

Classic Poetry Series

**Robert Fuller Murray**  
**- poems -**

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## Robert Fuller Murray(1863 - 1894)

Robert Fuller Murray was born on December 26, 1863, in Roxbury, Massachusetts, to John and Emmeline Murray. In 1869, his parents separated, and John took his young son to Kelso, England, and then to York. Robert was educated at grammar schools first in Ilminster, and later in Crewkerne. Murray attended the University of St. Andrews, where he succeeded in the topic of English moreso than in classical Greek, and received a B.A. in 1881. Due to a lack of other opportunities, Murray became a research assistant to Professor John M. D. Meiklejohn in 1886, and published poetry in several popular journals. He had a brief career in journalism in Edinburgh in mid 1889, and in 1890 returned to St. Andrews. By this time, Murray was dealing with consumption. In 1891, he paid a brief visit to Egypt, and saw publication of *The Scarlet Gown*. Not long after this, Murray's health continued to deteriorate, bring upon his death in 1894 in St. Andrews. His second volume of poems, *Robert F. Murray: his Poems*, was published later that year, through his friend Andrew Lang. In 1909, the St. Andrews Students Representative Council published a second edition of *The Scarlet Gown*.

# A Ballad Of Refreshment

The lady stood at the station bar,  
(Three currants in a bun)  
And oh she was proud, as ladies are.  
(And the bun was baked a week ago.)

For a weekly wage she was standing there,  
(Three currants in a bun)  
With a prominent bust and light gold hair.  
(And the bun was baked a week ago.)

The express came in at half-past two,  
(Three currants in a bun)  
And there lighted a man in the navy blue.  
(And the bun was baked a week ago.)

A stout sea-captain he was, I ween.  
(Three currants in a bun)  
Much travel had made him very keen.  
(And the bun was baked a week ago.)

A sober man and steady was he.  
(Three currants in a bun)  
He called not for brandy, but called for tea.  
(And the bun was baked a week ago.)

'Now something to eat, for the train is late.'  
(Three currants in a bun)  
She brought him a bun on a greasy plate.  
(And the bun was baked a week ago.)

He left the bun, and he left the tea,  
(Three currants in a bun)  
She charged him a shilling and let him be,  
And the train went on at a quarter to three.  
(And the bun is old and weary.)

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Ballad Of The Town Water

It is the Police Commissioners,  
All on a winter's day;  
And they to prove the town water  
Have set themselves away.

They went to the north, they went to the south,  
And into the west went they,  
Till they found a civil, civil engineer,  
And unto him did say:

'Now tell to us, thou civil engineer,  
If this be fit to drink.'  
And they showed him a cup of the town water,  
Which was as black as ink.

He took three sips of the town water,  
And black in the face was he;  
And they turned them back and fled away,  
Amazed that this should be.

And he has written a broad letter  
And sealed it with a ring,  
And the letter saith that the town water  
Is not a goodly thing.

And they have met, and the Bailies all,  
And eke the Councillors,  
And they have ta'en the broad letter  
And read it within the doors.

And there has fallen a great quarrel,  
And a striving within the doors,  
And quarrelsome words have the Bailies said,  
And eke the Councillors.

And one saith, 'We will have other water,'  
And another saith, 'But nay;'  
And none may tell what the end shall be,  
Alack and well-a-day!

I love the inoffensive frog,  
'A little child, a limber elf,'  
With health and spirits all agog,  
He does the long jump in a bog  
Or teaches men to swim and dive.  
If he should be cut up alive,  
Should I not be cut up myself?

So I intend to be straightway  
An Anti-Vivisectionist;  
I'll read Miss Cobbe five hours a day  
And watch the little frogs at play,  
With no desire to see their hearts  
At work, or other inward parts,  
If other inward parts exist.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Birthday Gift

No gift I bring but worship, and the love  
Which all must bear to lovely souls and pure,  
Those lights, that, when all else is dark, endure;  
Stars in the night, to lift our eyes above;

To lift our eyes and hearts, and make us move  
Less doubtful, though our journey be obscure,  
Less fearful of its ending, being sure  
That they watch over us, where'er we rove.

And though my gift itself have little worth,  
Yet worth it gains from her to whom `tis given,  
As a weak flower gets colour from the sun.  
Or rather, as when angels walk the earth,  
All things they look on take the look of heaven -  
For of those blessed angels thou art one.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Bunch Of Triolets

You like the trifling triolet:  
Well, here are three or four.  
Unless your likings I forget,  
You like the trifling triolet.  
Against my conscience I abet  
A taste which I deplore;  
You like the trifling triolet:  
Well, here are three or four.

Have you ever met with a pretty girl  
Walking along the street,  
With a nice new dress and her hair in curl?  
Have you ever met with a pretty girl,  
When her hat blew off and the wind with a whirl  
Wafted it right to your feet?  
Have you ever met with a pretty girl  
Walking along the street?

I ran into a lady's arms,  
Turning a corner yesterday.  
To my confusion, her alarms,  
I ran into a lady's arms.  
So close a vision of her charms  
Left me without a word to say.  
I ran into a lady's arms,  
Turning a corner yesterday.

How many maids you love,  
How many maids love you!  
Your conscious blushes prove  
How many maids you love.  
Each trusts you like a dove,  
But would she, if she knew  
How many maids you love,  
How many maids love you?

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Christmas Fancy

Early on Christmas Day,  
Love, as awake I lay,  
And heard the Christmas bells ring sweet and clearly,  
My heart stole through the gloom  
Into your silent room,  
And whispered to your heart, `I love you dearly.'

There, in the dark profound,  
Your heart was sleeping sound,  
And dreaming some fair dream of summer weather.  
At my heart's word it woke,  
And, ere the morning broke,  
They sang a Christmas carol both together.

Glory to God on high!  
Stars of the morning sky,  
Sing as ye sang upon the first creation,  
When all the Sons of God  
Shouted for joy abroad,  
And earth was laid upon a sure foundation.

Glory to God again!  
Peace and goodwill to men,  
And kindly feeling all the wide world over,  
Where friends with joy and mirth  
Meet round the Christmas hearth,  
Or dreams of home the solitary rover.

Glory to God! True hearts,  
Lo, now the dark departs,  
And morning on the snow-clad hills grows grey.  
Oh, may love's dawning light  
Kindled from loveless night,  
Shine more and more unto the perfect day!

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Coincidence

Every critic in the town  
Runs the minor poet down;  
Every critic--don't you know it?  
Is himself a minor poet.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A College Career

## I

When one is young and eager,  
A bejant and a boy,  
Though his moustache be meagre,  
That cannot mar his joy  
When at the Competition  
He takes a fair position,  
And feels he has a mission,  
A talent to employ.

With pride he goes each morning  
Clad in a scarlet gown,  
A cap his head adorning  
(Both bought of Mr. Brown);  
He hears the harsh bell jangle,  
And enters the quadrangle,  
The classic tongues to mangle  
And make the ancients frown.

He goes not forth at even,  
He burns the midnight oil,  
He feels that all his heaven  
Depends on ceaseless toil;  
Across his exercises  
A dream of many prizes  
Before his spirit rises,  
And makes his raw blood boil.

## II

Though he be green as grass is,  
And fresh as new-mown hay  
Before the first year passes  
His verdure fades away.  
His hopes now faintly glimmer,  
Grow dim and ever dimmer,  
And with a parting shimmer  
Melt into 'common day.'

He cares no more for Liddell  
Or Scott; and Smith, and White,  
And Lewis, Short, and Riddle  
Are 'emptied of delight.'  
Todhunter and Colenso  
(Alas, that friendships end so!)  
He curses in extenso  
Through morning, noon, and night.

No more with patient labour  
The midnight oil he burns,  
But unto some near neighbour  
His fair young face he turns,  
To share the harmless tattle  
Which bejants love to prattle,  
As wise as infant's rattle  
Or talk of coots and hems.

At midnight round the city  
He carols wild and free  
Some sweet unmeaning ditty  
In many a changing key;  
And each succeeding verse is  
Commingled with the curses  
Of those whose sleep disperses  
Like sal volatile.

He shaves and takes his toddy  
Like any fourth year man,  
And clothes his growing body  
After another plan  
Than that which once delighted  
When, in the days benighted,  
Like some wild thing excited  
About the fields he ran.

### III

A sweet life and an idle  
He lives from year to year,  
Unknowing bit or bridle

(There are no proctors here),  
Free as the flying swallow  
Which Ida's Prince would follow  
If but his bones were hollow,  
Until the end draws near.

Then comes a Dies Irae,  
When full of misery  
And torments worse than fiery  
He crams for his degree;  
And hitherto unvexed books,  
Dry lectures, abstracts, text-books,  
Perplexing and perplexed books,  
Make life seem vanity.

#### IV

Before admiring sister  
And mother, see, he stands,  
Made Artium Magister  
With laying on of hands.  
He gives his books to others  
(Perchance his younger brothers),  
And free from all such bothers  
Goes out into all lands.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Criticism Of Critics

How often have the critics, trained  
To look upon the sky  
Through telescopes securely chained,  
Forgot the naked eye.

Within the compass of their glass  
Each smallest star they knew,  
And not a meteor could pass  
But they were looking through.

When a new planet shed its rays  
Beyond their field of vision,  
And simple folk ran out to gaze,  
They laughed in high derision.

They railed upon the senseless throng  
Who cheered the brave new light.  
And yet the learned men were wrong,  
The simple folk were right.

Robert Fuller Murray

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Robert Fuller Murray

# A December Day

Blue, blue is the sea to-day,  
Warmly the light  
Sleeps on St. Andrews Bay --  
Blue, fringed with white.

That's no December sky!  
Surely 'tis June  
Holds now her state on high,  
Queen of the noon.

Only the tree-tops bare  
Crowning the hill,  
Clear-cut in perfect air,  
Warn us that still

Winter, the aged chief,  
Mighty in power,  
Exiles the tender leaf,  
Exiles the flower.

Is there a heart to-day,  
A heart that grieves  
For flowers that fade away,  
For fallen leaves?

Oh, not in leaves or flowers  
Endures the charm  
That clothes those naked towers  
With love-light warm.

O dear St. Andrews Bay,  
Winter or Spring  
Gives not nor takes away  
Memories that cling

All round thy girdling reefs,  
That walk thy shore,  
Memories of joys and griefs  
Ours evermore.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Late Good Night

My lamp is out, my task is done,  
And up the stair with lingering feet  
I climb. The staircase clock strikes one.  
Good night, my love! good night, my sweet!

My solitary room I gain.  
A single star makes incomplete  
The blackness of the window pane.  
Good night, my love! good night, my sweet!

Dim and more dim its sparkle grows,  
And ere my head the pillows meet,  
My lids are fain themselves to close.  
Good night, my love! good night, my sweet!

My lips no other words can say,  
But still they murmur and repeat  
To you, who slumber far away,  
Good night, my love! good night, my sweet!

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Lost Opportunity

One dark, dark night--it was long ago,  
The air was heavy and still and warm -  
It fell to me and a man I know,  
To see two girls to their father's farm.

There was little seeing, that I recall:  
We seemed to grope in a cave profound.  
They might have come by a painful fall,  
Had we not helped them over the ground.

The girls were sisters. Both were fair,  
But mine was the fairer (so I say).  
The dark soon severed us, pair from pair,  
And not long after we lost our way.

We wandered over the country-side,  
And we frightened most of the sheep about,  
And I do not think that we greatly tried,  
Having lost our way, to find it out.

The night being fine, it was not worth while.  
We strayed through furrow and corn and grass  
We met with many a fence and stile,  
And a quickset hedge, which we failed to pass.

At last we came on a road she knew;  
She said we were near her father's place.  
I heard the steps of the other two,  
And my heart stood still for a moment's space.

Then I pleaded, `Give me a good-night kiss.'  
I have learned, but I did not know in time,  
The fruits that hang on the tree of bliss  
Are not for cravens who will not climb.

We met all four by the farmyard gate,  
We parted laughing, with half a sigh,  
And home we went, at a quicker rate,  
A shorter journey, my friend and I.

When we reached the house, it was late enough,  
And many impertinent things were said,  
Of time and distance, and such dull stuff,  
But we said little, and went to bed.

We went to bed, but one at least  
Went not to sleep till the black turned grey,  
And the sun rose up, and the light increased,  
And the birds awoke to a summer day.

And sometimes now, when the nights are mild,  
And the moon is away, and no stars shine,  
I wander out, and I go half-wild,  
To think of the kiss which was not mine.

Let great minds laugh at a grief so small,  
Let small minds laugh at a fool so great.  
Kind maidens, pity me, one and all.  
Shy youths, take warning by this my fate.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Lover's Confession

When people tell me they have loved  
But once in youth,  
I wonder, are they always moved  
To speak the truth?

Not that they wilfully deceive:  
They fondly cherish  
A constancy which they would grieve  
To think might perish.

They cherish it until they think  
'Twas always theirs.  
So, if the truth they sometimes blink,  
'Tis unawares.

Yet unawares, I must profess,  
They do deceive  
Themselves, and those who questionless  
Their tale believe.

For I have loved, I freely own,  
A score of times,  
And woven, out of love alone,  
A hundred rhymes.

Boys will be fickle. Yet, when all  
Is said and done,  
I was not one whom you could call  
A flirt--not one

Of those who into three or four  
Their hearts divide.  
My queens came singly to the door,  
Not side by side.

Each, while she reigned, possessed alone  
My spirit loyal,  
Then left an undisputed throne  
To one more royal,

To one more fair in form and face  
Sweeter and stronger,  
Who filled the throne with truer grace,  
And filled it longer.

So, love by love, they came and passed,  
These loves of mine,  
And each one brighter than the last  
Their lights did shine.

Until--but am I not too free,  
Most courteous stranger,  
With secrets which belong to me?  
There is a danger.

Until, I say, the perfect love,  
The last, the best,  
Like flame descending from above,  
Kindled my breast,

Kindled my breast like ardent flame,  
With quenchless glow.  
I knew not love until it came,  
But now I know.

You smile. The twenty loves before  
Were each in turn,  
You say, the final flame that o'er  
My soul should burn.

Smile on, my friend. I will not say  
You have no reason;  
But if the love I feel to-day  
Depart, `tis treason!

If this depart, not once again  
Will I on paper  
Declare the loves that waste and wane,  
Like some poor taper.

No, no! This flame, I cannot doubt,

Despite your laughter,  
Will burn till Death shall put it out,  
And may be after.

Robert Fuller Murray

## A May-Day Madrigal

The sun shines fair on Tweedside, the river flowing bright,  
Your heart is full of pleasure, your eyes are full of light,  
Your cheeks are like the morning, your pearls are like the dew,  
Or morning and her dew-drops are like your pearls and you.

Because you are a princess, a princess of the land,  
You will not turn your lightsome eyes a moment where I stand,  
A poor unnoticed poet, a-making of his rhymes;  
But I have found a mistress, more fair a thousand times.

`Tis May, the elfish maiden, the daughter of the Spring,  
Upon whose birthday morning the birds delight to sing.  
They would not sing one note for you, if you should so command,  
Although you are a princess, a princess of the land.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A New Song To An Old Tune - From Victor Hugo

If a pleasant lawn there grow  
By the showers caressed,  
Where in all the seasons blow  
Flowers gaily dressed,  
Where by handfuls one may win  
Lilies, woodbine, jessamine,  
I will make a path therein  
For thy feet to rest.

If there live in honour's sway  
An all-loving breast  
Whose devotion cannot stray,  
Never gloom-oppressed -  
If this noble breast still wake  
For a worthy motive's sake,  
There a pillow I will make  
For thy head to rest.

If there be a dream of love,  
Dream that God has blest,  
Yielding daily treasure-trove  
Of delightful zest,  
With the scent of roses filled,  
With the soul's communion thrilled,  
There, oh! there a nest I'll build  
For thy heart to rest.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Presentiment

It seems a little word to say -  
FAREWELL--but may it not, when said,  
Be like the kiss we give the dead,  
Before they pass the doors for aye?

Who knows if, on some after day,  
Your lips shall utter in its stead  
A welcome, and the broken thread  
Be joined again, the selfsame way?

The word is said, I turn to go,  
But on the threshold seem to hear  
A sound as of a passing bell,  
Tolling monotonous and slow,  
Which strikes despair upon my ear,  
And says it is a last farewell.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Song Of Truce

Till the tread of marching feet  
Through the quiet grass-grown street  
Of the little town shall come,  
Soldier, rest awhile at home.

While the banners idly hang,  
While the bugles do not clang,  
While is hushed the clamorous drum,  
Soldier, rest awhile at home.

In the breathing-time of Death,  
While the sword is in its sheath,  
While the cannon's mouth is dumb,  
Soldier, rest awhile at home.

Not too long the rest shall be.  
Soon enough, to Death and thee,  
The assembly call shall come.  
Soldier, rest awhile at home.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Street Corner

Here, where the thoroughfares meet at an angle  
Of ninety degrees (this angle is right),  
You may hear the loafers that jest and wrangle  
Through the sun-lit day and the lamp-lit night;  
Though day be dreary and night be wet,  
You will find a ceaseless concourse met;  
Their laughter resounds and their Fife tongues jangle,  
And now and again their Fife fists fight.

Often here the voice of the crier  
Heralds a sale in the City Hall,  
And slowly but surely drawing nigher  
Is heard the baker's bugle call.  
The baker halts where the two ways meet,  
And the blast, though loud, is far from sweet  
That with breath of bellows and heart of fire  
He blows, till the echoes leap from the wall.

And on Saturday night just after eleven,  
When the taverns have closed a moment ago,  
The vocal efforts of six or seven  
Make the corner a place of woe.  
For the time is fitful, the notes are queer,  
And it sounds to him who dwelleth near  
Like the wailing for cats in a feline heaven  
By orphan cats who are left below.

Wherefore, O Bejant, Son of the Morning,  
Fresh as a daisy dipt in the dew,  
Hearken to me and receive my warning:  
Though rents be heavy, and bunks be few  
And most of them troubled with rat or mouse,  
Never take rooms in a corner house;  
Or sackcloth and ashes and sad self-scorning  
Shall be for a portion unto you.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Summer Morning

Never was sun so bright before,  
No matin of the lark so sweet,  
No grass so green beneath my feet,  
Nor with such dewdrops jewelled o'er.

I stand with thee outside the door,  
The air not yet is close with heat,  
And far across the yellowing wheat  
The waves are breaking on the shore.

A lovely day! Yet many such,  
Each like to each, this month have passed,  
And none did so supremely shine.  
One thing they lacked: the perfect touch  
Of thee--and thou art come at last,  
And half this loveliness is thine.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Swinburnian Interlude

Short space shall be hereafter  
Ere April brings the hour  
Of weeping and of laughter,  
Of sunshine and of shower,  
Of groaning and of gladness,  
Of singing and of sadness,  
Of melody and madness,  
Of all sweet things and sour.

Sweet to the blithe bucolic  
Who knows nor cribs nor crams,  
Who sees the frisky frolic  
Of lanky little lambs;  
But sour beyond expression  
To one in deep depression  
Who sees the closing session  
And imminent exams.

He cannot hear the singing  
Of birds upon the bents,  
Nor watch the wildflowers springing,  
Nor smell the April scents.  
He gathers grief with grinding,  
Foul food of sorrow finding  
In books of dreary binding  
And drearier contents.

One hope alone sustains him,  
And no more hopes beside,  
One trust alone restrains him  
From shocking suicide;  
He will not play nor palter  
With hemlock or with halter,  
He will not fear nor falter,  
Whatever chance betide.

He knows examinations  
Like all things else have ends,  
And then come vast vacations

And visits to his friends,  
And youth with pleasure yoking,  
And joyfulness and joking,  
And smilingness and smoking,  
For grief to make amends.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Tennyson Fragment

So in the village inn the poet dwelt.  
His honey-dew was gone; only the pouch,  
His cousin's work, her empty labour, left.  
But still he sniffed it, still a fragrance clung  
And lingered all about the broidered flowers.  
Then came his landlord, saying in broad Scotch,  
'Smoke plug, mon,' whom he looked at doubtfully.  
Then came the grocer saying, 'Hae some twist  
At tippence,' whom he answered with a qualm.  
But when they left him to himself again,  
Twist, like a fiend's breath from a distant room  
Diffusing through the passage, crept; the smell  
Deepening had power upon him, and he mixt  
His fancies with the billow-lifted bay  
Of Biscay, and the rollings of a ship.

And on that night he made a little song,  
And called his song 'The Song of Twist and Plug,'  
And sang it; scarcely could he make or sing.

'Rank is black plug, though smoked in wind and rain;  
And rank is twist, which gives no end of pain;  
I know not which is ranker, no, not I.

'Plug, art thou rank? then milder twist must be;  
Plug, thou art milder: rank is twist to me.  
O twist, if plug be milder, let me buy.

'Rank twist, that seems to make me fade away,  
Rank plug, that navvies smoke in loveless clay,  
I know not which is ranker, no, not I.

'I fain would purchase flake, if that could be;  
I needs must purchase plug, ah, woe is me!  
Plug and a cutty, a cutty, let me buy.

Robert Fuller Murray

# A Wasted Day

Another day let slip! Its hours have run,  
Its golden hours, with prodigal excess,  
All run to waste. A day of life the less;  
Of many wasted days, alas, but one!

Through my west window streams the setting sun.  
I kneel within my chamber, and confess  
My sin and sorrow, filled with vain distress,  
In place of honest joy for work well done.

At noon I passed some labourers in a field.  
The sweat ran down upon each sunburnt face,  
Which shone like copper in the ardent glow.  
And one looked up, with envy unconcealed,  
Beholding my cool cheeks and listless pace,  
Yet he was happier, though he did not know.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Adventure Of A Poet

As I was walking down the street  
A week ago,  
Near Henderson's I chanced to meet  
A man I know.

His name is Alexander Bell,  
His home, Dundee;  
I do not know him quite so well  
As he knows me.

He gave my hand a hearty shake,  
Discussed the weather,  
And then proposed that we should take  
A stroll together.

Down College Street we took our way,  
And there we met  
The beautiful Miss Mary Gray,  
That arch coquette,  
Who stole last spring my heart away  
And has it yet.

That smile with which my bow she greets,  
Would it were fonder!  
Or else less fond-since she its sweets  
On all must squander.

Thus, when I meet her in the streets,  
I sadly ponder,  
And after her, as she retreats,  
My thoughts will wander.

And so I listened with an air  
Of inattention,  
While Bell described a folding-chair  
Of his invention.

And when we reached the Swilcan Burn,  
'It looks like rain,'

Said I, 'and we had better turn.'  
'Twas all in vain,

For Bell was weather-wise, and knew  
The signs aerial;  
He bade me note the strip of blue  
Above the Imperial,

Also another patch of sky,  
South-west by south,  
Which meant that we might journey dry  
To Eden's mouth.

He was a man with information  
On many topics:  
He talked about the exploration  
Of Poles and Tropics,

The scene in Parliament last night,  
Sir William's letter;  
'And do you like the electric light,  
Or gas-lamps better?'

The strike among the dust-heap pickers  
He said was over;  
And had I read about the liquors  
Just seized at Dover?

Or the unhappy printer lad  
At Rothesay drowned?  
Or the Italian ironclad  
That ran aground ?

He told me stories (lately come)  
Of town society,  
Some slightly tinged with truth, and some  
With impropriety.

He spoke of duelling in France,  
Then lightly glanced at  
Mrs. Mackenzie's monster dance,  
Which he had danced at.

So he ran on, till by-and-by  
A silence came,  
For which I greatly fear that I  
Was most to blame.

Then neither of us spoke a word  
For quite a minute  
When presently a thought occurred  
With promise in it.

'How did you like the Shakespeare play  
The students read  
By this, the Eden like a bay  
Before us spread.

Near Eden many softer plots  
Of sand there be;  
Our feet, like Pharaoh's chariots,  
Drove heavily.

And ere an answer I could frame,  
He said that Irving  
Of his extraordinary fame  
Was undeserving,

And for his part he thought more highly  
Of Ellen Terry;  
Although he knew a girl named Riley  
At Broughty Ferry,  
Who might be, if she only chose,  
As great a star,  
She had a part in the tableaux  
At the bazaar.

If I had said but little yet,  
I now said less,  
And smoked a home-made cigarette  
In mute distress.

The smoke into his face was blown  
By the wind's action,

And this afforded me, I own,  
Some satisfaction;

But still his tongue received no check  
Till, coming home,  
We stood beside the ancient wreck  
And watched the foam

Wash in among the timbers, now  
Sunk deep in sand,  
Though I can well remember how  
I used to stand

On windy days and hold my hat,  
And idly turn  
To read 'Lovise, Frederikstad'  
Upon her stern.

Her stern long since was buried quite,  
And soon no trace  
The absorbing sand will leave in sight  
To mark her place.

This reverie was not permitted  
To last too long.  
Bell's mind had left the stage, and flitted  
To fields of song.

And now he spoke of Marmion  
And Lewis Morris;  
The former he at school had done,  
Along with Horace.

His maiden aunts, no longer young,  
But learned ladies,  
Had lately sent him Songs Unsung,  
Epic of Hades,

Gycia, and Gwen. He thought them fine;  
Not like that Browning,  
Of whom he would not read a line,  
He told me, frowning.

Talking of Horace -- very clever  
Beyond a doubt,  
But what the Satires meant, he never  
Yet could make out.

I said I relished Satire Nine  
Of the First Book;  
But he had skipped to the divine  
Eliza Cook.

He took occasion to declare,  
In tones devoted,  
How much he loved her old Arm-chair,  
Which now he quoted.

And other poets he reviewed,  
Some two or three,  
Till, having touched on Thomas Hood,  
He turned to me.

'Have you been stringing any rhymes  
Of late?' he said.  
I could not lie, but several times  
I shook my head.

The last straw to the earth will bow  
The overloaded camel,  
And surely I resembled now  
That ill-used mammal.

See how a thankless world regards  
The gifted choir  
Of minstrels, singers, poets, bards,  
Who sweep the lyre.

This is the recompense we meet  
In our vocation.  
We bear the burden and the heat  
Of inspiration;

The beauties of the earth we sing

In glowing numbers,  
And to the 'reading public' bring  
Post-prandial slumbers ;

We save from Mammon's gross dominion  
These sordid times ....  
And all this, in the world's opinion,  
Is 'stringing rhymes.'

It is as if a man should say,  
In accents mild,  
'Have you been stringing beads to-day,  
My gentle child?'

(Yet even children fond of singing  
Will pay off scores,  
And I to-day at least am stringing  
Not beads but bores.)

And now the sands were left behind,  
The Club-house past.  
I wondered, Can I hope to find  
Escape at last,

Or must I take him home to tea,  
And bear his chatter  
Until the last train to Dundee  
Shall solve the matter?

But while I shuddered at the thought  
And planned resistance,  
My conquering Alexander caught  
Sight in the distance

Of two young ladies, one of whom  
Is his ambition;  
And so, with somewhat heightened bloom,  
He asked permission

To say good-bye to me and follow.  
I freely gave it,  
And wished him all success.

Apollo Sic me servavit.

Robert Fuller Murray

# After Many Days

The mist hangs round the College tower,  
The ghostly street  
Is silent at this midnight hour,  
Save for my feet.

With none to see, with none to hear,  
Downward I go  
To where, beside the rugged pier,  
The sea sings low.

It sings a tune well loved and known  
In days gone by,  
When often here, and not alone,  
I watched the sky.

That was a barren time at best,  
Its fruits were few;  
But fruits and flowers had keener zest  
And fresher hue.

Life has not since been wholly vain,  
And now I bear  
Of wisdom plucked from joy and pain  
Some slender share.

But, howsoever rich the store,  
I'd lay it down,  
To feel upon my back once more  
The old red gown.

Robert Fuller Murray

## After Waterloo

On the field of Waterloo we made Napoleon rue  
That ever out of Elba he decided for to come,  
For we finished him that day, and he had to run away,  
And yield himself to Maitland on the Billy-ruffium.

`Twas a stubborn fight, no doubt, and the fortune wheeled about,  
And the brave Mossoos kept coming most uncomfortable near,  
And says Wellington the hero, as his hopes went down to zero,  
'I wish to God that Blooker or the night was only here!'

But Blooker came at length, and we broke Napoleon's strength,  
And the flower of his army--that's the old Imperial Guard -  
They made a final sally, but they found they could not rally,  
And at last they broke and fled, after fighting bitter hard.

Now Napoleon he had thought, when a British ship he sought,  
And gave himself uncalled-for, in a manner, you might say,  
He'd be treated like a king with the best of every thing,  
And maybe have a palace for to live in every day.

He was treated very well, as became a noble swell,  
But we couldn't leave him loose, not in Europe anywhere,  
For we knew he would be making some gigantic undertaking,  
While the trustful British lion was reposing in his lair.

We tried him once before near the European shore,  
Having planted him in Elba, where he promised to remain,  
But when he saw his chance, why, he bolted off to France,  
And he made a lot of trouble--but it wouldn't do again.

Says the Prince to him, 'You know, far away you'll have to go,  
To a pleasant little island off the coast of Africay,  
Where they tell me that the view of the ocean deep and blue,  
Is remarkable extensive, and it's there you'll have to stay.'

So Napoleon wiped his eye, and he wished the Prince good-bye,  
And being stony-broke, made the best of it he could,  
And they kept him snugly pensioned, where his Royal Highness  
mentioned,

And Napoleon Boneyparty is provided for for good.

Now of that I don't complain, but I ask and ask in vain,  
Why me, a British soldier, as has lost a useful arm  
Through fighting of the foe, when the trumpets ceased to blow,  
Should be forced to feed the pigs on a little Surrey farm,

While him as fought with us, and created such a fuss,  
And in the whole of Europe did a mighty deal of harm,  
Should be kept upon a rock, like a precious fighting cock,  
And be found in beer and baccy, which would suit me to a charm?

Robert Fuller Murray

## Aien Aristeuein (Motto Of St. Andrews University)

Ever to be the best. To lead  
In whatsoever things are true;  
Not stand among the halting crew  
The faint of heart, the feeble-kneed,  
Who tarry for a certain sign  
To make them follow with the rest --  
Oh, let not their reproach be thine!  
But ever be the best.

For want of this aspiring soul,  
Great deeds on earth remain undone,  
But, sharpened by the sight of one,  
Many shall press toward the goal,  
Thou running foremost of the throng,  
The fire of striving in thy breast,  
Shalt win, although the race be long,  
And ever be the best.

And wilt thou question of the prize?  
'Tis not of silver or of gold,  
Nor in applauses manifold,  
But hidden in the heart it lies.  
To know that but for thee not one  
Had run the race or sought the quest,  
To know that thou hast ever done  
And ever been the best.

Robert Fuller Murray

# An Afterthought

You found my life, a poor lame bird  
That had no heart to sing,  
You would not speak the magic word  
To give it voice and wing.

Yet sometimes, dreaming of that hour,  
I think, if you had known  
How much my life was in your power,  
It might have sung and flown.

Robert Fuller Murray

# An Exile's Song

My soul is like a prisoned lark,  
That sings and dreams of liberty,  
The nights are long, the days are dark,  
Away from home, away from thee!

My only joy is in my dreams,  
When I thy loving face can see.  
How dreary the awakening seems,  
Away from home, away from thee!

At dawn I hasten to the shore,  
To gaze across the sparkling sea -  
The sea is bright to me no more,  
Which parts me from my home and thee.

At twilight, when the air grows chill,  
And cold and leaden is the sea,  
My tears like bitter dews distil,  
Away from home, away from thee.

I could not live, did I not know  
That thou art ever true to me,  
I could not bear a doubtful woe,  
Away from home, away from thee.

I could not live, did I not hear  
A voice that sings the day to be,  
When hitherward a ship shall steer,  
To bear me back to home and thee.

Oh, when at last that day shall break  
In sunshine on the dancing sea,  
It will be brighter for the sake  
Of my return to home and thee!

Robert Fuller Murray

# An Interview

I met him down upon the pier,  
His eyes were wild and sad,  
And something in them made me fear  
That he was going mad.

So, being of a prudent sort,  
I stood some distance off,  
And before speaking gave a short  
Conciliatory cough.

I then observed, 'What makes you look  
So singularly glum?'  
No notice of my words he took. --  
I said, 'Pray, are you dumb?'

'Oh no!' he said, 'I do not think  
My power of speech is lost,  
But when one's hopes are black as ink,  
Why, talking is a frost,

'You see, I'm in for Math. again,  
And certain to be ploughed.  
Please tell me where I could obtain  
An inexpensive shroud.'

I told him where such things are had,  
Well made, and not too dear;  
And, feeling really very sad,  
I left him on the pier.

Robert Fuller Murray

# An Invitation

Dear Ritchie, I am waiting for the signal word to fly,  
And tell me that the visit which has suffered such belating  
Is to be a thing of now, and no more of by-and-by.  
Dear Ritchie, I am waiting.

The sea is at its bluest, and the Spring is new creating  
The woods and dens we know of, and the fields rejoicing lie,  
And the air is soft as summer, and the hedge-birds all are mating.

The Links are full of larks' nests, and the larks possess the sky,  
Like a choir of happy spirits, melodiously debating,  
All is ready for your coming, dear Ritchie--yes, and I,  
Dear Ritchie, I am waiting.

Robert Fuller Murray

# An Orator's Complaint

How many the troubles that wait  
On mortals!—especially those  
Who endeavour in eloquent prose  
To expound their views, and orate.

Did you ever attempt to speak  
When you hadn't a word to say?  
Did you find that it wouldn't pay,  
And subside, feeling dreadfully weak?

Did you ever, when going ahead  
In a fervid defence of the Stage,  
Get checked in your noble rage  
By somehow losing your thread?

Did you ever rise to reply  
To a toast (say 'The Volunteers'),  
And evoke loud laughter and cheers,  
When you didn't exactly know why?

Did you ever wax witty, and when  
You had smashed an opponent quite small,  
Did he seem not to mind it at all,  
But get up and smash you again?

If any or all of these things  
Have happened to you (as to me),  
I think you'll be found to agree  
With yours truly, when sadly he sings:

'How many the troubles that wait  
On mortals!—especially those  
Who endeavour in eloquent prose  
To expound their views, and orate.'

Robert Fuller Murray

# Andrew M'crie

from the unpublished remains of Edgar Allan Poe

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a city by the sea,  
That a man there lived whom I happened to know  
By the name of Andrew M'Crie;  
And this man he slept in another room,  
But ground and had meals with me.

I was an ass and he was an ass,  
In this city by the sea;  
But we ground in a way which was more than a grind,  
I and Andrew M'Crie;  
In a way that the idle semis next door  
Declared was shameful to see.

And this was the reason that, one dark night,  
In this city by the sea,  
A stone flew in at the window, hitting  
The milk-jug and Andrew M'Crie.  
And once some low-bred tertians came,  
And bore him away from me,  
And shoved him into a private house  
Where the people were having tea.

Professors, not half so well up in their work,  
Went envying him and me—  
Yes!—that was the reason, I always thought  
(And Andrew agreed with me),  
Why they ploughed us both at the end of the year,  
Chilling and killing poor Andrew M'Crie.

But his ghost is more terrible far than the ghosts  
Of many more famous than he—  
Of many more gory than he—  
And neither visits to foreign coasts,  
Nor tonics, can ever set free  
Two well-known Profs from the haunting wraith  
Of the injured Andrew M'Crie.

For at night, as they dream, they frequently scream,  
'Have mercy, Mr. M'Crie!'  
And at morn they will rise with bloodshot eyes,  
And the very first thing they will see,  
When they dare to descend to their coffee and rolls,  
Sitting down by the scuttle, the scuttle of coals,  
With a volume of notes on its knee,  
Is the spectre of Andrew M'Crie.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Art's Discipline

Long since I came into the school of Art,  
A child in works, but not a child in heart.  
Slowly I learn, by her instruction mild,  
To be in works a man, in heart a child.

Robert Fuller Murray

# At A High Ceremony

Not the proudest damsel here  
Looks so well as doth my dear.  
All the borrowed light of dress  
Outshining not her loveliness,

A loveliness not born of art,  
But growing outwards from her heart,  
Illuminating all her face,  
And filling all her form with grace.

Said I, of dress the borrowed light  
Could rival not her beauty bright?  
Yet, looking round, `tis truth to tell,  
No damsel here is dressed so well.

Only in them the dress one sees,  
Because more greatly it doth please  
Than any other charm that's theirs,  
Than all their manners, all their airs.

But dress in her, although indeed  
It perfect be, we do not heed,  
Because the face, the form, the air  
Are all so gentle and so rare.

Robert Fuller Murray

## Below Her Window

Where she sleeps, no moonlight shines  
No pale beam unbidden creeps.  
Darkest shade the place enshrines  
Where she sleeps.

Like a diamond in the deeps  
Of the rich unopened mines  
There her lovely rest she keeps.

Though the jealous dark confines  
All her beauty, Love's heart leaps.  
His unerring thought divines  
Where she sleeps.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Cairnsmill Den

As I, with hopeless love o'erthrown,  
With love o'erthrown, with love o'erthrown,  
And this is truth I tell,  
As I, with hopeless love o'erthrown,  
Was sadly walking all alone,

I met my love one morning  
In Cairnsmill Den.  
One morning, one morning,  
One blue and blowy morning,  
I met my love one morning  
In Cairnsmill Den.

A dead bough broke within the wood  
Within the wood, within the wood,  
And this is truth I tell.  
A dead bough broke within the wood,  
And I looked up, and there she stood.

I asked what was it brought her there,  
What brought her there, what brought her there,  
And this is truth I tell.  
I asked what was it brought her there.  
Says she, `To pull the primrose fair.'

Says I, `Come, let me pull with you,  
Along with you, along with you,'  
And this is truth I tell.  
Says I, `Come let me pull with you,  
For one is not so good as two.'

But when at noon we climbed the hill,  
We climbed the hill, we climbed the hill,  
And this is truth I tell.  
But when at noon we climbed the hill,  
Her hands and mine were empty still.

And when we reached the top so high,  
The top so high, the top so high,

And this is truth I tell.  
And when we reached the top so high  
Says I, `I'll kiss you, if I die!'

I kissed my love in Cairnsmill Den,  
In Cairnsmill Den, in Cairnsmill Den,  
And this is truth I tell.  
I kissed my love in Cairnsmill Den,  
And my love kissed me back again.

I met my love one morning  
In Cairnsmill Den.  
One morning, one morning,  
One blue and blowy morning,  
I met my love one morning  
In Cairnsmill Den.

Robert Fuller Murray

## Catullus At His Brother's Grave

Through many lands and over many seas  
I come, my Brother, to thine obsequies,  
To pay thee the last honours that remain,  
And call upon thy voiceless dust, in vain.  
Since cruel fate has robbed me even of thee,  
Unhappy Brother, snatched away from me,  
Now none the less the gifts our fathers gave,  
The melancholy honours of the grave,  
Wet with my tears I bring to thee, and say  
Farewell! farewell! for ever and a day.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Come Back To St Andrews

Come back to St. Andrews! Before you went away  
You said you would be wretched where you could not see the Bay,  
The East sands and the West sands and the castle in the sea  
Come back to St. Andrews--St. Andrews and me.

Oh, it's dreary along South Street when the rain is coming down,  
And the east wind makes the student draw more close his warm red gown,  
As I often saw you do, when I watched you going by  
On the stormy days to College, from my window up on high.

I wander on the Lade Braes, where I used to walk with you,  
And purple are the woods of Mount Melville, budding new,  
But I cannot bear to look, for the tears keep coming so,  
And the Spring has lost the freshness which it had a year ago.

Yet often I could fancy, where the pathway takes a turn,  
I shall see you in a moment, coming round beside the burn,  
Coming round beside the burn, with your swinging step and free,  
And your face lit up with pleasure at the sudden sight of me.

Beyond the Rock and Spindle, where we watched the water clear  
In the happy April sunshine, with a happy sound to hear,  
There I sat this afternoon, but no hand was holding mine,  
And the water sounded eerie, though the April sun did shine.

Oh, why should I complain of what I know was bound to be?  
For you had your way to make, and you must not think of me.  
But a woman's heart is weak, and a woman's joys are few -  
There are times when I could die for a moment's sight of you.

It may be you will come again, before my hair is grey  
As the sea is in the twilight of a weary winter's day.  
When success is grown a burden, and your heart would fain be free,  
Come back to St. Andrews--St. Andrews and me.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Cyclamen

I had a plant which would not thrive,  
Although I watered it with care,  
I could not save the blossoms fair,  
Nor even keep the leaves alive.

I strove till it was vain to strive.  
I gave it light, I gave it air,  
I sought from skill and counsel rare  
The means to make it yet survive.

A lady sent it me, to prove  
She held my friendship in esteem;  
I would not have it as she said,  
I wanted it to be for love;  
And now not even friends we seem,  
And now the cyclamen is dead.

Robert Fuller Murray

## Dawn Song

I hear a twittering of birds,  
And now they burst in song.  
How sweet, although it wants the words!  
It shall not want them long,  
For I will set some to the note  
Which bubbles from the thrush's throat.

O jewelled night, that reign'st on high,  
Where is thy crescent moon?  
Thy stars have faded from the sky,  
The sun is coming soon.  
The summer night is passed away,  
Sing welcome to the summer day.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Death At The Window

This morning, while we sat in talk  
Of spring and apple-bloom,  
Lo! Death stood in the garden walk,  
And peered into the room.

Your back was turned, you did not see  
The shadow that he made.  
He bent his head and looked at me;  
It made my soul afraid.

The words I had begun to speak  
Fell broken in the air.  
You saw the pallor of my cheek,  
And turned--but none was there.

He came as sudden as a thought,  
And so departed too.  
What made him leave his task unwrought?  
It was the sight of you.

Though Death but seldom turns aside  
From those he means to take,  
He would not yet our hearts divide,  
For love and pity's sake.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Farewell To A Singer

On Her Marriage

As those who hear a sweet bird sing,  
And love each song it sings the best,  
Grieve when they see it taking wing  
And flying to another nest:

We, who have heard your voice so oft,  
And loved it more than we can tell,  
Our hearts grow sad, our voices soft,  
Our eyes grow dim, to say farewell.

It is not kind to leave us thus;  
Yet we forgive you and combine,  
Although you now bring grief to us,  
To wish you joy, for auld lang syne.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Fickle Summer

Fickle Summer's fled away,  
Shall we see her face again?  
Hearken to the weeping rain,  
Never sunbeam greets the day.

More inconstant than the May,  
She cares nothing for our pain,  
Nor will hear the birds complain  
In their bowers that once were gay.

Summer, Summer, come once more,  
Drive the shadows from the field,  
All thy radiance round thee fling,  
Be our lady as of yore;  
Then the earth her fruits shall yield,  
Then the morning stars shall sing.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Footsteps In The Street

Oh, will the footsteps never be done?  
The insolent feet  
Thronging the street,  
Forsaken now of the only one.

The only one out of all the throng,  
Whose footfall I knew,  
And could tell it so true,  
That I leapt to see as she passed along,

As she passed along with her beautiful face,  
Which knew full well  
Though it did not tell,  
That I was there in the window-space.

Now my sense is never so clear.  
It cheats my heart,  
Making me start  
A thousand times, when she is not near.

When she is not near, but so far away,  
I could not come  
To the place of her home,  
Though I travelled and sought for a month and a day.

Do you wonder then if I wish the street  
Were grown with grass,  
And no foot might pass  
Till she treads it again with her sacred feet?

Robert Fuller Murray

# For A Present Of Roses

Crimson and cream and white -  
My room is a garden of roses!  
Centre and left and right,  
Three several splendid posies.

As the sender is, they are sweet,  
These lovely gifts of your sending,  
With the stifling summer heat  
Their delicate fragrance blending.

What more can my heart desire?  
Has it lost the power to be grateful?  
Is it only a burnt-out fire,  
Whose ashes are dull and hateful?

Yet still to itself it doth say,  
'I should have loved far better  
To have found, coming in to-day,  
The merest scrap of a letter.'

Robert Fuller Murray

# For Scotland

Beyond the Cheviots and the Tweed,  
Beyond the Firth of Forth,  
My memory returns at speed  
To Scotland and the North.

For still I keep, and ever shall,  
A warm place in my heart for Scotland,  
Scotland, Scotland,  
A warm place in my heart for Scotland.

Oh, cruel off St. Andrew's Bay  
The winds are wont to blow!  
They either rest or gently play,  
When there in dreams I go.

And there I wander, young again,  
With limbs that do not tire,  
Along the coast to Kittock's Den,  
With whinbloom all afire.

I climb the Spindle Rock, and lie  
And take my doubtful ease,  
Between the ocean and the sky,  
Derided by the breeze.

Where coloured mushrooms thickly grow,  
Like flowers of brittle stalk,  
To haunted Magus Muir I go,  
By Lady Catherine's Walk.

In dreams the year I linger through,  
In that familiar town,  
Where all the youth I ever knew,  
Burned up and flickered down.

There's not a rock that fronts the sea,  
There's not an inland grove,  
But has a tale to tell to me  
Of friendship or of love.

And so I keep, and ever shall,  
The best place in my heart for Scotland,  
Scotland, Scotland,  
The best place in my heart for Scotland!

Robert Fuller Murray

# Golden Dream

Golden dream of summer morn,  
By a well-remembered stream  
In the land where I was born,  
Golden dream!

Ripples, by the glancing beam  
Lightly kissed in playful scorn,  
Meadows moist with sunlit steam.

When I lift my eyelids worn  
Like a fair mirage you seem,  
In the winter dawn forlorn,  
Golden dream!

Robert Fuller Murray

# Hope Deferred

When the weary night is fled,  
And the morning sky is red,  
Then my heart doth rise and say,  
' Surely she will come to-day.'

In the golden blaze of noon,  
' Surely she is coming soon.'  
In the twilight, ' Will she come?'  
Then my heart with fear is dumb.

When the night wind in the trees  
Plays its mournful melodies,  
Then I know my trust is vain,  
And she will not come again.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Hymn Of Hippolytus To Artemis

Artemis! thou fairest  
Of the maids that be  
In divine Olympus,  
Hail! Hail to thee!  
To thee I bring this woven weed  
Culled for thee from a virgin mead,  
Where neither shepherd claims his flocks to feed  
Nor ever yet the mower's scythe hath come.  
There in the Spring the wild bee hath his home,  
Lightly passing to and fro  
Where the virgin flowers grow;  
And there the watchful Purity doth go  
Moistening with dew-drops all the ground below,  
Drawn from a river untaintedly flowing,  
They who have gained by a kind fate's bestowing  
Pure hearts, untaught by philosophy's care,  
May gather the flowers in the mead that are blowing,  
But the tainted in spirit may never be there.

Now, O Divinest, eternally fair,  
Take thou this garland to gather thy hair,  
Brought by a hand that is pure as the air.  
For I alone of all the sons of men  
Hear thy pure accents, answering thee again.  
And may I reach the goal of life as I began the race,  
Blest by the music of thy voice, though darkness ever veil thy face!

Robert Fuller Murray

# Ichabod

Gone is the glory from the hills,  
The autumn sunshine from the mere,  
Which mourns for the declining year  
In all her tributary rills.

A sense of change obscurely chills  
The misty twilight atmosphere,  
In which familiar things appear  
Like alien ghosts, foreboding ills.

The twilight hour a month ago  
Was full of pleasant warmth and ease,  
The pearl of all the twenty-four.  
Erelong the winter gales shall blow,  
Erelong the winter frosts shall freeze -  
And oh, that it were June once more!

Robert Fuller Murray

## Imitated From Wordsworth

He brought a team from Inversnaid  
To play our Third Fifteen,  
A man whom none of us had played  
And very few had seen.

He weighed not less than eighteen stone,  
And to a practised eye  
He seemed as little fit to run  
As he was fit to fly.

He looked so clumsy and so slow,  
And made so little fuss;  
But he got in behind -- and oh,  
The difference to us!

Robert Fuller Murray

## In Time Of Doubt

`In the shadow of Thy wings, O Lord of Hosts, whom I extol,  
I will put my trust for ever,' so the kingly David sings.

`Thou shalt help me, Thou shalt save me, only  
Thou shalt keep me whole,  
In the shadow of Thy wings.'

In our ears this voice triumphant, like a blowing trumpet, rings,  
But our hearts have heard another, as of funeral bells that toll,  
`God of David where to find Thee?' No reply the question brings.

Shadows are there overhead, but they are of the clouds that roll,  
Blotting out the sun from sight, and overwhelming earthly things.  
Oh, that we might feel Thy presence! Surely we could rest our soul  
In the shadow of Thy wings.

Robert Fuller Murray

# In Time Of Sickness

Lost Youth, come back again!  
Laugh at weariness and pain.  
Come not in dreams, but come in truth,  
Lost Youth.

Sweetheart of long ago,  
Why do you haunt me so?  
Were you not glad to part,  
Sweetheart?

Still Death, that draws so near,  
Is it hope you bring, or fear?  
Is it only ease of breath,  
Still Death?

Robert Fuller Murray

# In Time Of Sorrow

Despair is in the suns that shine,  
And in the rains that fall,  
This sad forsaken soul of mine  
Is weary of them all.

They fall and shine on alien streets  
From those I love and know.  
I cannot hear amid the heats  
The North Sea's freshening flow

The people hurry up and down,  
Like ghosts that cannot lie;  
And wandering through the phantom town  
The weariest ghost am I.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Indolence

Fain would I shake thee off, but weak am I  
Thy strong solicitations to withstand.  
Plenty of work lies ready to my hand,  
Which rests irresolute, and lets it lie.

How can I work, when that seductive sky  
Smiles through the window, beautiful and bland,  
And seems to half entreat and half command  
My presence out of doors beneath its eye?

Will not the air be fresh, the water blue,  
The smell of beanfields, blowing to the shore,  
Better than these poor drooping purchased flowers?  
Good-bye, dull books! Hot room, good-bye to you!  
And think it strange if I return before  
The sea grows purple in the evening hours.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Lost At Sea

Lost at sea, with all on board!  
No one saw their sinking sail,  
No one heard their dying wail,  
Heard them calling on the Lord—  
Lost at sea, with all on board.

Till the sea gives up its dead,  
There they lie in quiet sleep,  
And the voices of the deep  
Sound unheeded overhead,  
Till the sea gives up its dead.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Lost Liberty

Of our own will we are not free,  
When freedom lies within our power.  
We wait for some decisive hour,  
To rise and take our liberty.

Still we delay, content to be  
Imprisoned in our own high tower.  
What is it but a strong-built bower?  
Ours are the warders, ours the key.

But we through indolence grow weak.  
Our warders, fed with power so long,  
Become at last our lords indeed.  
We vainly threaten, vainly seek  
To move their ruth. The bars are strong.  
We dash against them till we bleed.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Love Recalled In Sleep

There was a time when in your face  
There dwelt such power, and in your smile  
I know not what of magic grace;  
They held me captive for a while.

Ah, then I listened for your voice!  
Like music every word did fall,  
Making the hearts of men rejoice,  
And mine rejoiced the most of all.

At sight of you, my soul took flame.  
But now, alas! the spell is fled.  
Is it that you are not the same,  
Or only that my love is dead?

I know not--but last night I dreamed  
That you were walking by my side,  
And sweet, as once you were, you seemed,  
And all my heart was glorified.

Your head against my shoulder lay,  
And round your waist my arm was pressed,  
And as we walked a well-known way,  
Love was between us both confessed.

But when with dawn I woke from sleep,  
And slow came back the unlovely truth,  
I wept, as an old man might weep  
For the lost paradise of youth.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Love's Phantom

Whene'er I try to read a book,  
Across the page your face will look,  
And then I neither know nor care  
What sense the printed words may bear.

At night when I would go to sleep,  
Thinking of you, awake I keep,  
And still repeat the words you said,  
Like sick men murmuring prayers in bed.

And when, with weariness oppressed:  
I sink in spite of you to rest,  
Your image, like a lovely sprite,  
Haunts me in dreams through half the night.

I wake upon the autumn morn  
To find the sunrise hardly-born,  
And in the sky a soft pale blue,  
And in my heart your image true.

When out I walk to take the air,  
Your image is for ever there,  
Among the woods that lose their leaves,  
Or where the North Sea sadly heaves.

By what enchantment shall be laid  
This ghost, which does not make afraid,  
But vexes with dim loveliness  
And many a shadowy caress?

There is no other way I know  
But unto you forthwith to go,  
That I may look upon the maid  
Whereof that other is the shade.

As the strong sun puts out the moon,  
Whose borrowed rays are all his own,  
So, in your living presence, dies  
The phantom kindled at your eyes.

By this most blessed spell, each day  
The vexing ghost awhile I lay.  
Yet am I glad to know that when  
I leave you it will rise again.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Love's Worship Restored

O Love, thine empire is not dead,  
Nor will we let thy worship go,  
Although thine early flush be fled,  
Thine ardent eyes more faintly glow,  
And thy light wings be fallen slow  
Since when as novices we came  
Into the temple of thy name.

Not now with garlands in our hair,  
And singing lips, we come to thee.  
There is a coldness in the air,  
A dulness on the encircling sea,  
Which doth not well with songs agree.  
And we forget the words we sang  
When first to thee our voices rang.

When we recall that magic prime,  
We needs must weep its early death.  
How pleasant from thy towers the chime  
Of bells, and sweet the incense breath  
That rose while we, who kept thy faith,  
Chanting our creed, and chanting bore  
Our offerings to thine altar store!

Now are our voices out of tune,  
Our gifts unworthy of thy name.  
December frowns, in place of June.  
Who smiled when to thy house we came,  
We who came leaping, now are lame.  
Dull ears and failing eyes are ours,  
And who shall lead us to thy towers?

O hark! A sound across the air,  
Which tells not of December's cold,  
A sound most musical and rare.  
Thy bells are ringing as of old,  
With silver throats and tongues of gold.  
Alas! it is too sweet for truth,  
An empty echo of our youth.

Nay, never echo spake so loud!  
It is indeed thy bells that ring.  
And lo, against the leaden cloud,  
Thy towers! Once more we leap and spring,  
Once more melodiously we sing,  
We sing, and in our song forget  
That winter lies around us yet.

Oh, what is winter, now we know,  
Full surely, thou canst never fail?  
Forgive our weak untrustful woe,  
Which deemed thy glowing face grown pale.  
We know thee, mighty to prevail.  
Doubt and decrepitude depart,  
And youth comes back into the heart.

O Love, who turnest frost to flame  
With ardent and immortal eyes,  
Whose spirit sorrow cannot tame,  
Nor time subdue in any wise -  
While sun and moon for us shall rise,  
Oh, may we in thy service keep  
Till in thy faith we fall asleep!

Robert Fuller Murray

## Magni Nominus Umbra

St. Andrews! not for ever thine shall be  
Merely the shadow of a mighty name,  
The remnant only of an ancient fame  
Which time has crumbled, as thy rocks the sea.

For thou, to whom was given the earliest key  
Of knowledge in this land (and all men came  
To learn of thee), shalt once more rise and claim  
The glory that of right belongs to thee.

Grey in thine age, there yet in thee abides  
The force of youth, to make thyself anew  
A name of honour and a place of power.  
Arise, then! shake the dust from off thy sides;  
Thou shalt have many where thou now hast few;  
Again thou shalt be great. Quick come the hour!

Robert Fuller Murray

# Make-Believes

When I was young and well and glad,  
I used to play at being sad;  
Now youth and health are fled away,  
At being glad I sometimes play.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Make-Believes

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Robert Fuller Murray

# Midnight

The air is dark and fragrant  
With memories of a shower,  
And sanctified with stillness  
By this most holy hour.

The leaves forget to whisper  
Of soft and secret things,  
And every bird is silent,  
With folded eyes and wings.

O blessed hour of midnight,  
Of sleep and of release,  
Thou yieldest to the toiler  
The wages of thy peace.

And I, who have not laboured,  
Nor borne the heat of noon,  
Receive thy tranquil quiet -  
An undeserved boon.

Yes, truly God is gracious,  
Who makes His sun to shine  
Upon the good and evil,  
And idle lives like mine.

Upon the just and unjust  
He sends His rain to fall,  
And gives this hour of blessing  
Freely alike to all.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Milton

with apologies to Lord Tennyson

O swallow-tailed purveyor of college sprees,  
O skilled to please the student fraternity,  
Most honoured publican of Scotland,  
Milton, a name to adorn the Cross Keys;  
Whose chosen waiters, Samuel, Archibald,  
Helped by the boots and marker at billiards,  
Wait, as the smoke-filled, crowded chamber  
Rings to the roar of a Gaelic chorus—  
Me rather all those temperance hostelries,  
The soda siphon fizzily murmuring,  
And lime fruit juice and seltzer water  
Charm, as a wanderer out in South Street,  
Where some recruiting, eager Blue-Ribbonites  
Spied me afar and caught by the Post Office,  
And crimson-nosed the latest convert  
Fastened the odious badge upon me.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Moonlight North And South

Love, we have heard together  
The North Sea sing his tune,  
And felt the wind's wild feather  
Brush past our cheeks at noon,  
And seen the cloudy weather  
Made wondrous with the moon.

Where loveliness is rarest,  
'Tis also prized the most:  
The moonlight shone her fairest  
Along that level coast  
Where sands and dunes the barest,  
Of beauty seldom boast,

Far from that bleak and rude land  
An exile I remain  
Fixed in a fair and good land,  
A valley and a plain  
Rich in fat fields and woodland,  
And watered well with rain.

Last night the full moon's splendour  
Shone down on Taunton Dene,  
And pasture fresh and tender,  
And coppice dusky green,  
The heavenly light did render  
In one enchanted scene,

One fair unearthly vision.  
Yet soon mine eyes were cloyed,  
And found those fields Elysian  
Too rich to be enjoyed.  
Or was it our division  
Made all my pleasure void?

Across the window glasses  
The curtain then I drew,  
And, as a sea-bird passes,  
In sleep my spirit flew

To grey and windswept grasses  
And moonlit sands--and you.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Music For The Dying

Ye who will help me in my dying pain,  
Speak not a word: let all your voices cease.  
Let me but hear some soft harmonious strain,  
And I shall die at peace.

Music entrances, soothes, and grants relief  
From all below by which we are opprest;  
I pray you, speak no word unto my grief,  
But lull it into rest.

Tired am I of all words, and tired of aught  
That may some falsehood from the ear conceal,  
Desiring rather sounds which ask no thought,  
Which I need only feel:

A melody in whose delicious streams  
The soul may sink, and pass without a breath  
From fevered fancies into quiet dreams,  
From dreaming into death.

Robert Fuller Murray

# My Lady

My Lady of all ladies! Queen by right  
Of tender beauty; full of gentle moods;  
With eyes that look divine beatitudes,  
Large eyes illumined with her spirit's light;

Lips that are lovely both by sound and sight,  
Breathing such music as the dove, which broods  
Within the dark and silence of the woods,  
Croons to the mate that is her heart's delight.

Where is a line, in cloud or wave or hill,  
To match the curve which rounds her soft-flushed cheek?  
A colour, in the sky of morn or of even,  
To match that flush? Ah, let me now be still!  
If of her spirit I should strive to speak,  
I should come short, as earth comes short of heaven.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Nightfall

Let me sleep. The day is past,  
And the folded shadows keep  
Weary mortals safe and fast.  
Let me sleep.

I am all too tired to weep  
For the sunlight of the Past  
Sunk within the drowning deep.

Treasured vanities I cast  
In an unregarded heap.  
Time has given rest at last.  
Let me sleep.

Robert Fuller Murray

# On A Crushed Hat

Brown was my friend, and faithful—but so fat!  
He came to see me in the twilight dim;  
I rose politely and invited him  
To take a seat—how heavily he sat!

He sat upon the sofa, where my hat,  
My wanton Zephyr, rested on its rim;  
Its build, unlike my friend's, was rather slim,  
And when he rose, I saw it, crushed and flat.

O Hat, that wast the apple of my eye,  
Thy brim is bent, six cracks are in thy crown,  
And I shall never wear thee any more;  
Upon a shelf thy loved remains shall lie,  
And with the years the dust will settle down  
On thee, the neatest hat I ever wore!

Robert Fuller Murray

# On An Edinburgh Advocate

In youth with diligence he toiled  
A Roman nose to gain,  
But though a decent pug was spoiled,  
A pug it did remain.

Robert Fuller Murray

# One Tear

Last night, when at parting  
Awhile we did stand,  
Suddenly starting,  
There fell on my hand

Something that burned it,  
Something that shone  
In the moon as I turned it,  
And then it was gone.

One bright stray jewel -  
What made it stray?  
Was I cold or cruel,  
At the close of day?

Oh, do not cry, lass!  
What is crying worth?  
There is no lass like my lass  
In the whole wide earth.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Partnership In Fame

Love, when the present is become the past,  
And dust has covered all that now is new,  
When many a fame has faded out of view,  
And many a later fame is fading fast -

If then these songs of mine might hope to last,  
Which sing most sweetly when they sing of you,  
Though queen and empress wore oblivion's hue,  
Your loveliness would not be overcast.

Now, while the present stays with you and me,  
In love's copartnery our hearts combine,  
Life's loss and gain in equal shares to take.  
Partners in fame our memories then would be:  
Your name remembered for my songs; and mine  
Still unforgotten for your sweetness' sake.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Patriotism

There was a time when it was counted high  
To be a patriot--whether by the zeal  
Of peaceful labour for the country's weal,  
Or by the courage in her cause to die:

FOR KING AND COUNTRY was a rallying cry  
That turned men's hearts to fire, their nerves to steel;  
Not to unheeding ears did it appeal,  
A pulpit formula, a platform lie.

Only a fool will wantonly desire  
That war should come, outpouring blood and fire,  
And bringing grief and hunger in her train.  
And yet, if there be found no other way,  
God send us war, and with it send the day  
When love of country shall be real again!

Robert Fuller Murray

# Pleasant Prophecies

A day of gladness yet will dawn,  
Though when I cannot say;  
Perhaps it may be Thursday week,  
Perhaps some other day,—

When man, freed from the bond of clothes,  
And needing no more food,  
Shall never pull his neighbour's nose,  
But be extremely good.

When Love and Nobleness shall live  
Next door to Truth and Right,  
While Reverence shall rent a room,  
Upon the second flight.

And wishes shall be horses then,  
And beggars shall be kings;  
And all the people shall admire  
This pleasant state of things.

But if it seems a mystery,  
And you're inclined to doubt it,  
Just ask your local poet. He  
Will tell you all about it.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Poets

Children of earth are we,  
Lovers of land and sea,  
Of hill, of brook, of tree,  
Of all things fair;  
Of all things dark or bright,  
Born of the day and night,  
Red rose and lily white  
And dusky hair.

Yet not alone from earth  
Do we derive our birth.  
What were our singing worth  
Were this the whole?  
Somewhere from heaven afar  
Hath dropped a fiery star,  
Which makes us what we are,  
Which is our soul.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Reflections Of A Magstrand

on returning to St. Andrews

In the hard familiar horse-box I am sitting once again;  
Creeping back to old St. Andrews comes the slow North British train,

Bearing bejants with their luggage (boxes full of heavy books,  
Which the porter, hot and tipless, eyes with unforgiving looks),

Bearing third year men and second, bearing them and bearing me,  
Who am now a fourth year magnate with two parts of my degree.

We have started off from Leuchars, and my thoughts have started too  
Back to times when this sensation was entirely fresh and new.

When I marvelled at the towers beyond the Eden's wide expanse,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's manse

With some money in his pocket, with some down upon his cheek,  
With the elements of Latin, with the rudiments of Greek.

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,  
Underneath the towers he looks at, in among the throngs of men,

Men from Fife and men from Forfar, from the High School of Dundee,  
Ten or twelve from other counties, and from England two or three.

Oh, the Bursary Competition! oh, the wonder and the rage,  
When I saw my name omitted from the schedule in the cage!

Grief is strong but youth elastic, and I rallied from the blow,  
For I felt that there were few things in the world I did not know.

Then my ready-made opinions upon all things under heaven  
I declaimed with sound and fury, to an audience of eleven

Gathered in the Logic class-room, sworn to settle the debate,  
Does the Stage upon the whole demoralise or elevate?

This and other joys I tasted. I became a Volunteer,

Murmuring Dulce et decorum in the Battery-Sergeant's ear;

Joined the Golf Club, and with others of an afternoon was seen  
Vainly searching in the whins, or fozzling on the putting-green;

Took a minor part in Readings; lifted up my voice and sang  
At the Musical rehearsals, till the class-room rafters rang;

Wrote long poems for the Column; entered for the S. R. C,  
And, if I remember rightly, was thrown out by twenty-three;

Ground a little for my classes, till the hour of nine or ten,  
When I read a decent novel or went out to see some men.

So I reaped the large experience which has made me what I am,  
Far removed from bejanthood as is St. Andrews from Siam.

But with age and with experience disenchantment comes to all,  
Even pleasure on the keenest appetite at last will pall.

Had I now a hundred pounds, a hundred pounds would I bestow  
To enjoy the loud solatium as I did three years ago,

When the songs were less familiar, less familiar too the pies,  
And I did not mind receiving orange-peel between the eyes.

Yet, in spite of disenchantment, and in spite of finding out  
There are some things in the world that I am hardly sure about,

Still sufficient of illusion and inexplicable grace  
Hangs about the grey old town to make it a delightful place.

Though solatiums charm no longer, though a gaudeamus fails  
With its atmosphere unwholesome to expand my spirit's sails,

Though rectorial elections are if anything a bore,  
And I do not care to carry dripping torches any more,

Though my soul for Moral lectures does not vehemently yearn,  
Though the north-east winds are bitter—I am willing to return.

At this point in my reflections, on the left the Links expand,

Many a whin bush full of prickles, many a bunker full of sand.

And I see distinguished club-men, whom I only know by sight,  
Old, obese, and scarlet-coated, playing golf with all their might;

As they were three years ago, when first I travelled by this train,  
As they will be three years hence, if I should come this way again.

What to them is train or traveller? what to them the flight of time?  
But we draw too near the station to indulge in the sublime.

In a minute at the furthest on the platform I shall stand,  
Waiting till they take my trunk out, with my hat-box in my hand.

As the railway train approaches and the train of thought recedes,  
I behold Professor — in a brand new suit of tweeds.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Requiem

For thee the birds shall never sing again,  
Nor fresh green leaves come out upon the tree,  
The brook shall no more murmur the refrain  
For thee.

Thou liest underneath the windswept lea,  
Thou drest not of pleasure or of pain,  
Thou drest no to-morrow that shall be.

Deep rest is thine, unbroken by the rain,  
Ay, or the thunder. Brother, canst thou see  
The tears that night and morning fall in vain  
For thee?

Robert Fuller Murray

# Sleep Flies Me

Sleep flies me like a lover  
Too eagerly pursued,  
Or like a bird to cover  
Within some distant wood,  
Where thickest boughs roof over  
Her secret solitude.

The nets I spread to snare her,  
Although with cunning wrought,  
Have only served to scare her,  
And now she'll not be caught.  
To those who best could spare her,  
She ever comes unsought.

She lights upon their pillows;  
She gives them pleasant dreams,  
Grey-green with leaves of willows,  
And cool with sound of streams,  
Or big with tranquil billows,  
On which the starlight gleams.

No vision fair entrances  
My weary open eye,  
No marvellous romances  
Make night go swiftly by;  
But only feverish fancies  
Beset me where I lie.

The black midnight is steeping  
The hillside and the lawn,  
But still I lie unsleeping,  
With curtains backward drawn,  
To catch the earliest peeping  
Of the desired dawn.

Perhaps, when day is breaking;  
When birds their song begin,  
And, worn with all night waking,  
I call their music din,

Sweet sleep, some pity taking,  
At last may enter in.

Robert Fuller Murray

## Song From 'the Princess'

As through the street at eve we went  
(It might be half-past ten),  
We fell out, my friend and I,  
About the cube of  $x+y$ ,  
And made it up again.  
And blessings on the falling out  
Between two learned men,  
Who fight on points which neither knows,  
And make it up again!  
For when we came where stands an inn  
We visit now and then,  
There above a pint of beer,  
Oh there above a pint of beer,  
We made it up again.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Song Is Not Dead

Song is not dead, although to-day  
Men tell us everything is said.  
There yet is something left to say,  
Song is not dead.

While still the evening sky is red,  
While still the morning gold and grey,  
While still the autumn leaves are shed,

While still the heart of youth is gay,  
And honour crowns the hoary head,  
While men and women love and pray  
Song is not dead.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Sorrow's Treachery

I made a truce last night with Sorrow,  
The queen of tears, the foe of sleep,  
To keep her tents until the morrow,  
Nor send such dreams to make me weep.

Before the lusty day was springing,  
Before the tired moon was set,  
I dreamed I heard my dead love singing,  
And when I woke my eyes were wet.

Robert Fuller Murray

## Stanzas For Music

I loved a little maiden  
In the golden years gone by;  
She lived in a mill, as they all do  
(There is doubtless a reason why).  
But she faded in the autumn  
When the leaves began to fade,  
And the night before she faded,  
These words to me she said:  
'Do not forget me, Henry,  
Be noble and brave and true;  
But I must not bide, for the world is wide,  
And the sky above is blue.'

So I said farewell to my darling,  
And sailed away and came back;  
And the good ship Jane was in port again,  
And I found that they all loved Jack.  
But Polly and I were sweethearts,  
As all the neighbours know,  
Before I met with the mill-girl  
Twenty years ago.  
So I thought I would go and see her,  
But alas, she had faded too!  
She could not bide, for the world was wide,  
And the sky above was blue.

And now I can only remember  
The maid—the maid of the mill,  
And Polly, and one or two others  
In the churchyard over the hill.  
And I sadly ask the question,  
As I weep in the yew-tree's shade  
With my elbow on one of their tombstones,  
'Ah, why did they all of them fade?'  
And the answer I half expected  
Comes from the solemn yew,  
'They could none of them bide, for the world was wide,  
And the sky above was blue.'



# Sweetheart

Sweetheart, that thou art fair I know,  
More fair to me  
Than flowers that make the loveliest show  
To tempt the bee.

When other girls, whose faces are,  
Beside thy face,  
As rushlights to the evening star,  
Deny thy grace,

I silent sit and let them speak,  
As men of strength  
Allow the impotent and weak  
To rail at length.

If they should tell me Love is blind,  
And so doth miss  
The faults which they are quick to find,  
I'd answer this:

Envy is blind; not Love, whose eyes  
Are purged and clear  
Through gazing on the perfect skies  
Of thine, my dear.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Tears

Mourn that which will not come again,  
The joy, the strength of early years.  
Bow down thy head, and let thy tears  
Water the grave where hope lies slain.

For tears are like a summer rain,  
To murmur in a mourner's ears,  
To soften all the field of fears,  
To moisten valleys parched with pain.

And though thy tears will not awake  
What lies beneath of young or fair  
And sleeps so sound it draws no breath,  
Yet, watered thus, the sod may break  
In flowers which sweeten all the air,  
And fill with life the place of death.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Banished Bejant

from the unpublished remains of Edgar Allan Poe

In the oldest of our alleys,  
By good bejants tenanted,  
Once a man whose name was Wallace—  
William Wallace—reared his head.  
Rowdy Bejant in the college  
He was styled:  
Never had these halls of knowledge  
Welcomed waster half so wild!

Tassel blue and long and silken  
From his cap did float and flow  
(This was cast into the Swilcan  
Two months ago);  
And every gentle air that sported  
With his red gown,  
Displayed a suit of clothes, reported  
The most alarming in the town.

Wanderers in that ancient alley  
Through his luminous window saw  
Spirits come continually  
From a case well packed with straw,  
Just behind the chair where, sitting  
With air serene,  
And in a blazer loosely fitting,  
The owner of the bunk was seen.

And all with cards and counters straying  
Was the place littered o'er,  
With which sat playing, playing, playing,  
And wrangling evermore,  
A group of fellows, whose chief function  
Was to proclaim,  
In voices of surpassing unction,  
Their luck and losses in the game.

But stately things, in robes of learning,

Discussed one day the bejant's fate:  
Ah, let us mourn him unreturning,  
For they resolved to rusticate!  
And now the glory he inherits,  
Thus dished and doomed,  
Is largely founded on the merits  
Of the Old Tom consumed.

And wanderers, now, within that alley  
Through the half-open shutters see,  
Old crones, that talk continually  
In a discordant minor key:  
While, with a kind of nervous shiver,  
Past the front door,  
His former set go by for ever,  
But knock—or ring—no more.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Best Pipe

In vain you fervently extol,  
In vain you puff, your cutty clay.  
A twelvemonth smoked and black as coal,  
'Tis redolent of rank decay  
And bones of monks long passed away—  
A fragrance I do not admire;  
And so I hold my nose and say,  
Give me a finely seasoned briar.

Macleod, whose judgment on the whole  
Is faultless, has been led astray  
To nurse a high-born meerschaum bowl,  
For which he sweetly had to pay.  
Ah, let him nurse it as he may,  
Before the colour mounts much higher,  
The grate shall be its fate one day.  
Give me a finely seasoned briar.

The heathen Turk of Istamboul,  
In oriental turban gay,  
Delights his unbelieving soul  
With hookahs, bubbling in a way  
To fill a Christian with dismay  
And wake the old Crusading fire.  
May no such pipe be mine, I pray;  
Give me a finely seasoned briar.

Clay, meerschaum, hookah, what are they  
That I should view them with desire?  
Both now, and when my hair is grey,  
Give me a finely seasoned briar.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Burial Of William - The Conqueror

Oh, who may this dead warrior be  
That to his grave they bring?  
'Tis William, Duke of Normandy,  
The conqueror and king.

Across the sea, with fire and sword,  
The English crown he won;  
The lawless Scots they owned him lord,  
But now his rule is done.

A king should die from length of years,  
A conqueror in the field,  
A king amid his people's tears,  
A conqueror on his shield.

But he, who ruled by sword and flame,  
Who swore to ravage France,  
Like some poor serf without a name,  
Has died by mere mischance.

To Caen now he comes to sleep,  
The minster bells they toll,  
A solemn sound it is and deep,  
May God receive his soul!

With priests that chant a wailing hymn,  
He slowly comes this way,  
To where the painted windows dim  
The lively light of day.

He enters in. The townsfolk stand  
In reverent silence round,  
To see the lord of all the land  
Take house in narrow ground.

While, in the dwelling-place he seeks,  
To lay him they prepare,  
One Asselin FitzArthur speaks,  
And bids the priests forbear.

`The ground whereon this abbey stands  
Is mine,' he cries, `by right.  
`Twas wrested from my father's hands  
By lawlessness and might.

Duke William took the land away,  
To build this minster high.  
Bury the robber where ye may,  
But here he shall not lie.'

The holy brethren bid him cease;  
But he will not be stilled,  
And soon the house of God's own peace  
With noise and strife is filled.

And some cry shame on Asselin,  
Such tumult to excite,  
Some say, it was Duke William's sin,  
And Asselin does right.

But he round whom their quarrels keep,  
Lies still and takes no heed.  
No strife can mar a dead man's sleep,  
And this is rest indeed.

Now Asselin at length is won  
The land's full price to take,  
And let the burial rites go on,  
And so a peace they make.

When Harold, king of Englishmen,  
Was killed in Senlac fight,  
Duke William would not yield him then  
A Christian grave or rite.

Because he fought for keeping free  
His kingdom and his throne,  
No Christian rite nor grave had he  
In land that was his own.

And just it is, this Duke unkind,

Now he has come to die,  
In plundered land should hardly find  
Sufficient space to lie.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Caged Thrush

Alas for the bird who was born to sing!  
They have made him a cage; they have clipped his wing;  
They have shut him up in a dingy street,  
And they praise his singing and call it sweet.  
But his heart and his song are saddened and filled  
With the woods, and the nest he never will build,  
And the wild young dawn coming into the tree,  
And the mate that never his mate will be.  
And day by day, when his notes are heard  
They freshen the street--but alas for the bird

Robert Fuller Murray

# The City Of Golf

Would you like to see a city given over,  
Soul and body, to a tyrannising game?  
If you would, there's little need to be a rover,  
For St. Andrews is the abject city's name.

It is surely quite superfluous to mention,  
To a person who has been here half an hour,  
That Golf is what engrosses the attention  
Of the people, with an all-absorbing power.

Rich and poor alike are smitten with the fever;  
Their business and religion is to play;  
And a man is scarcely deemed a true believer,  
Unless he goes at least a round a day.

The city boasts an old and learned college,  
Where you'd think the leading industry was Greek;  
Even there the favoured instruments of knowledge  
Are a driver and a putter and a cleek.

All the natives and the residents are patrons  
Of this royal, ancient, irritating sport;  
All the old men, all the young men, maids and matrons --  
The universal populace, in short.

In the morning, when the feeble light grows stronger,  
You may see the players going out in shoals;  
And when night forbids their playing any longer,  
They tell you how they did the different holes.

Golf, golf, golf -- is all the story!  
In despair my overburdened spirit sinks,  
Till I wish that every golfer was in glory,  
And I pray the sea may overflow the links.

One slender, struggling ray of consolation  
Sustains me, very feeble though it be:  
There are two who still escape infatuation,  
My friend M'Foozle's one, the other's me.

As I write the words, M'Foozle enters blushing,  
With a brassy and an iron in his hand ....  
This blow, so unexpected and so crushing,  
Is more than I am able to withstand.

So now it but remains for me to die, sir.  
Stay! There is another course I may pursue --  
And perhaps upon the whole it would be wiser --  
I will yield to fate and be a golfer too!

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Close Of The Session

The Session's over. We must say farewell  
To these east winds and to this eastern sea,  
For summer comes, with swallow and with bee,  
With many a flower and many a golfing swell.

No more the horribly discordant bell  
Shall startle slumber; and all men agree  
That whatsoever other things may be  
A cause of sorrow, this at least is well.

The class-room shall not open wide its doors,  
Or if it does, such opening will be vain;  
The gown shall hang unused upon a nail;  
South Street shall know us not; we'll wipe the Scores  
From our remembrance; as for Mutto's Lane,  
Yea, even the memory of this shall fail.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Crown Of Years

Years grow and gather--each a gem  
Lustrous with laughter and with tears,  
And cunning Time a crown of years  
Contrives for her who weareth them.

No chance can snatch this diadem,  
It trembles not with hopes or fears,  
It shines before the rose appears,  
And when the leaves forsake her stem.

Time sets his jewels one by one.  
Then wherefore mourn the wreaths that lie  
In attic chambers of the past?  
They withered ere the day was done.  
This coronal will never die,  
Nor shall you lose it at the last.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Death Of William Rufus

The Red King's gone a-hunting, in the woods his father made  
For the tall red deer to wander through the thicket and the glade,  
The King and Walter Tyrrel, Prince Henry and the rest  
Are all gone out upon the sport the Red King loves the best.

Last night, when they were feasting in the royal banquet-hall,  
De Breteuil told a dream he had, that evil would befall  
If the King should go to-morrow to the hunting of the deer,  
And while he spoke, the fiery face grew well-nigh pale to hear.

He drank until the fire came back, and all his heart was brave,  
Then bade them keep such woman's tales to tell an English slave,  
For he would hunt to-morrow, though a thousand dreams foretold  
All the sorrow and the mischief De Breteuil's brain could hold.

So the Red King's gone a-hunting, for all that they could do,  
And an arrow in the greenwood made De Breteuil's dream come true.  
They said `twas Walter Tyrrel, and so it may have been,  
But there's many walk the forest when the leaves are thick and  
green.

There's many walk the forest, who would gladly see the sport,  
When the King goes out a-hunting with the nobles of his court,  
And when the nobles scatter, and the King is left alone,  
There are thickets where an English slave might string his bow  
unknown.

The forest laws are cruel, and the time is hard as steel  
To English slaves, trod down and bruised beneath the Norman heel.  
Like worms they writhe, but by-and-by the Norman heel may learn  
There are worms that carry poison, and that are not slow to turn.

The lords came back, by one and two, from straying far apart,  
And they found the Red King lying with an arrow in his heart.  
Who should have done the deed, but him by whom it first was seen?  
So they said `twas Walter Tyrrel, and so it may have been.

They cried upon Prince Henry, the brother of the King,  
And he came up the greenwood, and rode into the ring.

He looked upon his brother's face, and then he turned away,  
And galloped off to Winchester, where all the treasure lay.

`God strike me,' cried De Breteuil, `but brothers' blood is thin!  
And why should ours be thicker that are neither kith nor kin?'  
They spurred their horses in the flank, and swiftly thence they  
passed,  
But Walter Tyrrel lingered and forsook his liege the last.

They say it was enchantment, that fixed him to the scene,  
To look upon his traitor's work, and so it may have been.  
But presently he got to horse, and took the seaward way,  
And all alone within the glade, in state the Red King lay.

Then a creaking cart came slowly, which a charcoal-burner drove.  
He found the dead man lying, a ghastly treasure-trove;  
He raised the corpse for charity, and on his wagon laid,  
And so the Red King drove in state from out the forest glade.

His hair was like a yellow flame about the bloated face,  
The blood had stained his tunic from the fatal arrow-place.  
Not good to look upon was he, in life, nor yet when dead.  
The driver of the cart drove on, and never turned his head.

When next the nobles throng at night the royal banquet-hall,  
Another King will rule the feast, the drinking and the brawl,  
While Walter Tyrrel walks alone upon the Norman shore,  
And the Red King in the forest will chase the deer no more.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Delights Of Mathematics

It seems a hundred years or more  
Since I, with note-book, ink and pen,  
In cap and gown, first trod the floor  
Which I have often trod since then;  
Yet well do I remember when  
With fifty other fond fanatics,  
I sought delights beyond my ken,  
The deep delights of Mathematics.

I knew that two and two made four,  
I felt that five times two were ten,  
But, as for all profounder lore,  
The robin redbreast or the wren,  
The sparrow, whether cock or hen,  
Knew quite as much about Quadratics,  
Was less confused by  $x$  and  $n$ ,  
The deep delights of Mathematics.

The Asses' Bridge I passed not o'er,  
I floundered in the noisome fen  
Which lies behind it and before;  
I wandered in the gloomy glen  
Where Surds and Factors have their den.  
But when I saw the pit of Statics,  
I said Good-bye, Farewell, Amen!  
The deep delights of Mathematics.

O Bejants! blessed, beardless men,  
Who strive with Euclid in your attics,  
For worlds I would not taste again  
The deep delights of Mathematics.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The End Of April

This is the time when larks are singing loud  
And higher still ascending and more high,  
This is the time when many a fleecy cloud  
Runs lamb-like on the pastures of the sky,  
This is the time when most I love to lie  
Stretched on the links, now listening to the sea,  
Now looking at the train that dawdles by;  
But James is going in for his degree.

James is my brother. He has twice been ploughed,  
Yet he intends to have another shy,  
Hoping to pass (as he says) in a crowd.  
Sanguine is James, but not so sanguine I.  
If you demand my reason, I reply:  
Because he reads no Greek without a key  
And spells Thucydides c-i-d-y;  
Yet James is going in for his degree.

No doubt, if the authorities allowed  
The taking in of Bohns, he might defy  
The stiffest paper that has ever cowed  
A timid candidate and made him fly.  
Without such aids, he all as well may try  
To cultivate the people of Dundee,  
Or lead the camel through the needle's eye;  
Yet James is going in for his degree.

Vain are the efforts hapless mortals ply  
To climb of knowledge the forbidden tree;  
Yet still about its roots they strive and cry,  
And James is going in for his degree.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Fiddler

There's a fiddler in the street,  
And the children all are dancing:  
Two dozen lightsome feet  
Springing and prancing.

Pleasure he gives to you,  
Dance then, and spare not!  
For the poor fiddler's due,  
Know not and care not.

While you are prancing,  
Let the fiddler play.  
When you're tired of dancing  
He may go away.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The First Meeting

Last night for the first time, O Heart's Delight,  
I held your hand a moment in my own,  
The dearest moment which my soul has known,  
Since I beheld and loved you at first sight.

I left you, and I wandered in the night,  
Under the rain, beside the ocean's moan.  
All was black dark, but in the north alone  
There was a glimmer of the Northern Light.

My heart was singing like a happy bird,  
Glad of the present, and from forethought free,  
Save for one note amid its music heard:  
God grant, whatever end of this may be,  
That when the tale is told, the final word  
May be of peace and benison to thee.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Garden Of Sin

I know the garden-close of sin,  
The cloying fruits, the noxious flowers,  
I long have roamed the walks and bowers,  
Desiring what no man shall win:

A secret place to shelter in,  
When soon or late the angry powers  
Come down to seek the wretch who cowers,  
Expecting judgment to begin.

The pleasure long has passed away  
From flowers and fruit, each hour I dread  
My doom will find me where I lie.  
I dare not go, I dare not stay.  
Without the walks, my hope is dead,  
Within them, I myself must die.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Golf Ball And The Loan

[After Longfellow.]

I drove a golf-ball into the air;  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.

I lent five shillings to some men,  
They spent it all, I know not when,  
For who is quick enough to know  
The time in which a crown may go?

Long, long afterward, in a whin  
I found the golf-ball, black as sin;  
But the five shillings are missing still!  
They haven't turned up, and I doubt if they will.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Haunted Chamber

Life is a house where many chambers be,  
And all the doors will yield to him who tries,  
Save one, whereof men say, behind it lies  
The haunting secret. He who keeps the key,

Keeps it securely, smiles perchance to see  
The eager hands stretched out to clutch the prize,  
Or looks with pity in the yearning eyes,  
And is half moved to let the secret free.

And truly some at every hour pass through,  
Pass through, and tread upon that solemn floor,  
Yet come not back to tell what they have found.  
We will not importune, as others do,  
With tears and cries, the keeper of the door,  
But wait till our appointed hour comes round.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The House Of Sleep

When we have laid aside our last endeavour,  
And said farewell to one or two that weep,  
And issued from the house of life for ever,  
To find a lodging in the house of sleep -

With eyes fast shut, in sunless chambers lying,  
With folded arms unmoved upon the breast,  
Beyond the noise of sorrow and of crying,  
Beyond the dread of dreaming, shall we rest?

Or shall there come at last desire of waking,  
To walk again on hillsides that we know,  
When sunrise through the cold white mist is breaking,  
Or in the stillness of the after-glow?

Shall there be yearning for the sound of voices,  
The sight of faces, and the touch of hands,  
The will that works, the spirit that rejoices,  
The heart that feels, the mind that understands?

Shall dreams and memories crowding from the distance,  
Shall ghosts of old ambition or of mirth,  
Create for us a shadow of existence,  
A dim reflection of the life of earth?

And being dead, and powerless to recover  
The substance of the show whereon we gaze,  
Shall we be likened to the hapless lover,  
Who broods upon the unreturning days?

Not so: for we have known how swift to perish  
Is man's delight when youth and health take wing,  
Until the winter leaves him nought to cherish  
But recollections of a vanished spring.

Dream as we may, desire of life shall never  
Disturb our slumbers in the house of sleep.  
Yet oh, to think we may not greet for ever  
The one or two that, when we leave them, weep!

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Life Of Earth

The life of earth, how full of pain,  
Which greets us on our day of birth,  
Nor leaves us while we yet retain  
The life of earth.

There is a shadow on our mirth,  
Our sun is blotted out with rain,  
And all our joys are little worth.

Yet oh, when life begins to wane,  
And we must sail the doubtful firth,  
How wild the longing to regain  
The life of earth!

Robert Fuller Murray

# The M.A. Degree

[After Wordsworth.]

It was a phantom of delight  
When first it gleamed upon my sight,  
A scholarly distinction, sent  
To be a student's ornament.  
The hood was rich beyond compare,  
The gown was a unique affair.  
By this, by that my mind was drawn  
Then, in my academic dawn;  
A dancing shape, an image gay  
Before me then was my M.A.  
I saw it upon nearer view,  
A glory, yet a bother too!  
For I perceived that I should be  
Involved in much Philosophy  
(A branch in which I could but meet  
Works that were neither light nor sweet);  
In Mathematics, not too good  
For human nature's daily food  
And Classics, rendered in the styles  
Of Kelly, Bohn, and Dr. Giles.  
And now I own, with some small spleen,  
A most confounded ass I've been;  
The glory seems an empty breath,  
And I am nearly bored to death  
With Reason, Consciousness, and Will,  
And other things beyond my skill,  
Discussed in books all darkly planned  
And more in number than the sand.  
Yet that M.A. still haunts my sight,  
With something of its former light.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Outcast's Farewell

The sun is banished,  
The daylight vanished,  
No rosy traces  
Are left behind.  
Here in the meadow  
I watch the shadow  
Of forms and faces  
Upon your blind.

Through swift transitions,  
In new positions,  
My eyes still follow  
One shape most fair.  
My heart delaying  
Awhile, is playing  
With pleasures hollow,  
Which mock despair.

I feel so lonely,  
I long once only  
To pass an hour  
With you, O sweet!  
To touch your fingers,  
Where fragrance lingers  
From some rare flower,  
And kiss your feet.

But not this even  
To me is given.  
Of all sad mortals  
Most sad am I,  
Never to meet you,  
Never to greet you,  
Nor pass your portals  
Before I die.

All men scorn me,  
Not one will mourn me,  
When from their city

I pass away.  
Will you to-morrow  
Recall with sorrow  
Him whom with pity  
You saw to-day?

Outcast and lonely,  
One thing only  
Beyond misgiving  
I hold for true,  
That, had you known me,  
You would have shown me  
A life worth living -  
A life for you.

Yes: five years younger  
My manhood's hunger  
Had you come filling  
With plenty sweet,  
My life so nourished,  
Had grown and flourished,  
Had God been willing  
That we should meet.

How vain to fashion  
From dreams and passion  
The rich existence  
Which might have been!  
Can God's own power  
Recall the hour,  
Or bridge the distance  
That lies between?

Before the morning,  
From pain and scorning  
I sail death's river  
To sleep or hell.  
To you is given  
The life of heaven.  
Farewell for ever,  
Farewell, farewell!



# The Poet's Hat

The rain had fallen, the Poet arose,  
He passed through the doorway into the street,  
A strong wind lifted his hat from his head,  
And he uttered some words that were far from sweet.  
And then he started to follow the chase,  
And put on a spurt that was wild and fleet,  
It made the people pause in a crowd,  
And lay odds as to which would beat.

The street cad scoffed as he hunted the hat,  
The errand-boy shouted hooray!  
The scavenger stood with his broom in his hand,  
And smiled in a very rude way;  
And the clergyman thought, 'I have heard many words,  
But never, until to-day,  
Did I hear any words that were quite so bad  
As I heard that young man say.'

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Science Club

Hurrah for the Science Club!  
Join it, ye fourth year men;  
Join it, thou smooth-cheeked scrub,  
Whose years scarce number ten

Join it, divines most grave;  
Science, as all men know,  
As a friend the Church may save,  
But may damage her as a foe.

(And in any case it is well,  
If attacking insidious doubt,  
Or devoting H—- to H—-,  
To know what you're talking about.)

Hurrah for the lang-nebbit word!  
Hurrah for the erudite phrase,  
That in Dura Den shall be heard,  
That shall echo on Kinkell Braes!

Hurrah for the spoils of the links  
(The golf-ball as well as the daisy)!  
Hurrah for explosions and stinks  
To set half the landladies crazy!

Hurrah for the fragments of boulders,  
Surpassing in size and in weight,  
To be carried home on the shoulders  
And laid on the table in state!

Hurrah for the flying-machine  
Long buried from sight in a cupboard,  
With bones that would never have been  
Desired of old Mother Hubbard!

Hurrah for the hazardous boat,  
For the crabs (of all kinds) to be caught,  
For the eggs on the surface that float,  
And the lump-sucker curiously wrought!

Hurrah for the filling of tanks  
In the shanty down by the shore,  
For the Royal Society's thanks,  
With Fellowships flying galore!

Hurrah for discourses on worms,  
Where one listens and comes away  
With a stock of bewildering terms,  
And nothing whatever to pay!

Hurrah for gadding about  
Of a Saturday afternoon,  
In the light of research setting out,  
Coming home in the light of the moon!

Hurrah for Guardbridge, and the mill  
Where one learns how paper is made!  
Hurrah for the samples that fill  
One's drawer with the finest cream-laid!

Hurrah for the Brewery visit  
And beer in liberal doses!  
In the cause of Science, what is it  
But inspecting a technical process?

Hurrah for a trip to Dundee  
To study the spinning of jute!  
Hurrah for a restaurant tea,  
And a sight of the Tay Bridge to boot!

Hurrah, after every excursion,  
To feel one's improving one's mind,  
With the smallest amount of exertion,  
And that of the pleasantest kind!

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Solitary

I have been lonely all my days on earth,  
Living a life within my secret soul,  
With mine own springs of sorrow and of mirth,  
Beyond the world's control.

Though sometimes with vain longing I have sought  
To walk the paths where other mortals tread,  
To wear the clothes for other mortals wrought,  
And eat the selfsame bread -

Yet have I ever found, when thus I strove  
To mould my life upon the common plan,  
That I was furthest from all truth and love,  
And least a living man.

Truth frowned upon my poor hypocrisy,  
Life left my soul, and dwelt but in my sense;  
No man could love me, for all men could see  
The hollow vain pretence.

Their clothes sat on me with outlandish air,  
Upon their easy road I tripped and fell,  
And still I sickened of the wholesome fare  
On which they nourished well.

I was a stranger in that company,  
A Galilean whom his speech bewrayed,  
And when they lifted up their songs of glee,  
My voice sad discord made.

Peace for mine own self I could never find,  
And still my presence marred the general peace,  
And when I parted, leaving them behind,  
They felt, and I, release.

So will I follow now my spirit's bent,  
Not scorning those who walk the beaten track,  
Yet not despising mine own banishment,  
Nor often looking back.

Their way is best for them, but mine for me.  
And there is comfort for my lonely heart,  
To think perhaps our journeys' ends may be  
Not very far apart.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Swallows

From Jean Pierre Claris Florian

I love to see the swallows come  
At my window twittering,  
Bringing from their southern home  
News of the approaching spring.  
'Last year's nest,' they softly say,  
'Last year's love again shall see;  
Only faithful lovers may  
Tell you of the coming glee.'

When the first fell touch of frost  
Strips the wood of faded leaves,  
Calling all their wingèd host,  
The swallows meet above the eaves  
'Come away, away,' they cry,  
'Winter's snow is hastening;  
True hearts winter comes not nigh,  
They are ever in the spring.'

If by some unhappy fate,  
Victim of a cruel mind,  
One is parted from her mate  
And within a cage confined,  
Swiftly will the swallow die,  
Pining for her lover's bower,  
And her lover watching nigh  
Dies beside her in an hour.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Tempted Soul

Weak soul, by sense still led astray,  
Why wilt thou parley with the foe?  
He seeks to work thine overthrow,  
And thou, poor fool! dost point the way.

Hast thou forgotten many a day,  
When thou exulting forth didst go,  
And ere the noon wert lying low,  
A broken and defenceless prey?

If thou wouldst live, avoid his face;  
Dwell in the wilderness apart,  
And gather force for vanquishing,  
Ere thou returnest to his place.  
Then arm, and with undaunted heart  
Give battle, till he own thee king.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The True Liberal

The truest Liberal is he  
Who sees the man in each degree,  
Who merit in a churl can prize,  
And baseness in an earl despise,  
Yet censures baseness in a churl,  
And dares find merit in an earl.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Voice That Sings

The voice that sings across the night  
Of long forgotten days and things,  
Is there an ear to hear aright  
The voice that sings?

It is as when a curfew rings  
Melodious in the dying light,  
A sound that flies on pulsing wings.

And faded eyes that once were bright  
Brim over, as to life it brings  
The echo of a dead delight,  
The voice that sings.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Wasted Day

Another day let slip! Its hours have run,  
Its golden hours, with prodigal excess,  
All run to waste. A day of life the less;  
Of many wasted days, alas, but one!

Through my west window streams the setting sun.  
I kneel within my chamber, and confess  
My sin and sorrow, filled with vain distress,  
In place of honest joy for work well done.

At noon I passed some labourers in a field.  
The sweat ran down upon each sunburnt face,  
Which shone like copper in the ardent glow.  
And one looked up, with envy unconcealed,  
Beholding my cool cheeks and listless pace,  
Yet he was happier, though he did not know.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Waster Singing At Midnight

*After Longfellow*

Loud he sang the song Ta Phershon  
For his personal diversion,  
Sang the chorus U-pi-dee,  
Sang about the Barley Bree.

In that hour when all is quiet  
Sang he songs of noise and riot,  
In a voice so loud and queer  
That I wakened up to hear.

Songs that distantly resembled  
Those one hears from men assembled  
In the old Cross Keys Hotel,  
Only sung not half so well.

For the time of this ecstatic  
Amateur was most erratic,  
And he only hit the key  
Once in every melody.

If "he wot prigs wot isn't his'n  
Ven he's cotched is sent to prison,"  
He who murders sleep might well  
Adorn a solitary cell.

But, if no obliging peeler  
Will arrest this midnight squealer,  
My own peculiar arm of might  
Must undertake the job to-night.

Robert Fuller Murray

# The Waster's Presentiment

I shall be spun. There is a voice within  
Which tells me plainly I am all undone;  
For though I toil not, neither do I spin,  
I shall be spun.

April approaches. I have not begun  
Schwegler or Mackintosh, nor will begin  
Those lucid works till April 21.

So my degree I do not hope to win,  
For not by ways like mine degrees are won;  
And though, to please my uncle, I go in,  
I shall be spun.

Robert Fuller Murray

## Thirty Years After

Two old St. Andrews men, after a separation of nearly thirty years, meet by chance at a wayside inn. They interchange experiences; and at length one of them, who is an admirer of Mr. Swinburne's Poems and Ballads, speaks as follows:

If you were now a bejant,  
And I a first year man,  
We'd grind and grub together  
In every kind of weather,  
When Winter's snows were regent,  
Or when the Spring began;  
If you were now a bejant,  
And I a first year man.

If you were what you once were,  
And I the same man still,  
You'd be the gainer by it,  
For you—you can't deny it—  
A most uncommon dunce were;  
My profit would be nil,  
If you were what you once were,  
And I the same man still.

If you were last in Latin,  
And I were first in Greek,  
I'd write your Latin proses,  
While you indulged in dozes,  
Or carved the bench you sat in,  
So innocent and meek;  
If you were last in Latin,  
And I were first in Greek.

If I had got a prize, Jim,  
And your certif. was bad,  
And you were filled with sorrow  
And brooding on the morrow,  
I'd gently sympathise, Jim,  
And bid you not be sad,  
If I had got a prize, Jim,

And your certif. was bad.

If I were through in Moral,  
And you were spun in Math.,  
I'd break it to your parent,  
When you confessed you daren't,  
And so avert a quarrel  
And smooth away his wrath;  
If I were through in Moral,  
And you were spun in Math.

My prospects rather shone, Jim,  
And yours were rather dark,  
And those who knew us both then  
Would often take their oath then,  
That you would not get on, Jim,  
While I should make my mark;  
My prospects rather shone, Jim,  
And yours were rather dark.

Yet somehow you've made money,  
And I am still obscure;  
Your face is round and red, Jim,  
While I look underfed, Jim;  
The thing's extremely funny,  
And beats me, I am sure,  
Yet somehow you've made money,  
And I am still obscure.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Thou Art Queen

Thou art queen to every eye,  
When the fairest maids convene.  
Envy's self can not deny  
Thou art queen.

In thy step thy right is seen,  
In thy beauty pure and high,  
In thy grace of air and mien.

Thine unworthy vassal I,  
Lay my hands thy hands between;  
Kneeling at thy feet I cry  
Thou art queen!

Robert Fuller Murray

## To Alfred Tennyson - 1883

Familiar with thy melody,  
We go debating of its power,  
As churls, who hear it hour by hour,  
Contemn the skylark's minstrelsy -

As shepherds on a Highland lea  
Think lightly of the heather flower  
Which makes the moorland's purple dower,  
As far away as eye can see.

Let churl or shepherd change his sky,  
And labour in the city dark,  
Where there is neither air nor room -  
How often will the exile sigh  
To hear again the unwearied lark,  
And see the heather's lavish bloom!

Robert Fuller Murray

## To C.C.C.

Oh for the nights when we used to sit  
In the firelight's glow or flicker,  
With the gas turned low and our pipes all lit,  
And the air fast growing thicker;

When you, enthroned in the big arm-chair,  
Would spin for us yarns unending,  
Your voice and accent and pensive air  
With the narrative subtly blending!

Oh for the bleak and wintry days  
When we set our blood in motion,  
Leaping the rocks below the braes  
And wetting our feet in the ocean,

Or shying at marks for moderate sums  
(A penny a hit, you remember),  
With aching fingers and purple thumbs,  
In the merry month of December!

There is little doubt we were very daft,  
And our sports, like the stakes, were trifling;  
While the air of the room where we talked and laughed  
Was often unpleasantly stifling.

Now we are grave and sensible men,  
And wrinkles our brows embellish,  
And I fear we shall never relish again  
The pleasures we used to relish.

And I fear we never again shall go,  
The cold and weariness scorning,  
For a ten mile walk through the frozen snow  
At one o'clock in the morning:

Out by Cameron, in by the Grange,  
And to bed as the moon descended . . .  
To you and to me there has come a change,  
And the days of our youth are ended.

Robert Fuller Murray

## To J.R.

Last Sunday night I read the saddening story  
Of the unanswered love of fair Elaine,  
The `faith unfaithful' and the joyless glory  
Of Lancelot, `groaning in remorseful pain.'

I thought of all those nights in wintry weather,  
Those Sunday nights that seem not long ago,  
When we two read our Poet's words together,  
Till summer warmth within our hearts did glow.

Ah, when shall we renew that bygone pleasure,  
Sit down together at our Merlin's feet,  
Drink from one cup the overflowing measure,  
And find, in sharing it, the draught more sweet?

That time perchance is far, beyond divining.  
Till then we drain the `magic cup' apart;  
Yet not apart, for hope and memory twining  
Smile upon each, uniting heart to heart.

Robert Fuller Murray

## To Number 27x

Beloved Peeler! friend and guide  
And guard of many a midnight reeler,  
None worthier, though the world is wide,  
Beloved Peeler.

Thou from before the swift four-wheeler  
Didst pluck me, and didst thrust aside  
A strongly built provision-dealer

Who menaced me with blows, and cried  
'Come on! Come on!' O Paian, Healer,  
Then but for thee I must have died,  
Beloved Peeler!

Robert Fuller Murray

## To The Reader Of 'university Notes'

Ah yes, we know what you're saying,  
As your eye glances over these Notes:  
'What asses are these that are braying  
With flat and unmusical throats?  
Who writes such unspeakable patter?  
Is it lunatics, idiots—or who?'  
And you think there is 'something the matter.'  
Well, we think so too.

We have sat, full of sickness and sorrow,  
As the hours dragged heavily on,  
Till the midnight has merged into morrow,  
And the darkness is going or gone.  
We are Editors. Give us the credit  
Of meaning to do what we could;  
But, since there is nothing to edit,  
It isn't much good.

Once we shared the delightful delusion  
That to edit was racy and rare,  
But we suffered a sad disillusion,  
And we found that our castles were air;  
We had decked them with carvings and gildings,  
We had filled them with laughter and fun,  
But all of a sudden the buildings  
Came down with a run.

Not a trace was there left of the carving,  
And the gilding had vanished from sight;  
But the 'column' for matter was starving,  
And we had not to edit—but write.  
So we set to and wrote. Can you wonder,  
If the writing was feeble or dead?  
We had started as editors—Thunder!  
We were authors instead.

We'd mistaken our calling, election,  
Vocation, department, and use;  
We had thought that our task was selection,

And we found that we had to produce.  
So we sigh for release from our labours,  
We pray for a happy despatch,  
We will take our last leave of our neighbours,  
And then—Colney Hatch.

We are singing this dolorous ditty  
As we part at the foot of the stairs;  
We cannot but think it's a pity,  
But what matter? there's nobody cares.  
Our candle burns low in its socket,  
There is nothing left but the wick;  
And these Notes, that went up like a rocket,  
Come down like the stick.

Ever to be the best. To lead  
In whatsoever things are true;  
Not stand among the halting crew,  
The faint of heart, the feeble-kneed,  
Who tarry for a certain sign  
To make them follow with the rest—  
Oh, let not their reproach be thine!  
But ever be the best.

For want of this aspiring soul,  
Great deeds on earth remain undone,  
But, sharpened by the sight of one,  
Many shall press toward the goal.  
Thou running foremost of the throng,  
The fire of striving in thy breast,  
Shalt win, although the race be long,  
And ever be the best.

And wilt thou question of the prize?  
'Tis not of silver or of gold,  
Nor in applauses manifold,  
But hidden in the heart it lies:  
To know that but for thee not one  
Had run the race or sought the quest,  
To know that thou hast ever done  
And ever been the best.



# Trafalgar Square

These verses have I pilfered like a bee  
Out of a letter from my C. C. C.  
In London, showing what befell him there,  
With other things, of interest to me

One page described a night in open air  
He spent last summer in Trafalgar Square,  
With men and women who by want are driven  
Thither for lodging, when the nights are fair.

No roof there is between their heads and heaven,  
No warmth but what by ragged clothes is given,  
No comfort but the company of those  
Who with despair, like them, have vainly striven.

On benches there uneasily they doze,  
Snatching brief morsels of a poor repose,  
And if through weariness they might sleep sound,  
Their eyes must open almost ere they close.

With even tramp upon the paven ground,  
Twice every hour the night patrol comes round  
To clear these wretches off, who may not keep  
The miserable couches they have found.

Yet the stern shepherds of the poor black sheep  
Will soften when they see a woman weep.  
There was a mother there who strove in vain,  
With sobs, to hush a starving child to sleep.

And through the night which took so long to wane,  
He saw sad sufferers relieving pain,  
And daughters of iniquity and scorn  
Performing deeds which God will not disdain.

There was a girl, forlorn of the forlorn,  
Whose dress was white, but draggled, soiled, and torn,  
Who wandered like a ghost without a home,  
She spoke to him before the day was born.

She, who all night, when spoken to, was dumb,  
Earning dislike from most, abuse from some,  
Now asked the hour, and when he told her `Two,'  
Wailed, `O my God, will daylight never come?'

Yes, it will come, and change the sky anew  
From star-besprinkled black to sunlit blue,  
And bring sweet thoughts and innocent desires  
To countless girls. What will it bring to you?

Robert Fuller Murray

# Triolet

After the melting of the snow  
Divines depart and April comes;  
Examinations nearer grow  
After the melting of the snow;  
The grinder wears a face of woe,  
The waster smokes and twirls his thumbs;  
After the melting of the snow  
Divines depart and April comes.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Undesired Revenge

Sorrow and sin have worked their will  
For years upon your sovereign face,  
And yet it keeps a faded trace  
Of its unequalled beauty still,  
As ruined sanctuaries hold  
A crumbled trace of perfect mould  
In shrines which saints no longer fill.

I knew you in your splendid morn,  
Oh, how imperiously sweet!  
I bowed and worshipped at your feet,  
And you received my love with scorn.  
Now I scorn you. It is a change,  
When I consider it, how strange  
That you, not I, should be forlorn.

Do you suppose I have no pain  
To see you play this sorry part,  
With faded face and broken heart,  
And life lived utterly in vain?  
Oh would to God that you once more  
Might scorn me as you did of yore,  
And I might worship you again!

Robert Fuller Murray

# Ursula

There is a village in a southern land,  
By rounded hills closed in on every hand.  
The streets slope steeply to the market-square,  
Long lines of white-washed houses, clean and fair,  
With roofs irregular, and steps of stone  
Ascending to the front of every one.  
The people swarthy, idle, full of mirth,  
Live mostly by the tillage of the earth.

Upon the northern hill-top, looking down,  
Like some sequestered saint upon the town,  
Stands the great convent.

On a summer night,  
Ten years ago, the moon with rising light  
Made all the convent towers as clear as day,  
While still in deepest shade the village lay.  
Both light and shadow with repose were filled,  
The village sounds, the convent bells were stilled.  
No foot in all the streets was now astir,  
And in the convent none kept watch but her  
Whom they called Ursula. The moonlight fell  
Brightly around her in the lonely cell.  
Her eyes were dark, and full of unshed woe,  
Like mountain tarns which cannot overflow,  
Surcharged with rain, and round about the eyes  
Deep rings recorded sleepless nights, and cries  
Stifled before their birth. Her brow was pale,  
And like a marble temple in a vale  
Of cypress trees, shone shadowed by her hair.  
So still she was, that had you seen her there,  
You might have thought you were beholding death.  
Her lips were parted, but if any breath  
Came from between them, it were hard to know  
By any movement of her breast of snow.

But when the summer night was now far spent,  
She kneeled upon the floor. Her head she leant  
Down on the cold stone of the window-seat.

God knows if there were any vital heat  
In those pale brows, or if they chilled the stone.  
And as she knelt, she made a bitter moan,  
With words that issued from a bitter soul, -  
`O Mary, Mother, and is this thy goal,  
Thy peace which waiteth for the world-worn heart?  
Is it for this I live and die apart  
From all that once I knew? O Holy God,  
Is this the blessed chastening of Thy rod,  
Which only wounds to heal? Is this the cross  
That I must carry, counting all for loss  
Which once was precious in the world to me?  
If Thou be God, blot out my memory,  
And let me come, forsaking all, to Thee.  
But here, though that old world beholds me not,  
Here, though I seek Thee through my lonely lot,  
Here, though I fast, do penance day by day,  
Kneel at Thy feet, and ever watch and pray,  
Beloved forms from that forsaken world  
Revisit me. The pale blue smoke is curled  
Up from the dwellings of the sons of men.  
I see it, and all my heart turns back again  
From seeking Thee, to find the forms I love.

`Thou, with Thy saints abiding far above,  
What canst Thou know of this, my earthly pain?  
They said to me, Thou shalt be born again,  
And learn that worldly things are nothing worth,  
In that new state. O God, is this new birth,  
Birth of the spirit dying to the flesh?  
Are these the living waters which refresh  
The thirsty spirit, that it thirst no more?  
Still all my life is thirsting to the core.  
Thou canst not satisfy, if this be Thou.  
And yet I dream, or I remember how,  
Before I came here, while I tarried yet  
Among the friends they tell me to forget,  
I never seemed to seek Thee, but I found  
Thou wert in all the loveliness around,  
And most of all in hearts that loved me well.

`And then I came to seek Thee in this cell,

To crucify my worldliness and pride,  
To lay my heart's affections all aside,  
As carnal hindrances which held my soul  
From hasting unencumbered to her goal.  
And all this have I done, or else have striven  
To do, obeying the behest of Heaven,  
And my reward is bitterness. I seem  
To wander always in a feverish dream  
On plains where there is only sun and sand,  
No rock or tree in all the weary land,  
My thirst unquenchable, my heart burnt dry.  
And still in my parched throat I faintly cry,  
Deliver me, O Lord: bow down Thine ear!

`He will not answer me. He does not hear.  
I am alone within the universe.  
Oh for a strength of will to rise and curse  
God, and defy Him here to strike me dead!  
But my heart fails me, and I bow my head,  
And cry to Him for mercy, still in vain.  
Oh for some sudden agony of pain,  
To make such insurrection in my soul  
That I might burst all bondage of control,  
Be for one moment as the beasts that die,  
And pour my life in one blaspheming cry!

The morning came, and all the convent towers  
Were gilt with glory by the golden hours.  
But where was Ursula? The sisters came  
With quiet footsteps, calling her by name,  
But there was none that answered. In her cell,  
The glad, illuminating sunshine fell  
On form and face, and showed that she was dead.  
`May Christ receive her soul!' the sisters said,  
And spoke in whispers of her holy life,  
And how God's mercy spared her pain and strife,  
And gave this quiet death. The face was still,  
Like a tired child's, that lies and sleeps its fill.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Vanity Of Vanities

Be ye happy, if ye may,  
In the years that pass away.  
Ye shall pass and be forgot,  
And your place shall know you not.

Other generations rise,  
With the same hope in their eyes  
That in yours is kindled now,  
And the same light on their brow.

They shall see the selfsame sun  
That your eyes now gaze upon,  
They shall breathe the same sweet air,  
And shall reckon not who ye were.

Yet they too shall fade at last  
In the twilight of the past,  
They and you alike shall be  
Lost from the world's memory.

Then, while yet ye breathe and live,  
Drink the cup that life can give.  
Be ye happy, if ye may,  
In the years that pass away,

Ere the golden bowl be broken,  
Ere ye pass and leave no token,  
Ere the silver cord be loosed,  
Ere ye turn again to dust.

'And shall this be all,' ye cry,  
'But to eat and drink and die?  
If no more than this there be,  
Vanity of vanity!'

Yea, all things are vanity,  
And what else but vain are ye?  
Ye who boast yourselves the kings  
Over all created things.

Kings! whence came your right to reign?  
Ye shall be dethroned again.  
Yet for this, your one brief hour,  
Wield your mockery of power.

Dupes of Fate, that treads you down  
Wear awhile your tinsel crown  
Be ye happy, if ye may,  
In the years that pass away.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Vivien's Song

at the I.I.a. examination

In Algebra, if Algebra be ours,  
x and x<sup>2</sup> can ne'er be equal powers,  
Unless x=1, or none at all.

It is the little error in the sum,  
That by and by will make the answer come  
To something queer, or else not come at all.

The little error in the easy sum,  
The little slit across the kettle-drum,  
That makes the instrument not play at all.

It is not worth correcting: let it go:  
But shall I? Answer, Prudence, answer, no.  
And bid me do it right or not at all.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Welcome Home

The fire burns bright  
And the hearth is clean swept,  
As she likes it kept,  
And the lamp is alight.  
She is coming to-night.

The wind's east of late.  
When she comes, she'll be cold,  
So the big chair is rolled  
Close up to the grate,  
And I listen and wait.

The shutters are fast,  
And the red curtains hide  
Every hint of outside.  
But hark, how the blast  
Whistled then as it passed!

Or was it the train?  
How long shall I stand,  
With my watch in my hand,  
And listen in vain  
For the wheels in the lane?

Hark! A rumble I hear  
(Will the wind not be still?),  
And it comes down the hill,  
And it grows on the ear,  
And now it is near.

Quick, a fresh log to burn!  
Run and open the door,  
Hold a lamp out before  
To light up the turn,  
And bring in the urn.

You are come, then, at last!  
O my dear, is it you?  
I can scarce think it true

I am holding you fast,  
And sorrow is past.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Where's The Use?

Oh, where's the use of having gifts that can't be turned to money?  
And where's the use of singing, when there's no one wants to hear?  
It may be one or two will say your songs are sweet as honey,  
But where's the use of honey, when the loaf of bread is dear?

Robert Fuller Murray

## Winter At St Andrews

The city once again doth wear  
Her wonted dress of winter's bride,  
Her mantle woven of misty air,  
With saffron sunlight faintly dyed.  
She sits above the seething tide,  
Of all her summer robes forlorn -  
And dead is all her summer pride -  
The leaves are off Queen Mary's Thorn.

All round, the landscape stretches bare,  
The bleak fields lying far and wide,  
Monotonous, with here and there  
A lone tree on a lone hillside.  
No more the land is glorified  
With golden gleams of ripening corn,  
Scarce is a cheerful hue descried -  
The leaves are off Queen Mary's Thorn.

For me, I do not greatly care  
Though leaves be dead, and mists abide.  
To me the place is thrice as fair  
In winter as in summer-tide:  
With kindlier memories allied  
Of pleasure past and pain o'erworn.  
What care I, though the earth may hide  
The leaves from off Queen Mary's Thorn?

Thus I unto my friend replied,  
When, on a chill late autumn morn,  
He pointed to the tree, and cried,  
'The leaves are off Queen Mary's Thorn!'

Robert Fuller Murray

## Yet A Little Sleep

Beside the drowsy streams that creep  
Within this island of repose,  
Oh, let us rest from cares and woes,  
Oh, let us fold our hands to sleep!

Is it ignoble, then, to keep  
Awhile from where the rough wind blows,  
And all is strife, and no man knows  
What end awaits him on the deep?

The voyager may rest awhile,  
When rest invites, and yet may be  
Neither a sluggard nor a craven.  
With strength renewed he quits the isle,  
And putting out again to sea,  
Makes sail for his desired haven.

Robert Fuller Murray

# Youth Renewed

When one who has wandered out of the way  
Which leads to the hills of joy,  
Whose heart has grown both cold and grey,  
Though it be but the heart of a boy -  
When such a one turns back his feet  
From the valley of shadow and pain,  
Is not the sunshine passing sweet,  
When a man grows young again?

How gladly he mounts up the steep hillside,  
With strength that is born anew,  
And in his veins, like a full springtide,  
The blood streams through and through.  
And far above is the summit clear,  
And his heart to be there is fain,  
And all too slowly it comes more near  
When a man grows young again.

He breathes the pure sweet mountain breath,  
And it widens all his heart,  
And life seems no more kin to death,  
Nor death the better part.  
And in tones that are strong and rich and deep  
He sings a grand refrain,  
For the soul has awakened from mortal sleep,  
When a man grows young again.

Robert Fuller Murray