

522 'MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD'

And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

30 O blessèd Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place;
That is fit home for Thee!

'My heart leaps up when I behold'

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

To H.C., Six Years Old

O thou! whose fancies from afar are brought;
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
And fittest to unutterable thought
The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol;
Thou faery voyager! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat
May rather seem
To brood on air than on an earthly stream;
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,

523 ODE: INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

10 Where earth and heaven do make one imagery;
O blessèd vision! happy child!
Thou art so exquisitely wild,
I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,
Lord of thy house and hospitality;
And Grief, uneasy lover! never rest
But when she sate within the touch of thee.
O too industrious folly!

20 O vain and causeless melancholy!
Nature will either end thee quite;
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
Preserve for thee, by individual right,
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
What hast thou to do with sorrow,
Or the injuries of tomorrow?
Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;
30 A gem that glitters while it lives,
And no forewarning gives;
But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
Slips in a moment out of life.

Ode:

*Intimations of Immortality from
Recollections of Early Childhood*

The Child is Father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,

524 ODE: INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore; -
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

10 The Rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the Rose;
 The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III

20 Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay;
30 Land and sea
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every Beast keep holiday; -
 Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
 Shepherd-boy!

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IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
40 My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel - I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm: -
50 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
 - But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
60 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
 But He
70 Beholds the light, and whence it flows,

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He sees it in his joy;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 80 And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 90 With light upon him from his father's eyes!
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;
 And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song:
 Then will he fit his tongue
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 100 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
 The little Actor cons another part;
 Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,

527 ODE: INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

That Life brings with her in her equipage;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 110 Thy Soul's immensity;
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal mind, -
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest,
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 120 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 A Presence which is not to be put by;
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX

130 O joy! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!
 The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction: not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast: -

528 ODE: INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

140 Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings;
 Blank misgivings of a Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realized,
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:
 But for those first affections,
 150 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
 To perish never;
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy,
 160 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy!
 Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

x

170 Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound!
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts today
 Feel the gladness of the May!

529 THE SPARROW'S NEST

What though the radiance which was once so bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
 180 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering;
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves!
 190 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
 I only have relinquished one delight
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
 Is lovely yet;
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
 200 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

The Sparrow's Nest

Behold, within the leafy shade,
 Those bright blue eggs together laid!
 On me the chance-discovered sight