TYNRON THOUGHTS

by

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AN AFTERNOON WALK

Enchantment beckons, and her invitation seize,

The mountain spirit thrills, wafting music to the breeze,

Perfumed with bog hyacinths and hanging thyme,

Sweeter than gardens of marigolds or columbine.

The Doon, the Craig, their majesties' solitude -

We ask ourselves, should we intrude?

On ancient roads and trenches to explore,

Thinking on days gone by, with their unwritten lore.

We're left to think. Our world vision swells

To Appin Hills and the blue Range of Kells,

Durisdeer and the Lowthers figure out so clear,

While at our feet the hills and fields of Keir.

On smiling horizon our vision search the view,

The setting sun, to nearer scenes, call us to their hue;

With slae and hazel Autumn paints the Sclenners[[1]](#footnote-1) side,

Kirkland and Auchengibbert display the colours wide.

The owlet hoots; we see her, silent, skim

In the night's twilight o'er the linn,

As to greet Venus, peering o'er yonder height,

Fairy sublime, Tynron in an Autumn night.

 BRIGHT DISCONTENT

The snow builds up in curling wreaths,

Beautiful, till the thawing wind upon it breathes;

Or sparkling icelets hanging from the byre,

By contented cattle's warmth they drop into the mire.

Sometimes we say the darkest place is 'neath the lamp—

Notions of other things, creatures of a shifty stamp;

One day he's like a god that walks the earth,

The next he curses the day that gave him birth:

He moves in restlessness. Is it the spirit of discontent?

Or a great hidden self or soul that must have vent

To higher planes, like a mirage's beckoning lure,

To other broader fields and skies more blue—

Be it the veldt, the prairie, or the Australian plain,

Klondyke, Coolgardie, or fields of waving grain?

Discontent hath not the wings of millennium shorn,

But straightened up the self to brighter ideals born;

Awhiles beneficial, when the paternal frowned,

There is always water where the stirk is drowned.

 GATHERING FLOWERS

Gathering flowers, me and you,

Forget-me-nots and violets blue,

Like fragments of heavenly hue—

Through our childhood hours,

Sweet flowers, gathering flowers.

Gathering flowers at the schools.

Forget-me-not be the rules,

Be at the desk or with tools—

Through our learning hours,

Studying flowers, gathering flowers.

Gathering flowers when school is past,

And we face the world's blast ;

Hard and fierce it will last—

Through, our manhood hours.

Pruning flowers, gathering flowers.

Gathering flowers, bitter or sweet,

They may be in the busy street,

Or tending sheep on hillside steep—

Tend with care this lot of ours.

Tender flowers, gathering flowers.

Gathering flowers, the hours awhile,

Some sadder moments to beguile:

A friendly talk, a cheery smile—

Doing all that's in our powers,

Maturing flowers, gathering flowers.

Gathering flowers, from finest stalk

Be our thoughts and noblest talk;

Brief at the longest is life's walk—

There's beauty in the evening hours,

Autumn flowers, gathering flowers.

Gathering flowers, be sincere,

In thy works count all things dear;

Then His presence is very near -

Fill each day with thoughtful hours.

Beautiful flowers, gathering flowers.

 TWIN THORNS GROWING BETWEEN

 TYNRON DOON AND CRAIGTURRA

Thorns with magnetic love, twain interlace,

Strong as thy roots, thy branch embrace;

Planted by no human hand, by moorfowl borne

From thy parent, the mountain thorn.

Pruned by the nibbling mountain sheep,

Shade prepare ’gainst summer's heat;

And rest there as they graze along,

Thy thicket holds the starling's song.

Midst nature song and beauty thou

Are but twin thorns on the mountain's brow;

Thy arched form intertwined, strong, sharp.—

Safe in thy retreat the mavis harp,

Hatch their young, make thy bower their domicile,

Midst creeping mists and song all Nature's smile;

Jasper effect, with waters dripping o'er the stone,

Reflects thy image, while moonbeams shone.

Listen, soul! Take off ! The spirit soul's mate call,

Compares of Here and Yonder, dare I say Dominical?

Thorns and moorland scenes, all fresh and fair.

Heaven, I careth not. I'd soon wander Here as There.

 TYNRON FROM CRAIGTURRA

The curlew planes her way, the mire-snipes bleet;

Yellow broom—-the hawthorn spreads her snowy sheet:

Larks sing to Ramesseum—Craigturra's rocky face

Cut out by nature, midst music Egypt trace.

Yonder the village lies, like a half hid ring;

Kirkland beeches wave, the mavies sing;

Tynron, who's pastel, with wild and mellow blen';

Brackens, rowans, ling, balm and thyme—aroma glen.

SPRING ON THE SHINNEL NEAR TO KILLIEWARREN

High here, where morning's sun and earth first meet,

From mingled dreams to sustenance, and again to sleep;

The bright'ning beams roselights the clouded crest,

And stirs the love on earth's maternal breast.

The Shinnel glen with its noising waters throng,

From root to rock, with dance and song.

The primrose banks and boulders tower,

With ivy wreathed, and woodbine bower;

The birches quiver in the mellow air,

The banks with tasselled heather here and there;

The hawthorn spreads in snowy bloom,

Mingled with brackens the golden broom.

Bee ! botany seeker, surely far you roam

From thy hive in the cottage garden home;

Amongst the alpine florals thy course pursue,

Saxifrage, saussurea, potentilla, and meadow-rue;

Imbibe with the emblem of honest toil,

Those vernal jewels of the upland soil.

In the eddying stream the wild ducks float,

Seeking out their nest in some secluded spot;

From the pool the herons graceful rise,

Larks from the bank soar in chorus to the skies—

Imagination emblazon on airy plumes .adorn,

Fit place to hold orison with Nature and alone.

 SUMMER IN THE LINN BETWEEN

 CRAIGTURRA AND THE DOON

Summer, changed from winter's dim

To beauty's garb, the mountain's linn;

On the wing the waterpie pipes her song;

Tumbling in laughter the waters slide along

Their age-worn, smooth, and rocky bed;

Hanging tasselled banks of heather red

Kiss the waters as they sway;

Trouts, unseen, 'neath yellow broom and spray.

In vying with the heather patch

Brackens camp, the partridge recent hatch;

In tentacles from the hazel bower

The honeysuckle swings her flower;

The bunching ivy in tresses fold,

O'er cooing dove spreads her parasol;

The mountain askance, wide-eyed sheep,

Wondering at the deer in their retreat.

On alder seats the owl to greet the moon,

In chorus with the nightjar on the Doon;

Tempting draught, clear, sparkling, cool,

Magnify the quartz-like pebbles in the pool ;

The stately heron, in silence fish,

Patient, in harmonious scenes, await her dish—

One swift uneddying dart, then graceful rise,

Mirrors herself, the Craig, the Doon, and skies.

Sweet is thy banks, jewelled with primrose flowers,

Thy music, falls and fairy emerald bowers.

 AUTUMN IN TYNRON

The ageing year has turned her sheen

To silver white, the brackens green,

The yellow grass, the heather brown,

Waft in crystal air the thistledown.

The woods put on their Autumn tint,

Even the clinging ivy inclines to pink;

Rich deep-green alders, but even they

Show the small, sure marks of decay.

The woods around all vocal were

In Summer. Gone their music, where?

Gone like the corn: it's stubble now—

To finish up the scene, the covering plough.

The robin and the blackbird become docile,

Southward wing the solan-geese in stately file;

From green, the Doon now rears a sable cone;

Craig, all have changed but thee; alone.

 WINTER IN TYNRON,

AS VIEWED KROM CLODRICK[[2]](#footnote-2) LINN

Varied colours, like paintings rare

On some great canvas glittering fair;

On Stenhouse Wood the weak sun shone;

Shinnel midst ice-bound pebbles drone.

On wooded banks the fungi cluster red,

And hawes weigh down the hawthorn's head;

The Linn's swirling spray icicles the cliff,

Round the fallen fir whirls the snow in drift.

Burr of wings ! and dash the red grouse flew,

And moorcocks in black and sapphire hue;

Amatory nature her tables spread

With hollyberries and hawthorns red.

Brown spot—one of those conglomerates yon -

It seems to move, and yet so like a stone.

Deer! so near to nature, you're scarcely seen

From the thicket to this bare patch of green.

In the Linn the woodsias are hanging there,

And other ferns which are just as fair ;

Those sheltering neuks are safe defiles

To the vertebrates and avifauna of the wilds.

 CONTENTED COMFORT

The social cattle sniffs the sere

Grass—or, by the gate standing near,

Await the cowboy to be driven

To sheltering shed in sauntering dizen,

Glad comfort from the wind-swept field,

In recompense her foaming draught to yield.

The stabled horse enjoys his hay,

Essence of hard work on a summer's day.

Peace and comfort in every corner float;

The collie looks his wish, the cat rubs her coat;

The lantern swings its mellow light

More soothing in the tempest night;

In duct to the drifting hail

The cowboy whistles at the milking pail.

 CROGLINN

The bog hyacinths' crimson tint

Replace the once-blue flowering lint,

And fields of corn and kale;

Or busy farmer, with the flail

On precious oats, or grind their meal.

Their women ply the spinning-wheel,

Making their linen or their tweeds,

The while their parent from Sacred Passage reads,

Or telling his stories of ancient lore

As he heard his fathers tell in days of yore.

The thistle and the benty grass

Seem to sigh past voices as you pass;

With lichen and mosses overgrown,

Where Oroglinn was, now a heap of stone.

The craigs around in silence nude,

Nothing to break the solitude

But the whaup as she planes along,

Piping her duet to Shinnel's song,

Or the grazing sheep—all is forlorn,

The winds through the withered rushes mourn.

 CUPID'S WHISPERS

The nights they are so calm and lovely,

Moonbeams playing through the trees;

Owlet tunes his note, and that one only,

Soothing vibrate to the breeze.

The corn sheaves are rustling mildly,

As the moonlight steals the weaker star;

In the Linn, waters are tumbling wildly,

The Doon listens to the nightly jar.

The shades, they vary nightly,

As they cast their varied hue;

Shaking hyacinths' head, askance lightly,

Am I red, white, pink, or blue?

The Craig is sitting lonely,

'Midst the hazel boughs and dew;

Rameses says to the moon so boldly,

"There is only two rulers, me and you."

Cupid, 'midst the rowans, sports so gaily.

He loves the moon, and late;

He lets fly his arrows daily

At the lover and his mate.

The hills circle around so homely,

The Glen is in a tranquil state,

The lovers look so comely—

A homestead is their fate.

 FREAK OF NATURE LIKE A HUMAN FACE

 ON CRAIGTURRA

Craigturra's rocky face, when did Nature chisel thou?

Appropriate: set skyward from the hazel bough.

Picture of whom? Rameses or Caesar—it would seem

You're out of place beside our crystal Shinnel stream,

Transported features from the Tiber or the Nile,

Nature cast thy lot 'midst Tynron—wild botany smile,

Rock ferns, ling, and heather, where fresh winds blow

Wild and mellow—scenes Nile or Tiber cannot show.

Speak, rocky lips! If we but only knew

From thy high brow the Roman Eagle flew;

Would that thy lips could read from thy unwritten book,

Thou face of stone, fathomless your moonward look.

 OCTOBER IN TYNRON

The moorfowl cackles sharp and shrill,

Still is the air, but crisp and chill;

The woodland birds their songs refrain,

The landscape is in a pastil strain.

The crimson gean 'gainst darker oak,

Thou one shelter for the feathered flock;

The rowan berries hanging ripe,

The tangled hazel in yellow stripe.

The year is drawing towards the fall,

Like an old lady in a Paisley shawl.

Proud of her garb, she likes to think,

The orange, the white, the brown, the pink.

Like a last summer's rainbow gone,

The wind pass o'er and they are blown.

Or in the stream and swept away,

Those gorgeous fragments of decay.

Brackens brown, and woods so fair,

Leaves wafting to this October's azure air,

Fading foxgloves and stalks of columbine—

Yes! Leaves and flowers just have their time.

Unthinking, who could view this unnamable beauty's sere?

This picture Glen, and those brown hills of Keir,

Makes thoughts wander with the passing year

Away to Yonder—perhaps with the Spring we won't be here.

 THE SMALL VOICE.

Those feelings rising in man from eternal flask,

Fragrant as October's sunshine, interwoven as damask:

Spirit, thou comest when it is thy choice,

In unexpected hours we hear "The Still Small Voice";

Your dwelling seems so wide apart,

Eternity and the humble heart;

Yes, they are one, thy visits make it plain—

The soul is part of God, from whence it came.

 ANGLE OF IMAGINATION

Yes, I have heard and seen thee when my spirit was torn in twain,

The soul's in deepest anguish when tears to flow refrain;

This life looked its darkest, sufferings this world enshroud;

There were partings of my dearest, dark the soul-enwrapping cloud,

When on my ears in chorus loud the lark rose off her nest;

Watching, my eyes caught Mars methink, bright'ning on yonder crest:

Brighter grew soul's life's vision—it was no longer dark,

’Though Mars grew the brighter, yet sweeter sang the lark.

Angle and vision both, deep left their impressive stamp.

I hear the lark, still singing—" The darkest place is ’neath the lamp."

Yes, and when my pulse is weak and my eyes grow dim,

Through thee, Imagination, still I will see the Cross and Him.

 WINTER ON THE FORD HILL

Hills and woods around all glisten bright.

Junipers bedecked with green and white;

Neath the evergreen, the brackens brown,

Scampering rabbits winds the snow-like thistledown.

Bramble and hollybush, bespeckled fair,

Their frosty blanches like filigree fragile rare,

And boulders from some glacial riddlings are

Gleaming in the winter's sun, as in those days afar.

The young moon in the western sky,

Wild ducks o'er Aird Loch in circles fly.

Seeking cover in the fen sedge and rush,

Before the Great Unseen Painter in orison Nature hush.

 WELCOME WANDERERS

Botanist! What need'st further go?

No other glen can give so varied show;

Hanging o'er the rock or dipping in the pool,

Fern and creeper bower, like fairy vestibule,

You will find them all in our upland glade,

From wandering Clubmoss to Enchanter's Shade.

Geologist! Our vista shows no serrated peak,

Food for knowledge 'mongst our glacials seek;

On many a knowe and bouldered scar.

With conglomerates strewn the hillsides are—

Greywackes, Quartz Rock, and Lydian-stone,

Crumbling rocky face and prominent cone.

Historian ! Killiewarren, with walls and arches old;

There the Douglas Crest, with its legion bold ;

On yonder hill are roads the Romans throw,

With tramp of pompish might their Eagles flow;

The Doon has seen many a Gallovidian truce,

Knew the "I'll Mac Siccar" and the valiant Bruce.

Psychological! Visitor hail! to whither goes?

To yonder leaden crest and drifting snows,

Alternate rain, sunshine, creeping mist and fogs;

Beyond the frequented peat-hags and bogs,

Where Shinnel, Ken, and Scaur have their watershed:

Mecca—Allan's Cairn, memorial to the martyred dead.

Materialist: Cull from the distant past remote,

In phantom see the Druid at the vetrified fort;

Craignee and Pinzarie in weird romances soar,

Saints Cuthbert and Connel chant their pious lore.

In yon quiet Acre persecutor and persecuted sleep,

O'er every height and glade enchantments sweep.

1. Stenhouse? [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. also spelt Clodderoch [↑](#footnote-ref-2)