘selfs’ to abide!”

*By Rumi. Trans. by Lawrence*

*Houseman*

“Happy the moment when we were seated in the palace,  
Thou and I;  
With two forms and with two figures but with one soul,  
Thou and I!

*By Rumi. Trans. by R. A. Nicholson*

“No tongue can express  
What means the separation from a friend!”

*By Hafiz. Trans. by E. C. Lefroy*

“Who shall impute it as a fault  
That I am enchanted by my friend?”

*By Saadi. Trans. by E. C. Lefroy*

POEMS FROM THE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS  
(1450 A D.)

This marvellous collection of stories and poems was probably put together in its present shape in Egypt under the domination of the Mamelukes in the first half of the fifteenth century. The tone of the various tales and poems accurately reflects the freedom and spaciousness of that epoch of Egyptian life under Arabian rule.

In the reign of the famous Saladin, this picked corps of soldiers purchased as boys was established. It was composed of men who were bought as boys for their fine physique and promise. At first they were merely the body-guard of the Sultan; but soon they became the dominant political power in the land. The Sultan, Malik al Mozaffar (1307-1341) sought for lovely, well-built boys from every nation and people and paid enormous prices for likely youths. This corps of soldiers so recruited soon became noted for their interest in boys. From them the whole tone of Egyptain life took on a paidophillic tinge which is faithfully portrayed in the "Nights" and is well preserved in the Burton translation.

I

In his face-sky shines the fullest moon,  
In his cheeks' anemone glows the sun,  
He so conquered beauty that he hath won  
All charms of humanity one by one.

II

That jet-black hair, that glossy brow,—  
My slender-waisted lad,—of thine  
Can darkness round creation throw  
Or make it brightly shine.

### III

Beauty they brought with him to make compare  
But Beauty hung her head in shame and care;  
Quoth they "O Beauty, hast thou seen his like"  
And Beauty cried "His like? Not anywhere!"

*Translated by Sir Richard Francis*

*Burton*

### MICHELANGELO

*Sculptor, Painter, Architect and Poet*

(1475-1564 A. D.)

Michel Angelo Buonarotti, the greatest artist the Italian race has produced, early showed his interest in boys. His first piece of sculpture was a statue of the boy St. John. His first masterpiece was the nude "David", now one of the most prized treasures of the City of Florence.

Two of Michelangelo's most treasured friends were Cecchino Bracci, and Tomasso Cavalieri. As his biographer Sydney Colvin says, "In 1533-1534 we find him beginning to address impassioned sonnets to a beautiful and gifted youth, Tomasso Cavalieri. The sentiment of these sonnets is curiously comparable to that expressed by Shakespere in his sonnets to Mr. W. H."

But at Michelangelo's death his papers came into the possession of his nephew Leonardo Buonarotti. This man, thinking to do his uncle a service, changed and distorted these sonnets so as to make them appear to be addressed to some female.

It was not until J. A. Symonds studied the original manuscripts preserved in Florence that this pious fraud was discovered and rectified.



**TO TOMMASO CAVALIERI**  
*(In English "Thomas Knight")*

If only chains and bands can make me blest  
No marvel if alone and bare I go,—  
An armed "Knight's" captive and slave confest!

**COMPARING THE LOVE OF YOUNG MEN**  
**WITH THE LOVE FOR WOMEN**

Love is not always harsh and deadly sin:  
If it be love of loveliness divine,  
It leaves the heart all soft and infantine  
For rays of God's own grace to enter in.  
Love fits the soul with wings and bids her win  
Her flight aloft nor e'er to earth decline;  
'Tis the first step that leads her to the shrine  
Of him who slakes the thirst that bums within.  
The love of that whereof I speak ascends:  
Woman is different far; the love of her  
But ill befits a heart all manly wise.  
The one Jove soars, the other downward tends:  
The soul lights this, while that the senses stir  
And still his arrow at base quarry flies.

*Translated by J. A. Symonds*

## CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

*Poet and Dramatist*

(1564-1593)

Christopher Marlowe was matriculated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, at the age of sixteen. He received his B.A. in 1583 and his M.A. in 1587. Soon after his graduation he came to London and began to write for the stage. His plays won instant attention. Soon he was recognized as the foremost English dramatist of his day.

His early play "Dido" begins with a scene between Jupiter and his Ganymede. In his lovely poem "Hero and Leander" the descriptions of Leander are some of the finest in the English tongue. In 1592 Marlowe set forth his masterpiece, the play Edward II. This tragedy recounts the boundless devotion of King Edward II for his young friend Piers Gaveston. It is interesting to note that this play has been recently staged by the National Theatre of Czechoslovakia at Prague with great success. In 1923 it was the "success of the year" in the Phoenix Players' repertoire in London.

Trouble soon threatened this unfortunate poet. The Jesuit Parsons anonymously accused Marlowe of atheism, then a capital crime~ An informer accused him of asserting his right to coin money. Marlowe's apprehension was ordered by the Privy Council of England. But before the officers could arrest him, the luckless poet was murdered by a servant in an inn at Depford. So perished mournfully one of the most brilliant poets the English race has produced.

### **LEANDER**

*From Marlowe's "Hero and Leander"*

Amourous Leander, beautiful and young,  
Whose tragedy divine Musaeus sung,  
Dwelt at Abydos; since him dwelt there none

For whom succeeding times make more moan.  
His dangling tresses that were never shorn,  
Had they been cut and unto Cholchos borne,  
Would have allured the venturous youth of Greece  
To hazard more than for the Golden Fleece.  
His body was as straight as Circe's wand,  
Jove might have sipt out nectar from his hand!  
Even as delicious meat is to the taste  
So was his neck in touching and surpast  
The white of Pelops' shoulder!

## EDWARD II

### *Scene I*

**Gaveston** (*Reading letter from King Edward*):

“What greater bliss can hap to Gaveston  
Than live and be the favorite of a King!  
Sweet Prince, I come; these, thy amorous lines  
Might have enforced me to have swum from France  
And like Leander, gasped upon the sand,  
So thou would's't smile and take me in thine arms.”  
(*Enter Edward.*)

**Gaveston** (*running to Edward*):

“I can no longer keep me from my Lord!”  
(*Kisses Edward's hand.*)

**Edward:**

“What, Gaveston, welcome, kiss not my hand!  
Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee!  
Why should's't thou kneel? Knowest thou not who I am

Thy friend, thyself, another Gaveston!”

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

*Dramatist and poet*

(1564-1616)

The greatest of English poets was educated in the Grammar School of his native town, Stratford-upon-Avon. As a young man he was rather wild. When 18 years old he became entangled with a woman ten years his senior and had to marry her hastily. Later he was arrested as a poacher.

Soon he drifted to London. There he made himself useful to the theatrical element. Tradition says that he organized a group of boys called “Shakespeare’s Boys” to hold the horses of gentlemen while at the play. But the opportunity for better things came and Shakespeare began to write.

In April 1593 was published Shakespeare’s first poem, “Venus and Adonis.” It tells of the amorous advances of the Queen of Beauty herself to the boy Adonis and his complete indifference to her charms. About this same time Shakespeare began that wonderful series of sonnets to his beloved friend Mr. W. H. Mr. W. H. was probably Will Hughes (graduated from Oxford in 1592), only son of Bishop Hughes of St. Asaph, 1573-1600. Shakespeare, it must be remembered, lived in a woman-less theatrical world. The female parts were all taken by young boys or by men who specialized in female impersonations, as in China today. For instance, the Juliet of “Romeo and Juliet” one of Shakespeare’s greatest plays, is clearly intended to be acted by a boy of fourteen.

That Shakespeare’s interest in young people continued to the end of his life is shown by his devotion to the Davenant boys at Oxford. Robert Davenant, who was fifteen when the great poet died, used to boast in after years of the frequency with which Shakespeare had

kissed him. Of William Davenant, Robert's younger brother, Shakespeare was so fond that ignorant folk surmised that the boy must be the dramatist's illegitimate son. This boy wrote an Ode to Shakespeare upon the great poet's death.

## VENUS AND ADONIS

*By William Shakespeare*

*(pub. 1593)*

Even as the sun with purple color'd face  
Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn  
Rose-cheeked Adonis hied him to the chase,—  
Hunting he loved, but Love he laughed to scorn.  
    Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain to him  
    And like a bold-faced suitor 'gins to woo him.

“Thrice fairer than myself”,—she thus began,—  
“The field's chief flower, sweet beyond compare,  
Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man,  
More white and red than doves or roses are;  
    Nature that made thee, with herself at strife,  
    Saith that the world hath ending with thy life.”

He burns with bashful shame,—she with her tears  
Doth quench the maiden burning of his cheeks;  
Then with her windy sighs and golden hairs  
To fan and blow them dry again she seeks:  
    He saith she is immodest, blames her miss,—  
    What follows more she murders with a kiss!

Even as an empty eagle, sharp by fast  
Tears with her beak on feathers, flesh and bone,  
Shaking her wings, devouring all in haste  
Till either gorge be stuffed or prey be gone;  
    Even so she kissed his brow, his cheek, his chin,  
    And where she ends she doth anew begin I

### SONNETS TO MR. W. H

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage  
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,  
To thee I send this written ambassage,  
To witness duty, not to show my wit;  
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine  
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it,  
But that I hope some good conceit of thine  
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it;  
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,  
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,  
And puts apparel on my tattered loving  
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect;  
    Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee:  
    Till then, not show my head where thou may'st prove me.

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted  
Hast thou, the Master-Mistress of my passion;  
A woman's gentle heart but not acquainted  
With shifting change, as is false woman's fashion;  
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling.

Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;  
A man in hue, all "hues" in his controlling,  
Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.  
And for a woman wert thou first created;  
Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting,  
And by addition me of thee defeated,  
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.  
    But since she picked thee out for woman's pleasure,  
    Mine be thy love and thy love's use their treasure.

Some day my love shall be, as I am now,  
With Time's injurious hand crushed and o'erworn;  
When hours have drained his blood and filled his brow  
With lines and wrinkles; when his youthful morn  
Hath travelled on to age's sleepy night,  
And all those beauties whereof now he's king  
Are vanishing or vanished out of sight,  
Stealing away the treasure of his spring;  
For such a time do I now fortify  
Against confounding Age's cruel knife,  
That he shall never cut from memory  
My sweet love's beauty, through my lover's life.  
    His beauty shall in these black lines be seen  
    And they shall live and he in them be green.

**A LOVER'S COMPLAINT**  
*By William Shakespeare*

His browny locks did hang in crooked curls;

And every light occasion of the wind  
Upon his lips their silken parcels hurls.  
What's sweet to do, to do will aptly find.  
Each eye that saw him did enchant the mind:  
For on his visage was in little drawn  
What largeness thinks in Paradise was sawn. (seen)  
Small show of man was yet upon his chin;  
His phoenix-down began but to appear,  
Like unshorn velvet, on that term-less skin,  
Whose bare out-bragged the webb it seemed to wear.  
Yet showed his visage by that cost more dear;  
And nice affections wavering stood in doubt  
If best were as it was, or best without.

MICHAEL DRAYTON  
(1563-1631)

As a boy, Michael Drayton was a page to Sir Henry Goodere. Upon reaching man's estate he gravitated to London. Soon after his arrival he published a book of religious verse.

It is interesting to note the striking parallelisms of theme and poem among these Elizabethan poets. In July 1593 was published Marlowe's play "Edward II", on the devotion of this king for Piers Gaveston; in December 1593 Drayton published his poem on this same subject, "The Legend of Piers Gaveston."

In April 1593 Shakspeare published his poem "Venus and Adonis" on the amorous approaches of a woman, Venus, to an unwilling boy, Adonis. Just a year later in April 1594 Drayton published his poem "Endymion" on the amorous approaches of a woman, Phoebe, to an unwilling boy Endymion. It is worthy of note that Drayton returned twice again to the subject of Edward II and Piers



Gaveston in his poems,—in his “Mortimeriados” and the “Historical Epistles.” He died unmarried in 1631.

**PIER GAVESTON’S SOLILOQUY**

*From Drayton’s “Legend of Piers Gaveston”*

“All men in shape I did so far excel  
(The parts in me such harmony did bear)  
As in my model Nature seemed to tell  
That her perfection she had placed there  
    As from each age reserving the rarest feature  
    To make me up her excellentest creature!

Such was the bait that gained Prince Edward’s love  
Breeding that league of amitie thereby,  
That no misfortune after could remove  
When she the utmost of her force did try;  
    Nor Death itself retained the power to sunder  
    Friendship seld’ seen and in this world a wonder!

Thus Edward in the April of his age  
While yet the crown sate on his father’s head  
Like that great Jove with his raped Phrygian page  
Me with ambrosial delicacies fed;  
    He might command that was the sovereign’s son  
    And what I said, that only must be done!

My smiles his life, so joyed he in my sight  
That his delight was led by my desire,  
From my clear eyes so borrowing all his light

As pale-eyed Cynthia from her brother's fire;  
He made my cheek the pillow for his head,  
My brow his book, my bosom was his bed!"

**"ENDYMION"**

*From Drayton's "Endimion", pub. 1594*

Endymion, the lovely shepherd boy,  
Endymion, great Phoebe's only joy,  
Endymion, in whose pure-shining eyes  
The naked fairies dance the hagedies;  
The shag-haired satyrs, mountain-climbing race  
Have been made tame by gazing on his face.  
His dainty hand the snow itself did stain  
As hers to whom Jove showered in golden rain:  
His tresses of the Raven's shining black,  
Straggled in curls along his manly back.

This shepherd Phoebe ever did behold  
Whose love already had her thoughts controlled;  
Near to a Grove she had Endymion spied  
When he was fishing by the River's side,  
Under a Poplar shadowed from the sun  
When merrily to court him she begun;  
"Sweet Boy" quoth she "take what thou wish;  
When thou dost angle, would I were a fish!"  
But he entreats her that she would be gone  
And at this time to let him be alone.  
But for all this the nymph would not forbear  
And now she smooths his crispy-curled hair;

And when he (rudely) willed her to refrain,  
Yet scarcely ended, she begins again.  
Then with a sigh her speeches off she broke  
The while her eyes to him in silence spoke!

### THE YOUTHFUL DAVID

The bees and wasps in wilderness wild  
Have with his beauties often been beguiled,—  
Roses and lillies thinking they have seen  
But finding they have deceived been!  
His lips in their pure coral liveries mock  
A row of pearls cut from a crystal rock,  
(Which stood between them, each of equal heighth) ;—  
    From top to toe his limbs so clean and straight  
That wolves oft that would his sheep surprise  
Became so charmed with the splendour of his eyes  
That they forgot their ravine and have lain  
Down by his flock, so near him they would fain!

RICHARD BARNFIELD

(1574-1627)

Richard Barnfield entered Oxford University at the age of fifteen. Upon obtaining his degree he went up to London and soon became a member of the literary circle surrounding Drayton, Shakspeare, etc.

When only nineteen, the young poet published his “The Affectionate Shepheard” a book of poems on the love of a shepherd for a boy called Ganymede. Two months later Barnfield published his second book of verse, called “Cynthia’s Revels”, in which were further poems in honor of the boy “Ganymede”.

It is remarkable that four fine poems by as many poets, on lovely youths should be published within the years,—1592-1594 — Marlowe’s Edward II, Shakspeare’s “Venus and Adonis”, Drayton’s “Endymion” and Barnfield’s poems in praise of “Ganymede”. But it should be remembered that this interest in youths was not confined to England only and was later to culminate in the poem “L’ Adone” of the Italian, John Baptist Marini, who spends 45,000 lines of verse to praise the young boy, Adonis!

In 1605 Barnfield retired to his estates. There he lived quietly until his death in 1627, having never married.

### **TO GANYMEDE**

Sometimes I wish that I his pillow were  
That I might steal a kiss and be not seen  
So I might gaze upon his sleeping een (eyes)  
Although I do it with a panting fear!

### **THE TEARS OF AN AFFECTIONATE SHEPHEARDE FOR THE LOVE OF THE BOY GANYMEDE**

If it be sin to love a sweet-faced Boy  
(Whose amber locks trussed up in golden trammels  
Dangle adown his lovely cheeks with joy  
When pearl and flowers his fair hair enamels),—

If it be sin to love a lovely lad  
Oh, then sin I, who for such love am sad.

His ivory white and alabaster skin  
Is stained throughout with rare Vermillion red  
Whose twinkling, starry light doth never blin (change)  
To shine on lovely Venus (Beauty's bed)  
    But as the lily and the blushing rose  
    So white and red on him in order grows!

### IN PRAISE OF GANYMEDE

Cherry-lipped Adonis in his snowy shape  
Might not compare with his pure Ivory white  
On whose fair front a Poet's pen may write,  
Whose roseate red excels the crimson grape!  
His love-enticing delicate soft limbs  
Are rarely framed t'intrap poor gazing eyes!  
His cheeks the Lily and Carnation dyes  
With lovely tincture that Apollo's dims!  
His lips ripe strawberries in nectar wet;  
His mouth a hive, his tongue a honey-comb!  
Where Muses (like Bees) make their mansion.  
His teeth pure pearl in blushing coral set,—  
Oh, how can such a body, sin-procuring?  
Be slow to love, and quick to hate enduring!

GIOVANNI BATTISTA MARINO

*Poet and Stylist*  
(1569-1625)

Marino, the Italian contemporary of Shakspeare and the culminating figure of the Italian renaissance has many striking analogies with the greatest of English poets. Like Shakspeare he had a thorough experience in that stem school of life “moneyless and a stranger in a great city.” Like Shakspeare he left the city of his birth in ill repute only to return to it in triumph in his old age.

Both wrote a famous poem upon the boy Adonis, Shakspeare at the beginning of his fame, Marino at the apex of his career. Both died the most famous writer of their race in their time, and had won out against the sneers and activities of the “Unco’ guid”.

Marino was born in the city of Naples in 1569. Quarrelling with his father, he was turned out of doors. He made his home with the famous lazzaroni of Naples, those happy-go-lucky homeless ones of that wonderful city. Marino became the lazzaroni’s poet and interpreter; his verses quickly attracted the attention of great men. But before long he was in trouble over a love escapade and had to flee Naples. He went to Rome and at once became the confidential secretary of a Cardinal,—Cardinal Aldobrandino. His literary work increased his fame and he was made a knight of St. Maurice by the Duke of Savoy.

In 1615 Marino went to France and was received with open arms by the Queen of France, Marie de Medici. He was given a pension of 10,000 crowns a year in order that he might be able to devote his whole attention to his masterpiece, the “Adonis” on which he was then working.

In 1623, the great poem, containing 45,000 lines, was published under the patronage of the Queen of France. It received the greatest of praise both in France and Italy. Everywhere “Marinism” became the style and the fashion of the day.

In the midst of his success Marino returned to his old home, Naples. The city from which he had fled in disgrace now welcomed

him as her most famous son. Nobles were proud to escort him on horse back; his old friends the lazzaroni, mad with delight, scattered roses in his path. A year later, in 1625, still in the height of his fame, the great poet died. He lived and died a bachelor.

His masterpiece the great poem “L’ Adone” may be epitomized from the words of John Addington Symonds. It’s smoothchinned hero, Adonis, beautiful as a girl, threads a labyrinth of adventures. Mercury introduces him to our attention in a series of the classical myths, the tales of Narcissus, Ganymede, Cyparissus, Hylas, Atys, in which Antiquity portrayed the attractiveness of lovely boyhood. Venus woos him and the witch Falserina seeks to captivate him, by her enchantments. Adonis is seized by brigands but his beauty quickly wins him his freedom.

He then contends with a band of other beautiful youths for the throne of Cyprus, to be awarded to the fairest boy. There in Cyprus he meets his death by the unintended assault of a wild boar. As in Shakspeare’s “Venus and Adonis” the savage animal attracted by Adonis’ beauty attempts to caress his thigh but instead unwittingly gives the boy his death wound in his groin.

Contemporary critics hailed “L’Adone” as an “Epic of Peace”. And so it is,—peace with human nature as it actually is in all its diversities and variations.

### “L’ADONE”

La nela region riccae felice  
D’Arabia bella Adone il giovinetto  
Quasi’ competitor de 1a Fenici,  
Senza pari in belta vive soletto.  
Adon nato de lei, cui la nutrice  
Col proprio genitor giunse in un letto;  
Di lei, che volta in pianta, i suoi dolori

Ancor distillain lagrimosi adori.  
Fattezze mai si signoriti e belle  
Non vide l'occhio mio lucido e chiaro,  
Sventurato fanciullo, a cui te stelle  
Prima il rigor, che lo splendor mostaro.  
Contro gli armo crude influentie e felle  
Ancor de lui non vista, il Cielo avaro:  
Poiche, metre l'un sorse, e l'altra giacque  
Al morir de Ia madre il figlio nacque.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT  
*Poet and Dramatist*  
(1584-1624)

Francis Beaumont entered Oxford University at the age of twelve. When seventeen or eighteen he wrote his first poem "Hermaphroditus", which Swinburne has termed a remarkable tour de force. After leaving Oxford, Beaumont met John Fletcher, son of a sometime Bishop of London. The two youths became inseparable friends. Together they composed that series of plays which rank next to Shakspeare's in sustained power. Aubrey says "There was a wonderful consistency of phansy between Mr. Francis Beaumont and Mr. Ion Fletcher, which caused that dearness of feeling between them. They lived together in Southwark, not far from the Globe Theatre, both bachelors, between them the same clothes and cloke."

**"HERMAPHRODITUS"**

*From Beaumont's "Hermaphroditus"*



There was a lovely boy the nymphs had kept  
That on the Idalian mountains oft had slept;  
His cheeks were sanguine and his lips were red  
As o'er the blushing leaves of the rose spread,  
For his white hand each goddess did him woo  
For it was whiter than the driven snow;  
His leg was straighter than the thigh of Jove  
And he far fairer than the God of Love.

When this well-shap'd boy, Beauty's chief king,  
Had seen the labour of the fifteenth spring,  
He 'gan to travel from his place of birth,  
Leaving the stately hills where he was nurst,  
Seeking clear, limpid springs to bathe him in,  
For he did love to wash his ivory skin.

The lovely nymphs have oft thus seen him swim  
And closely stol'n his clothes from off the brim,  
Because the wanton wenches would so fain  
See him come nak'd to ask his clothes again.

Using to travel thus, one day he passed  
A crystal brook that bubbled 'long the grass:  
He then supposing he was all alone,  
Like a young boy that is espied of none,  
Runs here and there, then on the banks doth look,  
Then on the crystal current of the brook:  
Then with his foot he touch'd the silvery stream,—  
Whose drowsy waves made music in their dream,—  
And for he was not wholly in, did weep  
Talking aloud and babbling in their sleep.  
Whose pleasant coolness when the boy did feel  
He thrust his foot down lower to the heel.  
O'ercome with whose sweet noise, he did begin

To strip his soft clothes from his tender skin.

When straightway the scorching sun wept tears of brine  
Because he dare not touch him with his shine  
For fear of spoiling that same ivory skin  
Whose whiteness he so much delighted in.  
And the Moon, mother of mortal ease,  
Would fain have come from the Antipodes  
To there behold him naked as he stood  
Ready to leap into the silver flood.  
When Hermaphroditus, on the sands,  
Clasping his while sides with his hollow hands,  
Leaped lively from the land whereon he stood  
Into the main part of the crystal flood,—  
Like ivory then his snowy body was,  
Or a white lily in a crystal Glass!!

THOMAS TRAHERNE

*Priest and Poet*

(1636-1674)

At the age of sixteen Traherne became a commoner of Brasenose College, Oxford. He received his B.A. in 1656, his M.A. in 1661. He was priested about the year 1657.

Ten years later Traherne became associated with the closest friend of his career, Sir Orlando Bridgman, Lord Keeper of the Seals. Traherne became the Lord Keeper's Chaplain and Director. When Sir Orlando fell into disfavor at Court and was deprived of the Seals, Traherne accompanied him into retirement. When Sir Orlando died in 1674, Traherne followed his friend to the grave within two months. He had never married.

## THE SALUTATION

New burnished joys  
Which yellow gold and pearls excel!  
Such sacred treasures are the limbs of boys  
    In which a soul doth dwell,  
Their organized joints and azure veins  
More wealth include than all the world contains!

## THE BODY

O Lord  
Thou hast given me a body  
Wherein the glory of thy Power shineth!  
Wonderfully composed above the beasts,  
Within, distinguished into useful parts,  
Beautified without, with many ornaments,—

Limbs rarely poised  
    And made for heaven;  
Arteries filled  
    With celestial spirits:  
Veins wherein blood floweth  
Refreshing all my flesh  
    Like rivers:

Sinews fraught with the mystery  
    Of wonderful strength,

Stability,  
Feeling.

O blessed be thy glorious name  
That thou hast made of it  
A Treasury of Wonders!

## POETS AND AUTHORS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727)

Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

Thomas Gray (1716-1771)

Horace Walpole, *Earl of Orford* (1711-1797)

Tobias Smolett (1721-1771)

Charles Vanbrugh (1726-1745)

The enthusiasm of the Elizabethan and early Stuart authors over boys had been frowned upon by the Puritan element, and suppressed by the Commonwealth. It survived in the era of the Restoration mainly in that school of Cambridge Platonists who avowedly set out to restore the ideals of Plato and Socrates.

But the Eighteenth Century saw the nadir of this devotion. This prim era, with its hostility to all “enthusiasm” was alien to a heartfelt devotion to any ideal, be it boy or hero, God or devil.

Hence it was typically the age of frigid bachelordom. The more frivolous and wealthy made long trips to Naples and Venice, where the name of Englishman came to be closely linked with the idea of boy-infatuation.

But some right-minded friendships and ideals stand out in contrast to the age. Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest of English scientists, was noted for his long and steadfast friendships. He never displayed the slightest interest in women and died unmarried in 1727.

Alexander Pope is understood to have had a deep and a lasting affection for a young friend but the regard was not reciprocated. He died unmarried in 1744. Horace Walpole appears to have had a very ardent devotion to his friend Conway, and to the poet Thomas Gray, as shown in various passages in his letters. His biographer, Austin Dobson speaks of that “mixture of effeminacy and real

genius that made up Horace Walpole's character." His brother Edward Walpole was attacked in 1751 by a gang of blackmailers. Horace Walpole although a younger son finally inherited his father's Earldom of Oxford but died unmarried in 1797.

Thomas Gray, the foremost English poet of the Eighteenth Century, became very intimate with Horace Walpole while at Eton. The friendship reminds one very strikingly of that later friendship at the same school between Dolben and Manning. In both cases books were much preferred to sports. At Cambridge Gray was very unhappy and unpopular. His uncle Rodgers despised him because he preferred reading to hunting and solitary strolls around the country-side to riding to the hounds!

In 1739 Gray and Walpole left England together for a tour on the Continent. Walpole had made a will leaving Gray all his property. But at Reggio the two friends quarrelled and parted. Fortunately the friendship was later renewed. Gray's first poem "Ode on a distant Prospect of Eton College" was published in 1742 at Walpole's urgent suggestion. This poem mentions, it will be remembered, the Eton lads swimming in the River Thames.

There is no sign of a romantic interest in women in any of Gray's poetry. Leslie Stephens, his biographer, says "Gray was bored to extinction by a crowd of women and hardly ever opened his mouth in such a company." Says Stephens: "There is not the slightest suggestion of a romance with a woman in Gray's life, even of the most shadowy kind." Gray died unmarried in 1771.

Tobias Smolett, who had been a ship's surgeon in the British Navy for three years, published in 1742 his first novel "Roderick Random". In Chapter XXXIV Smolett describes (probably from some recollections of his naval career) the sexual intimacies between the commander of a man of war and one of his officers. Later, in Chapter LI, a British nobleman, Earl Strutwell, utters a long panegyric of "Greek Love" as being most healthful and fashionable.

One of the most brilliant dramatists of the Eighteenth Century, Charles Vanbrugh, has a scene in his play "The Relapse" showing

the amorous advances of an older man toward a younger. John Cleland, (1707-1789), was the author of one of the most celebrated Eighteenth Century novels (published 1747), “The Adventures of Fanny Hill”. This picturesque novel contains a very charming and striking description of the affection of an older lad toward a younger boy.

John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), wrote some very striking verse on this affection. One of his plays on this subject was performed privately before the King and a number of his courtiers. The following is an example of his verse.

But a dear Boy’s disinterested Flame  
Gives Pleasure and for mere Love gathers Pain!—  
In him alone Fondness sincere does prove;  
And the kind, tender, naked Boy is Love!

## JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

*Dramatist, Essayist and Poet*

(1749-1832)

George Brandes, the celebrated Danish essayist, has told us that in the Eighteenth Century a wave of romantic friendship spread over Germany and Denmark. This appears to have culminated in the great figure of Goethe, the greatest writer the German race has ever produced. In his high-minded and unselfish friendship with the poet Schiller, he set an ideal worthy of the best days of Greece or Persia.

When Goethe was 37 years old he spent a year in Italy. This visit was the turning point in his career. As with Count Platen, his attitude toward all forms of love became broadened and more philosophic. When he returned to Germany, Goethe broke with his former mistress, Frau von Stein, and as his biographer says

“continued the freer customs to which he had adapted himself in Rome.”

In 1794 Goethe met Schiller, and began that romantic friendship which lasted until the death of the younger poet. Early in the 19th Century Goethe became interested in Winkelmann, the modern prophet of Greek life, art and love. In 1805 the great poet published his defense of Winkelmann,—“Winkelman and His Times.”

Count Platen in his romantic poems on Platonic love had introduced the Persian verse form, the Ghazeel, into German prosody. In 1811 a translation of Hafiz’ *Divan* was published. This interested Goethe greatly, and in 1819 he published his own volume of Oriental poems, the “West-East Divan”. In this the interest in the boy figured largely, especially in the Ninth Book, “The Book of the Cup-Bearer”. Goethe had become warm friends with several boys, especially a son of Professor Paulus of Heidelberg and a young waiter at Weisbaden. This friendship between a young lad and an older man was idealized in the relations between the Poet and his youthful Cup-bearer in the “West-East Divan”.

“From a volume of lyrics of Eastern poetry” wrote Goethe, “could not be omitted the delight inspired in old age by the grace of youth, nor the answering reverence for wisdom felt by the young. The passionate attachment of a child for an old man is not a rare phenomenon.” To this sentiment “The Book of the Cup-Bearer” stands as an undying monument.

### **THE CUP-BEARER TO HIS MASTER**

“And in your eyes gaze long and deep  
Till you shall kiss the Cup-bearer.”  
The Master watching his Cup-bearer asleep.  
“Now the delicious tide of health is flush  
In every limb; new life comes momentarily!  
But not a sound, hush, hush,



That waking not, I may have joy in thee!  
The Cup-bearer to his Master.  
“Me thy long-hoped-for gift at last contents;  
Deep-felt wisdom in all its elements:—  
How lovingly thou givest it! Yet above  
All other things the loveliest is thy love.

*Translated by Edward Dowden and  
others*

### **THE BOY CUP-BEARER TO HIS MASTER**

In the market-place appearing  
None thy poet-fame dispute;  
I, too, gladly hear thy singing;-  
More, still,—hearken when thou 'rt mute!

For I love thee, when thou printest  
Kisses not to be forgot,  
Best of all,—for words may perish,  
But a kiss lives on in thought!

Rhymes on Rhymes fair meaning carry;  
Thoughts to think bring deeper joy;  
Sing to other folk,—but tarry  
Silent with thy serving boy.

*Translated by Edw. Carpenter*

LORD BYRON

*Poet and Liberal*

(1788-1824)

Lord Byron, in spite of his many affairs with women, appears to have had very deep and abiding affection for various boys and young men with whom he became friendly. During his boyhood at Newstead Abbey, he became greatly attached to a village lad. With this boy Byron corresponded even after being sent to Harrow School. This affection the poet has celebrated in his poem "Don Leon".

At Harrow Byron met Lord Clare, for whom he cared with such deep affection that the poet could not hear Lord Clare's name mentioned without experiencing deep emotion.

While at Oxford, Byron met a young choir boy, Eddleston. Byron wrote of this boy: "His voice first attracted my attention, and his countenance fixt it. I certainly love him more than any other human being."

Later, in the last phase of Byron's life, during his stay in Greece, Byron met a young Greek-French lad of great beauty. This lad, Nicolo Giraud, was the model of the Italian painter Lusieri. Byron took possession of the lad with characteristic impetuosity and made a will leaving to this boy the whole of his private fortune!

**"THE ADIEU"**

*Addressed to Eddleston the choir boy*

And thou, my friend, whose gentle love  
Yet thrills my bosom's chords,  
How much thy friendship was above  
Description's power of words!

## “DON LEON”

Then, say, was I or Nature in the wrong?  
If, yet a boy, one inclination strong  
In wayward fancies domineered my soul,  
And bade complete defiance to control?  
Among the yeoman's sons on my estate,  
A gentle boy would on my mansion wait.  
Full well I know, though decency forbade  
The same caresses to a rustic lad,  
Love, love it was that made mine eyes delight  
To have his person ever in my sight—  
Oh, how I loved to press his cheek to mine!  
How fondly would mine arms his waist entwine!

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

*Poet, Historian and Essayist*

(1840-1893)

John Addington Symonds was the son of a very serious minded and dominant father. Hence his whole life was an unceasing attempt to bend his temperament to conform to the ideals set by this father. But the attempt was continually a failure, and the conformity was never more than an outward one. The older Symonds had little or no sympathy with Platonic ideals. For instance, at one time in J. A. Symonds' boyhood, the father was extremely shocked by his son's fascination with a picture of a Greek male figure.

The young Symonds soon developed indications of lung trouble. Thenceforth his whole life was an unceasing battle against this

relentless enemy.

Symonds' literary genius early showed itself. His biographer, Horatio Brown, complains that there was no unity in Symonds' literary or historical work. But it is obvious that all his studies centered about his interest in boys and boy-love. From this came his interest in the Greek poets, in the Italian Renaissance, in the Elizabethans, in Walt Whitman.

Indeed, of the coterie of literary men surrounding Symonds, Swinburne maliciously remarked that they "were more interested in the blue velvet of the Venetian gondoliers' trousers than they were in the blue of Venetian skies." It was not for nothing that they were nick-named the "Calamites" after the "Calamus" of Walt Whitman.

In 1892 Symonds visited the celebrated publicist Ulrichs in his retreat in Northern Italy. Shortly afterwards Symonds published his masterly "Problem in Greek Ethics" and a little later his "Problem in Modern Ethics". He had previously published two very lovely poems on the affection between Jonathan and David and the tragic episode of the Emperor Hadrian and the lad Antinoos. His monumental studies in the Italian Renaissance have placed him in the front rank of English historians.

### LAD'S LOVE

He was all beautiful: as fair  
As summer in the silent trees,  
As bright as sunshine on the leas,  
As gentle as the evening air.

His voice was swifter than the lark  
Softer than thistle down his cheek  
His eyes were stars that shyly break

At sundown ere the skies are dark.

But sloth and fear of men and shame  
Impose their limit on my bliss:—  
Else I had laid my lips to his  
And called him by love's dearest name!

### **A DREAM**

I saw a vision of deep eyes  
In morning sleep when dreams are true,  
Wide humid eyes of hazy blue  
Like seas that kiss the horizon skies.

Then as I gazed, I felt the rain  
Of soft warm curls around my cheek  
And heard a whisper low and meek  
"I love and canst thou love again?"

A gentle youth beside me bent,  
His cool, moist lips to mine were pressed,  
That throbbed and burned with love's unrest  
When lo, the powers of sleep were spent.

And noiseless on the airy wings  
That follow after night's dim way,  
The beauteous boy was gone for aye,  
A theme of vague imaginings.

Yet I can never rest again:  
The flocks of morning dreams are true;  
And till I find those eyes of blue  
And golden curls, I walk in pain.

PAUL VERLAINE  
(1844-1896)

Paul Verlaine had the ordinary education of a middle-class French boy. At the age of twenty-five he had a momentary glimpse of a sixteen year old school girl, Mathilde Maute and instantly proposed marriage to her. He was accepted. But within fifteen months of the wedding ceremony a strange sixteen year old lad, Arthur Rimbaud, came to live at Verlaine's home. This brought about strained relations between Verlaine and his wife. Suddenly Verlaine and Rimbaud left for London where they lived together. Madame Verlaine obtained a divorce from her husband. Verlaine and Rimbaud quarrelled, and Verlaine shot Rimbaud, the bullet lodging in his wrist. For this Verlaine was sentenced to two years in prison.

After his release from prison, Verlaine finally became Professor of English at the Roman Catholic College of Notre Dame at Rethel in the Ardennes. Here he met a slim graceful young lad, Lucien Letinois, seventeen years old. Verlaine became greatly attached to this student. When Letinois was graduated Verlaine resigned his professorship. Verlaine then bought a farm and here he and Letinois lived together. But the experiment was not a success. Letinois was called up for military service and afterward died of typhoid fever. Verlaine in great grief published his "Amour" in Lucien Letinois' memory.

Verlaine's later career was very melancholy. He alternated between the Parisian hospitals and the Parisian wine-shops. But

upon his death in 1896 he was awarded a public funeral in honor of his services to French Literature as a poet.

**“LUCIEN”**

“Je connus cet enfant, mon amere douceur  
Dans un pieux college oil j’etais professeur.  
Ses dix-sept ans mutins et maigres, sa reelle  
Intelligence, et la purete vraiment belle  
Que disaient et ses yeux et son geste et sa voix  
Captiverent mon coeur et dicterent mon choix.”

**“ARTHUR RIMBAUD”**

Le roman de vivre a deux hommes  
Mieux que non pas d’epoux modeles,  
Chacun au tas versant des sommes  
De sentiments forts et fideles.

**DIGBY MACWORTH DOLBEN**

*Religious and Poet*

(1848-1868)

Dolben entered Eton College at the age of fourteen. Here he became great friends with Thomas Bridges afterwards Poet Laureate of England and Edward Manning, after Cardinal of the Roman Church. Many of Dolben’s poems were addressed to Manning under his nick-name “Archie”.

Dolben soon became profoundly interested in the revival of the Monastic Life in the Church of England under the influence of the Oxford Movement. He was received into the Anglican Benedictines and shocked the simple country folk by tramping about at night in his sandals and scapular. After being prepared for Oxford by various tutors, he entered Christchurch at the age of twenty. A month later he was drowned accidentally in the river Weiland.

In appearance Dolben was the typical young poet,—fair, beautiful and shy. He had the best Earth gives and then was early snatched away from life. Who knows from what shame and agony he was saved!

### TO EDWARD MANNING

O come, my King, and fill the palaces  
(Where sceptered Loss too long hath held her state)  
With courts of joyance and a laughing breeze  
Of voices—if thou wilt, come,—I wait  
Unquestioning; no equal but thy slave!  
I plead no merit and no claim for wages,  
Nor that sweet favour which my sovereign gave  
In other days of his own grace ;—But pages  
Are privileged to linger at the door  
With longing eyes, (while nobles kiss the hand  
Of him the noblest), though elect no more  
To touch the train, nor at the throne to stand.  
    Ah, come,—content me with the lowest place  
    So be it that I may but see thy face!

### A LETTER (TO EDWARD MANNING)



My love and once again my love,  
And then no more until the end,  
Until the waters cease to move,  
Until we rest within the Ark  
And all is light that now is dark,  
And loves can never more descend;—  
And yet, and yet,—be just to die;  
At least for manhood; for the whole  
Love-current of a human soul,—  
Though bent and rolled through fruitless ways,  
Though marred with slime and chocked with weed:—  
(Long lost the silver ripple-song,  
Long past the sprouting water-mead)  
Is something awe-ful, broad and strong;  
Remember that this utterly,—  
With all its waves of passion, set  
To you!  
My brother, hear me, for the name  
Which is as fire within my bones  
Has burned away the former shame;  
Held I my peace, the very stones  
Would cry against me; hear me then,  
Who will not bid you hear again,—  
Though how the waters were made sweet  
That night thou knowest,—only thou!

EDWARD CRACROFT LEFROY  
*Priest and Poet*

(1855-1891)

Lefroy's mother was a niece of the novelist, Jane Austin. As a school boy his friendships were few but very close, his greatest delight being to wander afield in the woods with a chosen chum.

In 1874 Lefroy entered Keble College Oxford; he took his B.A. in 1877 and was priested in 1878.

But Lefroy's heart was weak and in 1882 he was compelled to give up his clerical work. As he set his face bravely toward the setting sun, the priest-poet wrote in his diary that his one regret would be "that I will not be able to watch the after career of the many lads in whom I have taken an interest." He died, mourned by his many friends, in 1891. He had never married.

### TO A LOVELY FRIEND

Now may God bless thee for thy face, at least,  
Seeing there is such comfort in the mere  
Mute watching of it,—yea, a constant feast  
Of golden glamour when the days are drear,  
And Summer harmonies have sunk and ceased.  
This is the very death-day of the year;  
Yet beauty is not dead; thou art her Priest  
Thy face her temple 'mid the shed leaves here.  
And if for me no Spring shall ever prank  
My fields again with daisies anywhere,  
And though all other faces, dull and blank,  
Look through the darkness till they seem to bear  
The guise of death; I cannot choose but thank  
My God for having fashioned one so fair!

**AN IDLER LISTENING TO SOCRATES  
DISCUSSING PHILOSOPHY WITH HIS BOY FRIENDS**

The old man babbles on! Ye gods, I swear  
My soul is sick of these philosophers!  
In sooth I marvel that young blood should care  
To hear such vapid stuff; yet no one stirs.  
Who's for a breath of unpolluted air?  
See yonder brown-eyed nursling of the Muse,—  
I'll pluck his robe and ask him; if he choose  
We two can steal away and none be ware.  
What joy to find a woodland rill and wade  
Knee-deep through pebbly shallows; then to lie  
With glistening limbs along the open glade  
And let the soft-lipped sunbeams kiss them dry:  
Or wandering in the Grove's remoter shade  
To sport and jest and talk—Philosophy?

E. E. BRADFORD  
*Priest and Poet*  
(1860- )

The Rev. E. E. Bradford was educated at Exeter College, Oxford. For a number of years he was a chaplain to English congregations in various countries on the Continent. At one time he was Assistant Priest at the Anglo-Catholic Church in Paris, St. George's. His travels and his contacts with the boys of many lands are mirrored in his verse.

He has now been for many years the Vicar of Nordelph. There he enjoys the confidence and respect of all types of people for his saintliness of life and his fearless defense of the love of boys.

### **SHY LOVE**

Little enough say I to Jim,  
Little enough says he,  
Though now and then I look at him  
And he at me:  
But if by chance our glances meet—  
My faith! I grow as red as beet!

Often I wait for Jim at school,  
Often he wats for me—  
With the door between us, as a rule,  
I wait and he.  
When at last he ventures in the street—  
Good gracious I how my heart does beat!

“Only a boy,” they say of him:  
“Only a boy” is he?  
Aye, the only boy in the world is fun,  
At least for me.  
And as for girls,—I never meet  
One that is fit to kiss his feet!

### **WHEN I WENT A-WALKING**

When I went a-walking  
In the morning fair  
I met three boys a-running,  
And one had golden hair;  
Curly locks were they  
Like little rings of light.  
I thought of him all day  
And I dreamed of him all night.

When I went a-walking  
In the noonday glare  
I met three boys a-bathing  
And the form of one was fair:  
Snowy white, like May,  
Yet rosy 'neath the white.  
I thought of him all day,  
And I dreamed of him all night.

When I went a-walking  
In the evening air,  
I saw three boys a-coming:  
Two went I know not where.  
But one went not away  
For that I held him tight;—  
I'll work for him all day,  
And dream of him all night.

ALAN

Fresh from his bath, the boy, with hollowed hands  
    Luxuriating in the genial heat  
Before the glowing hearth a moment stands,  
    Flushed with its rosy light from head to feet:  
And thus I see him, naked, clean and warm,  
    Framed by the uncurtained casement close behind,  
Placed in a picture lowering with storm,  
    Mid myriad snow-flakes whirling in the wind.  
His radiant face, illumined by the fire,  
    Gleams out against a dark and troubled sea:  
The shore, here dark with snow, there foul with mire,  
    Lies all around his form yet leaves it free:  
So is it with his heart, 'mid shame and sin  
    Unstained it glows with love's pure light within!

JOHN GAMBRIL NICHOLSON

*Schoolmaster and Poet*

(1866- )

John Gambril Nicholson was educated at Oxford. While an undergraduate he was a contributor to that ill-fated magazine in which appeared for the first time Bloxam's "Priest and the Acolyte" and Oscar Wilde's "Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young", a publication which was to play so tragic a part in the trial of that unhappy man.

Nicholson presently became the English Master of the Stationers' Company's School in North London. Here he has remained ever since, quite content with his school work and boy friends. He has published three volumes of verse about boy love and two novels of

boy life,—“Carrington’s Duty Week” and “The Romance of a Choir Boy”.

### “VICTOR”

Just for once my Victor kissed me,-  
    Ah, his cheek was soft as satin!  
Cynics say that Fortune’s missed me,—  
Just for once my Victor kissed me,  
And when with the lost they list me  
    Let them anyway put that in!  
Just for once my Victor kissed me,—  
    Ah, his cheek was soft as satin!

### THE BATHER

Clothed only in his wondrous loveliness  
    He stands upon the margin of the stream,  
    The Summer’s self were not a worthier theme  
If language might but half his charms express:—  
The sunlit land has donned its richest dress,  
    And decked with gold the radiant meadows gleam;  
    But he, whose garments hid his grace supreme.  
Has cast them off beneath the sun’s caress.

### PROFIT OR LOSS

What if I've made a mistake?  
I have told him the naked truth!  
Silent so long for his sake,  
Should I have spared his youth?

I put it all into speech,  
That's where I may have been wrong!  
So hard is Love to teach  
Though I've called him mine so long.

I was dying for something more;  
Have I lost what once I had?  
He was never afraid before,  
My bonny little lad!

Have I lost what once I had,  
He sleeps, but I lie awake;  
My bonny little lad!  
What if I've made a mistake?

J . M. STUART-YOUNG  
*Poet, Novelist and Colonist*  
(1881- )

Mr. Stuart-Young as a lad claims to have attracted the attention of the author Oscar Wilde and has published a love letter he claims Wilde wrote him. He had a very unhappy childhood in a British slum and early drifted into colonial work on the West Coast of Africa. Mr. Stuart-Young has written a number of novels as well as books of verse, dealing with the Niger Country and the subject of



Boy-love. A collection of his verse has been recently edited by Charles Kains-Jackson.

### **A PORTRAIT OF THE BOY A. H. G**

A gentle youth with dark and soul-lit eyes  
Where twinkling thought and fleeting fancy lies:  
A calm, pale brow that shows each passing phase  
Of budding beauty in a thousand ways.

### **INVOCATION**

Shy Boy, shy boy,  
Shyest of your kind;  
If you were of my mind  
You'd not sit apart  
But enter my warm heart,  
Shy boy, shy boy!

Shy boy, shy boy,  
Softer than a dove  
Or the wings thereof,  
Shy boy, shy boy,  
Meet for lover's rapture  
O will you not capture  
Love, love, love?

## TO A NUDE BOY

Your face is not divine; but softly wrought  
Are your white shoulders which strong muscles hide.  
I like you thus and am most satisfied  
That you have posed as in a sculptor's thought;—  
Watching your sinuous breasts makes me distraught  
In memory of the time when we defied  
The indolence of flesh; and magic taught  
Each to the other, and no thrill denied!

RICHARD MIDDLETON

*Poet and Essayist*

(1882-1911)

Richard Middleton was educated at schools near London. He had not a very happy boyhood. At eighteen he became a clerk in an insurance office in London. His spare time was devoted to reading and to entertaining parties of young people. He wrote in his diary: "I must be content to choose my friends among children; who always see me at my best,—and what better friends do I want?"

In 1905 he became a member of the "New Bohemians" Club. Here he met Arthur Machen, Frank Harris, etc., and soon began to try his hand at literary work. In 1906 he left his father's house and took lodgings for himself. A year later he resigned his position with the insurance firm and began to depend on his pen for an income.

Good as Middleton's work was, it brought him only a meager livelihood. In 1908 he went to stay in Brussels because of the low cost of living there. But he became entangled in a sordid amour and had to flee to his father's home at St. Albans in England. But

dissatisfied with conditions at his father's house he again returned to Brussels. Six weeks later he committed suicide.

So perished at the same age as Mozart, a gifted English poet. Of Middleton's "Bathing Boy" Frank Harris said that it was "finer than Herrick, nearly as beautiful as Keats' 'Grecian Urn' ",—praise well deserved!

### **YOUTHFUL PAN**

A fair, slim Boy who darts across the brake  
    Paling the morning with his silver thigh,  
    Piping his soft strange music like a sigh,  
To greet the world and kiss the earth awake  
    And make its old heart ache  
With vain regret and passionate melody!

### **MY LOVE LIES HID**

My love lies hid in leafy forest pools  
    That never a wind may trouble from the South,  
And there amid the silences he cools  
    His ivory body and his crimson mouth.

### **I SAW A BOY, A PRETTY BOY**

A fair boy grieving in the Spring  
    Stayed for the procession of the years,  
For the sun grew pale at his sorrowing

And the moon-light filled his tears.  
A rose lay dead upon his mouth,  
The violets dreamed about his eyes  
And a wind blew out of the mad South  
And tore the timid skies.

The sad rain fell upon his face  
That was as soft as a girl's breast,  
His grief sought comfort in his grace  
As a tired child its rest.  
The warm wind sobbed about the earth,  
The heart of the pulsing earth was sore  
Because the boy had forgotten mirth  
And so would sing no more.

Oh dear boy with the lovely head  
And the silver body of snow,  
Laugh out again for the Fates are dead  
And the dead fates homeward go.  
Ah, dear boy with the red lips  
And the breast as soft as a girl's,  
Young love has brought a thousand ships  
And the skies are all awhirl!

### **THE BATHING BOY**

I saw him standing on the brim  
Of the quick river in his beauty clad.  
So fair he was that Nature looked at him

And touched him with her sunbeams here and there  
So that his cool flesh sparkled, and his hair  
Blazed like a crown above the naked lad.

And so I wept; I have seen lovely things,  
Maidens and stars and roses all a-nod  
In moon-lit seas; but Love without his wings  
Set in the azure of an August sky  
Was all too fair for my mortality  
And so I wept to see the little god.

Till with a sudden grace of silver skin  
And golden lock he dived, his song of joy  
Broke with the bubbles as he bore them in;  
And lo, the fear of death was on that place  
Till, decked with new-found gems and flushed of face,  
He rose again, a laughing, choking boy.

EDMUND JOHN  
*Schoolmaster and Poet*  
(1883-1911)

Edmund John's early interests were strongly scientific, particularly in the direction of Chemistry. He finally decided however to devote his life to teaching as a profession. His biographer says "Edmund John was happiest when surrounded by a group of boys, all engrossed and fascinated by his wonderful personality. His power over boys was extraordinary and they adored him."

He never forgot a promise to a child. The cigarette cards, the stamps or the coveted specimen always came by the first available post. Very charming too were his notes to his small friends. To one he wrote from Italy.

“Bambino carissimo:—

Will you come and stay with me in Florence? No one grows up here and you can dabble your feet in the Amo! A revederci carino.”

To another he wrote:

“I have received your adorable illustrated letter this morning and loved it so much that I immediately made an altar before it, lit by amber candles in copper candle-sticks, burnt incense before it and kissed its extreme beautifulness—”

In 1915 he gave up his school and enlisted in the “Artists’ Rifles”. But heart trouble developed and he was invalided out. He went to Italy in hopes of regaining his health but died there in February 1917.

His finest poem is undoubtedly “The Seven Gifts”. This was written, upon sudden inspiration, on the back of a schoolboy’s arithmetic examination paper. Edmund John sent it to his friend, the editor of the “English Review” with the following note:

“Ecco, here is the poem at last. I wonder if you will like it. The feeling is, I think, essentially characteristic of myself.”

### **THE SEVEN GIFTS**

I give my clear-eyed boy a star  
Of clematis from summer days

That dwelt among the scented ways  
Of an old garden still and far:

So that it light his dreams with truth  
From that walled garden of my youth,  
I give my clear-eyed boy a star.

I give my soft-haired boy a crown  
Of olive from the groves of Greece,

That all life's passion turn to peace  
For him, and perilous paths lead down  
To clear, calm lakes beneath the moon;—  
So that his brow be cool at noon,  
I give my soft-haired boy a crown.

I give my red-lipped boy a rose  
Fresh with the dew of waking dawn,—

A rose for my fair dancing fawn  
Whose laughter all the summer knows:  
Sweet, careless, unstained, fragrant boy,—  
So that love bring him only joy,  
I give my red-lipped boy a rose.

I give my white-skinned boy a pearl  
Fair as his body and as strange

As still pools veiled in mists that change  
Their mysteries as they wreath and curl:  
So that his visions ever be  
Wondrous and subtile as the sea,  
I give my white-skinned boy a pearl.

I give my singing boy a lute

With silver strings whose chant belongs  
    To youth for him to sing his songs  
Among the ripening flowers and fruit:  
    So that I hear his voice in Spring  
When I lay unawakening,  
I give my singing boy a lute.

I give my laughing boy a kiss  
Too poor for lips so exquisite—  
    With curious fleeting tears in it  
That glitter through a love like this:  
    So that he never know the pain  
Of red bruised mouth bruised red in vain,  
I give my laughing boy a kiss.

I give my sweet-souled boy my heart  
That has been cleansed by bitter tears  
    Of all the fruitless weary years  
With hope and sorrow set apart :  
    So that his pain shall pass before  
Into myself and be no more,  
I give my sweet-souled boy my heart.

“PHILEBUS”  
*Scientist and Poet*  
( )

“Philebus” is the pseudonym of a British scientist, who has had a world-wide experience, in China, the Far East, etc. During the great



war he saw service in the Mediterranean. With war work finished he made a trip to the middle of Africa with an exploration party. He has published several books of poems about boys,—“Lads-love Lyrics”, “Young Things”, and “Fantasies”.

**“PLAYERS”**

*To S.*

I send thee cigarettes for thy delight.

Smoke my belov'd and think awhile of one

Who thinks and dreams of thee from sun to sun  
Longing to have thee, lov'd one, in his sight;

To hold to his thy lissom body tight;

To press thy lips and, pressing, to surprise  
Thy soul and his together in thine eyes ...

If this be wrong, no love on earth is right!

**ALEC**

A sudden knock—“Come in” I cried  
And straight the door was opened wide  
And there appeared a little lad  
Who, cap in hand, as if he had  
Known me for years, stepped gaily in,  
Looked in my eyes with witching grin  
And answered my astonished “Who  
On earth, my bonny boy, are you?” ...

“I'm Alec.”

O Boy with great black mass of hair,  
Deep dancing eyes beyond compare,  
Sweet willing lips, entrancing smile,  
And dear soft voice that can beguile  
In memory my dullest days;  
I pray God that you always  
As trustfully will come to me  
And say with soul as pure and free,  
“I’m Alec.”

## AMERICAN POETS

BAYARD TAYLOR

*Traveler and Poet*

(1825—1878)

Bayard Taylor was the first literary American to travel widely and to use the material thus gathered for “Travel-books”. Early in life he visited England and the Continent, and in 1851 proceeded to Egypt and the Far East. The impressions gathered in the East greatly influenced his poetry as is evidenced by one of the poems here given, “To a Persian Boy”. He was appointed American Minister to the newly formed German Empire but died in Berlin only a few months after his arrival in that city in 1878.

### TO A PERSIAN BOY

The gorgeous blossoms of that magic tree  
Beneath whose shade I sat a thousand nights  
Breathed from their opening petals all delights  
Embalmed in spice of Orient Poesy.  
When first, young Persian, I beheld thine eyes  
And felt the wonder of thy beauty grow  
Within my brain, as some fair planet's glow  
Deepens, and fills the Summer's evening skies:  
From under thy dark lashes shone on me  
The rich voluptuous soul of Eastern land,  
Impassioned, tender, calm, serenely sad,—  
Such as immortal Hafiz felt when he  
Sang by the fountain-streams of Rocnabad

Or in the bowers of fam'd old Samarcand!

### **SERAPION**

Come hither, Boy! For while I press  
Thy lips' confiding tenderness,  
Less broad and dark the spaces be  
Which life has set 'twixt thee and me.

### **LOVE RETURNED**

He was a boy when first we met;  
    His eyes were mixt of dew and fire  
And on his candid brow was set  
    The sweetness of a chaste desire.  
But in his veins the pulses beat  
    Of passion waiting for its wing,  
As ardent veins of summer-heat  
    Throb through the innocence of Spring.

### **A PAINTER SPEAKING TO HIS YOUNG BOY MODEL**

    "As Ganymede's  
Thy rosy limbs against the dark blue sky  
Shall press the eagle's plumage as he speeds;—  
Or darling Hylas, 'mid Scamander's reeds,  
Thy beauty borrow!"

WALT WHITMAN  
*Prophet and Poet*  
(1819-1892)

Walt Whitman, born of Quaker parentage, left school at the age of eleven, and drifted finally into newspaper work. In 1848 he spent six months in New Orleans, where he met a man who is the subject of one of his earliest efforts in Free Verse.

In 1855 he published his Opus Magnum, "Leaves of Grass" in its first form. The philosopher Emerson recognized its great merits and termed the book "the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom America has yet contributed."

In 1862 Whitman volunteered as a male nurse in the hospitals of Washington during the American Civil War. He took a great interest in the hapless young men in his care. Of one he wrote: "He looks so handsome as he sleeps, one must go nearer to him." Of a young Confederate Captain he wrote: "I have struck up a tremendous friendship with a young Mississippi captain (about 19) that we took prisoner badly wounded. He has followed me here, is in the Emory hospital here. Our affection is an affair quite romantic,—sometimes when I lean over him to say 'I am going' he puts his arms around my neck, draws my face down, etc."

When the war ended, Whitman was given a government position in one of the Federal offices at Washington. These ten years 1864-1873 were some of the happiest in Whitman's life. He met a young street-car conductor, Pete Doyle, to whom he became greatly attached. Whitman's letters to Doyle, both at this time and later, were collected after Whitman's death and published under the title of "Calamus."

Whitman was continually adding to his "Leaves of Grass." He had this manuscript in his desk in the government offices. His superior

chanced to find this and read it. Whitman was summarily dismissed from the government service.

Soon after the loss of his position, Whitman was stricken with partial paralysis and went to live with some friends in Camden New Jersey. There he remained until his death in 1892. He had never married. Whitman's pioneer work in Free Verse and his breadth of vision have rendered him one of the foremost poets America so far has produced.

### **“ONCE I PASSED THROUGH A POPULOUS CITY”**

“Once I passed through a populous city, imprinting on my  
brain for future use its shows, architecture, customs  
and traditions.

But of all that city I remember only the man who wandered  
with me there for love of me.

Day by day and night by night, we were together.

All else has long been forgotten by me,—I remember I say,  
only one rude and ignorant man who, when I departed,  
long and long held me by the hand, with silent lip,  
sad and tremulous.

### **CALAMUS**

“For the one I love most lay sleeping by me under the  
same cover in the cool night,

In the stillness, in the autumn moonbeams, his face was  
inclined toward me,

And his arm lay lightly around my breast—and that night

I was happy!”

**“PUBLISH MY NAME”**

“Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of  
the tenderest lover,  
The friend, the lover’s portrait, of whom his friend, his  
lover, was fondest,  
Who often walk’d lonesome walks, thinking of his dear  
friends his lovers,  
Who oft as he saunter’d the streets curv’d with his arm  
the shoulder of his friend,—while the arm of his friend  
rested upon him also.”

**“CLEMENT ANDREWS”**

*Poet and Essayist*

(1880- )

“Clement Andrews” is the pseudonym of an American newspaper man. He was born in the state of Massachusetts and educated at a small college in New York State. For several years he was in Welfare Work among children. He is now the assistant editor of a publication in the Middle West.

**“PERFECTION”**

I saw him once—  
His beauty girt about him like a dress,

Pristine, resplendent, in his loveliness.

So had he seemed in many a furtive dream  
Standing alert, beside the sunlit stream;  
Or, resting idly, by some ancient tree,  
Within his hands the vase of mystery,  
The fragrant flowers of the lotus rare  
Drooping in bliss for crowning of his hair—  
Ah! dreams are fair, but fairer far to see  
The nitid grace of this reality.

### **“TO A BOY SEEN SWIMMING”**

Somewhere he lies asleep  
Serene and free from dread  
I would that I might keep  
My vigil by his bed.

I saw him by the shore  
Naked and stripped and bare,  
I lingered to adore.  
He passed me unaware.

Somewhere he lies asleep  
With slender arms flung wide  
I would that I might creep  
And nestle at his side.

### **MORN’S RECOMPENSE**



I woke at dawn—and you were lying there  
Close to my side, yet turned away from me.  
So when sleep caught us, you lay wearily  
Within my arms: the fragrance of your hair  
Like a narcotic drugged me into rest:  
Though I would fain have foresworn sleep for joy,—  
That you, quintessent Youth, my darling Boy,  
Should lie abandoned on my throbbing breast.  
So as I yearned above you, the first ray  
Of the glad morning quickened through the gloom,  
You felt my eager kisses on your face,  
Opened your eyes and smiled—And it was day!  
The sun burst forth and flooded all the room  
With radiance as you turned to my embrace!

“EDMUND EDWINSON”

( )

“Edmund Edwinson” is the pseudonym of an American technical man. He was born in the South and educated there. He has travelled widely in his work and visited China, Korea, Annam, Australia, New Zealand, India, etc. He is now engaged in University work.

### **IL PENSEROSO**

Thinkest thou now of me?  
In our loves in bright days gone by

Oft did I think of thee.

Thinkest thou now of me?  
For us twain, full many a flower  
Hangs on memory's tree.

Thinkest thou now of me?  
Knowest thou well my heart's best love  
Was one time given thee!

### **To E. K**

Three lovelier things there be  
Than all else on land or sea:—  
    The friendship of a friend both tried and true,  
    The gleam of silver lads 'gainst Heaven's blue  
    And,—need I say 't—the loveliness of You!

### **BOY LOVE IN SPRINGTIME**

Like a yellow Jonquil  
    Peeping timidly  
Up through Winter's white expanse  
    Came'st thou first to me.

Like a yellow Jonquil  
    Smiling merrily  
Under Spring's so warm caress

Bloomed thy love for me.

But as after May-time  
Springtime flowers flee  
Flying with the Springtime hours  
Fled thy love from me.

### **TO A TRAITOR**

Once thou reigned o'er my heart and soul;  
Now,—Lord of my despair;  
Once thy love was my fairest crown,—  
Now is the shame I wear.

Like to the Centaur's dying gift  
Thy lying love-hours were;  
Thy smiling face, thine arms' embrace  
But fawnings of a cur.

The sting of whips was in thy lips  
Though oft they spake me fair:  
“Love, honour, trust,” thou laughed at such  
For these thou canst-not care.

And yet I cared,—ah, Hell's worst flame  
Can sear my heart no more  
Than thought of thee as thou used to be  
Before my dreams were o'er.

## EROS IN DOLORE

I would not care to see him come once more,  
I would not hear his step upon the stair,  
See his lov' d face enframed in my door  
Nor feel the heart-throb of his presence near.

I would not wish his silences to cool  
The weary clamor of my tugging heart  
Nor have the fragrance of his golden hair  
Heal with his medicine its smart.

For he is gone—and all my hopes are gone  
That he a friend in word and deed might be:  
The weary round as formerly goes on; —  
Life is just somewhat drearier for me.

## A VALENTINE

My love is a flower in bloom  
Of his sweet youth so fair,  
My love is a bonnie lad  
With sun-glint in his hair.

My love is a lilting song  
Gladdening all who hear him;  
My love is an Oak-tree strong  
For all who may need him.

My love is a lark that soars  
    To the Heavens above;  
My love is a boy who pours  
    To my heart his sweet love.

## VARIOUS PRESENT-DAY POETS

### LAMENT

He is gone with his blue eyes  
Whom I love most,  
Gone among the cliffs and for  
Of a far coast.

He whose joy was in sweet words  
And kindness,—  
Whom old men loved, and little boys  
No whit the less.

Love, the blind importunate  
Craves touch and sight,  
Briefly parted, feels and fears  
Eternal night.

*I. Holt*

### “BOY”

When my evening fire is gilding  
Picture, table, wall and chair,  
Dreamily I fall a-building  
Fairy castles in the air,—  
Boy, Boy, Boy!  
Then the joyous dream retreating

Fades again to empty air,—  
Golden visions, false and fleeting!  
O that you were true as fair,  
Boy, Boy, Boy!

*E. W. H*

### **A BOY'S ABSENCE**

All I could say thou knowest; how I long  
To clasp thine hand, to feel thy cheek on mine,  
To see thee smile, to watch thee at thy play:  
So in thine absence, will I make a song:  
A Friendship's garland let the hours entwine  
That miss thee, since we parted yesterday.

*By a Schoolmaster*

### **THE ROADS**

The roads were white with April  
And new with rare delight,  
And there I saw an elm-tree fill  
With blackbirds poised in flight.

Above that way 'twas after rain,  
The skyey pennons flew,  
While every hoof-print down the lane  
Was brimmed with April blue.

To a slender lad I turned me  
    Beneath those wondrous skies,  
And then the fairest blue did see  
    Alight in his young eyes.

*S. Strahan*

**“I LIKE LITTLE BOYS”**

I like rumpled little boys,  
With collars upstanding  
And buttons missing;  
Little boys with rough red cheeks  
And freckled noses,  
And restless hands  
That are never still.

I like neat little boys  
In Norfolk suits  
With white collars and dotted windsor ties  
And slicked black hair, still wet,  
And restless hands  
That are never still.  
I like little boys.

*Clifford Whitford*

**THIS A BOY CAN DO**

This a little boy can do,—



Cheer you up when you are blue,  
Give you hope when hope is gone,  
Get you up before the dawn;  
Make the dull world bright and gay,  
Keep you in the higher way,  
Give you back your youth again,  
At your heart strings tug and strain,  
Keep you in an awful stew,—  
This and more a boy can do!

*Bert Adair*

### **LIGHT LOVE**

The love that is not quite love,—  
Ah, let us be kind to it!  
For it bears a touch of the dream above,  
Of lads-love exquisite!

The love that is not quite love  
But only the heart's wild fling—  
A passing joy like the touch of a boy,  
Or a smile from a lad in spring!

*H. Townes*

### **THE TENANTS**

There are a host of tenants in my heart  
Queer boyish loves that will not go away:

Light, merry glints of lads'-love, yesterday;  
Stray bits of smiles that have nor guile nor art  
But are of some past happiness a part;—  
Hot, furtive kisses, so fleet and fugitive,  
One wonders why their soft imprints should live.  
Yet,—through my memory how oft they dart!

*Mark Beecher*

## **REGRET**

“Godspeed” I cried and watched him go—  
The lovely boy I craved  
But dared not shelter in my heart,—  
He turned his head and waved.

Now I would yield my every hope  
To follow where he went  
And, at the trail's end, kiss again  
My Love—a penitent!

*Terrlss Owens*

## **THE LOVE OF BOYHOOD**

The love of Boyhood lives; it never dies.  
Deathless as Love's own self, it gleams and shines  
As an old votive lamp among the pines,  
Aglow so long as stars smile in the skies!  
A boon of dew, it falls where slumbering lies

The seed-bud of a thousand-flowered rose;  
A breeze benign on arid earth it blows;  
A cooling hand, it soothes the Scholar's eyes.  
Sweet'ner of Centuries, Egypt knew it. Rome  
And Persia were thrilled by its day-dreams;  
It broods e'en now by those two twin-like streams  
Where Abu-Nowas sung ;—where storied Dome  
And ivied silence crown the Cyclades,  
The eager heart still wakes to this Love's cries!  
*Vincent Scarford*

### **THE BOY AND THE DOLPHIN**

A band of boys went bathing to the sea  
All fair, but one the first in youthful bloom,  
Him marked a Dolphin, tenderest of his kind,  
Far off and joined his gambols in the wave.  
And a great love grew up between the twain.  
For day by day, the boy came to the shore  
And day by day his faithful friend was there,  
And on his back would bear him merrily  
Amid the dashing waves, a burden dear.  
But on an unblest morn, what time their mirth  
Was happiest and the boy in trustful glee  
Upon his playmate stretched his limbs at length,  
And backward leaned, and shouted to his steed,  
Ah, me! the sharp spear of the Dolphin's fin  
Pierced his fair side and spilt his tender life,  
So there was no more play between the twain.

But that poor friend, perceiving how the foam  
Was crimsoned all with blood about his track,  
And that sweet voice, which was his music, hushed,  
Knew that all joy was slain and agony  
Seized him and he desired to die.

So to the beach he bore him mournfully  
Amid the dashing waves a burden dear;  
And on the sands he softly laid him down  
And by his side gave up his grieving soul.

But the boy's comrades, sorrowing for their mate,  
Took up the corpse and washed it of the blood,  
And laid it in a grave beside the sea,  
Beside the sea, above the wave-washed sand.

And by his side they laid the Dolphin dead  
For the sake of that true love he bore the boy.

*Ernest Meyers*

## **THE FIRST SWIMMERS**

The chill clung to the water;  
A bevy of boys  
In naked beauty,  
Venturesome,  
Shivering,  
Shy with wonderment,  
Huddled into themselves;—  
Like street sparrows  
On snowy mornings!

*David O'Neil*

## THE TRUANT

Slim woodland faun who stands upon the brink  
Of that cool, unforgotten swimming hole,  
While spying, leaf-checked sunbeams seem to wink  
A sly condonement of this hour you stole  
From cramping seat and unrelenting book  
In yon slave-laden galley known as “school”;—  
I note one backward, gay, defiant look,  
And then your shout ends gurgling in the pool!

*Burges Johnson*

## PARSONS' PLEASURE

A greengloom sideloop of the creek,  
A sodden place of twilight smell:  
Clear dayshine did not often touch  
That water; and a mouldy hutch  
For the convenience of undressing.  
An ancient, far from prepossessing,  
Offered uncandid towels (eschewed  
By most).

There men's white bodies, nude,  
Unconscious, comely, gallant, Greek,  
Stretched, tingled cool, shone sleek, lived well  
In the one patch where sunwarm fell.

*Christopher Morley*

## LOVE'S INCARNATION

Floating dreamily  
O'er the waters cool of a lazy river,  
I espied beneath a tree a lovely boy,  
Basking in the warm sunshine,  
His golden hair burying his hands as he lay  
Stretched at full length, his head supported by his arms,  
In full enjoyment of life.  
And, as I passed, our eyes met as if by destiny;  
And, as I gazed, the colour flooded his fair cheeks,  
And his long lashes drooped over his eyes with virgin modesty.  
But that one glance told me plainer than any book  
That it was Love that I lacked and that I had found it  
There, in that pure youthful soul.

*Fidian*

## I WAS HAPPY

Suddenly into my life there came a boy  
Of sixteen summers, whose fresh lovely face  
Was radiant as the Dawning,—like a joy  
That smiles in dreams, swift flies, leaving no trace  
Save a vague sense of awe and wonderment:  
O never did words live wherewith to tell  
His body's beauty!—rather be content  
To dream upon his star-white limbs, so well  
And surely formed as if in marble cast,

Which after aeons of slumber woke to life!  
His eyes were like clear waters, when the last  
Gold o' the sun lies locked in shadowy strife  
With imaged cloud and grass at close of Day—  
Deep mirrored waters, unperturbed alway.

*F. S. Woodley*

### **I SAW HIM ONCE**

I saw you once, one golden space,  
    Yet love leaped flamelike in my breast and burned,  
    You only looked at me and then you turned  
To leave me dreaming of your boyish face.  
    No memory is mine wherein to trace  
    That loveliness for which my heart so yearned,—  
No dreaming hope of mine has ever learned  
    What joys unlooked-for bloomed beneath your grace!

*Sanford Middleton*

### **THE LOVE-BOY**

A little boy, but oh, so lovable,  
    With lips and eyes  
That smile and shine with mirth and tenderness  
    In sweet surprise.

Two little hands, but oh! so powerful  
    To hold a heart,

And make it live and love and beat for him  
Wholly apart.

Two bare brown knees and oh, how wonderful  
They seem to be,  
Kissed by the sun and by the gentle breeze  
And kissed by me.

Two eyes with light so sparkling that they seem  
Like stars above,  
And fill the soul with mirth and ecstasy  
And tender love.

*M. Snow*

### **TWO TINY HANDS**

Two tiny hands laid hold upon my heart.  
Two lips sought mine in fond caress  
And swore no mortal gods could ever, part  
Our lives, or spoil our happiness.

Two tiny hands withdrew their sweet embrace  
Two boyish lips curved in disdain.  
Now in my heart remains an empty space  
That I shall never, never fill again.

*D. B.*

*(a school-boy to another)*



## A MEMORY

Soft shining with a light divine  
His soft brown eyes, like a caress,  
Showed clearly,—looking into mine,—  
A world of tenderness.

His rose-red lips near mine he held;  
Mine trembled in ecstatic bliss,  
As he my deepest love compelled  
In a long, lingering kiss!

But now I've lost my fairest prize,—  
(Oh, brief—too brief—Love's heavenly stay!)  
O rose-red lips, O soft, brown eyes,  
Why have you turned away?

*S. B.*

## LAD'S LOVE

I had his first—they say across the sea  
His “lad's love”! Truth and faith he gave to me  
Unquestioning—a boyish faith that knew  
No doubt— a truth that shamed me although true,—  
A lover's and a brother's clasping hand,—  
A child's kiss either could understand I  
The time was sweet; the end full well I knew;  
I had his “lad's love”, faithful, pure and true;  
I am content nor ask for more; when she

Shall come, from far or near, his love to be,  
A man's brave heart will be her willing shrine,  
And she shall fill her place,—but never mine!

*Wayne Gordon*

### THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

They called for him tonight—two little girls,  
One near his age, the other younger still;  
“Going?” they asked ; and he looked straight at me,—  
(We'd planned to read together, he and I),  
But now—the girls had come; they had a dance—  
He'd partly promised—

“Yes,” I said; “Yes, go”.

(What lover ever could say “no”?)

And now I sit alone; the book lies there  
Open, where we were reading when they came.

I had not thought t'would come so soon—This change;  
Only fifteen and my beloved boy,—  
For he and I have been such chums—till this!  
But now—

*I cannot give him what he wants!*

Is it not cruel? Why is life so hard  
To us Boy-lovers?

Were it things like toys  
I'd find a way, somehow, to compass it;  
It's been my pride that he's had everything;—

I've been his Providence till this (and ah.  
What joy it was to be his Providence!)  
But here,—soon I must stand aside and see  
A hated girl now take up my loved task  
And be to him what I have always been—  
Companion, chum, house-mate and comforter.  
Well, I must hope  
The best—be cheerful; he so hates to see  
Me sad or solemn,—... and there!—  
The evening's over—that's his step, thank God!

*E. Van Cleve*

## **TOGETHER**

Sleeping together ... how tired you were ...  
How warm our room ... how the firelight spread  
On wall and ceiling and great white bed!  
We spoke in whispers, as boys will do,  
And now it was I—and then it was you  
Slept a moment, to wake-time fled;—  
“I'm not a bit sleepy,” one of us said.

I woke in your arms,—you were sound asleep.  
So close together we had tried to creep,—  
Clinging fast in the darkness, we lay  
Sleeping together,—that yesterday!

*C. Mansfeld*

## A LITTLE BOY IN THE MORNING

He will not come and still I wait;  
He whistles at another gate  
Where angels listen, Ah, I know  
He will not come, yet if I go  
How shall I know he did not pass  
Barefooted in the flowery grass?

The moon leans on one silver horn  
Above the silhouettes of morn,  
And from their nest-sills finches whistle  
Or, stooping, pull the downy thistle—  
How is the mom so gay and fair  
Without his whistling in the air?

The world is calling; I must go.  
How shall I know he did not pass  
Barefooted in the shining grass?

*Francis Ledwidge*

## POSSESSION

My love I own in his white, white youth,  
For he gave to me his heart of fire  
And fiercely my two strong hands shall keep  
His uttermost desire.  
The swift, unsullied lips he bends to me are mine,  
And mine the hands that never tire.

But oh, his singing self goes free!  
I do not own my lover's soul,  
And all his tinctured dreams I can but dimly see  
Inviolate within a crystal bowl.

*C. Worth*

### **THE IMMORTAL BOY**

You may be right, I do not doubt you are;  
He may have been the Shakespeare of your thought,—  
The brilliant shadow singing in the dark,—  
But still he sang! And more than that, he laughed ...

I'd sooner think.—

Not of the broken, disillusioned man,—  
But rather of the big-eyed, laughing lad,  
The bad boy of old Stratford, spending half his time  
In planning mischief and the other half  
In planning rhymes. I like to picture him,  
His slender body slipping 'mongst the trees,  
Nimbler than moonlight,—an adventurer  
Then as he never ceased to be! A lover  
With all the ardor of Eighteen and June,  
Yet wed to cold December 'gainst his will;—  
A father in his teens,—a child with children!  
I like to see him scornful of the law,  
Smiling at oaths or charges, with his mind  
On doggerel that was to plague them all.  
Then, boylike, finding life too great a coil,  
He ran away, careless, wondering, blithe,

To London and to immortality!  
Well.—  
you keep your Bard, the immortal Boy for me!  
*Louis Untermeyer*

## **To HUGH**

O lovely boy, the seasons blend in you  
Their varied charms, their glory and their grace!  
The youth and love of Spring is in your face  
And in those tender eyes of matchless blue,  
The happy sunshine of the summer, too,  
Has caught you in its passionate embrace;  
For sunshine has not fitter dwelling place  
Than on your lips, so sweet and smiling, Hugh!  
And on your head has Autumn laid her hand  
As though completing beauty's wealth untold,  
For there I see in every silky strand  
The glory and the light of burnished gold.  
But tell me, lovely boy, ah, tell me this:  
Should I find Winter's coldness in your kiss?

*M. Snow*

## **THE MESA BOY**

He had contempt that was divine  
For every sailor that he fed,  
For while they talked of "Fun" and "Wine"

He read.

He washed their dishes, made their bed,  
And gave their bodies joy with grace;  
Nor could their insults on his head  
Erase

That fine immobile pride of his,—  
In the embraces of each man  
He was as different as a Kiss  
From Pan!

*Sydney Wilmer*

## GENIUS

Lady,  
You, who are pattering to your carriage door  
In high-heeled shoes,  
Your hat spraying delicate, white feathers,  
Soft furs about your throat  
And pointed designs, crusted with diamonds,  
Pinned to your frail blouse—  
Your coat was made by the best of tailors  
Who patted and pinned and smoothed it with infinite care  
So that it would give you “long lines.”  
And your figure has been stiffened rigidly  
Into the proper shape.  
You are hung with costly things,  
You carry them about with you—

Even the intricate embroidery on your stockings is a cause for wonder—

And when you think of them

Your little, muffled mind glows with satisfaction.

But you are not half so beautiful

For all your trouble,

As the young workman who just went swinging down the street,

His body lithe and strong and free as a whip in the wind!

*Louis Saunders Perkins*

**LINES ON THE PORTRAIT OF  
A MIDSHIPMAN KILLED IN BATTLE**

A boy's face wherein beauty lies

As in all things untouched by age.

A waking wonder in those eyes

That scarce had looked on Life's first page,

And all that beauty and that grace

Forever gone through Time and Space

When last I saw those lips they laughed

Those eyes were lit with sunshine then;—

Who guessed a sudden, bitter draught

Would find in you a man 'mid men.—

That strength could in such frailty lie,

And youth with such high courage die!

*Cecil Roberta*



**TO ROBERT WESTMAN, DEAD IN BATTLE**

I was his teacher on a time  
Some happy seasons back  
Guiding his hand and mind to trace  
That knowledge which youths lack.

Now dead in France, his tenderness  
Enfolds me as the sea,  
Now I am like a little child  
In wonder at his knee.

“Bobbie, I love you” is all my heart can say  
No matter where I wake at night or wander in bright day.

No word of mine could ever say  
One half of what is true  
No reticence is graver than  
The poem that is you.

*Willard Wattles*

**PLAINT OF FRIENDSHIP BY DEATH BROKEN**

God, if thou livest, Thine eye on me bead  
And stay my grief and bring my pain to end,  
Pain for my lost, the deepest, rarest friend  
Man ever had, whence groweth this despair.

*Robert Nichols*

## NIGHT FOR ADVENTURE

Sometimes, when fragrant summer dusk  
Comes in with smell of rose and musk  
And scatters from their sable husk

    The stars like yellow grain,—  
Oh, then the ancient longing comes  
That lurks in me like roll of drums  
To follow where the cricket strums  
    His banjo in the lane.

A call that bids me rise and strip,  
And naked all from toe to tip  
To wander where the dew-drops drip

    From off the silent trees,  
And where the hairy spiders spin  
Their nets of silver, fragile-thin,  
And out to where the fields begin,—

    Like down upon the breeze!  
Or in a silver pool to plunge  
And like a great trout wheel and lunge,—  
Beneath the water lilies plunge,—

    'Mid stars reflected there:  
My face upturned, to lie afloat,  
With moonbeams rippling round my throat  
And from the rushes' dull green coat  
    Weave chaplets for my hair.

Then, leaping from my rustic bath,  
To take some winding meadow-path,

Across the fields of aftermath  
To run with flying feet,  
And feel the dewdrop-weighted grass  
That bends beneath me as I pass,  
Where solemn trees in shadowy mass  
Beyond the highway meet!

*Victor Starbuck*

### **THE BOY IN THE NIGHTMARE**

He clung to me, his young face dark with woe,  
And as the mournful music of the tide  
Monotonously crooned, he moaned and cried,—  
A silhouette against the afterglow! ...  
I said :—“The boat has spread her pinions wide’,—  
The stars and wind come forth together,—go  
Straight to our love-tryst, ... that you well know,  
And place my seat, as always, at your side!”

*Rupert Hillyer*

### **[TITLE UNKNOWN]**

They meet their lovers, when day cools,  
Under the upland trees,  
Or by the river swimming pools,  
Inviting at their ease  
The body-piercing breeze.  
Then it is sweet as heaven to kiss,

Enchanted and unseen;  
But they think no more of love than this  
That it is something not amiss  
When leaves are long and green!

*H. Lange*

### **DE PUERORUM OSCULIS**

Red mouths of lads for love God made:  
God mindeth ever poor wights' ease;—  
Yet men His kindly Will gainsayed!

In seemly innocence arrayed  
To be in sooth, a grace to please,—  
Red lips of lads for love God made.

He weened that Love might there be stayed  
That steals into the blood to tease;—  
Yet men His kindly Will gainsayed.

Ah, pretty kisses they had prayed  
Did not cold Pride their duty seize:—  
Red mouths of lads for Love God made;  
Yet men His kindly Will gainsayed!

*Giles de Gillies*

### **A PAGE'S SONG**

Jesu,  
If thou wilt make  
Thy peach-trees bloom for me,  
And fringe my boyhood's path, both  
With lads-love fine and free,—  
If thou wilt make thy skies as blue  
As in old Sicily,  
And wake the little leaves that sleep  
On every bending tree,—  
I promise not to vexen thee  
That thou should make eternally  
Heaven my home;  
But right contentedly  
A singing page I'd be  
Here in thy springtime  
Jesu!  
*A. W. Percy*

## YOUTH

How perfectly mine eyes delight  
In your dear awkwardness!  
Because I love you, it is grown  
Poignant as a caress.

The sudden way you move your bauds.  
Your quick ungainly feet—  
These homely things my heart holds close  
Finding them very sweet.—

If you were gracious as your soul  
I could but love you less:  
Perfection cannot catch the throat  
Like your dear awkwardness.

*E. Tietieu*

### **AFTER VACATION**

Let me think it over, now that you are gone.  
I cherished those hours, every one,  
When your boyish laughter filled the air  
And broke my thought of pain and care.

Ah, red young lips and rosy cheeks!  
My heart for its long-lost boyhood seeks,  
Some echo of it rang in your voice,  
And hearing it I could not help rejoice;  
And part of my love was love for you  
And part for the dreams that have not come true.

*Cecil Roberta*

### **TO A FRIEND**

Thy voice, as tender as the light  
That shivers low at eve—  
Thy hair, where myriad flashes bright  
Do in and outward weave—

Thy charms in their diversity  
Half frighten and astonish me.

Thine eyes, that hold a mirth subdued  
Like deep pools scattering fire—  
Mine dare not meet them in their mood,  
For fear of my desire,  
Lest thou that secret do descry  
Which evermore I must deny.

Hard is the world that does not give  
To every love a place;  
Hard is the power that bids us lift  
A life bereft of grace—  
Hard, hard to lose thy figure, dear,  
My star and my religion here!

*James Fenimore Cooper, Jr.*

### **GIVE ME ONE FRIEND**

Give me one friend, just one, who meets  
The needs of all my varying moods;  
Be we in noisy city streets,  
Or in Dame Nature's solitudes.

One who can share my grief or mirth,  
And know my days to praise or curse;  
And rate me for just what I'm worth,  
And find me still—Oh, not so worse!

One who can let the world go by  
And suffer not a minute's pang;  
Who'd dare to shock propriety  
With me, and never care a hang!  
*E. M. Clark*

### **MANLY LOVE**

Deep in your heart understand  
the love of a man for a man;  
He'll go with you over the trail,  
the trail that is lonesome and long;  
His faith will not falter nor fail,  
nor falter the lilt of his song.  
He knows both your soul and your sins,  
and does not too carefully scan,—  
The Highway to Heaven begins  
with the love of a man for a man!  
*Donald Malloch*