

Selver, P., comp.

MODERN
RUSSIAN POETRY
TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

SELECTED AND TRANSLATED WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
P. SELVER

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TO
MY FATHER

PREFACE

THIS book forms the Russian section of a more extensive Slavonic anthology which has been in progress for some years, and, as far as it has been completed, includes representative selections from the modern poetry of the Poles, Czechs, and Serbs.

The disadvantages associated with all anthologies are increased in the case of an anthology of translated verse, where the choice of the contents is affected not only by the translator's personal leanings, but also by the suitability of any particular poem for translation into another language. As regards the present volume, it is admittedly the merest outline, to be filled in later, as circumstances may permit. But it is hoped that this collection, in spite of such obvious shortcomings as have been indicated, will convey a fairly adequate idea of the chief features in modern Russian poetry, a branch of Russian literature which has so far received very little serious attention in this country.

On the subject of verse-translation there is a great divergency of opinion, and it is not proposed to discuss the matter at length in this preface. In the main, the translator has considered it his duty to produce renderings which, in themselves, are reasonably good English verse. At the same time, an endeavour has been made to give the meaning of the originals as closely as the restrictions of rhyme and rhythm will permit. The character of the original metre has been retained in

almost every case. In the Russian text the natural tonic accent has been indicated.

Some of these renderings first appeared in *The New Age*, and are reprinted in this collection by kind permission of the Editor, whom the translator takes this opportunity of thanking. It is also a duty and a pleasure to express gratitude to Mr. Alexander Bakshy, who read the proofs of the book, and offered valuable suggestions and criticisms while it was passing through the press.

P. S.

LONDON.

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INTRODUCTION

THE more recent developments in the history of Russian poetry may be regarded as a revival following upon a period of depression and stagnation. In the following sketch an attempt will be made to trace briefly the varying stages in its progress during the nineteenth century, before the achievements of contemporary writers are discussed in any detail.

The first important epoch in the history of Russian poetry during the nineteenth century is associated with the names of Pushkin and Lermontov. Pushkin, in particular, founded a poetical school, among the members of which were such men as Vyazemsky, Delvig, Yazykov, and Baratynsky. This was the golden age of Russian poetry, the popularity of which was enhanced by Pushkin's relations with the Court.

Pushkin died in 1837, Lermontov in 1841. These dates mark the beginning of a decline in the vogue which poetical literature had been enjoying. It rapidly sank from one extreme of favour to the other, and before long lyric verse was regarded as an inferior branch of literature, and was neglected by readers and critics alike. Yet, in spite of these adverse conditions, there was not a complete lack of lyric poets. About the middle of the century, at the very time when this reaction was most marked, the tradition of the earlier years was being worthily upheld by such men as Tyutchev, Maikov, Fet, and Polonsky. The neglect of poetry was, in fact, due to the political situation. It was a period when Russian society was beginning to show symptoms of internal ferment. All men of intellectual ability were expected to employ their talents for the advancement of the political cause. This practical materialism, which rejected all

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splendour of his own creative powers. In one of his best-known poems he begins:

"I am choiceness of Russian so stately of mien,
The poets before me my heralds have been. . . ."

This is the unaffected egotism of youth, and it also happens to be true, for it is highly probable that the literary historian of the future will date the second great epoch of Russian poetry from Balmont, just as the first is associated with the name of Pushkin. Of the great European lyric poets of modern times, Balmont is akin to Swinburne, Drachmann, d'Annunzio, and Vrchlický. His influence has altered the whole aspect of Russian poetry in the last generation.

If Bryusov's poetry lacks some of the exuberance and external brilliance which is so characteristic of Balmont, if it is often more sober and deliberate than that of the elder poet, it gains by a greater depth and unity of thought, by a more obvious scheme of ideas, by a closer contact with the realities of life. Balmont's poems are full of such words as *sky, stars, ocean, sun, shoreless spaces, clouds, peaks, silence, chaos, eternity*, the select vocabulary of the unreal; while Bryusov—probably influenced by Verhaeren—finds inspiration in the bustle of cities and the feverish life of the streets. Yet, although his subjects are frequently artificial, he does not treat them in an artificial manner. Bryusov has been specially attracted towards the French symbolists, many of whom he has translated. His versions from Maeterlinck, Verlaine, Verhaeren, d'Annunzio, and Wilde, together with a critical study of the late Latin poet Ausonius, also show in what direction his literary sympathies lie. They have exposed him to the accusation of being a scholar rather than a poet, but successive volumes of fervid and delicate verse have triumphantly vindicated him, and have shown that inspiration and industry do not mutually exclude each other. There is no denying a certain exotic tendency in some of Bryusov's poetry; but from this he has gradually freed himself more and more, so that in his most recent volumes he has attained an admirable clarity of style. Finally, let it be mentioned that Bryusov

ranks high as a Russian prose writer. Two of his novels in particular—"The Fiery Angel," dealing with the Renaissance period, and "The Altar of Victory," a product of Bryusov's late Latin studies—would represent modern Russian fiction far more worthily than the majority of the recent numerous importations.

The poetical movement inaugurated by Balmont and Bryusov had its centre at Moscow, with the review *Vyessy* (The Balance) as its official organ. The epithet "decadent" has been applied to these writers, but in Russian this implies nothing further than modernity of thought and cultivation of advanced artistic principles.

A few years before the establishment of this literary centre, another group of writers had begun to develop similar activities in the Russian capital, and to publish their works in the *Severny Vyestnik* (Northern Herald). The chief members of this group—Merezhkovsky, his wife, known as an author under her maiden name of Zinaida Hippius, Minsky, and Sologub—followed, in the main, religious tendencies, which can be traced back to the influence of Vladimir Solovyov (1853-1900), philosopher and poet. Solovyov, whose name is associated with various religious controversies—he was a champion of Catholicism—is sometimes regarded as the source of Russian symbolism. And it is significant that although Merezhkovsky (b. 1866) is more prominent as a novelist and critic than as a poet, his first published work was a volume of poems entitled "Symbols." It cannot be said, however, that Merezhkovsky as a poet has passed through any clearly marked stages of development. His poetry reflects rather those ideas which have found more ample expression in his other writings, to which they furnish an eloquent commentary.

Zinaida Hippius (b. 1870), who, like her husband, is also a prominent novelist, has shown from her earliest works a leaning towards the abstruse and metaphysical. In her verses this is even more strongly pronounced than in her other writings. The language of her poems is often beautiful, but often, too, they contain hazily mystical thoughts expressed with an abundance of rather highly coloured imagery. The same kind of hysterical affecta-

tion is characteristic of other Russian poetesses. All that is morbid, overwrought, and fantastic in the Russian spirit seems to become unpleasantly accentuated in the work of these feminine writers. Thus the poems of Myrrha Alexandrovna Lokhvitskaya (1869-1905), to mention only one of several, are full of noisy and unrestrained declamation, with frequent touches of feverish eroticism.

Nicolai Maximovitch Minsky (b. 1855), whose real name is Vilenkin, began his career with poems which lead back to the tradition of Nadson. Their markedly individual style and harmonious language gained for Minsky a popularity which began to diminish when he turned his attention towards more purely æsthetic ideals. Later still, he attained a fresh stage in his development, as a poet of religious mysticism. At one time he founded, together with Gorky, a socialistic daily paper, but the venture soon came to an end, partly through the action of the authorities, partly also because of the lack of agreement between Minsky and his socialistic colleagues. Minsky is essentially a poet of transition, and, as such, he has come to occupy a precarious standing among his contemporaries. The revolution of 1905 affected his work critically, leading him, as it did, into such outbursts of unbalanced rhetoric as the "Workmen's Hymn."

Fedor Sologub (pseudonym for Teternikov, b. 1863) is a poet of the decadent school in the narrower acceptation of the word. As in his novels and short stories, so also in his poems, he is almost entirely absorbed by contemplation of the abnormal, the morbid, and the perverse. But the qualification of this statement should not be overlooked, for it is possible to overstate this aspect of the case. Professor Vengerov declares, for instance, that "Sologub's lyrics and his prose form a downright hymn to death." And in another passage the same critic says, after emphasizing the fact that this attitude on Sologub's part is unaffected and sincere: "Sologub's creative spirit is dominated by eternal twilight, and not a single sunbeam illumines this subterranean world. In the work of Sologub, death, madness, and sensuality are entangled in one awful nightmare." A criticism of this kind ignores

the pure and hopeful side of Sologub's work, which, though not prominent, is nevertheless expressed emphatically enough in such charming verses as the "Northern Trios" and, in fact, throughout the volume of poems called "Kindred Earth." Even in his fiction Sologub sometimes writes with a playful fancy of which the stories hitherto translated into English give no hint. But it must be admitted that the main body of Sologub's work represents the tragic lack of harmony between ideals and reality, and is, as a result, steeped in despair and loathing. It is the metaphysical strain often induced by this attitude which connects him with what may be called the Merezhkovsky group. But the bonds which unite him to other poets are slender; the main impression produced by his verses is one of morose isolation.

All these poets have, in varying degrees, come under foreign influences. In this respect Ivan Bunin (b. 1870) cannot be assigned to one or other of the groups hitherto dealt with, for his verses show no traces of the later developments of Russian poetical style. He is more typically Slavonic than any of the modernists, although he himself is modern in his impressionistic manner of depicting the various aspects of the typical Russian landscape. The influence of folk-song, which even in the less obviously national poets has left considerable traces, is very marked in Bunin's verses. He has also written stories of Russian country life, similar in spirit to his delicate rhymes, and, on a larger scale, a realistic novel the scenes of which are laid in rural Russia in the years immediately following the revolution. As a translator, Bunin is best known by his metrical version of Longfellow's "Hiawatha." In November, 1912, he celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his literary beginnings.

The summary manner in which the remaining poets must be treated is not always in proportion to the value of their achievement. There is, for example, Alexander Block, whose verses are distinguished by their devout and austere tone; the search for an unattained ideal is often expressed in the symbolism of mediæval chivalry. Only bare mention, too, can be made of Vyatcheslav Ivanov, whose philosophic verses are exquisitely polished

and harmonious, with deliberate and effective lapses into an archaic style. Another of the younger poets of distinction is Andrey Byely, author also of a remarkable novel, "The Silver Dove," which follows worthily in the tradition of Gogol. For the present, bare mention alone must suffice for such poets as Kuzmin, Voloshin, Annen-sky, Baltrushaitis, and Count Alexis Tolstoy—Tolstoy III., as he is called; he has reanimated popular legends and traditions in verses that are essentially modern in technique.

Less than twenty years ago, Balmont and Bryusov were looked upon as bold innovators, before whom none of the most cherished poetical traditions were safe. Now a younger generation of poets has arisen, who regard the symbolists and modernists generally as conventional and academic. Among these youngest poets there is a good deal of mere extravagance and eccentricity. In some cases there is undoubtedly more than this: Sergey Gorodetsky, for instance, has written powerful verses, the most effective of which are those based upon old Russian mythology. And perhaps behind Igor Severyanin's crude and violent attempts at originality there is real talent, which will develop with increasing maturity. As for the rest, they must, for the present, remain anonymous.

P. SELVER.

MODERN RUSSIAN POETRY

Константи́нъ Дми́тровичъ Бальмонтъ

1. ВОДА.

Отъ кáли росы, что трепéщетъ, игráя
Огнёмъ драгоцéнныхъ камнéй,
До блéдныхъ простóровъ, гдé, вдалъ убéгáя,
Вéнчáется пéною влáга морскáя
На глáди бездóнныхъ морéй,
Ты всéду, всегдá, неизмéнно-живáя,
И то изумрудная, то голубáя,
То полная красныхъ и жéлтыхъ лучéй,
Орáнжевыхъ, бéлыxъ, зелéныхъ и сíниxъ,
И тéхъ, что рождáются тóлько въ пустыняхъ
Въ волнéны и пéны безмéрныхъ выбéй,
Оттéнковъ, что вíдны лишь избраннымъ взóрамъ,
Дрожáній, сверкáній, мелькáній, кóторымъ
Нельзáй подыскáть отражáющихъ словъ,
Хоть въ слóвъ бездóнность оттéнковъ блистáется,
Хоть въ слóвъ красивомъ всегдá расцвéтаетъ
Весна многоцвéтныхъ цвéтóвъ.

Водá безконéчные лíки вмéщáется
Въ беzméрность своéй глубины,
Мечтáные на выбахъ разлíчныхъ качáется,
Молчáнemъ и пéньемъ душé отвéчáется,
Увóдить сознáніе въ сны.

Богáтыми были, богáты и нýнъ
Простóры лазурно-зелёной Пустыни,
Рождáющей мíръ островной.
И Мóре—всё Мóре, но въ вóльномъ простóрѣ
Разлíчно онó въ человéческомъ взóрѣ
Качáется грéзой-волнóй.

Konstantin Dmitriyevitch Balmont

1. WATER.

FROM droplets of dew that aquiver are throwing
The lustre of jewels around,
To the pallor of spaces, where, distantly flowing,
The wave of the ocean its foam-wreath is strowing
O'er seas that no plummet can sound,
Thou art everywhere, ever, life changelessly glowing,
Now emerald-tinted, now azurely showing,
Now in ruby and amber the waters abound,
In orange, white, green, and in dusky-blue splendour,
And in such as the deserts alone can engender
In the heaving and chanting of tides without bound,—
In tints only seen by the choicest of gazes,
As they tremble and sparkle and dazzle, their mazes
No words can be culled to reflect:
Though the word has its tints with unquenchable gleaming,
Though the word that is comely with bloom ever teeming,
A spring-tide of hues has bedecked.

The water has guises of infinite seeming
In zones that are boundlessly deep;
Its multiple billows are cradled in dreaming,
The spirit with muteness and tune of its streaming,
It answers and lulls into sleep.

Rich of old have they been, and rich still are the spaces
Where deserts stretch onward in azure-green traces,
And islands have birth in their shoals.
And Ocean, still Ocean, unfettered it ranges,
But man ever sees how it changes and changes,
And billowy visions unrolls.

Въ разлічныхъ скитаньяхъ,
 Въ іныхъ сочетаньяхъ,
 Я слышалъ сказанія бурь,
 И знаю, есть разность въ мечтаньяхъ.

Я видѣлъ Индійское море, лазурь,
 Въ нёмъ волны голубые извины,
 И Красное море, где ласковъ король,
 Гдѣ розовой краскою збится валъ,
 И Жёлтое, водные нивы,
 Зелёное море, Персидский заливъ,
 И Чёрное море, где буенъ приливъ,
 И Бѣлое, призракъ красивый.
 И всюду я думалъ, что всюду, всегда,
 Различно-прекрасна Вода.

2. МОЙ ПѢСНОПѢНЬЯ.

Въ моихъ пѣснопѣньяхъ журчанье ключей,
 Что звучать всѣ звончай и звончай.
 Въ нихъ женистенно-стрѣстные шопоты струй,
 И дѣвическай въ нихъ поцѣлуй.

Въ моихъ пѣснопѣньяхъ застывшіе льды,
 Безпредѣльность хрустальной воды.
 Въ нихъ бѣлая пышность пушистыхъ снѣговъ,
 Золотые край облаковъ.

Я звучныя пѣсни не самъ соиздавалъ,
 Мнѣ забросилъ ихъ горный обвалъ.
 И вѣтеръ влюбленный, дрожа по струнѣ,
 Трепетанія передалъ мнѣ.

Wherever I wander,
Or hither, or yonder,
I have harkened to lays of the storm,
And I know how diversely I ponder.

The Indian Ocean has azure-clad form
Where blue is the wave in its dancing,
And then the Red Sea with its coral display,
Where billows are tossing in pinkish array;
Yellow Sea,—fields of water advancing.
And the Persian Gulf that is verdantly dyed,
And in the Black Sea, how boistrous the tide,
And the White Sea,—what phantoms entrancing.
And ever I mused, ever here, ever there,
Upon Water so endlessly fair.

2. MY SONG-CRAFT.

My song-craft is filled with the trickle of springs,
And clearer and clearer it rings:
With the passionate whispers of love it is laden,
With the kisses bestowed by a maiden.

The chillness of ice with my song-craft is blending,
The crystalline water unending;
It holds the white glory of snow's downy shrouds,
And the golden-hued fringes of clouds.

The resonant songs I alone have not wrought,
By the avalanche they have been brought.
And amorous wind in the strings as it quivered,
Its trembling to me has delivered.

Воздушныя пѣсни съ мерцаньемъ страстей
 Я подслушашъ у звонкихъ дождей.
 Узорно-играющій тающій свѣтъ
 Подглядѣть въ сочетаньяхъ планѣтъ.

И я въ человѣческомъ нечеловѣкъ,
 Я захваченъ разливами рѣкъ.
 И, въ морѣ стремя полногласность свою,
 Я стозвучныя пѣсни пою.

3.

Я—изысканность русской медлительной рѣчи,
 Предо мною другіе поэты—предтечи,
 Я впервые открыль въ этой рѣчи уклоны;
 Перепѣвные, гнѣвные, нѣжные звоны.

Я—внезапный изломъ,
 Я—играющій громъ,
 Я—прозрачный ручей,
 Я—для всѣхъ и ничеи.

Переплѣскъ многоголосный, разбранно-слитный,
 Самоцѣтные камни земли самобытной,
 Перекликчики лѣсныя зелёного мая,
 Всё пойму, всё возьму, у другихъ отнимая.

Вѣчно-юный, какъ сонъ,
 Сильный тѣмъ, что влюбленъ
 И въ себѣ и въ другихъ,
 Я—изысканный стихъ.

My airy-tuned songs with the looming of pain
I have heard in the chimes of the rain,
And the pattern-wise melting and dallying light
I have glimpsed as the planets unite.

And though amid mortals, no mortal am I,
The river-floods raised me on high.
And in ocean my bounty of sound I have thrown,
My hundred-fold chants to intone.

3.

I am choiceness of Russian, so stately of mien,
The poets before me my heralds have been,
I the first in this tongue subtle byways revealed,
Strains tuneful, and wrathful and wistful I wield.

I,—a rending asunder,
I,—a sporting of thunder,
I,—a stream, finely-spun,
I,—for all and for none.

Rills plashing in foam, that are rivenly merging,
The jewels unblemished, of earth's matchless purging.
The summons of woodlands in verdure of May,
All I grasp, all I take, and I bear all away.

Young, as dreams, evermore,
Strong because I adore
Both myself and the rest,
I,—the verse choicely stressed.

4. ЗАВѢТЬ БЫТИЙ.

Я спроси́ль у свобо́дного вѣтра,
Что мнѣ сде́лать, чтобы быть молоды́мъ.
Мнѣ отвѣ́тилъ играющій вѣтеръ:
,,Будь возду́шнымъ, какъ вѣтеръ, какъ дымъ!“

Я спроси́ль у могу́чаго Моря,
Въ чёмъ вели́кій завѣть бытія.
Мнѣ отвѣ́тило зву́чное Море:
,,Будь всегдѣ полнозву́чнымъ, какъ я!“

Я спроси́ль у высо́каго Солнца,
Какъ мнѣ вспы́хнуть свѣтлѣе зари.
Ничего не отвѣ́тило Солнце,
Но душа́ услыха́ла: „Гори!“

5. КАМЫШІЙ.

Полночнай порою въ болотной глущі
Чуть слышино, безшумно шурша́ть камыші;

О чёмъ они ше́пчутъ? О чёмъ говорятъ?
Зачёмъ огоньки между ними горятъ?

Мелькаютъ, мигаютъ,—и сно́ва ихъ нѣть,
И сно́ва забрёжилъ блуждающій свѣтъ.

Полночнай порой камышій щелестя́ть;
Въ нихъ жа́бы гнѣздя́тся, въ нихъ змеи свистя́ть.

Въ болотѣ дрожа́ть умирающій ликъ:
То мѣсяцъ багровый печально поникъ.

4. LIFE'S BEHEST.

I QUESTIONED with fetterless breezes,
How with youth to accomplish my days;
I was answered by dallying breezes:
" Be thou airy as breezes, as haze !"

I questioned with dominant ocean,
Where life's mighty behest to descry;
I was answered by resonant ocean:
" Be thou ever full-sounding as I !"

I questioned with measureless sunshine,
How the dawn to outdo in its light:
There was naught in response from the sunshine,
But I heard in my spirit: " Burn bright !"

5. THE REEDS.

WHEN midnight has come on the desolate slough,
Scarce heard are the reeds, so softly they sough.

Of what do they whisper and talk to and fro?
For what are the flamelets amongst them aglow?

They shimmer, they glimmer, and once more they wane,
Then the wandering light is enkindled again.

When midnight has come, then the reeds are aquake;
They harbour the toad and the hiss of the snake.

In the slough is a quiver a perishing gaze:
'Tis the purple-hued moon that forlornly decays.

И тайной запахло. И сырость ползётъ . . .
Трясина заманить, сожмётъ, засосётъ.

„Кого? Для чего?“—камыш говорятъ—
„Зачемъ огоньки между нами горятъ?“

Но мѣсяцъ печальный безмолвно поникъ,
Не знаѣтъ. Склоняется всѣ нижне свой ликъ.

И, вдохъ повторяя погибшей душѣ,
Тоскливо, безшумно шуршать камышъ.

6.

Я въ ётотъ міръ пришёлъ, чтобы видѣть Солнце
И синій кругозоръ.

Я въ ётотъ міръ пришёлъ, чтобы видѣть Солнце
И высі горъ.

Я въ ётотъ міръ пришёлъ, чтобы видѣть Море
И пышный цветъ долинъ.

Я заключилъ міры въ едіномъ взорѣ,—
Я властелінъ.

Я побѣдилъ холодное забвѣніе,
Создавъ мечту мою.

Я каждый мигъ исполненъ откровенія,
Всегда пою.

Мою мечту страданья пробудили,
Но я любимъ за то.

Кто равенъ мнѣ въ моей пѣвучей силѣ?
Никто, никто.

Я въ ётотъ міръ пришёлъ, чтобы видѣть Солнце—
А если день погасъ,

Я буду пѣть . . . Я буду пѣть о Солнцѣ,
Въ предсмѣртный часъ!

There is odour of slime. And the soddeness crawls.
The marsh will allure and engulf as it mauls.

“ But whom ? And for what— ” say the reeds to and fro,—
“ For what are the flamelets amongst us aglow? ”

But the moon that forlornly and mutely decays
Cannot tell. But yet lower she settles her gaze.

’Tis the sigh of a perishing spirit that now
The reeds softly raise as they mournfully sough.

6.

I CAME into this world to see the sunshine,
The sky-line’s bluish lights.

I came into this world to see the sunshine,
And mountain-heights.

I came into this world to see the ocean,
The valley’s rich array.

I in a single gaze saw worlds in motion,—
Where I held sway.

I triumphed o’er oblivion’s chill concealment,
I shaped my pondering.

Filled was my every moment with revealment,
I ever sing.

My pondering was roused by tribulation,—
But thus my love it won.

Who is my like in strength of tune-creation?
Not one, not one.

I came into this world to see the sunshine,
And when day’s wane is nigh,
Then will I sing . . . then will I sing of sunshine,
Before I die.

7.

Свѣчѣ горѣть и мѣркнеть и вновь горѣть сильнѣй,
 Но мѣркнеть безвозвратно сіянье юныхъ дней.
 Горѣ же, разгораѣся, пока ещѣ ты юнъ,
 Сильнѣй полнѣй касаіся сердѣчныхъ звонкихъ
 стрѣнъ,
 Чтобъ было что припомнить на склонѣ трудныхъ
 лѣтъ,
 Чтобъ старости холодной свѣтілъ нетленный свѣтъ—
 Мечтаній благородныхъ, порывовъ молодыхъ,
 Безумныхъ, но прекрасныхъ, безумныхъ и святыхъ.

8.

О, волны морскія, родная стихія моя,
 Всегда вы свободно бѣжите въ иные краи,
 Всегда одиночи въ холодномъ движеньи своемъ,
 А мы безутешно тоскуемъ,—одни и вдвоемъ.
 Зачемъ не могу я дышать и бѣжать, какъ волна?
 Я въ мірѣ одиный, и душа у меня холодна,
 Я также спѣшу все въ иные, въ иные краи,—
 О, волны морскія, родная стихія моя!

7.

THE light will burn and darken, then burn with stronger
blaze,
But unreturning darkens the sheen of youthful days.
Glow then, and be enkindled, the while thou still art
young,
Let ever more undwindled the heart's loud chords be
strung,
That something be remembered in waning years of woe,
That chill old-age be lighted by that decayless glow,
Born of exalted fancies, and headstrong youth's ado,
Heedless, but full of splendour, heedless and hallowed,
too.

8.

O WAVES of the ocean, akin to the blood in my veins,
Ye ever unfettered are coursing to other domains,
Ye ever are lonely in chillness of ebb and of flow,
And,—alone or united,—we pine in uncomforted woe.
Why may I not breathe and course on as a wave of the
sea?
On earth I am lonely, and cold is the spirit in me,
I likewise am speeding to other, to other domains,—
O waves of the ocean, akin to the blood in my veins !

9. СВЕТЛЫЙ МИРЬ.

Тонкий, узкий, длинный ходъ
 Въ глубь землѣ мечтѣ ведѣтъ.
 Только спустишься туда,
 Встрѣтишь замки изо льда.

Чуть сойдёшь отсюда внизъ,
 Разноцвѣтности зажглісь,
 Смѣтить чѣй-то светлый глазъ,
 Лунный камень и алмазъ.

Тамъ опалъ снѣжитъ, а тутъ
 Расцвѣтаетъ изумрудъ.
 И услышишь въ замкахъ тѣхъ
 Флѣйты, лютни, нежный смѣхъ.

И увидишь чихъ то ногъ
 Тамъ хрустальный башмачокъ.
 Льды, колонны, свѣтъ, снѣгъ,
 Нежность, снѣжность, жемчуга.

Тонкий, узкий, длинный ходъ
 Въ бытоть светлый миръ ведѣтъ.
 Но, чтобы знать туда пути,
 Нужно бѣрежно итти.

9. THE MAGIC WORLD.

STRAIT the passage, slender, long,
Reaching depths where visions throng.
Sinking down, you turn your eyes
Where an ice-wrought castle lies.

When from here you sink below,
Twinkling shafts of colour glow;
Someone's peeping eyes are seen—
Adamant and moonstone sheen.

There's the snowy opal; here
Budding emeralds appear.
Hearken—in these castles be
Flutes and lutes and dainty glee.

Whose may be the feet that don
Crystal shoon you gaze upon?
Ice in pillars, lustre, snow,
Dainty, flaky, pearly glow.

Strait the passage, slender, long,
Reaching realms where splendours throng;
But to find the path you need,
You must set your foot with heed.

Алекса́ндръ Алекса́ндровичъ Блокъ

1. ДЕНЬ БЫЛЪ НѢЖНО-СЪРЫЙ . . .

День быль нѣжно-сѣрый, сѣрый, какъ тоска.
Вечеръ сталъ матовый, какъ жѣнская рука.

Въ кѣнатахъ вѣчѣрнихъ прѣтали сердца,
Усталыя отъ нѣжной тоски безъ конца.

Пожимали руки, избѣгали встрѣчъ,
Укрывали смѣхи бѣлизною плечъ.

Длінныи вѣрѣзъ платья, платье, какъ змѣя,
Въ сѣмѣркахъ бѣгѣзъ платья чешуя.

Надъ скатертью въ столовой наклонились ницы,
Касаясь прическами пылающихъ лицъ.

Стуки сѣрдца чаще, напряженнѣй взглядъ,
Въ мысляхъ—онъ, глубокій, нѣжный, душный садъ.

И молча, какъ по знаку, двинулись внизъ.
На ступенькахъ шорохъ бѣлыхъ жѣнскихъ ризъ.

Молча потонули въ саду безъ слѣда.
Небо тихо вспыхнуло зarezомъ стыда.

Можеть быть скатилась красная звѣзда.

Alexander Alexandrovitch Block

1. TENDER-GREY THE DAY WAS . . .

TENDER-GREY the day was, grey as sorrow, and
Pallid grew the evening, like a woman's hand.

In the house at evening they had hid their hearts,
Faint with tender sorrow,— grief that ne'er departs.

Hands were clasped together, eyes forebore to meet,
Unto glistening shoulders laughing lips retreat.

Garb that bares the shoulders, serpent-like array,
White as scaly raiment in the waning day.

O'er the table-cover brow to brow inclined;
O'er the glowing faces locks of hair were twined.

Beat of hearts grew swifter, glances sore oppressed,
In their thoughts the garden,—sultry, deep, at rest.

Mutely they together, as in covenant, stirred;
Woman's white apparel on the steps was heard.

Mutely in the garden, tracelessly they fled,
Softly in the heavens, shame its flush outspread.

Then, perchance, a star fell, with a trail of red.

NOTE.—It was found impossible to reproduce quite closely the
fluctuating rhythm of the original.

2. ВÉРБОЧКИ.

Мáльчики, да дíвочки
Свíчечки, да вéрбочки
Понеслий домóй.

Огонёчки тéплятся,
Прохóжие крéстятся,
И пахнётъ веснóй.

Вéтерóкъ удаленькíй,
Дóждикъ, дóждикъ мáленькíй,
Не ваду́й огнá !

Въ Воскресéные Вéрбное
Зáвтра встáну пéрвая
Для святóго дня.

2. THE WILLOW-BOUGHS.

LADS and lasses gathering,
Willow-boughs and tapers bring,
That they homeward bear.

Warmly do the flamelets glow,
Wayfarers cross them as they go;
Spring-tide scents the air.

Little breeze from far away,
Rain, O rain, with tiny spray,
Quench ye not the flame.

For Palm Sunday earliest,
I to-morrow stir from rest,
Holy-day to acclaim.

NOTE.—It is almost impossible to reproduce in English rhyme the delicate simplicity of the original, with its diminutives and the tripping melody of its metre.

Валерій Яковлевич Брюсовъ

1. ТЕРЦІЙНЫ КЪ СПІСКАМЪ КНИГЪ.

И васть я пόмню, пέречни и спіски,
Васть віжку предъ собою за лікомъ ликъ.
Вы мнѣ, въ степій безплодной, сно́ва близки.

Я ваши таинства давнó постігъ !
При лампѣ, наклоняясь надъ каталогомъ,
Вникать въ названья неизвѣстныхъ книгъ ;

Слѣдить за именами ; слогъ за слогомъ
Вшивать словá чужого языка ;
Угадывать великое въ немногомъ ;

Возсоздавать поэтовъ и вѣка
По краткимъ повторительнымъ помѣстамъ :
„Безъ титула“, „въ сафьянѣ“ и „рѣдка“.

И нынѣ вы предстали мнѣ скелетомъ
Всего, что было жизнью сто вѣковъ,
Киваешь онъ съ насмѣшиливымъ привѣтомъ.

Мнѣ говорить : „Я не совсѣмъ готовъ,
Ещё мнѣ нужны кости и суставы,
Я жажду книгъ, чтобы сдѣлать груду словъ.

„Мечтайте, думайте, пишите славы !
Мнѣ все равнo, безумецъ иль пророкъ,
Созданье для ума и для забавы.

Valery Yakovlevitch Bryusov

1. STANZAS ON BOOK CATALOGUES.

YE lists and catalogues still haunt my brain;
Before me I behold you, face on face,
Near me afresh on this unpeopled plain.

Your secrets long ago I held in chase !
By lamp-light o'er the catalogue I bent,
To probe for books that scarce had left a trace;

To track down names; by syllables I went,
Sipping at words of foreign tongues with care,
Surmising much from briefest document.

Poets and epochs I upraised in air
On scanty cue, as oft, to wit, would be:
“ No author's name ” or “ Bound in calf ” or “ Rare.”

And now, meseems, a skeleton are ye
Of all that lived in ages long ago,
That beckons with a scornful nod to me.

And says: “ I, having somewhat yet to grow,
Of still more bones and joints must be possessed,
I crave for books, that words may overflow.

“ Ponder and dream, and be renown your quest !
'Tis on e to me, or imbecile or sage,
Produce of wisdom or a merry jest.

„Я всѣмъ даю опредѣлѣнныи срокъ.
Твори и ты, а изъ твойхъ мечтаний
Я сохранию навѣкъ семь-восемь строкъ.

„Всесильнѣй мойхъ упоминаній
Нѣть ничего. Безсмертіе во мнѣ.
Вѣнчаю я—міръ творчества и знаній“.

Такъ оставь говоритьъ мнѣ въ тишинѣ,
И я, съ покорностью цѣлую землю,
При быстро умирающей лунѣ,

Исчезновеніе ! твой зовъ пріемлю.

2. К. Д. БАЛЬМОНТУ.

Какъ прѣжде мы вдвоѣмъ, въ ночномъ кафѣ. За
входомъ
Кружитъ огнѣ Парижъ, своймъ весельемъ пьянъ.
Смотрю на обликъ твой; стараюсь гдѣ за гдѣмъ
Всё разгадать, найти рубцы отъ свѣжихъ ранъ.

И ты мнѣ кажешься суровымъ мореходомъ,
Тѣхъ лѣпшихъ дней, когда звалъ къ дѣламъ Магелланъ.
Предавшись гордый духъ безвестностямъ и вѣдамъ,
Узнавшись, что тайтъ для вѣрныхъ океанъ.

Я разгадать хочу, въ лучахъ какой лазури,
Вдалѣ отъ нашихъ странъ, искаль ты береговъ
Погибшихъ Атлантидъ и призрачныхъ Лемурій,

Какія тайны спятъ во тьмѣ твойхъ врачковъ . . .
Но чтобы выразить, что въ этомъ лікѣ ново,
Ни ты, ни я, никто еще не знаеть слово !

“ For all things their established term I gauge.
Create, and from the dreams whereon you pore,
I'll keep a few scant verses, age on age.

“ Naught in omnipotence can stand before
My verdict. I allot the deathless bays
And crown a world of phantasy and lore.”

Thus quoth the wraith to me on silent ways,
And as to earth with humble kiss I fall,
While the moon swiftly dies before my gaze,

O transient glory, I accept your call !

2. TO K. D. BALMONT.

At night, as was our wont, we sought the café. Near,
Paris aglow and drunken in its rapture swayed.
I gaze upon your face; I strive from year to year
To pierce the veil and seek the scars new wounds have
made.

And like a rugged sailor you to me appear,
Who in those goodly times Magellan's call obeyed,
Trusting to seas unknown his soul too proud for fear,
For he has learnt what ocean yields not to the staid.

And fain would I surmise amid what azure gleam,
What marges you have sought, far from our native skies,
Where dead Atlantides and phantom Lemurs teem.

What secrets sleep amid the darkness of your eyes . . .
But, to proclaim what tidings in your gaze abound,
Nor you, nor I, nor any yet the words have found.

3. ЯРОСТНЫЯ ПТИЦЫ.

Яростныя птицы съ огненными пёрыми
 Пронеслись надъ бѣлыми райскими преддвѣрьями,
 Огненные отблески вспыхнули на мраморѣ
 И умчались странницы, улетѣли за море.

Но на чистомъ мраморѣ, на порогѣ дѣственномъ,
 Чѣто-то всѣ алѣлося блескомъ неестественнымъ,
 И въ вратахъ подъ свѣдами, вѣчными, алмазными
 Упивались ангелы тайными соблазнами.

4. СУМЕРКИ.

Горѣть электричествомъ луны
 На выгнутыхъ, длинныхъ стебляхъ ;
 Звенѣть телеграфные струны
 Въ незримыхъ и нѣжныхъ рукахъ ;

Круги циферблѣтовъ янтарныхъ
 Волшѣбно зажглисъ надъ толпой,
 И жаждущихъ плить тротуарныхъ
 Коснулся прохладный покой.

Подъ сѣтью пленительнѣо—зѣбкой
 Притихъ отуманенный сквѣръ,
 И вѣчеръ цѣлуетъ съ улыбкой
 Въ глаза—проходящихъ гетеръ.

Какъ тихиѣ звукѣ клавиры—
 Далѣкіе ропоты дня.
 О сумерки ! Милостью мирап
 Опять упойте меня !

3. BIRDS OF WRATH.

BIRDS of wrath with their plumage of fire all bedight
Over heaven's white portals were borne in their flight;
On the marble the fiery fulgurances flared.
Then swiftly o'er ocean the wanderers fared.

But upon the pure marble, the threshold unstained,
There was something unwonted that flushed and
remained;—
'Neath the crystalline vault never-ending aloft
Most secret enticements by angels were quaffed.

NOTE.—The metre of the original has not been reproduced.

4. DUSK.

ELECTRICAL moons are twinkling
On curving and delicate bands;
The telegraph wires are tinkling
In tender, invisible hands.

The clocks with their amber faces
By magic are lit o'er the crowd;
Of stillness the cooling traces
The thirst-ridden pavement enshroud.

'Neath a net that quivers enchanted,
The square lies hushed in the haze;
The evening has smilingly planted
A kiss on the harlots' gaze.

As music that soothingly quavers
Is daytime's far-away roar.
O dusk! In your lulling favours
You steep my spirit once more.

5. КÁМЕНЩИКЪ.

—Кáменщикъ, кáменщикъ, въ фáртукъ бéломъ,
Что ты тамъ стрóишь? кому?

—Эй, не мéшай намъ, мы зáняты дéломъ,
Стрóимъ мы, стрóимъ тюрьму.

—Кáменщикъ, кáменщикъ, съ вéрной лопáтой,
Кто же въ ней бúдетъ рýдáть?

—Вéрно, не ты и не твой братъ, борáтый.
Нéвачьмъ вамъ воровáть.

—Кáменщикъ, кáменщикъ, дóлгíя нóчи,
Кто жъ проведéть въ ней безъ сна?

—Мóжетъ быть, сынъ мой, такóй же рабóчíй.
Тéмъ наша дóлгáя полнá.

—Кáменщикъ, кáменщикъ, вспóмнить, пожáлуй,
Тéхъ онъ, кто нéсъ кирпичí!

—Эй! берегíсь! подъ лýсáми не бáлуй . . .
Знáемъ всé сáми, молчí!

5. THE STONEHEWER.

—STONEHEWER, stonehewer, whitely arrayed,
What art thou building? For whom?

—Ho, do not baulk us intent on our trade,—
From our building a prison will loom.

—Stonehewer, stonehewer, trowel in hand,
Who then will sob in these walls?

—Not you, nor your brother, rich man, understand,
For theft to your lot never falls.

—Stonehewer, stonehewer, who without sleep
Will abide there long hours of the night?

—Maybe my son will,—he toils for his keep.
And such is the close of our plight.

—Stonehewer, stonehewer, then will he think
Of them who laid bricks here of yore!

—Ho, beware! Beneath ladders from jests you should
shrink . . .

This we ourselves know, give o'er!

NOTE.—This is a very inadequate translation of a poem, the precise
style of which is extremely difficult to reproduce.

Ивáнъ Бúнинъ

1.

Ночь идёт—и темнеть
Бледносиный востокъ.
Отъ одёждъ ея вѣтъ
По полямъ вѣтерокъ.

День былъ дологъ и знобъ,
Ночь идёт и поётъ.
Колыбельную пѣсню
И къ покою зовётъ.

Грустенъ взоръ ея тёмный,
Одинокъ ея путь . . .
Спи-усни, моё сѣрдце !
Отдохни . . . Позабудь.

2.

Какъ свѣтла, нарядна, весна !
Погляди мнѣ въ глаза, какъ бывало,
И скажи: отчего ты грустна?
Отчего ты такъ ласкова стала?

Но молчишь ты, слаба, какъ цвѣтокъ . . .
О, молчи !—Мнѣ не надо признанья:
Я узналъ эту ласку прощанья,—
Я опять одинокъ !

Ivan Bunin

1.

NIGHT hastens and seizes
Clear gleams in the east.
From her raiment light breezes
Over fields are released.

Long and sultry the day was,
Night sings as she goes
A lullaby ditty
And calls to repose.

Her dark gaze is mournful,
On her way naught is met . . .
O my heart, sleep and slumber,
Take your rest . . . and forget.

2.

How agleam, how garnished the spring !
Turn your eyes in the old way upon me:
Say, wherefore this sorrowing?
Why lavish this tenderness on me?

You are mute, as a blossom so frail,
Say naught !—No confession is needed:
The flight of your love I have heeded,—
Lone again is my trail !

Зинайда Николаевна Гиппіусъ

1. ПѢСНЯ.

Окнó моё высо́ко надъ землéю,
Высо́ко надъ землéю.
Я вíжку тóлько нéбо съ вечéрнею зарéю,—
Съ вечéрнею зарéю.

И нéбо кáжется пустýмъ и блéднымъ,
Такимъ пустымъ и блéднымъ.
Оно не сжáлится надъ сердцемъ бéднымъ
Надъ моймъ сéрдцемъ бéднымъ.

Увý, въ печáли безúмной я умираю,
Я умираю.
Стремлóсь къ томú, чегó я не знаю,
Не знаю.

И это желáніе не знаю отку́да
Пришло отку́да,
Но сéрдце хóчетъ и прóсить чу́да,
Чу́да !

О, пусть бúдетъ то, чегó не бывáеть,
Никогдá не бывáеть:
Мнъ блéдное нéбо чудéсь обéщаеть,
Оно обéщаеть,

Zinaida Nikolayevna Hippius

1. SONG.

My window is high o'er the earthly spaces,
O'er the earthly spaces;
I behold but the sky with evening's red traces,
With evening's red traces.

And the gaze of the sky is so faded and dreary,
So faded and dreary;
No pity it has for the heart that is weary,
For my heart that is weary.

Alas, by a frenzied dismay I am riven,
I am riven;
I know not the thing whereto I am driven,
I am driven.

Nor whence is the wish that I bow myself under;
I bow myself under;
But my heart is desiring and craving a wonder,
A wonder.

O may it be aught that life never offers,
That life [never offers;
Unto me 'tis a wonder the sky wanly proffers,
That it proffers.

Но плáчу беъзъ слёзъ о невърномъ обѣтъ,
 О невърномъ обѣтъ.
 Мнъ нужно то, чегó нѣть на свѣтъ,
 Чегó нѣть на свѣтъ.

2. ЭЛЕКТРИЧЕСТВО.

Двѣ нáти вмѣстъ свíты,
 Концы обнажены.
 То „да“ и „нѣть“,—не слíты,
 Не слíты—сплетены.
 Ихъ тёмное сплетéнье
 И тѣсно, и мертвó.
 Но ждёть ихъ воскресéнье,
 И ждутъ они егó.
 Концóвъ концы коснутся—
 Другіе „да“ и „нѣть“,
 И „да“ и „нѣть“ проснутся,
 Сплетённые солыются,
 И смерть ихъ бу́детъ—Свѣтъ.

But tearless I weep for the vow that is broken,
For the vow that is broken.
The thing that I seek is no earth-given token,
No earth-given token.

2. ELECTRICITY.

Two threads are closely hafted,
The ends are unconfined.
'Tis "yea" and "nay,"—not grafted,
Not grafted,—but entwined.
Dim is the weft that mates them
Close and inanimate,
But wakening awaits them,
And they the same await.
End unto end is taken,—
Fresh "yea" and "nay" ignite,
And "yea" and "nay" awaken,
Into one moulding shaken,
And from their death comes,—light.

Мирра Александровна Лбвицкая

И вътра стонъ, и шопотъ мрачныхъ думъ . . .
И жить отрады нѣть . . .
А гдѣ-то зной и моря тихій шумъ,
И солнца яркій свѣть !

Гудить мятель и множить въ сѣрдцѣ гнѣть.
Невыплаканныхъ слёзъ . . .
А гдѣ-то миръ, зелёный миръ растётъ
И кущи бѣлыхъ розъ !

Проходить жизнь въ мечтаньяхъ обѣ иномы,
Ничтожна и пуста . . .
А гдѣ-то смыхъ, и счастье бѣять ключомъ,
И блескъ, и красота !

Myrrha Alexandrovna Lokhvitskaya

AND moan of winds and whispered thoughts of gloom,
From life no joy is won . . .
Yet somewhere,—warmth, and ocean's muffled boom,
And lustre of the sun.

The blizzard wails, and in the heart it throws
A load of tears unshed.
Yet somewhere myrtle, verdant myrtle grows,
And stainless roses spread.

Life, passing by, in empty brooding delves,
Unmeaning, unbedight . . .
Yet somewhere, mirth and bliss will yield themselves,
And comeliness and light !

Дмитрій Сергєвич Мережківський

1. НИРВАНА.

И вновь, какъ въ пёрвый день созданья,
Лазурь небесная тиха,
Какъ бўдто въ мірѣ нѣть страданья,
Какъ бўдто въ сёрдцѣ нѣть грѣха.
Не надо мнѣ любви и славы:
Въ молчанья утреннихъ полѣй
Дышу, какъ дышать эти травы . . .
Ни прошлыхъ, ни грядущихъ дней
Я не хочу пытаться и числить.
Я только чувствую опять,
Какое счастье—не мыслить,
Какая нѣга—не желать !

2. ПРИРОДА ГОВОРІТЬ.

Природа говорить мнѣ съ царственнымъ презрѣніемъ :
„Уйді, не нарушай гармоніи моей !
Твой плачъ мнѣ надоѣль ; не оскорблай мученіемъ
Спокойствія моихъ лавровыхъ ночей.

„Я все тебѣ далѣ—жизнь, молодость, свободу,—
Ты все, ты все отвергъ съ безсмыслицей враждой,
И дѣракимъ ропотомъ ты оскорблѣй природу,
Ты мать свою забыль—уйді, ты мнѣ чужой !

Dmitri Sergeyevitch Merezhkovsky

1. NIRVANA.

As in the day of first creation,
The azure skies are calm again,
As though the world knew not privation,
As though the heart knew naught of pain;
For love and fame my craving passes;
'Mid silence of the fields at morn
I breathe, as breathe these very grasses . . .
O'er days agone, and days unborn
I would not chafe, nor reckoning squander.
This only do I feel once more:
What gladness—ne'er again to ponder,
What bliss—to know all yearning o'er.

2. QUOTH NATURE . . .

QUOTH nature unto me in tones of stately scorning:
“ Begone, and break not in upon my harmony!
I weary of thy tears; mar not with anguished mourning
The calm wherewith my azure nights encompass me.

“ All have I given thee,—life, youth and freedom given,
But thou in senseless feid hast flung it all away.
Nature hast thou with overweening murmurs riven,
Thou hast forgot thy mother,—go, I speak thee nay.

„Иль ма́ло для теб́я на небѣ звѣздъ блестя́щихъ,
Нѣма́го сўмрака въ задумчивыхъ лѣсахъ,

*

И дико́й красоты въ заоблачныхъ горахъ?

„Я всё тебѣ далá,—а въ э́томъ чудномъ мірѣ
Ты не сумѣть хоть разъ счастли́вымъ быть, какъ всѣ:
Какъ счастли́въ звѣрь въ лѣсу и ла́сточка въ эе́рѣ,
И дрѣмлю́щий цвѣткъ въ серебряной росѣ.

„Ты радость бытія сомнѣніемъ разрушаша́ешь:
Уйді! ты гадокъ мнѣ, бессильный и больной . . .
Пытли́вымъ разумомъ и грудою душою
Ты счастья безъ менѣ ищи себѣ, какъ спа́ешь!“

3.

Ла́сковый ве́черъ съ землёю прощался,
Листь шелохну́ться не смѣть въ ожиданьи.
Грохотъ телеги вдали раздавался . . .
Звѣады, дрожа́, выступали въ молчаньи.

Синее небо—глубоко и странно;
Но не смотри ты въ него такъ пытли́во,
Но не ищи въ нёмъ разгадки желанной.—
Синее небо, какъ гробъ, молчаливо!

“Or dost thou rate as naught in heaven the starry lustre,
And in the brooding woods the dusk where nothing speaks,
*

And all the rugged beauty on the cloudy peaks?

“ All have I given thee,—this world is wonder-gifted,
Yet couldst thou not be happy, even as all the rest,—
Happy as woodland beast, and swallow, æther-lifted,
And bud that sleeps amid its silvery dew-clad nest.

“ By thy bewilderment the joy of life thou slayest,
Begone, I loathe thee, full of weak and sickly dole . . .
Thou, with thy probing mind and haughtiness of soul,
Thy happiness without me seek, as best thou mayest.”

3.

THE eventide fondled the earth in farewell,
And in its suspense not a leaf dared to sway;
The creak of a cart far away rose and fell,
Stars marshalled aquiver in silent array.

Clear-blue is the sky,—deep and strange is its guise;
But look not upon it with glances that crave,
But seek not therein the revealment you prize,—
Clear-blue is the sky, but as mute as the grave.

* Owing to a defect in the printing, this line has slipped out of the volume from which the poem was taken. Although I have consulted several other editions of Merezhkovsky's poems, I have been unable to find another copy of the text.

4. ПРИРОДА.

Ни зломъ, ни враждю кроввой
 Донынъ затмить не моглі
 Мы неба чертогъ величавый
 И прелестъ цвѣтущей землі.

Насъ прѣжнею лаской встрѣчаясь
 Долины, цвѣты и ручьи,
 И звѣзды всѣ такъ же сияютъ,
 О томъ же поють соловъи.

Не вѣдаешь нашай кручини
 Могучай, тайственныи лѣсь,
 И нѣть ни единой морщины
 На ясной лазурѣ небесъ.

5. СВЯТЕЛЬ.

Надъ холмами полосою
 Побѣгъ востокъ вдалі,
 Дышать сыростью ночною
 Глыбы вспаханной землі.

Видиши, мѣрными шагами
 Ходить святель въ поляхъ.
 Тишинѣ, какъ въ Божиѣмъ храмѣ,
 На землѣ и въ небесахъ.

4. NATURE.

Not bloodshed, nor ills we engender,
Could yet fling a mantle of gloom
On the heavenly palace of splendour,
Or on earth with the lure of its bloom.

As of old, we are tenderly ravished
By valleys and blossoms and rills;
Unchanging, the starlight is lavished,
And the tune that the nightingale trills.

Great forests with deep-hidden spaces
Know naught of our spirit's dismay;
And never a wrinkle defaces
The heaven's clear azure array.

5. THE SOWER.

FAR above the stretch of hills
The east has flung its lustre round;
Moistened breath of night-time fills
Clods of plough-uprooted ground.

See, how with his measured pace
O'er the fields the sower goes;
Calm, as in God's holy place
On earth and in the heaven flows.

Всё кругомъ священнымъ страхомъ,
Какъ предъ таинствомъ, полно,
И руки покойнымъ взмахомъ
Разсвѣасть онъ зерно.

И для труженика сноva
Грудь землї родить должна
Жатву хлѣба золотого
Изъ погибшаго зерна.

Созидая жизнь изъ смерти,
Предъ лицомъ святыхъ небесъ,
О, молитесь-же и вѣрьте:
Это—чудо изъ чудесъ!

A sacred awe through all the land,
As of some secret thing is borne;
And with a gently sweeping hand
Far and wide he scatters corn.

And for the toiler must again
Out of the womb of earth be born
A harvest of the golden grain
That quickens from the perished corn.

Life out of death is rendered free
Before the glance of holy skies;
O, pray then, and believing, see
A wonder from a wonder rise.

Николáй Максимович Минскíй

1.

Какъ сонъ, пройдуть дѣла и помыслы людѣй;
Забудется герой, истлѣтъ мавзолей—

И вмѣстѣ въ общій прахъ сольются.

И мудрость, и любовь, и знанья, и правда,
Какъ съ аспидной доски ненужныя слова,
Рукой невѣдомой сотрутся.

И ужъ не тѣ слова подъ токо же рукой—
Далѣко отъ земли, застывшей и нѣмой—

Возникнуть вновь загадкой блѣдной.

И сноша свѣтъ блеснѣтъ, чтобы стать добѣгчай тѣмы,
И кто-то будетъ жить и такъ, какъ жили мы,
Но такъ, какъ мы, умрѣть безслѣдно.

И невозможно намъ предвидѣть и понять,
Въ какихъ формахъ духъ одѣнется опять.

Въ какихъ созданьяхъ воплотится.

Быть можетъ, изъ всегда, что будетъ въ насы любовь,
На той звездѣ ничто не повторится вновь . . .

Но есть одно, что повторится:

Лишь то, что мы теперъ считаемъ празднымъ сномъ,
Тоска неясная о чѣмъ-то неземномъ,

Куда-то смутныя стремленья.

Вражда къ тому, что есть, предчувствій робкій свѣтъ,
И жажды жгучая святны, которыхъ нѣть,—

Одно лишь это чуждо тленья.

Nikolai Maximovitch Minsky

1.

MAN's ponderings and labours, dream-like, pass away,
Heroes will be forgot, and sepulchres decay,—

And all in common dust is merged.

And righteousness and love, and sciences and lore,
As words upon a slate, whose meaning is no more,
By undiscovered hand are purged.

But words that are not these, beneath the self-same hand,
Far from the numbing muteness of this earthly land,

Again, pale riddles will supply.

Another light will shine, for gloom to prey upon,
And others there will live, not as our lives have gone,

But e'en as we, untraced shall die.

And we have not the power to fathom or to view
The guise wherein our spirit shall be garbed anew,

The shapes wherein its breath shall dwell.

Perchance, of all that love within us stirs to life,
Nothing upon this planet shall again be rife,

But there is one thing naught can quell:

Only the thing that now an empty dream we count,
The blurred and fretful wish beyond the earth to mount,

Restive essays towards some height.

Hatred of things that are, foreboding's timid glow,
And burdensome desire for shrines we cannot know,—

On this alone shall come no blight.

Въ какихъ бы образахъ и гдѣ бы средь міровъ
Ни вспыхнуль мысли свѣтъ, какъ лучъ средь облаковъ,

Какія бъ существа ни жили,—
Но будутъ рваться вдалъ онѣ, подобно намъ,
Изъ страха своего къ несбыточнымъ мечтамъ,
Грустя душой, какъ мы грустили.

И потому не тотъ 'бесмртнъ на землѣ,
Кто превзошель другіхъ въ добрѣ или во злѣ,

Кто славы хрупкія скрижалі
Наполнилъ побѣстью, безцѣльною, какъ сонъ,
Предъ кѣмъ толпы людѣй — такои же прахъ, какъ
онъ—

Благоговѣли иль дрожали,
Но всѣхъ бесмртнѣй тотъ, кому сквозь прахъ землї
Какои-то новыи міръ мерещился вдалъ,
Несуществующій и вѣчный.

Кто цѣли неземной такъ жаждалъ и страдалъ,
Что силою жажды самъ миражъ себѣ создалъ
Среди пустыни безконечной.

2.

Я вижу край обѣтованный,
Сверканье водъ, шатры дерёвъ.
Но преступить предѣль желанній
Мнѣ запретилъ Господній гнѣвъ.

Усталъ я отъ песковъ и зноя,
Ещѣ при жицни смерть вкусиль.
Такъ изнемогъ, что для покоя
Въ моей душѣ нѣть болѣше силъ.

In whatsoever guise, and where 'mid worlds shall gleam
The radiance of thought, like to a cloud-girt beam,

 Whatever lives are fashioned yet,—
Still shall they make ado, and rouse them e'en as we,
From very depths of dread to dreams that ne'er can be,
 Fretful of soul, as we do fret.

And therefore he is not on earth immortal who
Either in good or ill his fellows could outdo,
 Who upon glory's tablets frail
Hath graved the deeds of him, that, as a dream, are
 naught,
'Fore whom the throng, of that same clay as he is wrought,
 Or utter homages, or quail.

But above all is he immortal unto whom
Through dust of earth afar new worlds were wont to loom,
 Worlds though unreal, yet perishless.
He who so craved and pined for things beyond the earth,
That by his craving's power he gave his vision birth
 'Mid an unending wilderness.

2.

I view the promised land before me.—
Gleaming of waters, tents of trees.
But anger of the Lord forbore me
To touch the dower I long to seize.

I rose from heat and sandy places,
I tasted death in living hours:
My strength so wanes, that it effaces
Within my soul all placid powers.

И если радостному краю
Поётъ привѣтъ мой грустный стихъ,
Я гимнъ привѣтственный слагаю
Не для себя, а для другихъ.

3.

То, что вы зовёте вдохновеньемъ,
Я зову прислушиваньемъ чуткимъ.
Есть часы, когда съ восторгомъ жуткимъ
Вдругъ я слышу: кто-то съ грустнымъ пѣньемъ

Надъ душой проносится моёю.
Слышу, внѣмлю, чую, замираю . . .
И творю, доколѣ повторяю
То, къ чему прислушаться успѣю.

4. ГОРОДЪ ВДАЛИ.

Тамъ внизу, въ полукругломъ просвѣтѣ холмовъ,
Виденъ городъ вдалі.
Тамъ, за блѣдными пѣтнами сель и лѣсовъ,
Гдѣ сливаются краски полей и луговъ,
Чуть мерещится городъ вдалі.

Не домъ, не сады,—что-то тѣнью болшой
Залегло сквозь туманъ.
Какъ безстрастье надъ мнѣго страдавшей душой,
Какъ усталость надъ мнѣго дерзавшей мечтой,
Легъ надъ городомъ мутный туманъ.

And if my mournful-tuned ovation
Is chanted to that glad domain,
I shape a hymn of salutation,
Not for my own, but others' gain.

3.

WHAT you are wont to name as inspiration,
Delicacy of hearkening I call;
Hours there are that palpably enthrall,
When I hear the plaintive incantation.

Of someone who above my spirit stirred:
I hark, I grope, I feel, my senses wane . . .
I labour on until I shape again
The thing that by my mastery I heard.

4. THE CITY AFAR.

DOWN yonder, 'mid hills in a shimmering bend
Lo, the city afar.
Pale village and woodland before it extend,
Where tintings of meadow and pasturage blend,
The city gleams faintly afar.

Nor dwelling, nor yard—but in shadows of night,
Something glides through the mist.
As if listless o'er many a soul in its plight,
As if weary o'er many a vision of might,
O'er the city lies dimly the mist.

Изъ живыхъ испареній труда и страстей
Сотканъ мглистый покровъ.
Изъ пылинокъ, изъ дыма, изъ брызгъ, изъ тѣней,
Изъ дыханій и криковъ несчетныхъ грудей
Сотканъ въ воздухъ мглистый покровъ.

Между градомъ буйнымъ и взоромъ моймъ
Онъ повисъ навсегда,
Ибо утро и полдень безсильны надъ нимъ.
Храмы, тюрьмы, дворцы для меня, точно дымъ,
Въ отдаленіи слились навсегда.

Лишь порою закатъ стрѣловиднымъ лучомъ
Мглу пронижетъ на мигъ.
И предъ тѣмъ какъ исчезнутъ во мракѣ ночномъ,
Дальній градъ людей угрожающимъ сномъ,
Открывается взору на мигъ.

Live vapours of toiling and passionate cries
Weave a darkening pall.

Dust and smoke and the specks and the shadows that rise,
And numberless hearts with their throbings and sighs,
Aloft weave a darkening pall.

'Twixt the din of the city's unrest and my gaze
It is spread evermore.

And its load nor the morn nor the noon can upraise,
Gaols, churches and courtyards, meseems, are but haze,—
In the farness they merge evermore.

But sometimes at sunset an arrowy ray
Stabs the mist for a flash.

And amid the night's darkness, then fading away,
The city afar with its dreams of dismay
Is revealed to the gaze for a flash.

Федоръ Кўзьмичъ Сологубъ

1.

Возставилъ Богъ менѣ изъ влажной глины,
Но отъ землї не отдѣлилъ.
Роднѣя мнѣ—вершны и долины,
Какъ я себѣ, весь міръ мнѣ милъ.

Когда гляжу на дальняя дороги,
Мнѣ кажется, что я на нихъ
Всѣ чѣствую колеса, камни, ноги,
Какъ будто на рукахъ моихъ.

Гляжу ли я на звонкіе потоки,—
Мнѣ кажется, что это мнѣ
Земля несётъ живительные соки,
Свой дары моей веснѣ.

2. ТРИОЛЁТЫ СЪВЕРУ.

(i.)

Земля докучная и злая,
Но все же мнѣ роднѣя мать!
Люблю тебя, о мать нѣмая,
Земля докучная и злая!
Какъ сладко землю обнимать,
Къ ней приникая въ чарахъ май!
Земля докучная и злая,
Но все же мнѣ роднѣя мать!

Fedor Kuzmitch Sologub

1.

FROM moistened clay by God was I created,
But never freed from earthly guise.
With peaks and valleys I am federated,
E'en as myself, the earth I prize.

When gazing on the distant roads I ponder,
Methinks that feeling I can grasp
How wheels thereon, and stones and feet that wander,
Are all as if within my clasp.

When torrents I behold with deep-toned courses,
Methinks that merged amid their power
Earth bears her saps with their restoring forces
Unto my spring-tide, as her dower.

2. NORTHERN TRIOLETS.

(i.)

THOU earth with guile and irksome woe,
Art yet a mother unto me !
Mute mother mine, I love thee so,
Thou earth with guile and irksome woe !
How sweet in earth's embrace to be,
Nestling to her when May's aglow !
Thou earth with guile and irksome woe,
Art yet a mother unto me !

(ii.)

Любите, люди, землю,—землю
 Въ зелёной тайне влажныхъ травъ.
 Велѣнью тайному я внѣмлю:
 —Любите, люди, землю,—землю
 И сладость всѣхъ ея отравъ!—
 Земной и тёмный, все пріемлю.
 Любите, люди, землю,—землю
 Въ зелёной тайне влажныхъ травъ.

(iii.)

Сердце дрогнуло отъ радости.
 Снова северъ, снова дождь,
 Снова нѣженъ мохъ и тощъ,—
 И уныніе до радости,
 И томлѣніе до сладости,—
 И мечтанія тихихъ рощъ,
 И дрожитъ душа отъ радости,—
 Мілый северъ! мілый дождь!

(iv.)

Куполь церкви, крестъ и небо,
 И вокругъ печаль полей,—
 Что спокойнѣй и светлѣй
 Этой ясной жизни неба?
 И скажи мнѣ, другъ мой, где бы
 Возносилася святѣй
 Къ благодатнымъ тайнамъ неба
 Скавка лёгкая полей!

(ii.)

THE earth, the earth, ye men, revere,
Green secrets of its moistened weeds,
Its secret ordinance I hear:
—The earth, the earth, ye men, revere,
E'en its delights, where venom breeds!—
Earthy, untaught, I hold it dear.
The earth, the earth, ye men, revere,
Green secrets of its moistened weeds.

(iii.)

QUIVERS the heart with joyousness,
North afresh, return of rain,
Slender, tender moss again,—
Despair is one with joyousness
And torment with a sweet caress,—
Soft visions of a wooded lane,
And trembles the soul with joyousness,—
Beloved North! Beloved rain!

(iv.)

CHURCH-SPIRE, crucifix, and sky,
And around, the sorrowing fields,—
What more peace and radiance yields
Than this sheen of living sky?
And, my friend, I would descry
Where in holier fashion yields
To the glad secracies on high
This soft legend of the fields!

(v.)

Какая радость—по дорогамъ
 Стопами голыми итти
 И сумку лёгкую нести !
 Какая радость—по дорогамъ,
 Въ смиреныи благостномъ и строгомъ,
 Стихъ пъвучие плести !
 Какая радость—по дорогамъ
 Стопами голыми итти !

3. ВЪ ЭТОТЪ ЧАСЪ.

Въ этотъ часъ, когда грохочеть въ тёмномъ небѣ
 грозный громъ,
 Въ этотъ часъ, когда въ основахъ сотрясается нашъ
 домъ.
 Въ этотъ часъ, когда въ тревогѣ вся надѣжда, вся
 любовь,
 И когда сильнейший духомъ беспокойно хмурить
 бровь,
 Въ этотъ часъ стремите выше, выше гордыя сердца,—
 Наслаждается победой только вѣрный до конца,
 Только тотъ, кто слѣпо вѣрить, хоть судьбѣ на пере-
 корь,
 Только тотъ, кто въ мать не бросить камнемъ тягост-
 ный укорь.

(v.)

WHAT delight,—from place to place
With uncovered feet to fare
And a scanty scrip to bear !
What delight,—from place to place
With austere and humble grace
To entwine a tuneful air !
What delight,—from place to place
With uncovered feet to fare !

3. IN THIS HOUR . . .

IN this hour when darkened skies are by the awful thunder
rent,
In this hour when shakes our dwelling to its very
fundament,
In this hour when every hope and every love are in
despair,
When the mightiest in spirit purse the brow in restless
care,
In this hour your hearts shall rouse them higher, higher
in their pride,
Victory is theirs alone who faithful to the end abide.
Only theirs who trust with blindness, even though in
spite of fate,
Only theirs who on their mother fling not grievous stones
of hate.

4.

Злой драконъ, горяцій ярко тамъ, въ зенітѣ,
 Протянувшій всюду пламення ніти,
 Опалівшій душнымъ зноемъ всю долину,—
 Злой драконъ, побѣду ты ликуешь рано!
 Я изъ тѣмнаго, глубокаго колчана
 Для тебя стрѣлѣ отравленную вину.

Предъ тобою съ лукомъ стану безъ боязни
 Я, свершитель сильный безпощадной казни,
 Я, предскажанный и всѣ-жъ нежданній мститель.
 Лукъ тугой стрѣла покинетъ съ мѣднымъ звономъ.
 Ты на вѣзовъ мой отвѣтиши тѣжкимъ стономъ,
 Ты померкнешь, ты погибнешь, злой губитель!

5.

Этотъ зыбкій туманъ надъ рекой
 Въ одинокую ночь, при лунѣ,—
 Ненавистенъ онъ мнѣ, и желаненъ онъ мнѣ
 Тишиной своей и тоской.

Я забыть про дневную красу,
 И во мглѣ я тихонько вхожу,
 Еле видимый слѣдъ напряженно слѣжу,
 И печали мой одиноко несю.

4.

EVIL dragon, 'mid the zenith hotly burning,
Thou, who all about thee, fiery threads art turning,
With a stifling hotness parching all the valley,—
Evil dragon, lo, too speedy is thy rapture
O'er thy victory; for, compassing thy capture,
From my dark, deep quiver, poisoned barbs will sally.

With my bow before thee shall I stand, nor falter,
Dauntless to fulfil the doom that none can alter;
Vengeance unforeseen, and yet foretold I cherish.
Taut, my bow shall fling its shaft with brazen droning.
To my challenge, thou shalt answer sorely moaning,—
Foul destroyer, thou shalt wane away and perish.

5.

OVER the river the hazes that flow
'Neath the moon in the lonesome night,
They beset me with hate, and they bring me delight
For the stillness thereof and the woe.

Forgotten the beauty of day,
And thro' mist I stealthily pace,
A track scarce beheld, in my travail I trace
And I carry my lonely despair on my way.

Владимір Сергеевич Солов'євъ

1.

Мілый другъ, иль ты не ви́дишъ,
Что всё ви́димое на́ами—
Только о́блескъ, только тѣни
Отъ незримаго очами?

Мілый другъ, иль ты не слышишъ,
Что житейскій шумъ трескучай—
Только о́ткликъ искаженныій
Торжествуюющихъ созвучай?

Мілый другъ, иль ты не чуешь,
Что однó на цѣломъ свѣтѣ—
Только то, что сѣрдце къ сѣрдцу
Говорить въ нѣмомъ привѣтѣ.

2.

Земля́ владычица! Къ тебѣ́ чело склонилъ я,
И сквозь покровъ благоуханній твой
Роднаго сѣрдца пламень ощущай я,
Услышать трепетъ жизни міровой.
Въ полуденныхъ лучахъ такою нѣгой жгучай
Сходила благодать сіяющихъ небесъ,
И блеску тихому неслѣ привѣтъ пъвучай
И вольная рѣка, и многошумный лѣсъ.
И въ явномъ таинствѣ вновь вижу сочетанье
Земной душѣ со свѣтомъ неземнѣмъ,
И отъ огнѣ любви житейское страданье
Уносится какъ мимолѣтный дымъ.

Vladimir Sergeyevitch Solovyov

1.

FRIEND belovèd, dost thou see not
That whate'er our gaze embraces,
Is but a reflex, but a shadow
Of the things the eye ne'er traces?

Friend belovèd, dost thou hear not
That the roar of earthly surging
Is naught but a distorted echo
Of harmonies in triumph merging?

Friend belovèd, dost thou feel not
That the world but one thing holdeth—
What one heart unto another
With a mute acclaim unfoldeth?

2.

O MISTRESS earth! Before thee have I knelt,
And through the fragrances that thee begird,
The glowing of a kindred heart I felt,
The throbbing of a living world I heard.
In noon-tide beams with such enraptured blaze
The bounty of the radiant skies was sent,
With whose still lustre the responsive lays
Of rippling streams and rustling woods were blent.
To me the sacrament reveals again
Earth's soul with the unearthly sheen unite,
And from the fire of love all earthly pain
Is borne away like passing smoke in flight.

3.

Въ туманѣ утреннемъ невѣрными шагами.
 Я шѣль къ таинственнымъ и чуднымъ берегамъ.
 Боролася заря съ послѣдними звѣздами;
 Ещѣ летали сны—и схваченная снаими,
 Душа молилася невѣдомымъ богамъ.

Въ холодный бѣлый день дорожай одинокой,
 Какъ прѣжде, я иду въ невѣдомой странѣ.
 Разселялся туманъ, и ясно видить бѣко,
 Какъ труденъ горный путь, и какъ еще далѣко
 Далѣко все, что грѣзилось мнѣ.

И до полуночи нерѣбкими шагами
 Всё бѣду я идти къ желаннымъ берегамъ,
 Туда, гдѣ на горѣ, подъ новыми звѣздами
 Весь пламенѣющій побѣдными огнями
 Меня дождется мой завѣтный храмъ.

4.

У царыцы моей есть высокій дворецъ
 О семи онъ столбахъ золотыхъ.
 У царыцы моей семигранный вѣнецъ,
 Въ нѣмъ безъ счѣту камней дорогихъ.

И въ зеленомъ саду у царыцы моей
 Розы и ліліи краса расцвѣла,
 И въ прозрачной волнѣ серебристый ручей
 Ловить отблескъ кудреи и чела.

3.

AMID the morning hazes, wavering of pace,
I journeyed to a secret, wonder-laden shore;
The daybreak strove to quench the straggling starry trace;
Dreams still were on the wing, and held in their embrace,
My spirit sought unfathomed godheads to adore.

Upon a lonely journey in a chill, white day,
Amid unfathomed regions, as of old I fare.
The hazes now are rent, and clearly I survey
How hard the upward path, and still how far away,
How far away is all my dreams laid bare.

But to the midnight hour, unfaltering of pace,
I still shall journey on, to reach my yearning's shore;
Yonder on high, beneath another starry trace,
With fires of victory illumining the place,
My shrine awaits me with its hallowed store.

4.

THE court of my empress is lofty of height,
With seven golden pillars around.
The crown of my empress is sevenfold bedight,
With jewels unnumbered 'tis bound.

And in the green garden, my empress' own,
The roses and lilies bloom fair;
In the waves of a silvery streamlet is thrown
The flash of her brow and her hair.

Но не слышить царыца, что шепчеть ручей,
 На цветы и не взглянеть она:
 Ей туманить печаль суть лазурный очей,
 И мечтая ея скорби полна.

Она видеть: далеко, въ полночномъ краю,
 Средь морозныхъ тумановъ и выюгъ,
 Съ злую силу тьмы въ одиночномъ бою
 Гибнетъ ею покинутый другъ.

И бросаеть она алмазный вѣнецъ,
 Оставляеть чертогъ золотой,
 И къ невѣрному другу, нежданный пришлецъ,
 Благодатной стучится рукой.

И надъ мрачной зимой молодая весна—
 Вся сия, склонилась надъ нимъ
 И покрыла его, тихой ласки полна,
 Лучезарнымъ покровомъ своймъ.

И низрнуты тѣмныя силы во прахъ,
 Чистымъ пламенемъ весь онъ горитъ,
 И съ любовью вѣчной въ лазурныхъ очахъ
 Тихо другу она говорить:

— „Знаю, воля твой волнъ морскихъ не вѣрный;
 Ты моя вѣрность клялся сохранить,—
 Клятвъ ты измѣнилъ,—но измѣной своей
 Могъ ли сѣрдце моё измѣнить? . . .“

But my empress ne'er harks to the whispering rill,
On the blossoms she turns not her gaze:
And the glow of her eyes in despair has grown chill,
And grief on her pondering preys.

She beholds: in a midnight domain far away,
'Mid the chillness of hazes and snow,
How the gloom's evil powers in a single affray
Her lover of old overthrow.

And her gem-studded crown from her brow she has torn,
From her golden-wrought palace she wends;
Of a sudden, approaching her comrade forsworn,
Benignant, her hand she extends.

And as o'er the dark winter young spring-tide has cast
His glow, she in tenderest love
Has bent herself o'er him, and shielded him fast
With her glittering shelter above.

As the powers of the gloom in the dust he descries,
He is kindled with purest of flames;
And with perishless love in her radiant eyes
Thus softly her friend she acclaims:

“ I know thee inconstant as waves of the sea;
Thou hast sworn to me trueness alway,—
Thine oath thou betrayed,—by betrayal of me,
My heart couldst thou likewise betray?”

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