THE SMITH.

A cunning Smith of old wrought in his work-shop, and forged him chains of wondrous fineness: as he worked, he exulted in his pride and sang, saying, "Never was Craftsman such as I." And all the while the chains grew apace. Then at the last he grew weary of his toil and fain would away, but as he sought to go, his chains constrained him. Then laughed he scornfully, and said in his pride, "Of such wondrous fineness have I wrought, that these mighty hands of mine will burst away." Yet when he would tear one asunder, ever another twined about him and withheld him, till perforce he forebore. Thus struggling, strength and pride alike left him, and in the humility of his soul he cried, "There is not one way out." But Death echoed grimly, "One way out."

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VERSES

BY

J. de L. S.



DEATH OF MAJOR JOHN DE LUZE SIMONDS, D.S.O.

The Simonds' family, which has sustained such heavy bereavements during the past twelve months, is again thrown into mourning by the death of Captain (acting Major) John de Luze Simonds, D.S.O., Royal Garrison Artillery, third son of the late Mr. L. de L. Simonds and Mrs. Simonds, of Audley's Wood, and brother of Mr. Eric Simonds. Deep sympathy with the family will be felt on all hands. Major Simonds met his death while in command of a heavy battery, R.G.A. When war broke out he was in India, and left for Egypt with a mountain battery. In December, 1914, he proceeded to France, where he has served almost continuously ever since. For a long period he was attached to

Major Simonds met his death while in command of a heavy battery, R.G.A. When war broke out he was in India, and left for Egypt with a mountain battery. In December, 1914, he proceeded to France, where he has served almost continuously ever since. For a long period he was attached to the staff of the Royal Flying Corps as artillery laison officer, and only a few weeks ago was transferred to the command of the battery. The deceased officer was in most of the heavy fighting in the winter of 1914-15, and in most of the engagements since.

A native of Reading, he was aged 52, and educated at Summerfields, Oxford, and Winchester College, where he was first on the role of scholars. He was subsequently at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and joined the R.G.A. in 1903. For some years he was stationed in Malta and afterwards in Hong Kong, where he was aide-de-camp to Major-General Sir Charles Anderson, the commander-inchief. He was employed on several important surveys in the hinterland of China, and the island of Hainan, for which he received much official kudos. On leaving the China station he was sent to India.

He was granted the D.S.O. on January let this year, and mentioned in dispatches a few days later. He obtained leave to attend the funeral of his father in December last, this being his last occasion home.

The deceased officer was a man of fine physique, and of great intellectual attainments. He had made a deep study of languages and literature. A very keen mason, he had given a great deal of time and application to the craft, and was a member of the Basinestoke Lodge, and the Old Wykehamiste Lodge. He was unmarried.

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CUPID'S FANE.

I made my heart a treasure-house of Love
And wrought it round with poesy and song,
Its pinnacles were cast of Hope deferred,
Its gates of trusting Faith were fashioned strong:

Around it flowed the current of my soul,
O'erbearing all in greatness of desire,
Its tower was tall with unrequited love,
And He had lit its lantern with His fire.

Round its still meres there grew forget-me-nots, And heartsease, gorgeous in their motley hue; The roses, blushing at the peonies' side, Were circled round with rosemary and rue.

The love-lies-bleeding edged its tawny paths,
Mingling its splendour with the hollyhocks:
The yews strange-carved to many a wondrous shape
Grew ghostly-wise from tumbled, moss-clad rocks.

But then there came the blasting of my fane,
Ruin of tower, pinnacle and cope,
The gates were broken and my treasure bared—
Dead Love, False Faith, and Unaccomplished Hope!

And now I die within a desert land,
My life is waned, dishonoured and unknown;
And every night I pray that Death may come,
To reap the harvest that my grief has sown.

A LOVER'S PRAYER.

Star of my Love, look downward through the gloom Of this sad world, and smile away her tears, Lighten with joy the vista of the years And hide the horror of the pending doom;

For in this ebbing mart of souls below

We may not meet and wed our souls in bliss,

Cheating Eternity in one long kiss,

When all the joy of Heaven above we know.

LA VIE EST BRÈVE.

"La vie est brève— Un peu d'espoir, Un peu de rêve, Et puis—bon soir."

How sweet it were to take some ancient chalice, Wrought in Murano's sea-girt isle of old, Which columned stood in some Venetian palace, Gorgeous with Indian gem and Orient gold!

A goblet of the foamy, mystic glass,
Fashioned to gryphon of fantastic fable,
Such as, perchance, the Doge was wont to pass,
In reverent awe, around his princely table.

Then pour therein the wine of sunny France, And then the languorous poison, drop by drop, And watch the merry bubbles wink and dance, Dim-seen betwixt the twisted curve and knop.

Seat thee awhile and softly meditate
On all this life, its sorrow and its joy,
How that the twain are incommensurate,
For grief endures, but love an hour can cloy.

Lift up the eyes and take one last long look On all this weary, weary world of ours, Of all its sorrows sum the dismal book, Each leaf a dreary dirge of dreadful hours.

Upraise the brimming cup of golden wine, Against the molten splendour of the West, Sip the long draught of anguish all-divine And sink in rapture to a careless rest.

"BEHOLD, MY LOVE IS ALL FAIR."

"Behold, my Love is all fair." (S. of S.)

Oh love, there are groves in Sharon,
Where the crimson roses shine,
Flaming red in the moonlight,
Ah love, if thy lips were mine!

Beloved, there are lily pastures, Where God has sown of His best, Lilies purer than daybreak, Ah love, for thy wondrous breast!

Queen, there are pools at noontide, Blue as the answering skies, Shimmering, hot with passion, Ah love, for thy sun-bright eyes!

Love, there are Lebanon cedars
That fret the morning air,
Dark as the doom of mercy,
Ah love, for thy fragrant hair!

Queen of my heart and mistress Of water and earth and sky, Morning and eve and noontide, Ah love, for thee I die!

HAUD IMMEMOR MORTUÆ.

Ever thy vision sears my sleepless eyes, Thy shadowy footfall echoes in my ears, My heart is set to break with vanquished sighs, My cheeks are wan with ill-suppresséd tears.

I reckon not how Time is taking flight,

To me the teeming world is all forlorn;

Each day I long for sorrow-shading night,

Each night I curse the never-coming dawn.

Hateful the country in the summer haze,

The budding spring or golden harvest spread,

Hateful the dark and dreary winter days,

While I am left alone to mourn my dead.

The sands fall on in Time's unfailing glass,

The Earth still rolls, the Sea still turns her tides—
Ah God, that I could die! I fain would pass

Unto that Haven where my Love abides.

IN MEMORIAM, G.W.C.

Comrades still, by a High behest
Doomed for a while to part,
Bound to Faith by the Sacred Law
Of a cry from a heart to heart.

So shall we meet at the end of all, Unstained with the taint of earth, Refined in the fire of mortal death And the joy of immortal birth.

Friend, I have loved thee well and true— What matter to live or die? Our souls live on in the hope of peace— Comrade, Good-bye, Good-bye.

THE UNWORTHY LOVER.

If this be life, then give me death,
For better far to die,
Than live a living death, drawn out
In grief and misery;
Honour dishonoured, truth untrue,
Such is my guerdon here,
My faith unfaithful—Hell itself
No worse a brood could rear—
To love unloved, my anguish scorned,
The scorn of beauteous pride,
No longer will I toil and moil,
Nay, Death shall be my bride.

"NOW FALLS THE CURTAIN AND THE STAGE IS DARK."

"Now falls the curtain and the stage is dark."

Since I have never kissed thee on the lips, Save once in dreams,

So have I held that memory dear, And glory streams

Athwart my sorrow, as the maze of stars At midnight gleams,

Splashing the darkness with a web of light.

So must I run my widowed course unloved, Hallowed with tears,

The days but anguish and the nights unrest, Mazy with fears,

And all my life a bitter prophecy Of bitter years,

Knowing that thou canst never bless my sight.

Never shall any child of thine and mine Be born to bless,

Soothing with gentle hands, a mild old age Of happiness,

Our perfect bliss grown peaceful with the years, Each sweet caress

Our Love's own sceptre and a crown of joy.

Nor may I die, for still I hope that Heaven Shall hold us last,

When to the mire of oblivion we tread The sad years past,

And for the æons of celestial bliss

I hold thee fast,

Haloed with happiness no time can cloy.

THE KISS.

Golden lilies had my love in her garden,
What was their chaste innocence to me?
Have I not sinned beyond all hope of pardon?
Have I not sinned most unregretfully?

What do I care, though Heaven's gates be transomed Against the stormy pleadings of my soul? What is't to me? My soul may go unransomed, Thy golden memory compounds the whole.

So thou dost hate me beyond all reasoning?

Hate, like the steely innocence of snow?

Is my coat smirched beyond all blazoning?

And still I hear the night-winds whispering low—

And still I hear the night-winds whispering low!

THE SHIP.

Where gleams the moonlight fitfully O'er grey mysterious seas,
I hear thy low beseeching voice,
Imperious in the breeze.

Where the soft waves, that lap the side, Constrain my sleep with fears, Through all their gentle murmurings I hear thy silent tears.

Where burns the sun with fiercest ray
The azure-bounded blue,
Searing the world to nothingness,
It is my love for you!

I come, my love, I come.

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

"Set me by my daughter's grave,
And leave me there to mourn alone:
The Lord has ta'en where once he gave,
In all things may His will be done.

Crowned with victory, on that day
All the world was nought to me,
All my light had passed away,
Only dark there seemed to be.

Alone I stood, by man abhorred,
Deserted by our father's God:
Like Job, I wished to curse the Lord,
And lie with her beneath the sod.

But many a year has run it's round,
And Time with ever healing hands
Has smoothed away the bitterest wound,
But not yet joined the severed bands."

Thus they left him all alone,
Weeping o'er the bitter sod,
Thus the Lord did claim his own,
For the Lord is always good.

SPRING.

I have not any skill to sing of love; My lyre is tuned to thrill an earthly lay, It recks not of the strains of heaven above, But only chants the gladness of to-day. I can but sing the purple of the hills, The distant view of snow-clad mountain chain, The vale melodious with a thousand rills Of crystal foaming to the happy plain. I sing the flowers of the kindly earth, The purple lilac and the snow-white may, The years of fatness after time of dearth, The rustic rebeck and sweet roundelay. Nor can I sing of arms, for sweeter far The creaking music of the wind-torn bough Than clash of arms, than varied sounds of war The cheery call of yokel at the plough. Sweeter to me the kind and fruitful land, The golden corn which vaunts the sunset's glory, Than bloody valour of a desperate band, Round which the bards may weave their stirring story.

E' MOBILE.

Was I not loved far more than God in Heaven Loves His own creatures? Did I not give myself Body and soul into his keeping, swear to cherish him And love him, till the Double Death-for one Dared not to live a moment all alone-Wrapped us together in his single shroud And bore us hence to love once more in Heaven. And I, woe's me, with sneer and bitter taunt, Have sent him hence to death, loving, unloved, A death far onward down the road of Time, Whereon each step is life, but life all sear With grief and but an age-long prayer for death, And yet he fears to die by his own hand, Lest in that Hell, where unregretted sins Are burnt into the soul with red regret, We should not meet, lest even in this life Some passing chance of fortune may invoke One fleeting glimpse across the crowded streets— Ah God, the weary streets he walks and walks! God knows I loved him, would I loved him still To ease this weary aching heart of mine, That all unwilling turned and ceased to love him. Cannot I feel his every mordant pain Whose soul once throbbed with mine? Can I not hear Him sob the sad night-watches through?—and yet I cannot love him.

TYPHOON.

The wine-dark sea lies heaving on the breast Of her old Mother Earth, and in the West The blood-impassioned sun in crimson ire Sinks down to rest, a symphony of fire.

And as it sinks in awful pageantry,
The bridal sorrow of the sea and sky
Paints all the hills with presage of the years,
With doom of strife to come and plash of tears.

IN MEMORIAM—W. H. JOHNSTON, V.C. KILLED IN ACTION, 7-vi-15.

Very tall beside his grave the Flemish poplars grow, Bearing the noble heart to Heaven, that rests in peace below, The shrieking shell his requiem, the guns his funeral hymn, A fitting harmony of death for us, whose eyes are dim.

He died that England live again, more glorious in his loss, He breathes no more, but England shines resplendent from the Cross,

The Cross that loomed on Calvary amid the encircling gloom, The Cross that showed his gallant life, the Cross that marks his tomb.

And we that love him may not stand beside his hasty grave;
We only know that all he had he very gladly gave
To England: we that mourn him thus may still be glad
to know

We gave our best to England—we that loved him so.

LILIES OF THE FIELD.

The gold that ye deck your women with, as they dance in a blaze of light,

Is red, red gold, yea, red with the old, old blood of a byegone fight.

The pearls that circle you snow-white neck, as she bends to a whispered word,

In the deep of the sea where the doom of three, ere their nacreous home was stirred.

The ruby that glows on a snowy breast, with a flaming heart below,

Was the death of a prince in days long since, where Burman breezes blow.

The eye of an idol in Mexico in the days when Cortez fought,
That emerald green in its sheen was seen—with the life of a
friend was bought.

The diamond that gleams on your golden hair, once shone on the dusky brow

Of an Indian bride, and a thousand died, that you might wear it now.

The shimmering dress of embroidered silk was woven in far Cathay,

In the glimmering light of a squalid night by a maid who was blind next day.

The waving plume on a smiling head goes gaily by to the band, But that egret plume was a hunter's doom in a fever-stricken land.

A FALSE VILANELLE.

I gathered roses at the dawn
To deck fair Chloe's golden hair,
I brought them to her in the morn
And begged that she would set them there.

She stood at gaze like timorous fawn, A tear was in that limpid stare,— I gathered roses at the dawn.

Her eyes were set with pearl-drops rare,—
I thought that jewels should be borne,
To deck fair Chloe's golden hair.

My heart within my breast was torn,
Whenas I thought she would not wear
Those roses gathered at the dawn.

For I had sought the morning air
And searched the river's dewy lawn
To deck fair Chloe's golden hair.

I turned away alone to mourn, But heard a whisper rich and rare, "You culled me roses at the dawn!

Ah me, ah happy one to fare

Forth to greet the breaking dawn
To deck your Chloe's golden hair.

Ah happy me, I too this morn
For Strephon gathered violets rare,
He gathered roses at the dawn
To deck his Chloe's golden hair."

THE SONG OF THE VIKING.

Then Sigurd took the passing harp and sweetly struck the shimmering strings:

"Some sing of when the world was new, the utter ordering of things,

And some have asked what the world will be, when time is waxen old,

Or how the end of all will come when the heart of man is cold. While some have praised a maiden's charms and sung her golden hair,

Her dainty feet, her shapely arms, bedecked with jewels rare. And some have sung the ruby wine, long hid from human eyes, And maudlin quaff the brimming bowl, the while a nation dies. Ah, these are such as sit at home, with women and with wine Or dusty tomes within their homes amid the scented pine.

But I am sprung of ancient line, aye, even of the Gods,
And shall I toil behind the plough to till the frost-bound clods?
Or shall I play at love with girls and dally hours away,
With throbbing heart and fiery brain and lustful for the fray?
Or shall I pore o'er ancient books, the while the sun is bright,
And winds are whispering from the sea the tale of many a
fight?

And shall I hang upon the wall the axe that none can wield But I, my sword, my wingéd helm, my never-sullied shield? Ye Gods, forfend that ever I should hap on such a day, Nay, better death, if my last breath Valkyries waft away!"

TRIOLET.

I called you unkind,—
I take back the word,
I was out of mind
To call you unkind,
As no one could find
One to kindness more stirred,
I called you unkind?
Nay, I take back the word.

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THE DOUBTING KING.

Open stands the doorway, Brightly gleams the fire, Dark the night without is, Dark in wood and byre.

In there flits a sparrow,
Flying to the spark,
Soon it goeth forth again
To the unknown dark.

Life is like the sparrow,
Into light we're born,
Live our joys and sorrows,
Then of breath we're shorn.

Coming from the darkness

To the dark we go,

Whither, whence, unknowing—

God has ordered so.

BALLAD.

"Though poison lurk in the stew-pot, And death stalk gaunt at the gate, Though a thousand foes forbid me, Yet I will front my fate: Though the walls be high as Heaven, And the moat be deep as Hell, Though Satan's hosts constrain me, Yet I will quit me well! My love is girt with iron? Locked with the triple key? Her father's guards around her? Yet I will set her free! Her father's guards will hold me? I reck not what they do! My soul is steel with passion And I will win me through." "But hold, thy horse will weary, And theirs are Sleipner's breed "-"Though double burden bearing, Yet love will fire my steed."

And so they could not stay him But wished him all god-speed, And forth he fared him fearless To face that fearful deed. He came to Rooma's castle And swam that ghastly water, He scaled the circle perilous, That girt the sea-thief's daughter. Though two score men denied him, And sought to bar his way, His battle-axe was set to hand, He broke the dead array. He passed the inner ramparts, He entered to the keep, He trod the passage softly For fear his love should sleep. Then wide he flung the portal,-Unstirred by war's alarms. There his true love found he, Wrapt in another's arms.

LOVE AND HATE.

Before the Dawn of Time, both Love and Hate, Did move alone in Chaos vast profound, Nor was there sun or moon or stars above To light the horror of that awful dark. Thus through the zons of Untime they passed, Seeking in vain, where they might find a rest, Nor knew each other. Then the Lord of all Sent forth His word, and darkness brought forth light And sea and sky and earth and beast, till Man Was born, and sinned. Then Love and Hate did meet; Love, fair of face, straight as a tree and tall, Breathing forth radiance so the very earth Blossomed with gladness, where he set his feet; The beasts stood by in mild amaze, the trees Rustled the melody, the birds forebore To sing for rapture; Hate stood gaunt and grim, Ghastly, ill-visaged, bent and twisted frame; Where'er he walked, the earth welled forth in blood, The birds dropped dead, withered the flowers, the stream Grew dark and turbid ' neath his baleful glance. Aghast, Love spake, "O Fiend, what do ye here, Fouling the glory of this paradise? Get thee far hence, for know that Love alone Shall rule supreme in this fair world of ours! Love, only Love, can guide its course aright, That Man may live and thus regain his soul." Then answered Hate "Ye fool, more strong than Love Is Hate; 'tis Hate alone can teach below Man the rude earth to quell, the savage beast— In Paradise once tame, by sin made fierce "— Into subjection bring." But Love spake forth "Not so! By Love alone shall Man rule earth." Then answered Hate, with lowering visage grim, "This Man was once in God's own image made, Yet sinned and fell; I am his punishment. To me is given power over Life To render hard his pathway to the great Eternity." "So be it," answered Love, "God knoweth best and so thou walkest here. Yet at the end Love conquers, and no Hell Shall hold thee, ever doomed to pass alone Through all the trackless horror of all Time."

VALLETTA.

Stately thy walls and proud thy towers rise, A clear-cut frieze against the sunset skies: Valletta Humilissima, to thee I raise this hymn of halting poesy.

Memories of noble knights, of many a deed Of arms, of captive Turk, and Christian freed, Girdle thy towers and laurel-crown thy walls, Gilded with glory where the sunlight falls.

Set is the sun, the sky turns cold and grey, Too soon, too soon, there falls the close of day; Gone too Thy glory, a memory lingers yet, A rosy halo though thy sun be set.

CITTA VECCHIA.

Ruby and opal and sapphire
Set in a lowering frame
Of the clouds of an autumn evening
Ablaze in a sky of flame,
A wondrous clear-cut cameo
Of tower and church and wall,
Behind thee the sun in passion
Droopeth his brazen ball.

Thine a share of the glory,
O Citta Vecchia fair,
Of that Unconquered City,
That the Othman might could dare.
"Jewel most precious," one called thee,
"Set in his world-wide crown"
While yet unknown to history,
As yet unwed to renown.

Tyre and Greece and Carthage,
Rome and Barbarian Hordes,
Byzantine Arab and Norman
Sicilian have been thy lords.
Yet was thy destiny steadfast,
Home of the Priestly Knight,
Thou hast won thy guerdon of honour.
And keepest thy scutcheon bright.

THE CRYPT OF ST. JOHN'S.

- "Liest thou quiet in this fane, Sir Knight, Far from thy kin, beneath an alien sun?"
- "My soul is steeped in utter bitterness, Knowing the Holy City still unwon."
- "Ever went forward to the fiercest fray, Thy sable stork, imbrued on argent shield."
- "Ever I strove to glorify the Cross, Smiting Mahound on many a stricken field."
- "Alone thou stood'st of England's stalwart sons, Guarding her honour in that mighty band."
- "No country know the Knights Hospitaller, No King but God, Zion their only land."
- "But yet bethink thee once again, Sir Knight, Thy country ruleth where the suns ne'er set.
- "I have no land, the Cross my only flag, And Moslems rule King David's City yet."
- "Back from the heart of Europe have we thrust The Turk, that ancient enemy of thine."
- "Can I rest quiet, while the Infidel Befouls the Holy Fane of Constantine."
- "Nay stay thine anger, for thy erstwhile land Preacheth the Gospel of the Prince of Peace; Many the teachers to benighted lands, Waiting the time when every war shall cease. Sleep on, good Knight, and haply thou may'st find Some little peace amidst thy hopeless woe,—Deep in the soil of many a pagan heart Thy kinsmen still the seed of Gospel sow,"

THE MINERS.

Full need have ye of the warrior's meed, Though ye have no sword to wield, To whom in the depths of the fearsome pit Doth the earth of its richness yield.

Yours is the fount to which England looks For the stream of her vital gold, Whence flows the tide of her empire vast And her power o'er men untold.

Yours is the power that drives the wheels In this riotous world o'erhead, Yours is the force that guides the ships O'er the stormy ocean bed.

Down to the heart of the tropical seas, Aye, up to the ice-bound North, Driven by ye our argosies fly And our ships of war go forth.

Yours not the death in the joy of the fight In the glorious cavalry charge, But twice a hundred feet below, Ye labour at Lethe's marge.

Far from the carnage and reeking strife, Untouched by the lust of war, Ever with pain for us ye toil, Down at the earth's dark core.

THE STAR.

I wandered through a deep and purple gloom, and ever the gloom grew deeper, ever the purple was shot with black. Thus I stood bewildered not knowing whither to turn my weary footsteps, when suddenly there arose on every side twinkling lights, as if to guide my feet aright; but when I turned to follow, lo, they were but phantasies and dreams, and the night of my ignorance was exceeding dark.

Suddenly through the darkness there shone a Mystic Star, not dragging herself wearily from Ocean's arms, as Hespers, Harbinger of Even, but springing to the Heavens in full splendour, potent, lovely, all-powerful, and the subtle sweetness of her radiance entwined itself about my very soul.

Casting all aside, I followed and all was clear before me. Mountains were as nought before me, and the oceans but as rivulets. While I thus sought her blindly, behold, she vanished, leaving but a wondrous glow across the lowering dark.

Then stood I still, torn with anguish and dismay, and was minded to slay myself in the trammels of my grief, when I heard a voice of dulcet sweetness saying:

"Fear not; not for evil, of a surety, but for all good, has the Star of Infinite Purity shone athwart thy life; haply thou mayst even yet attain to her, but this I know not; yet even this I do know; the Star, though unseen, will guide thy course aright. And, moreover, even if thou wert racked with the uttermost pains of Hell, yet would her memory be wrapped about thy very heart and sustain thee. Be of Good Cheer."