The Persian Sufists.
Abu-Nowas (756-810 A.D.)
Saadi 1184-1292 A.D.
Hafiz (1310-1388 A.D.)
Djami (1414-1492 A.D.)

When the Persian people became Mohametans under the
conquest of the successors of Mohamet, there gradually arose
a school of mystics called Sufists. These under the guise of
glosses on orthodox Mohamedanism taught an esoteric philo-
sophy in which the devotion toward boys played a prominent part.
The compositions of the four poets listed above, as well as many
others, are filled with poems praising the beauty and lovableness
of boys. These were interpreted as allegorical when objection
was made to their theme, but there is no doubt but that a very
real and deep seated devotion to the paidophilic ideal permeates
all this school of poets.

Few of these poems have been translated into English un-
mutilated. Generally the redactor has substituted “she” and
“her” for “he” and “him” wherever they occur. There is great
need for a courageous translator to handle Persian poetry with
the same honesty that Sir Richard Burton showed in his transla-
tion of the 1001 Nights and similar Arabic literature.

“The Door of Friendship”

Once came a youth to the doorway of friendship and knocked
“Ah” cried a voice from within “faithful heart, is it thou?”
“Yea” the youth answered, “‘tis I” But the door remained locked.
“There is no room for thee then!” cried the other, “Go thou!”

Weeping the youth turned away: for a year remained lone
Burned, he hung all on fire for the waiting to end;
Till with no self in him left, no heart of his own,
Back like a swallow came he to the house of his friend.

Quick at the portal he knocked, and trembled for fear
Lest from his lips there should fall any word but the true:
“Ah” cried the friend from within, “who is this that I hear?”
Spake he that waited without, “O Beloved, it is you”.

“If it be I, then let me come in” the friend cried:
“Under one roof was no room for two ‘selves’ to abide!”

By Rumi. Trans. by Lawrence Houseman
"Happy the moment when we were seated in the palace,
Thou and I;
With two forms and with two figures but with one soul,
Thou and I!
   By Rumi. Trans. by R. A. Nicholson

"No tongue can express
What means the separation from a friend!"
   By Hafiz; translated by E. C.

"Who shall impute it as a fault
That I am enchanted by my friend?
   By Saadi; trans. by E. C."
Poems From the Thousand and One Nights.
(1450 A.D.)

This marvellous collection of stories and poems was probably put together in its present shape in Egypt under the domination of the Mamelukes in the first half of the fifteenth century. The tone of the various tales and poems accurately reflects the freedom and spaciousness of that epoch of Egyptian life under Arabian rule.

In the reign of the famous Saladin, this picked corps of soldiers purchased as boys was established. It was composed of men who were bought as boys for their fine physique and promise. At first they were merely the body-guard of the Sultan; but soon they became the dominant political power in the land. The Sultan, Malik al Mozaffar (1307-1341) sought for lovely, well-built boys from every nation and people and paid enormous prices for likely youths. This corps of soldiers so recruited soon became noted for their interest in boys. From them the whole tone of Egyptian life took on a paidophillic tinge which is faithfully portrayed in the “Nights” and is well preserved in the Burton translation.

I

In his face-sky shines the fullest moon,
    In his cheeks' anemone glows the sun,
He so conquered beauty that he hath won
    All charms of humanity one by one.

II

That jet-black hair, that glossy brow,—
    My slender-waisted lad,—of thine
Can darkness round creation throw
    Or make it brightly shine.

III

Beauty they brought with him to make compare
But Beauty hung her head in shame and care;
Quoth they “O Beauty, hast thou seen his like”
And Beauty cried “His like? Not anywhere!”
Translated by Sir Richard Francis Burton
Michelangelo.
Sculptor, Painter, Architect and Poet
(1475-1564 A.D.)

Michel Angelo Buonarotti, the greatest artist the Italian race has produced, early showed his interest in boys. His first piece of sculpture was a statue of the boy St. John. His first masterpiece was the nude "David", now one of the most prized treasures of the City of Florence.

Two of Michelangelo's most treasured friends were Cecchino Bracci, and Tomasso Cavalieri. As his biographer Sydney Colvin says, "In 1533-1534 we find him beginning to address impassioned sonnets to a beautiful and gifted youth, Tomasso Cavalieri. The sentiment of these sonnets is curiously comparable to that expressed by Shakespere in his sonnets to Mr. W. H."

But at Michelangelo's death his papers came into the possession of his nephew Leonardo Buonarotti. This man, thinking to do his uncle a service, changed and distorted these sonnets so as to make them appear to be addressed to some female.

It was not until J. A. Symonds studied the original manuscripts preserved in Florence that this pious fraud was discovered and rectified.

To Tommaso Cavalieri.
(In English "Thomas Knight")

If only chains and bands can make me blest
No marvel if alone and bare I go,—
An armed "Knight's" captive and slave confest!

Comparing the Love of Young Men With the Love for Women.

Love is not always harsh and deadly sin:
If it be love of loveliness divine,
It leaves the heart all soft and infantine
For rays of God's own grace to enter in.
Love fits the soul with wings and bids her win
Her flight aloft nor e'er to earth decline;
'Tis the first step that leads her to the shrine
Of him who slakes the thirst that burns within.
The love of that whereof I speak ascends:
Woman is different far; the love of her
But 'll befits a heart all manly wise:
The one love soars, the other downward tends:
The soul lights this, while that the senses stir
And still his arrow at base quarry flies.

Trans. by J. A. Symonds.
Christopher Marlowe.
Poet and Dramatist,
(1564-1593)

Christopher Marlowe was matriculated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, at the age of sixteen. He received his B.A. in 1583 and his M.A. in 1587. Soon after his graduation he came to London and began to write for the stage. His plays won instant attention. Soon he was recognized as the foremost English dramatist of his day.

His early play "Dido" begins with a scene between Jupiter and his Ganymede. In his lovely poem "Hero and Leander" the descriptions of Leander are some of the finest in the English tongue. In 1592 Marlowe set forth his masterpiece, the play Edward II. This tragedy recounts the boundless devotion of King Edward II for his young friend Piers Gaveston. It is interesting to note that this play has been recently staged by the National Theatre of Czeckoslovakia at Prague with great success. In 1923 it was the "success of the year" in the Phoenix Players' repertoire in London.

Trouble soon threatened this unfortunate poet. The Jesuit Parsons anonymously accused Marlowe of atheism, then a capital crime. An informer accused him of asserting his right to coin money. Marlowe's apprehension was ordered by the Privy Council of England. But before the officers could arrest him, the luckless poet was murdered by a servant in an inn at Deptford. So perished mournfully one of the most brilliant poets the English race has produced.

Leander.
From Marlowe's "Hero and Leander."

Amourous Leander, beautiful and young,
Whose tragedy divine Musaeus sung,
Dwelt at Abydos; since him dwelt there none
For whom succeeding times make more moan.
His dangling tresses that were never shorn,
Had they been cut and unto Cholchus borne,
Would have allured the venturous youth of Greece
To hazard more than for the Golden Fleece.
His body was as straight as Circe's wand,
Jove might have sipt out nectar from his hand!
Even as delicious meat is to the taste
So was his neck in touching and surpast
The white of Pelops' shoulder!
Edward II.

Scene I.

Gaveston (Reading letter from King Edward).

“What greater bliss can hap to Gaveston
Than live and be the favorite of a King!
Sweet Prince, I come; these, thy amorous lines
Might have enforced me to have swum from France
And like Leander, gaspéd upon the sand,
So thou would'st smile and take me in thine arms.”

(Enter Edward.)

Gaveston (running to Edward). “I can no longer
keep me from my Lord!” (Kisses Edward's hand)

Edward.

“What, Gaveston, welcome, kiss not my hand!
Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee!
Why should'st thou kneel? Knowest thou not who I am
Thy friend, thyself, another Gaveston!”
William Shakespere.
Dramatist and poet.
(1564-1616)

The greatest of English poets was educated in the Grammar School of his native town, Stratford-on-Avon. As a young man he was rather wild. When 18 years old he became entangled with a woman ten years his senior and had to marry her hastily. Later he was arrested as a poacher.

Soon he drifted to London. There he made himself useful to the theatrical element. Tradition says that he organized a group of boys called "Shakespere's Boys" to hold the horses of gentlemen while at the play. But the opportunity for better things came and Shakespere began to write.

In April 1593 was published Shakespere's first poem, "Venus and Adonis." It tells of the amorous advances of the Queen of Beauty herself to the boy Adonis and his complete indifference to her charms. About this same time Shakespere began that wonderful series of sonnets to his beloved friend Mr. W. H. Mr. W. H. was probably Will Hughes (graduated from Oxford in 1592), only son of Bishop Hughes of St. Asaph, 1573-1600.

Shakespere, it must be remembered, lived in a woman-less theatrical world. The female parts were all taken by young boys or by men who specialized in female impersonations, as in China today. For instance, the Juliet of "Romeo and Juliet" one of Shakespere's greatest plays, is clearly intended to be acted by a boy of fourteen.

That Shakespere's interest in young people continued to the end of his life is shown by his devotion to the Davenant boys at Oxford. Robert Davenant, who was fifteen when the great poet died, used to boast in after years of the frequency with which Shakespere had kissed him. Of William Davenant, Robert's younger brother, Shakespere was so fond that ignorant folk surmised that the boy must be the dramatist's illegitimate son. This boy wrote an Ode to Shakespere upon the great poet's death.
Venus and Adonis.
By William Shakespere.
(pub. 1593)

Even as the sun with purple color'd face
Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn
Rose-check'd Adonis hied him to the chase,—
Hunting he loved, but Love he laughed to scorn.
Sick-thoughtéd Venus makes amain to him
And like a bold-faced suitor 'gins to woo him.

"Thrice fairer than myself",—she thus began,—
"The field's chief flower, sweet beyond compare,
Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man,
More white and red than doves or roses are;
Nature that made thee, with herself at strife,
Saith that the world hath ending with thy life."

He burns with bashful shame,—she with her tears
Doth quench the maiden burning of his cheeks;
Then with her windy sighs and golden hairs
To fan and blow them dry again she seeks:
He saith she is immodest, blames her miss,—
What follows more she murders with a kiss!

Even as an empty eagle, sharp by fast
Tears with her beak on feathers, flesh and bone,
Shaking her wings, devouring all in haste
Till either gorge be stuffed or prey be gone;
Even so she kissed his brow, his cheek, his chin,
And where she ends she doth anew begin!

Sonnets to Mr. W. H.

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
To thee I send this written ambassage,
To witness duty, not to show my wit;
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it,
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it;
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,
And puts apparel on my tattered loving
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect;
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee:
Till then, not show my head where thou mays't prove me.
A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the Master-Mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false woman's fashion;
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue, all "hues" in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created;
Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she picked thee out for woman's pleasure,
Mine be thy love and thy love's use their treasure.

Some day my love shall be, as I am now,
With Time's injurious hand crushed and o'erworn;
When hours have drained his blood and filled his brow
With lines and wrinkles; when his youthful morn
Hath travelled on to age's steepy night,
And all those beauties whereof now he's king
Are vanishing or vanished out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his spring;
For such a time do I now fortify
Against confounding Age's cruel knife,
That he shall never cut from memory
My sweet love's beauty, through my lover's life.
His beauty shall in these black lines be seen
And they shall live and he in them be green.

A Lover's Complaint.
By William Shakespere.

His browny locks did hang in crooked curls;
And every light occasion of the wind
Upon his lips their silken parcels hurls.
What's sweet to do, to do will aptly find,
Each eye that saw him did enchant the mind;
For on his visage was in little drawn
What largeness thinks in Paradise was sawn. (seen)

Small show of man was yet upon his chin;
His phoenix-down began but to appear,
Like unshorn velvet, on that term-less skin,
Whose bare out-bragged the Webb it seemed to wear.
Yet showed his visage by that cost more dear;
And nice affections wavered stood in doubt
If best were as it was, or best without.
Michael Drayton.
(1563-1631)

As a boy, Michael Drayton was a page to Sir Henry Goodere. Upon reaching man's estate he gravitated to London. Soon after his arrival he published a book of religious verse.

It is interesting to note the striking parallelisms of theme and poem among these Elizabethan poets. In July 1593 was published Marlowe's play "Edward II," on the devotion of this king for Piers Gaveston; in December 1598 Drayton published his poem on this same subject, "The Legend of Piers Gaveston." In April 1599 Shakespeare published his poem "Venus and Adonis" on the amorous approaches of a woman, Venus, to an unwilling boy, Adonis. Just a year later in April 1594 Drayton published his poem "Endymion" on the amorous approaches of a woman, Phoebe, to an unwilling boy Endymion. It is worthy of note that Drayton returned twice again to the subject of Edward II and Piers Gaveston in his poems,—in his "Mortimeriados" and the "Historical Epistles." He died unmarried in 1631.

Pier Gaveston's Soliloquy.
From Drayton's "Legend of Piers Gaveston"

"All men in shape I did so far excel
(The parts in me such harmony did bear)
As in my model Nature seemed to tell
That her perfection she had placed there
As from each age reserving the rarest feature
To make me up her excellentest creature!

Such was the bait that gained Prince Edward's love
Breeding that league of amittie thereby,
That no misfortune after could remove
When she the utmost of her force did try;
Nor Death itself retained the power to sunder
Friendship seld' seen and in this world a wonder!

Thus Edward in the April of his age
While yet the crown sate on his father's head
Like that great Jove with his raped Phrygian page
Me with ambrosial delicacies fed;
    He might command that was the sovereign's son
And what I said, that only must be done!

My smiles his life, so joyed he in my sight
That his delight was led by my desire,
From my clear eyes so borrowing all his light
As pale-eyed Cynthia from her brother's fire;
    He made my cheek the pillow for his head,
My brow his book, my bosom was his bed!"

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"Endymion"

From Drayton's "Endimion", pub. 1594.

Endymion, the lovely shepherd boy,
Endymion, great Phoebe's only joy,
Endymion, in whose pure-shining eyes
The naked fairies dance the hagedies;
The shag-haired satyrs, mountain-climbing race
Have been made tame by gazing on his face.
His dainty hand the snow itself did stain
As hers to whom Jove showered in golden rain:
His tresses of the Raven's shining black,
Straggled in curls along his manly back.

This shepherd Phoebe ever did behold
Whose love already had her thoughts controlled;
Near to a Grove she had Endymion spied
When he was fishing by the River's side,
Under a Poplar shadowed from the sun
When merrily to court him she begun;
"Sweet Boy" quoth she "take what thou wish;
When thou dost angle, would I were a fish!"
But he entreats her that she would be gone
And at this time to let him be alone.
But for all this the nymph would not forbear
And now she smooths his crispy-curled hair;
And when he (rudely) willed her to refrain,
Yet scarcely ended, she begins again.
Then with a sigh her speeches off she broke
The while her eyes to him in silence spoke!

The Youthful David.

The bees and wasps in wilderness wild
Have with his beauties often been beguiled,—
Roses and lilies thinking they have seen
But finding they have deceived been!
His lips in their pure coral liveries mock
A row of pearls cut from a crystal rock,
(Which stood between them, each of equal height) ;-—
From top to toe his limbs so clean and straight
That wolvsès oft that would his sheep surprise
Became so charmed with the splendour of his eyes
That they forgot their ravine and have lain
Down by his flock, so near him they would fain!
Richard Barnfield.
(1574-1627)

Richard Barnfield entered Oxford University at the age of fifteen. Upon obtaining his degree he went up to London and soon became a member of the literary circle surrounding Drayton, Shakspere, etc.

When only nineteen, the young poet published his "The Affectionate Shepheard" a book of poems on the love of a shepherd for a boy called Ganymede. Two months later Barnfield published his second book of verse, called "Cynthia's Revels", in which were further poems in honor of the boy "Ganymede".

It is remarkable that four fine poems by as many poets, on lovely youths should be published within the years,—1592-1594—Marlowe’s Edward II, Shakspere’s "Venus and Adonis", Drayton’s "Endymion" and Barnfield’s poems in praise of "Ganymede". But it should be remembered that this interest in youths was not confined to England only and was later to culminate in the poem "L'Adone" of the Italian, John Baptist Marini, who spends 45,000 lines of verse to praise the young boy, Adonis!

In 1605 Barnfield retired to his estates. There he lived quietly until his death in 1627, having never married.

To Ganymede.

Sometimes I wish that I his pillow were
That I might steal a kiss and be not seen
So I might gaze upon his sleeping een (eyes)
Although I do it with a panting fear!
The Tears of an Affectionate Shephearde for the Love of the Boy Ganymede.

If it be sin to love a sweet-faced Boy
(Whose amber locks truss’d up in golden trammels
Dangle adown his lovely cheeks with joy
When pearl and flowers his fair hair enamels)—
If it be sin to love a lovely lad
Oh, then sin I, who for such love am sad.

His ivory white and alabaster skin
Is stained throughout with rare Vermillion red
Whose twinkling, starry light doth never blin (change)
To shine on lovely Venus (Beauty’s bed)
But as the lily and the blushing rose
So white and red on him in order grows!

In Praise of Ganymede

Cherry-lipped Adonis in his snowy shape
Might not compare with his pure Ivory white
On whose fair front a Poet’s pen may write,
Whose roseate red excells the crimson grape!
His love-enticing delicate soft limbs
Are rarely framed t’intrap poor gazing eyes!
His cheeks the Lily and Carnation dyes
With lovely tincture that Apollo’s dims!
His lips ripe strawberies in nectar wet;
His mouth a hive, his tongue a honey-comb!
Where Muses (like Bees) make their mansion.
His teeth pure pearl in blushing coral set,—
Oh, how can such a body, sin-procurin’?
Be slow to love, and quick to hate enduring!

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Giovanni Battista Marino.
Poet and Stylist.
(1569-1625)

Marino, the Italian contemporary of Shakspere and the
culminating figure of the Italian renaissance has many striking
analogies with the greatest of English poets. Like Shakspere he
had a thorough experience in that stern school of life "moneyless
and a stranger in a great city." Like Shakspere he left the city
of his birth in ill repute only to return to it in triumph in his
old age.

Both wrote a famous poem upon the boy Adonis, Shakspere
at the beginning of his fame, Marino at the apex of his career.
Both died the most famous writer of their race in their time, and
had won out against the sneers and activities of the "Unco' guid".

Marino was born in the city of Naples in 1569. Quarrelling
with his father, he was turned out of doors. He made his home
with the famous lazaroni of Naples, those happy-go-lucky
homeless ones of that wonderful city. Marino became the lазвa-
roni's poet and interpreter; his verses quickly attracted the
attention of great men. But before long he was in trouble over
a love escapade and had to flee Naples. He went to Rome and at
once became the confidential secretary of a Cardinal,—Cardinal
Aldobrandino. His literary work increased his fame and he was
made a knight of St. Maurice by the Duke of Savoy.

In 1615 Marino went to France and was received with open
arms by the Queen of France, Marie de Medici. He was given
a pension of 10,000 crowns a year in order that he might be able
to devote his whole attention to his masterpiece, the "Adonis" on
which he was then working.

In 1623, the great poem, containing 45,000 lines, was pub-
lished under the patronage of the Queen of France. It received
the greatest of praise both in France and Italy. Everywhere
"Marinism" became the style and the fashion of the day.

In the midst of his success Marino returned to his old
home, Naples. The city from which he had fled in disgrace now
welcomed him as her most famous son. Nobles were proud to
escort him on horse back; his old friends the lazaroni, mad with
delight, scattered roses in his path. A year later, in 1625, still
in the height of his fame, the great poet died. He lived and
died a bachelor.
His masterpiece the great poem "L'Adone" may be epitomized from the words of John Addington Symonds. It's smooth-chinned hero, Adonis, beautiful as a girl, threads a labyrinth of adventures. Mercury introduces him to our attention in a series of the classical myths, the tales of Narcissus, Ganymede, Cyparissus, Hylas, Atys, in which Antiquity portrayed the attractiveness of lovely boyhood. Venus woos him and the witch Falserina seeks to captivate him, by her enchantments. Adonis is seized by brigands but his beauty quickly wins him his freedom.

He then contends with a band of other beautiful youths for the throne of Cyprus, to be awarded to the fairest boy. There in Cyprus he meets his death by the unintended assault of a wild boar. As in Shakspere's "Venus and Adonis" the savage animal attracted by Adonis' beauty attempts to caress his thigh but instead unwittingly gives the boy his death wound in his groin.

Contemporary critics hailed "L'Adone" as an "Epic of Peace". And so it is,—peace with human nature as it actually is in all its diversities and variations.

"L'Adone."

La nela region riccae felice
D'Arabia bella Adone il giovinetto
Quasi' competitor de la Fenici,
Senza pari in belta vive soletto.
Adon nato de lei, cui la nutrici
Col proprio genitor giunse in un letto;
Di lei, che volta in pianta, i suoi dolori
Ancor distillain lagrinosi adori.

Fattezze mai si signorili e belle
Non vide l'occhio mio lucido e chiaro,
Sventurato fanciullo, a cui te stelle
Prima il rigor, che lo splendor mostaro.
Contro gli armò crude influenza e felle
Ancor de lui non visto, il Cielo avaro:
Poi che, mette l'un sorse, e l'altra giacque
Al morir de la madre il figlio nacque.
Francis Beaumont.
Poet and Dramatist.
(1584-1624)

Francis Beaumont entered Oxford University at the age of twelve. When seventeen or eighteen he wrote his first poem "Hermaphroditus", which Swinburne has termed a remarkable tour de force. After leaving Oxford, Beaumont met John Fletcher, son of a sometime Bishop of London. The two youths became inseparable friends. Together they composed that series of plays which rank next to Shakspere's in sustained power. Aubrey says "There was a wonderful consistency of phantasy between Mr. Francis Beaumont and Mr. Ion Fletcher, which caused that dearness of feeling between them. They lived together in Southwark, not far from the Globe Theatre, both bachelors, between them the same clothes and cloak."
"Hermaphroditus"
From Beaumont's "Hermaphroditus."

There was a lovely boy the nymphs had kept
That on the Idalian mountains oft had slept;
His cheeks were sanguine and his lips were red
As o'er the blushing leaves of the rose spread,
For his white hand each goddess did him woo
For it was whiter than the driven snow;
His leg was straighter than the thigh of Jove
And he far fairer than the God of Love.

When this well-shap'd boy, Beauty's chief king,
Had seen the labour of the fifteenth spring,
He 'gan to travel from his place of birth,
Leaving the stately hills where he was nurst,
Seeking clear, limpid springs to bathe him in,
For he did love to wash his ivory skin.
The lovely nymphs have oft thus seen him swim
And closely stol'n his clothes from off the brim,
Because the wanton wenches would so fain
See him come nak'd to ask his clothes again.

Using to travel thus, one day he passed
A crystal brook that bubbled 'long the grass:
He then supposing he was all alone,
Like a young boy that is espied of none,
Runs here and there, then on the banks doth look,
Then on the crystal current of the brook;
Then with his foot he touch'd the silvery stream,—
Whose drowsy waves made music in their dream,—
And for he was not wholly in, did weep
Talking aloud and babbling in their sleep.
Whose pleasant coolness when the boy did feel
He thrust his foot down lower to the heel.
O'ercome with whose sweet noise, he did begin
To strip his soft clothes from his tender skin.

When straightway the scorching sun wept tears of brine
Because he dare not touch him with his shine
For fear of spoiling that same ivory skin
Whose whiteness he so much delighted in.
And the Moon, mother of mortal ease,
Would fain have come from the Antipodes
To there behold him naked as he stood
Ready to leap into the silver flood.
When Hermaphroditus, on the sands,
Clasping his white sides with his hollow hands,
Leaped lively from the land whereon he stood
Into the main part of the crystal flood,—
Like ivory then his snowy body was,
Or a white lily in a crystal Glass!!
Thomas Traherne.  
Priest and Poet.  
(1636-1674)  

At the age of sixteen Traherne became a commoner of Brasenose College, Oxford. He received his B.A. in 1656, his M.A. in 1661. He was priested about the year 1657.

Ten years later Traherne became associated with the closest friend of his career, Sir Orlando Bridgman, Lord Keeper of the Seals. Traherne became the Lord Keeper’s Chaplain and Director. When Sir Orlando fell into disfavor at Court and was deprived of the Seals, Traherne accompanied him into retirement. When Sir Orlando died in 1674, Traherne followed his friend to the grave within two months. He had never married.

The Salutation.

New burnished joys  
Which yellow gold and pearls excel  
Such sacred treasures are the limbs of boys  
In which a soul doth dwell,  
Their organized joints and azure veins  
More wealth include than all the world contains!

The Body.

O Lord  
Thou hast given me a body  
Wherein the glory of thy Power shineth!  
Wonderfully composed above the beasts,  
Within, distinguished into useful parts,  
 Beautified without, with many ornaments,—  

Limbs rarely poised  
And made for heaven;  
Arteries filled  
With celestial spirits:  
Veins wherein blood floweth  
Refreshing all my flesh  
Like rivers:  

Sinews fraught with the mystery  
Of wonderful strength,  
Stability,  
Feeling.  
O blessed be thy glorious name  
That thou hast made of it  
A Treasury of Wonders!  

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