

The background of the cover is a line drawing. At the top, a large sun with several straight rays is positioned. Below the sun, the sea is depicted with horizontal wavy lines. At the bottom, there is a field of flowers, with some flowers having circular heads and long stems. The overall style is simple and illustrative.

# Polynesian Legends

*by*

A. Stanley Sherratt

**A. Stanley Sherratt**'s powerful early sequence of Māori myths/legends has remained unpublished in book form since 1924, when it was first serialised in the Christchurch *Star*. Discovered in 2013 by editor Mark Pirie, who has republished the text, this new publication includes an introduction by Māori literary scholar Dr Michael O'Leary, giving details of Sherratt's life along with a brief history of Aotearoa legend telling in English.

*“Earl of Seacliff and Mark Pirie are to be commended for unearthing this valuable trove of Pākehā representations of Māori mythology and legend, not merely because they have never been committed to print in any sequential book format previously, but more especially because the representations contained within are manifestly without the devious elaborations and misguided romantic capital (Curnow, 1960) of many of Sherratt’s near contemporaries such as Domett. Indeed, Sherratt, for all his iambic pentameter and rhyming couplet, remains true to the Weltanschauung of the original and oral Indigenous élan of these mighty vignettes. Ka nui te pai te mahi kei konei!”*  
— Vaughan Rapatahana

# POLYNESIAN LEGENDS

AND OTHER POEMS

by

**A. Stanley Sherratt**

Edited by Mark Pirie

Introduction by Dr Michael O'Leary

(No. 2 in the HeadworX Classic Poetry Series)



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Sherratt’s legends (based on Sir George Grey’s *Polynesian Mythology and Maori Legends*) first appeared serialised in the Christchurch *Star*, ‘Among the Poets’ Saturday poetry page, February-September 1924.

The poems were signed “Sherratt”, of Kaiapoi.

Six other shorter poems by Sherratt also appeared in the Christchurch *Star*, 1923-24.

Sherratt’s ‘Sonnet to Christchurch’ came third in the Christchurch poem competition, *The Star*, December 1924, and was signed “A. Stanley Sherratt”.

Cover Art: Māui controlling the sun by Michael O’Leary, 2013

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## INTRODUCTION

**Alfred Stanley (Sherry) Sherratt** (4 December 1891-26 April 1977) is a little known Canterbury-born poet, and his preferred name was Stan. Of the main biographical details researched by the editor of this collection, we know that Stan Sherratt was a member of a well-known settler family in the Canterbury/South Canterbury region. Most of the Sherratt family were Primitive/Wesleyan Methodists and were prominent as JPs, borough councillors, timber merchants, mill owners, station managers and sheep farmers in the Canterbury/Geraldine area, and the family originating from Cheshire, England, has its own coat of arms.

Stan's own father Alfred Sherratt (d. 1940 aged 78 years, buried at Kaiapoi) was a tenterer at Buchanan's Paddock (1890 Timaru Electoral Roll). He moved the family north to Kaiapoi soon after, where he was a long-term employee of the Kaiapoi Wool Mills. Stan's mother was Elizabeth Ellen Barker (d. 1949 aged 81 years, buried at Kaiapoi) who had married Alfred in 1889 and is the householder at Peraki Street according to the Wise's Post Office directory from the 1890s till her death. The couple had four children (Stan and two sisters, Marjorie May and Dorothy Alice, and a fourth son Alfred, their first, died in infancy). In Kaiapoi, the family was affiliated with St Bartholomew's Anglican Church, although they may have also had earlier Methodist Church affiliation.

Stan was educated in Canterbury at Kaiapoi Borough School (where also was the poet Edith Howes) and Kaiapoi District High School which opened in 1902. Edith Howes' poem 'Kaiapoi' along with her specially written school poem 'School Days' give insight into Stan's earlier childhood days there:

### KAIAPOI

Cool willowed walks and poplar's grace,  
O green-embowered Kaiapoi,  
Belong to thy remembered face;  
And childhood's tears and childhood's joy.

Curved river's call and gleaming oar,  
And summer days in summer fields,  
Where matchless skylarks sing and soar—  
Fair visions these remembrance yields...

As a school boy Stan won prizes in bugle competitions (1904-05) and a photo survives in the school history of the boy scout cadets with Bugler Sherratt noted for his prize-winning performances. In 1901 he experienced the Cheviot earthquake, which brought down the school tower.

After finishing school, Stan seems to have moved to Christchurch to work for New Zealand Railways at the Southern Cross Hotel, becoming a clerk/official there. In 1916, during The Great War, Stan was called up to the NZEF (*New Zealand Gazette*, 24 February 1916) to be an officer on the recommendation of Railways. He was appointed as 2nd Lieutenant, Corps of New Zealand Engineers, New Zealand Railway Battalion (South Island) as a probationary officer but did not pass initial examination. Railways had posted him to Greymouth where he could get little training (according to his service file) and failed his examination on account of an 'insufficient knowledge of musketry'. He was noted as a West Coast reservist working as a clerk at the Duke of Edinburgh Hotel in Greymouth (*Grey River Argus*, 9 May 1917). In 1918 he was again called up and passed for service with the NZEF (*New Zealand Gazette*, 6 June 1918) and was transferred from Trentham Camp in July that year to the 45th Reinforcements as an NCO engineer (probationary corporal) with the territorial forces. It's uncertain he saw much service before peace was declared in November because he sent a wreath to a railway worker's funeral in Christchurch in October 1918, suggesting he was still in the country. He resigned his commission from the NZEF in 1920.

After the war, according to the Electoral Roll, Stan is listed on the Christchurch South Roll 1919, 1925-38 and lived for a while in Invercargill and Kaiapoi between the 1919 and 1925 rolls. In 1919 he had returned to his job as a clerk/official with Railways living in Christchurch at Moorhouse Avenue. On 25 October 1922 Stan married Eleanor Shardlow. The two are living at the same address at Carrick Street on the 1922 Invercargill Roll, with Stan given as 'NZR clerk'. In Kaiapoi, he must have been a clerk at the Kaiapoi Rail office. During his Kaiapoi return 1923-24 he published the bulk of his newspaper poetry. He returned to Sydenham, Christchurch, by December 1924, resuming his role as a clerk/official for Railways; his occupations are given by the Electoral Roll and the Wise's Post Office directory for the years up until the 1950s when he retired from Railways. Stan and his wife Eleanor had two daughters: Eleanor Elizabeth (1928-2011) and Mae Russell.

By 1946, the Wise's directory lists him as having moved to Cholmondeley Avenue, Opawa, Christchurch, where he soon retired and eventually moved north with his family to Nelson living out his later years at the family's Waimea Road address. Stan died in April 1977 and

was buried at Marsden Valley Cemetery (Anglican plot). His wife died in March 1979 and is buried there with him.

Sherratt's imaginative interpretations of Māori myths published in 1924 during his time spent at Kaiapoi are significant works for his time period. There may be no other comparable work that is as powerful as his in early telling of Māori legends in poetry in English. The 'Thirty Polynesian Legends' presented in this volume date from February-September 1924 when he serialised the work as a sequence published in the Christchurch *Star* newspaper. Sherratt was the most prolific of the *Star* group of poets during the 1922-26 period. He also wrote shorter lyrics or individual pieces for the *Star* from 1923-24 outside of his legends and these have also been collected here. Wellington literary scholar, poet and publisher Mark Pirie, the editor of this Sherratt collection, has recently produced a book of mostly unknown and previously unacknowledged *Star* poets in his *broadsheet/12* (special issue, November 2013) published by The Night Press, Wellington.

Sherratt uses Sir George Grey's *Polynesian Legends and Maori Myths* as his primary source text. Grey compiled his collection of Māori myths and legends, *Ngā Mahinga a ngā Tupuna* (also published in translation as *Polynesian Mythology*), with about a quarter of his material taken from the manuscripts of Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikaheke, also known as William Marsh. Te Rangikaheke was a famous chief of Ngati Rangiwewehi, in the Rotorua district. The son of a celebrated priest, he was born about 1820 and died in 1893. In his 1967 book, *Te Arawa*, D M Stafford tells us that Te Rangikaheke was 'one of the more turbulent characters of Te Arawa'. Grey also made extensive use of the works of Te Rangikaheke in his collection of songs, *Ngā Mōteatea*.

Like J E Ollivant's *Hine Moa, the Maori Maiden* (1879), A Perry's *Hinemoa and Tutaneikai: A Legend of Rotorua* (1910), J McLauchlan's *Legend of the Dauntless Rimu and the Princess Hia Wata* (1912), Charles Oscar Palmer's *Hinemoa: A Legend of Ao-tea-roa* (1918), Marieda Batten's *Maori Love Legends* (1920), James Izett's *Tutaneikai and Hinemoa* (1925) and Johannes C Andersen's *Tura and the Fairies* (1936), several writers of the late 19th Century and early 20th Century produced literary works in the English language, both poetry and prose, inspired by Māori myths and legends. Many writers published in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* as with John McGregor, James Izett and Elsdon Best also adapted, retold and interpreted legends/songs; so too did James Cowan and A W Reed in the 1950s and 1960s. L F Moriarty made a poetry collection of them in his *Verse from Maori Myth and Legend* (1958). A

full list is given by Linda Hirst in her *Select, Annotated Bibliography of Publications on The Myths, Legends and Folk Tales of the Maori* (1973).

Other writers since the 1950s who have written contemporary takes on these myths and legends in poetic form include Adele Schafer, F Wynn Williams, Barry Mitcalfe, Dora Somerville, Hone Tuwhare, Simon Williamson, Richard Adams (UK), Robert Sullivan, Alistair Te Ariki Campbell, Glenn Colquhoun and Apirana Taylor. A careful search of newspapers, books, periodicals and school annuals will no doubt bring up further names.

In the present volume, *30 POLYNESIAN LEGENDS*, Mark Pirie republishes a long sequence of poems in which Sherratt takes the creation story and turns it into a well-crafted and plausible interpretation of the story of Māui. The 30 sections of the book are of different figures and events revealed in the creation story and are made up of stanzas of varying lengths. Each section has its own heading and the stories come from mainly the Waikato and Te Arawa tribal areas.

Like Ollivant and a host of other writers in English, Sherratt is fascinated by the story of Hinemoa and a whole section is dedicated to the love story between her and Tutanekai. In section 27, titled 'HINE-MOA, THE MAIDEN OF ROTORUA', in the first stanza, Sherratt predates the '60s rock god Jimi Hendrix:

Out of the purple haze beyond the lake,  
Clear and sweet as the sounds the song birds make,  
Breaking the silence where the earth met sky,  
Came the sweet music of Tutanekai.

Sherratt's sequence, however, begins at the very beginning, as they say, with what is the best known of the Māori myths and legends, the creation story. 'LET THERE BE LIGHT' (No. 1) tells how Rangi, the sky, and Papa, the earth, were parted by their children who were being suffocated by their parents' love for each other:

The children of Rangi and Papa  
(The offspring of heaven and earth)  
Had lived many years in a darkness—  
The darkness that shadowed their birth.

The poet then takes the reader through a *tour de force* of Māori myths and legends before reaching the exciting and climactic story of 'THE



SORCERER, KIKI, IS SLAIN BY THE CHIEF TAMURE OF KAWHIA'  
(No. 30), with the victory of good over evil:

Surrounded by good genii, did he  
Come boldly forth to make a victory;  
Enchanted the enchanter—freed the land  
Of evil magic's fell, destroying hand.

While there is more than a hint of good old Christian referencing in the telling of these myths, Sherratt's work does illuminate and is authentic to Aotearoa's legend telling tradition. His work is powerful and original for its era and is written in a tougher modern epic style to earlier poets such as Blanche Baughan, Arthur H Adams, Tom Bracken, "Roslyn" [Margaret A Sinclair] and Alfred Domett (most of who appear in *The Treasury of New Zealand Verse* [1926]) or near contemporaries like Mariëda Batten, Johannes C Andersen or James Izett.

Editor Mark Pirie, like Niel Wright and myself and like-minded scholars through our work with the Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa (PANZA), are dedicated to discovering and bringing back to life these poems and those of other New Zealand poets who have long been neglected in academic and other anthologies for dubious reasons — ignorance being no excuse.

Dr. Michael O'Leary  
Paekākāriki  
September 2013

*Sources used:*

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**POLYNESIAN  
LEGENDS  
(Grey)**

## LET THERE BE LIGHT (No. 1)

The children of Rangi and Papa  
    (The offspring of heaven and earth)  
Had lived many years in a darkness—  
    The darkness that shadowed their birth.  
The greatest of offspring took council,  
    The healthy were sick'ning for light—  
They longed to be free from their bondage—  
    The bonds of perpetual night.  
Till Rangi and Papa were parted  
    (For heaven and earth were attached):  
No light giving ray would know mankind—  
    Nor darkness despatched.

The fiercest of sons spoke of slaying  
    The earth and her heavenly lord;  
But, god of the forests, his brother,  
    With killing was not in accord.  
He favoured the great separation,  
    The tearing of heaven away;  
The sky to become as a stranger,  
    The earth to remain, that she may,  
Give comfort to them on her bosom;  
    To which all the brothers agreed,  
Excepting the god of the tempest,  
    Who liked not the deed.

Then rent they the earth from the heaven,  
    Though many attempted the deed,  
The forest god, Tāne Mahuta,  
    'Twas he who was willed to succeed.  
He heeded not shriekings nor cryings—  
    He thought of perpetual night;  
His strength burst the forces asunder  
    That earth may be flooded with light.  
Great multitudes, then, were apparent  
    The masses the light had disclosed,  
That in the continuous darkness  
    Had lain and reposed.

'Twas thus that the great separation  
'Twixt heaven and earth was achieved;  
But god of the tumult and tempest  
Accompanied the heaven, aggrieved.  
He promised his brothers a vengeance  
For rending his parents in twain,—  
In whirl-winds, in squalls and in blackness,  
In thunder and torrential rain.  
The heaven and earth were afflicted,  
They mourn for each other anew—  
The mists are the earth's gentle sighings—  
The heavens weep dew.

### **TĀWHIRIMATEA, THE STORM GOD (No. 2)**

Out in the west see the clouds swiftly massing;  
Feel the chill sting of the wind that is passing;  
Hear the wild gulls as they wheel in the sky,  
Warning us mortals with dolorous cry.  
God of the tumults, Tāwhirimatea,  
Father of storms, with destruction, is near  
Seeking anew his great vengeance of old,  
Smiting his brothers with tempest and cold.

Dark is his face in the sky with his wrath  
Flashing, his eye, as the lightning springs forth—  
Threat'ning and deep comes the thunder, his voice—  
Shrieking, the winds, in their mad flight rejoice.  
Great is the pow'r of the God of the storm;  
Awful, his wrath, in its terrible form,  
Wreak'd on his brothers for tearing apart  
Rangi and Papa, those dear to his heart.

### **TĀNE MAHUTA, GOD OF FORESTS (No. 3)**

Hail! Tāne Mahuta,  
Great God of the trees:  
Hail! Father of plant life,  
Birds, insects and bees.  
Your great timber giants  
Have banished the night,  
Rent earth from the Heaven  
That there may be light.

Great God of the forests:  
Your wonderful trees  
Serve God of all mankind  
To brave the great seas.  
Your birds and your insects  
Are useful to man,  
Be fruitful, for many's  
The chasms you span.

Hail! Tāne Mahuta,  
Great father of trees:  
What though the fierce storm god's  
Immoderate breeze  
May seek to destroy you?  
His forces must fail,  
Your growth springs anew from  
The hill and the vale.

### **TŪMATUENGA, GOD OF MANKIND (No. 4)**

The tempest's cruel wrath had passed away;  
Chastened, the sons of earth, beneath its sway  
The frenzied seas at last had come to rest—  
The smitten trees clung closely to earth's breast,  
One god alone remained;  
One god no injury sustained—  
The god of man, the brave and fierce,  
The one whom tempest's darts had failed to pierce.

Alone, he stood  
And gazed upon the stricken wood;  
His heart consumed with rage;  
For when the tempest war 'gainst them did wage,  
His brothers fled and left him to his plight;  
But they were sorely smitten in their flight.  
For this desertion they his wrath incurred,  
That they, to stern resistance, flight preferred.  
He fell on them and vanquished them anew,  
More surely than the god of storms could do,  
The gods of fishes, birds, sweet plants and roots,  
And all the vegetation's tend'rest shoots,  
Enslaved he, for his use;  
But tempest he could not induce  
To do his will. So from the sky  
The tumult does the will of man defy,  
Unconquered still,  
He seeks to wreak on man some ill.  
The god of man was wise  
And knew the evil intent of the skies;  
So gave out incantations, that his food  
May multiply. And so the human brood  
Increased and flourished through the ages vast  
Till Māui's generation reached its last.

### **MĀUI-TIKITIKI-A-TARANGA (No. 5)**

“Where goes our mother from our sight  
When morning dawns to end the night?  
Why stays she not with us all day  
But flies in this mysterious way?”  
Thus Māui to his brothers spoke,  
When once again they all awoke  
To find their mother's empty bed,  
And their maternal parent fled.

“We know no more than you of this,”  
His elder brother said. “We miss  
Our parents just as much as you,  
To find them out, what can we do?  
We think that Rangi is our sire,  
(To heavenly birth do we aspire),  
And mother goes to be with him  
Returning when the light is dim.”

But Māui slowly shook his head.  
“I’ll seek them for myself,” he said.  
Some time before whilst mother slept,  
Small Māui from his bed had crept  
And hid his mother’s clothes away  
To stay her flight when dawned the day,  
And stopped the window so that light  
Could not betray the end of night.

When morning came the fam’ly slept  
But Māui still his vigil kept,  
The sun rose higher in the sky,  
The hours advanced and noon was nigh,  
When mother from her bed arose  
With puzzled look and lowered brows  
To raise the cov’ring from the door  
And see the light stream o’er the floor.

So great her panic that she tore  
The cov’ring from the whare door  
To clothe herself, as off she strode,  
To gain her mystic day abode.  
Small Māui watched that hurried flight  
And saw his parent pass from sight;  
She plucked a grass tuft from a mound  
And vanished swiftly underground.

But this the brothers did not know  
For only Māui saw her go;  
And now resolved was he to find  
Those parents whom for long he'd pined.  
Though still quite young the boy was wise,  
And fashioned for himself disguise.  
He'd seek his parents as a bird—  
A pigeon's guise he most prefer'd.

### **MĀUI FINDS HIS FATHER, MAKEATUTARA, AND HIS MOTHER, TARANGA (No. 6)**

High amongst the leafy branches,  
Hopping nimbly spray to spray,  
Cooed a pigeon, high in spirits—  
To the dawn he made his lay,  
Happy and quite unconcerned  
One would think to see him there  
That he had no serious object—  
That his mind was free from care.

Soon his dulcet cooing ended;  
From his lofty place he flew  
To a tuft of waving grasses  
Sparkling with the morning dew.  
Near its base he found a hollow,  
Thrust his body through a hole  
Found below a lengthy tunnel  
Down which sped he to his goal.

After miles of dreary flying  
Came he to an open space,  
Perched himself among the branches  
Of a tree around whose base  
Sat a crowd of happy people,  
'Mongst whom were the ones he sought;  
There at last he found his mother  
And his father, too, he thought.



Flying down amongst the people  
He assumed his normal shape—  
That of stalwart, perfect boyhood  
’Fore which stood the crowd, agape.  
Spoke his name, and claimed his parents  
Whom he’d come so far to find,  
And received his father’s blessing  
For protection of his kind.

Prayers were said to make him sacred,  
Also prayers to make him pure;  
But a vital part omitted  
Made his body insecure.  
Grim Death had no tyrant power  
To destroy the race of man;  
With this thoughtless, grave omission,  
Death his war on man began.

### **MĀUI’S CONQUEST OF THE SUN (No. 7)**

O stay thy rapid flight O Sun,  
For scarcely is the day begun,  
Than quickly fades the feeble light,  
And greyness deepens into night.  
Thus people of the earth had prayed  
For longer sunshine, lesser shade.

Great Māui to his brothers said:  
“We’ll snare his fiery orb, so red;  
Make lengthy ropes of flax, and strong,  
And come with me to right this wrong.  
We’ll travel nightly, sleep by day,  
Towards the East, the Sun’s gateway.”

One morning when the Sun arose,  
It felt a snare around it close,  
It struggled vainly to be free,  
But Māui held it cleverly.  
He smote it with the Magic Jaw\*  
The more it struggled to withdraw.

He smote it till it cried in pain,  
And humbly begged him to refrain;  
In future it would slower move,  
And promised greatly to improve  
If Māui would his actions cease,  
And let it go its way in peace.

So Māui's weapon ceased to fall  
Upon the vanquished, glowing ball.  
The snares were freed so that the Sun  
Was free its daily course to run.  
So very feebly on its way  
It moved to give earth longer day.

*\*Jaw-bone weapon of his ancestress, Muri-ranga-whenua*

### **THE MAGIC HOOK OF MĀUI (No. 8)**

When op'ed the flaming eye of morn  
And blinked the sea from off its lash,  
Some natives in a boat were borne  
Across the waves with sprightly dash.  
'Twas Māui and his brothers three  
Who went to fish the shining sea.

While still within the sight of land  
His brothers anchored their canoe;  
But Māui said 'twas his command  
They paddle further o'er the blue.  
He knew precisely where the line  
Could draw great fishes from the brine.

On, on he took them o'er the sea  
Till not a glimpse of land was seen.  
"We'll drop our anchor here," said he.  
"And see what monsters we can glean."  
So in the sea their lines they cast,  
And hauled out fishes very fast.

Almost at once their boat was full,  
Yet Māui had not cast his line.  
“Before we start our homeward pull,”  
He said, “I’ll try this hook of mine.”  
“Have you a hook?” his brother cried.  
“A magic hook,” he said, with pride.

A magic hook it was they saw;  
Mother of pearl shone in its bend,  
Tipped with a piece of magic jaw,  
A tuft of dog’s hair at its end.  
This was the magic hook which he  
Used for the monster of the sea.

### **THE LONG FISH OF MĀUI (No. 9)**

Down sank the hook which Māui threw  
Into the cool transparent blue.  
Down, down it sank – some seconds passed  
Before it made itself quite fast,  
Caught in a beam of some hut door  
There on the sodden ocean floor.

The line which held the hook grew taught.  
“What monster is it I have caught!”  
Asked Māui as he strove to raise  
His prize by sundry artful ways,  
“Come, help me haul this great fish in.  
Haul, haul! my brothers, or he’ll win.”

They strained and heaved the fish to land:  
Their beated brows the sea breeze fanned.  
They hauled and hauled and hauled again—  
This fish defied the strength of men.  
So Māui spoke, to help his fight,  
Enchantments which made great weights light.

Up, up from out the bubbling deep  
Came Māui's fish with mighty sweep;  
A wond'rous catch it was indeed,  
A "fish" of some unheard of breed:  
For Māui's magic masterhand  
Brought from the deep a "fish" of land.

Long had it lain beneath the sea  
In absolute tranquility,  
Since Rangī and the tempest god  
In vengeance on the sons who trod  
Its surface, swept it to a grave  
Beneath the restless em'rald wave.

But once more to the surface brought,  
The gods must know the fish was caught,  
"Cut not the fish till I return  
Or you the wrath of gods will earn."  
So saying, Māui left the place  
To seek the sacred of his race.

### **THE GODS' VENGEANCE (No. 10)**

Scarce had our hero passed from sight  
Than disregarded was his speech;  
His brothers hacked with all their might  
At all the fish which they could reach.

The gods resented this deceit,  
And willed that man should pay the price  
For not conveying to their feet  
A share of fish for sacrifice.

The fish's head tossed side to side,  
The tail and fins lashed to and fro,  
The lower jaw fell open wide—  
The wrath of angry gods to show.

Had not the brothers acted thus,  
But heeded Māui's just command,  
Instead of being mountainous,  
This would have been a level land.

A model land 'twas meant to be,  
No hills nor hollows, but all plain.  
This land fished from the southern sea,  
The land which Māui did regain.

If you would see the magic hook,  
It still remains unto this day,  
And forms, so says the legend book,  
The southern portion of Hawke's Bay.

### **MĀUI SEEKS THE GODDESS OF FIRE (No. 11)**

Night cast upon the earth its sable cloak,  
And seemed some vent'rous spirit to awake,  
For Māui softly rose up from his bed,  
And through the sleeping village swiftly sped.  
Into the cooking huts he made his way,  
Extinguished all the fires before he lay  
Again upon his couch; 'twas his desire  
To seek the ancient goddess of all fire.

When morning came the slaves their embers found  
All cold and dead and scattered o'er the ground.  
To Māui's mother some the news had brought,  
And she a messenger then quickly sought  
Amongst the slaves to seek the spirit Flame,  
And to her ears their lack of fire proclaim;  
But all the slaves drew back in mortal fear—  
None for this awesome task would volunteer.

Then Māui took upon himself the task  
Of visiting his ancestress to ask  
If she his people's wants would satisfy  
And give him of her fire a small supply.  
On towards the fiery realm he made his way,  
The journey held for him no cold dismay—  
For it was now great Māui's sole desire  
To rob the goddess of her pow'r of fire.

### **MAHUIKA: GODDESS OF FIRE (No. 12)**

Hark! Hark! What footfall strange is this, I hear?  
What mortals to my fiery realm draw near?  
Come, speak, who to my lurid regions come?  
What early folk can be so venturesome?  
'Tis Māui, Goddess, who would speak with thee—  
Thy grandchild of thine own great family tree,  
Who seeketh fire as it is lost from earth,  
And mortals suffer greatly from its dearth.  
I bid thee welcome, grandchild, and to thee  
Will I give fire for timely is thy plea.  
As from her finger tip she pulled the nail  
There flowed forth fire, and wonder did assail  
Great Māui's mind. With fire at his command  
He started back towards his native land.  
But ere proceeding far upon his way  
His actions would have caused no small dismay  
If they by Māui's people had been seen:  
For, as he paused behind a Nature's screen,  
He flung his fire to earth and stamped it out,  
And having done so, turned his face about.  
The Goddess once again he sought  
With words and manner of a man distraught.  
O lady give me, pray, another light  
And save my people from their fireless plight.  
The Goddess then pulled out another nail  
And hoped that this would not her grandchild fail.

But scarce had Māui from her presence sped  
Than he returned again with drooping head,  
And told to her once again an untrue tale,  
Requesting of her yet another nail.  
Time and again did Māui come and go  
Repeating his fictitious tale of woe;  
Till but one nail remained. Then thought the dame,  
This Māui is, with me, playing a game.

### **MĀUI AND THE FLAMES OF MAHUIKA (No. 13)**

Com'st thou again to visit me  
To voice thine oft repeated plea?  
To ask of me yet once again  
For fire for your cold world of men?  
Dost seek from me yet more and more  
As thou hast done so oft before?  
Take this, my last remaining nail;  
This source of fire will not you fail.

She dashed the nail upon the ground,  
And flames our Māui did surround,  
Great tongues of flame, and sulph'rous smoke—  
Our hero felt that he must choke.  
Through this Inferno Māui fled  
With blistered limbs and bursting head;  
For flames, great flames, were everywhere,  
And stifling smoke befouled the air.

Great Māui thought his death was nigh;  
He turned his face towards the sky,  
A thought passed through his troubled mind  
To leave this awful flame behind;  
He'd make himself an eagle swift,  
And from this heat his body lift.  
Straight to the lofty sky he flew,  
Still breath of fire around him flew.

Then to the shining sea he sped  
To cool his fevered, burning head;  
But boiling was the water there  
So back he flew into the air.  
What torment from the scorching flame!  
How dearly paid he for his game.  
O would this torment never cease!  
Would ne'er this flaming mass decrease?

O god of storms, my body pains:  
O send, I pray thee, heavy rains.  
Send torrents to this fire destroy;  
O all the stormy pow'rs employ.  
O hear my weak, despairing cry.  
Spread clouds of storm across the sky;  
Send rain, O god of storms send rain,  
To save the earth and stay my pain.

#### **TĀWHIRIMATEA SAVES MĀUI FROM THE FLAMES (No. 14)**

The god of storms up in the sky  
Heard Māui's weak, despairing cry,  
And to his aid he sent the rain  
In torrents to the flames restrain.

For hours the god and goddess fought:  
It seemed the pow'r of rain was naught—  
The lurid flames still lept and roared,  
And choking smoke still upward soared.

At length the rain advantage gained,  
And o'er the flames the storm god reigned.  
The goddess saw her doom was nigh  
And towards her shelter turned to fly.

Her shrieks and screams now filled the air  
As she fled headlong to her lair.  
Her cries were louder, far, than those  
Of Māui, when flames round him rose.



Thus all her pow'r the goddess lost;  
But passing by some trees she tossed  
Some sparks into their branches high,  
That fire may not completely die.

So was the fire preserved for men,  
And ne'er was lost from earth again.  
Our hero took his human shape,  
And thanked the storm for his escape.

### **MĀUI FALLS BEFORE HINE-NUI-TE-PŌ, GODDESS OF DEATH (No. 15)**

Up 'mid the tow'ring mountains  
White with snow,  
Up where the swirling white mists  
Softly flow,  
Up 'mid the dark cold peaks and  
Caverns deep—  
Goddess of Death was lying,  
Fast asleep.

None had her cold dominions  
Ever sought,  
None to her gloom steeped boundaries  
Had been brought,  
Never was need for her at  
Watch to keep—  
Nothing disturb'd her long and  
Peaceful sleep.

Up from the world below  
To this white realm of snow,  
Māui came stealthily  
To conquer Death;  
Sturdy and bold was he,  
And from all fear was free—  
He would fight fearlessly  
To his last breath.

Goddess of Death awoke,  
Ere Māui made the stroke  
That would have freed mankind  
From Death's great pow'r.  
Māui was slain instead,  
First of the sacred dead;  
Honoured and great was he  
To his last hour.

Up 'mid the tow'ring mountains  
White with snow,  
Up where the swirling white mists  
Softly flow,  
Up where the dark cold peaks are  
Headstones all—  
Goddess of Death sleeps not, but  
Waits for all.

#### **AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF TĀWHAKI (No. 16)**

As generations come and go,  
The heroes of the human race,  
Like tidal waters ebb and flow,  
And others come to take each place;  
Last generation's hero dead,  
There lived Tāwhaki in his stead.

Tāwhaki lived close by the sea,  
Among the people of his wife.  
A Chief and magic man was he,  
And jealousy perhaps was rife  
Amongst his brothers of his spouse,  
Who looked on him with lowered brows.

One morning on their way to fish  
The brothers to Tāwhaki went,  
And mentioned that it was their wish  
That he their party would augment.  
Tāwhaki, therefore, sought his line,  
And started out to fish the brine.

The sport was dull, the fish were shy;  
No monsters of the deep caught they;  
So when the hour of noon was nigh  
Two brothers homeward made their way.  
Tāwhaki also left the shore—  
His fishing for the day was o'er.

When they near to the village came  
The brothers struck Tāwhaki down;  
But subtle fear destroyed their aim,  
When striking one of such renown;  
Though merely stunned, a grave was made,  
And in it was Tāwhaki laid.

### **THE FLOOD (No. 17)**

The wife, when from her brothers learned  
Tāwhaki had not yet returned,  
Suspected there had been foul play,  
And from the village made her way  
Along the path the party took  
When they set out with line and hook.

She stopped before a little mound  
Of recently disturbed ground,  
And from its shallow depths she brought  
The body which she keenly sought.  
She found Tāwhaki was not dead,  
But weak because of blood he'd shed.

She hoisted him upon her back  
And started out along the track.  
She bathed his wounds and bandaged them,  
And sought the flow of blood to stem.  
She tended him with tireless care,  
And of his trouble took a share.

When he regained his normal health  
He gathered all his tribe by stealth,  
And left the village lest the men  
Should seek to strike him down again.  
He built and ably fortified  
A stronghold on the mountain side.

Installed securely there so high  
He could his brothers' tribes defy.  
He sought a vengeance for his blood—  
Beseeched the gods to send a flood,  
Which overwhelmed the populace  
And swept to sea the faithless race.

### **KAE'S THEFT OF THE WHALE (TUTUNUI) (No. 18)**

Mystic, drowsy, droning noises  
Rose and fell upon the air,  
Incantations and enchantments  
For a child, the Chieftain's heir.  
Kae, a man of skill in magic,  
Worked the rites and cast the spell,  
That the child might be successful—  
As a warrior excel.

When the ceremony ended  
All assembled to a feast,  
Cooked to please the holy palate  
Of the honoured magic priest.  
Best of all the savoury dishes  
Was a piece of mammoth tail,  
Freshly cut for the occasion  
From the Chieftain's favourite whale.

Kae was overcome with pleasure—  
Praising very much the dish;  
Begged the Chief to tell him where he  
Found so excellent a fish.  
To the beach the Chief then pointed  
Where this whale swam near the shore—  
Ready to oblige its master  
Should he of its flesh want more.

When came time for Kae's departure  
He was offered a canoe  
To convey him 'cross the waters  
But he cunningly withdrew.  
In his mind a scheme had formed—  
He would like to homeward sail,  
Not in an unsafe canoe but  
On the back of this great whale.

Grudgingly his wish was granted,  
And he set out 'cross the foam  
On the back of this great monster  
To the place which was his home.  
To possess a fish so tasty  
Was this magic man's desire,  
So he killed it as it grounded  
To its wholesome flesh acquire.

### **THE KIDNAPPING OF KAE THE MAGICIAN (No. 19)**

The whale remained as long away  
The Chief could not his tears allay  
That Kae his useful pet had killed—  
And he with awful wrath was filled.

No idle fear this proved to be,  
For wafted 'cross the crested sea  
There came a pleasant cooking smell—  
A smell the Chief remembered well.

A boat was launched without delay,  
And swiftly paddled 'cross the bay.  
No hint was there of war intent  
For only forty women went.

They did not know the magic Kae,  
To find whom they had just one way—  
His teeth were rude and overlapped,  
So should he laugh, then he was trapped.

They to Kae's hut admission gained,  
And all his party entertained.  
They proved themselves delightful guests,  
With games, amusing tricks and jests.

But still for all their skilful guile  
They made not the magician smile;  
They tried to think of some new plan  
To draw a laugh from this old man.

They then began a song so droll  
That Kae could not himself control;  
He laughed and laughed with mouth so wide,  
That all could see the teeth inside.

The fire had burnt down very low  
Till it was but a dull red glow,  
And so that none a watch should keep,  
The guests enchanted all to sleep.

Old Kae suspected they were spies,  
So placed pearl discs in both his eyes,  
That those who watched him might mistake  
And think that he was still awake.

When all Kae's people soundly slept,  
The guests into the starlight crept,  
Bearing with them the sleeping Kae,  
And so, to boat, and thus away.

**THE EXECUTION OF KAE BY THE CHIEF  
(TINIRAU) (No. 20)**

With morning came a great surprise;  
When the magician op'ed his eyes  
He saw the Chieftain by his side—  
“How came you in my hut?” he cried.

The Chief replied—“How came you here?”  
“You've wandered from your home, I fear;  
This house in which you lie is mine—  
Have you a house of this design?”

The magic man knew he had not,  
But was the victim of some plot—  
The old magician bowed his head,  
And he was from the whare led.

They took him to an open space  
In view of all the populace,  
And there the magic man was killed—  
Their vows to 'venge the whale fulfilled.

When of Kae's death news reached his tribe  
Their anger words could not describe;  
They swore a vengeance on the Chief—  
Their loss had steeped them all in grief.

They sent an army and attacked  
The Chieftain's village, which was sacked.  
An awful vengeance did they gain—  
The Chief's son was amongst the slain.

## **THE LEGEND OF RATA (No. 21)**

In the dark ancient days of which we write,  
The “right” was largely governed by the “might.”  
No Law was there to rectify a wrong  
Inflicted on the weakly by the strong  
Thus feuds and thirstings for revenge were rife,  
And nothing but a life repaid a life.  
When Rata grew to man’s estate he learned  
The flame of vengeance in his body burned.  
His father had been treacherously slain;  
Therefore his duty was to him plain.  
The blood of him who did this awful deed  
Must flow by Rata’s hand; this was the creed.  
So off he set to seek th’ offending Chief,  
Who by his act occasioned so much grief  
To those whom Rata held in high esteem;  
A grief which only vengeance would redeem.  
Before the entrance of the Chief’s court yard  
A warrior was stationed there on guard.  
“I come to seek your master,” Rata said.  
“He’s underground, beneath the earth I tread,”  
Replied the guard. “But he will rise up soon,  
For when he appears to me the slim new moon  
I call to him, and from the earth he comes,  
And mankind to his appetite succumbs.  
In two nights hence the new moon will appear;  
Go home, but two morns hence return you here.”

## **RATA SLAYS MATUKUTAKOTAKO, THE MURDERER OF HIS FATHER (No. 22)**

Come mighty Chief, your servant calls,  
Come from your silent earthly halls,  
The golden arc adorns the sky,  
Come up before it passes by.



The fountains wait with waters cool;  
Come bathe you in the shining pool,  
Come wash and braid your lust'rous hair,  
The air is calm, the land is fair.

The Chief came from the regions drear  
And moved towards the fountain clear;  
Shook out his much disheveled hair  
And bathed it with his usual care.

But whilst it hung about his face  
Came Rata from his hiding place,  
And struck the Chief a mighty blow—  
A stroke which laid the Chieftain low.

Thus Rata gained his great desire  
And so revenged his murdered sire.  
Yet more remained for him to do,  
The bones must be recovered too.

A tribe had come some years before  
From some remote and distant shore  
And 'mongst the trophies of the fray  
The bones which Rata sought, took they.

### **RATA SEEKS A CANOE (No. 23)**

To obtain his father's relic  
Rata first must sail the sea;  
So into the woods he wandered  
To select a giant tree.  
From its trunk he had to fashion  
A canoe of monst'rous size;  
So he closely scanned the woodland  
Hoping for a noble prize.

Once amongst the forest monsters  
One to suit he quickly found;  
With his axe he set to work and  
Brought it crashing to the ground.  
From its top he struck the branches  
Shaped the end to form the bow—  
Rata chipped the mighty log as  
Long as daylight would allow.

When he started for the village,  
Woodland sprites and insects came  
With a host of feathered kin who  
Loudly did their wrath proclaim.  
Who would dare to slay this monster  
Who would war on Tāne's tree?  
Tāne's spirits, birds and insects  
Asked each other angrily.

Then they worked upon the tree trunk  
And replaced each little chip,  
Singing loud their incantations  
To perfect their workmanship  
“Fly together, chips and shavings”  
Sang the fairies, merrily;  
“Hold and stick ye fast together  
Stand ye up again, O tree.”

God of forests heard the chanting  
Of his tiny woodland folk  
As they sang their weird enchantments  
Hoping to his aid invoke.  
Thus the fallen tree stood upright  
Whole and sound as 'twas before;  
And the sprites fled to the shadows,  
For the night their work was o'er.

## THE CANOE (No. 24)

Next morning Rata vainly sought  
The boat which he had partly wrought;  
For though he knew where it should be  
No trace of it there could he see.

The standing tree then caught his eye,  
And from its base chips soon did fly.  
He worked his axe throughout the day,  
As ev'ning homeward took his way.

When he returned, the "little men"  
Had placed the tree upright again;  
But Rata set to work once more,  
And felled it as he'd done before.

This time, when he'd but felled the tree,  
He moved from the vicinity;  
But silently returned to wait  
Those who had tricked him so of late.

First came the insects there to scout  
To see no mortals were about;  
Then came the birds who gave the call—  
The signal that 'twas safe for all.

The fairies then appeared in hosts,  
As silent as so many ghosts  
To place the tree upon its base  
When Rata left his hiding place.

The spirits turned at once to run;  
But Rata deftly captured one,  
"What right have you small folk," asked he,  
"To practice magic on my tree?"

Then all the spirits made reply,  
“Pray tell us, Rata, tell us why  
You seek our woods and thus employ  
Yourself our giants to destroy?”

“The forests’ god resents this act,  
And sent us here to make a pact;  
Return, O Rata; a canoe  
Shall we, ourselves, prepare for you.”

So Rata their commands obeyed  
And his canoe was quickly made  
The magic craftsmen made the tree  
To stand the roughest stormy sea.

**[No. 25 missing]**

### **THE DISCOVERY OF NEW ZEALAND BY THE CHIEF NGAHUE (AOTEAROA, ARAHURA AND WAIRERE) (No. 26)**

Upon the Rarotongan sands,  
In midnight chill and noon-day heat,  
Some natives toiled to make complete  
Canoes to sail to other lands.

Dissension brought about this stir;  
That strife for them might terminate  
These men prepared to emigrate  
To ’scape Oppression’s cruel spur.

A Chief who’d fled across the sea  
Brought tidings of a peaceful shore  
Where men might live for evermore  
And be from strife and sorrow free.

The Chief related how he’d fled  
To save his jasper from a foe  
Who sought his tribe to overthrow  
And steal the green stone from its bed.

But he in swift canoe had sailed  
To this fair land across the blue,  
Where his fierce foe would not pursue:—  
The plot to steal the stone had failed.

With half his jasper safe concealed  
And axes made from what remained  
He'd ventured back with news obtained  
To speak of what this land revealed.

Green jasper was abundant there:  
The stately moa he had seen;  
The land was fertile, hills were green,  
No isle with this one could compare.

Encouraged by the Chieftain's tale  
The peaceful tribes canoes prepared,  
And fearful lest their news be shared.  
They made all haste to outward sail.

So was the land, which Māui drew  
Up from the sea, found by the Chief,  
Who fleeing from a murd'rous thief  
Set out to make his home anew.

### **HINEMOA, THE MAIDEN OF ROTORUA (No. 27)**

Out of the purple haze beyond the lake,  
Clear and sweet as the sounds the song birds make,  
Breaking the silence where the earth met sky,  
Came the sweet music of Tutanekai.

Dusk little maiden heard those notes and knew  
Just what the player hoped that she would do.  
Chieftain, her father, had foreseen her flight,  
So all canoes were guarded through the night.

Soft summer zephyr smote the maiden's brow,  
Whispered, in passing, a suggestion how  
Aided by gourds to serve as floats she might  
Swim cross the sleeping lake that summer night.

Soft as a shadow moved she to the brink,  
Slid like a nymph into the wat'ry link,  
Guided by music which her lover played,  
Swam Hinemoa, strong and unafraid.

Straight 'cross the vast expanse that starry night  
Moved the fair maiden like a water sprite.  
Swimming and resting she pursued her way  
On through the gloom to shore where safety lay.

Trembling and chill, she felt the waters shoal,  
Joy filled her heart that she had reached her goal;  
Weary and cold she trod a native path,  
Leading, she knew, to tepid swimming bath.

Soothing and warm, the waters eased her pain,  
Brightened her spirits, which were on the wane:  
Soon would the light at dawn invade the sky,  
And to her side would come Tutanekai.

Dawn saw a slave approach a drinking spring,  
Passing the bath he stood a-wondering,  
Whom could the stranger be who bathed so soon.  
Who but a fairy bathed so long ere noon?

Back to the village sped he, and his cry  
Brought from his hut the Chief, Tutanekei;  
Found in the stranger there so sweet and pure  
Fair Hinemoa, maid of Rotorua.

Great was the wedding feast they held that night;  
Joyous dancing in fires' ruddy light:  
Gayest of all beneath that starry sky  
Were Hinemoa and Tutanekei.

**NET-MAKING LEARNED FROM THE FAIRIES BY  
KAHUKURA (No. 28)**

Fair was the night as one could wish  
When the fairy folk set out to fish;  
No use had they for the hook and line  
For they fished with a flaxen net so fine.

Each boat was made from a flaxen blade  
And each bow a frond from a sylvan glade,  
Each oar was formed from the green marsh reeds,  
And sufficed for the fairies' simple needs.

So over the glassy sea they went  
Their fairy backs to their oars well bent;  
Whilst from the stern the fine net slid  
And down in the dark still sea was hid.

Then there commenced a great hand trawl—  
High up the beach they brought their haul;  
Catch after catch they made this way  
For they worked till the night was growing grey.

As silent as the growth around  
A Native man lay on the ground.  
He'd seen the fairies net their fish—  
To possess a net was his one wish.

He closely watched all the wee folk did,  
He saw where the precious net was hid—  
And this is how the Natives knew  
How to make a net like the fairy crew.

**TE KANAWA AND THE FAIRIES OF PUKEMORE,  
WAIKATO (No. 29)**

After a long, fatiguing chase  
In which the game had won the race,  
The Chief and his party needs must stop  
All night on a wooded high hill-top.

They'd followed the kiwi since the morn  
O'er plain and hill, braving bramble's thorn;  
But the wily bird had outwitted them  
By some crafty kiwi stratagem.

So there for the night their needs must stop  
And make their bed on the wooded top;  
Between the protruding roots of the trees  
In the camp fire's warmth they took their ease.

The night progressed and the fire burnt low—  
Just a fitful flame and a dull red glow;  
And the Chief and his party soundly slept  
For they knew the land and no watch was kept.

But here they erred for the leafy screen  
Hid the hosts of the tiny fairy queen:  
And as the flick'ring fire burned dim  
They approached each man and looked at him.

Then they flooded the woods with a fairy song  
In those voices sweet which to elves belong,  
And the natives waked to see a sight  
Which paralysed them all with fright.

These elfin folk, let it here be said,  
Filled the native mind with an awful dread,  
For the fairies were of the magic kind  
And woe to him whom they should find.



The smiling faces and merry song  
Convinced the Chief his fears were wrong;  
To the sprites he a presentation made  
And his ornaments before them laid.

When their song was done moved the fairies round  
To where the gifts lay on the ground  
And each in passing took a share  
Of shadows of the things laid there.

Then all was still and the fairies gone;  
But the ruddy gleam of the fire still shone  
On the dusky faces with wond'ring eyes  
Which mirrored the natives' great surprise.

**THE SORCERER, KIKI, IS SLAIN BY THE CHIEF  
TAMURE OF KĀWHIA (No. 30)**

The land through which the great Waikato flows  
Was once disturbed by certain magic woes;  
Black arts and evil sorcery progressed,  
And all around the folk were much distressed.

Upon the sloping banks, where all seemed peace,  
The dark magician lived and did release  
His awful pow'rs upon the country side,  
And knowledge of his fame spread far and wide.

Such pow'rs had he, that should his shadow fall  
Upon a man or shrub, or life at all,  
That life became extinct—naught could withstand  
The blighting magic Kiki had at hand.

Such was his pow'r that none would venture near—  
The natives' simple minds were numbed with fear;  
For he had but to ope his sliding door  
And passers in canoes would breathe no more.

Thus reigned this evil one, by magic crowned  
The king of rotting waste, which all around  
Disgusted eye and fouled the sweet, fresh air,  
Made hideous a land which once was fair.

News of this evil and the people's fears  
Alighted on a mighty Chieftain's ears—  
A Chief who called to him good genii  
To aid him evil magic to defy.

Thus armed with goodly pow'rs, he made his way  
To where the evil sorcerer held sway,  
And with his arts he sought to quickly purge  
The district of this artful, evil scourge.

Surrounded by good genii, did he  
Come boldly forth to make a victory;  
Enchanted the enchanter—freed the land  
Of evil magic's fell, destroying hand.

# OTHER POEMS

## SMALL THINGS

I turned to find the stars but they had fled;  
The clouds were thick and heavy overhead,  
Empty of all but blackness, and I said,  
“Nothing remains of beauty; it is dead!”

The hills were veiled; only an inky bar,  
Shrouded in night, and guiltless of a star,  
Marked where they stood. The world was dark and bare,  
Night stark, and desolation everywhere.

Neither the wind that whirled the leaves away,  
And left the trees all bare and cold and grey,  
Nor hill, nor sky, held comfort then for me—  
Beauty I thought was dead; I could not see.

Heartsick and old, I turned and bent my head,  
And saw where faint gleams from a street-lamp led,  
Amongst the ragged grasses in the long-left bed—  
A wind-bent snowdrop’s white-starred cup—and said,  
“Through this I know beauty is never dead!”

## AGE

Age, defeated, haggard, feeble,  
Clad in scarlet of his sin,  
Rode bestride a sable charger—  
Darkness yawned his soul to win.  
From this life’s precarious foothold  
Stared he down the pit of death,  
Contemplating its great terrors  
Waiting for his last drawn breath.

Brief, the awful contemplation:  
Doom was mirrored in his face—  
Thinking of the Great Oblivion—  
Knowing not of Heavenly Grace,  
Would that he uplift his vision  
Now before this life should cease,  
To observe the Holy City—  
Home of God! Abode of Peace.

### **“FOUNDLING” FLOWER**

'Twas a sunny summer morning,  
In a dry and dusty street  
Lay a new plucked, perfect flower  
On the pavement, in the heat.  
Newly taken from a garden  
With some others of its kind,  
It had fallen from amongst them  
Unobserved, and left behind.

Soon the heat, or careless passers  
Would this hapless flow'r destroy;  
And, me thought, a bloom so lovely  
Should, to someone, prove a joy.  
Therefore from the path I raised it,  
Much too fine was it too pass,  
Took it to my dingy office,  
Placed it in a drinking glass.

How it brightened up my morning  
With the brilliance of its bloom;  
How its sweet refreshing perfume  
Changed the air in that old room!  
Even my most irksome labours  
Seemed to me a joy that day,  
All because of that sweet flower  
Which I'd picked up by the way.

All the day that bloom refreshed me  
And the next and next again:  
For it brought the breath of woodland  
To my dark, unlovely den.  
Words can not express the pleasure  
Which that foundling flow'r gave me,  
And I always it remember  
When a fresh lost bloom I see.

## **HAWTHORN**

Through winter's rigid clime it sleeps, like dead  
Appear its gnarled trunks and twigs: leaves shed—  
Naught but its stern gaunt shape outlined 'gainst sky;  
And thus it stays till winter has pass'd by.  
But with the spring the signs of life are seen;  
The dark bare twigs are dotted o'er with green,  
Just tiny specks, appearing one by one,  
Encourag'd forth by warmth from kindly sun.  
The days go by; these specks to leaves have grown:  
Their emerald profusion, bright in tone  
Hides from our eyes the gaunt unsightly form,  
Which through wild winter weather'd cold and storm.  
As time advances, little buds we see,  
Which shortly snow white blossoms are to be;  
And when the floral season's at its height  
The hawthorn bush is one great mass of white,  
Sweet fragrance issues from its snowy bloom  
And fills the ev'ning air, and e'en our room.  
The scent suggests to one an English lane,  
And makes one think that he is Home again.

## PSYCHE BATHING AMOR

The sun had risen, and his gentle beams  
Spread o'er the landscape, waking from their sleep  
The countless birds and beasts and flowers.  
The foliage assumed assorted hues.  
The air was still, no breeze as yet disturb'd  
The woodland growth. The song of thrush and scent  
Of dew touch'd flower rose from the wood. Cloth'd yet  
In shade, a tiny stream wound slowly on,  
Its cool, inviting depths, as crystal, clear,  
And round a bend it widened out, and formed  
A kind of forest pool. Upon its bank  
A deer, who came there for his morning drink,  
Still stood, and seemed to watch the stately swans  
Which swam serenely, heedless of his gaze.  
The sun's warm rays had reached the water's edge;  
From wooded bank a rustling sound was heard.  
The swans ceased swimming, and the deer had raised  
His head, and looked about expectantly.  
From out the bush two fairy figures came—  
Amor and Psyche, for their morning bathe.

## SONNET TO CHRISTCHURCH

O Fairest City, gleamst thou like a gem  
Upon the em'rald velvet of the plains;  
Like solitaire, thy beauty never wanes,  
For e'en the winter canst not thee condemn  
To ugliness. In frosty diadem,  
As with spring flowers crowned, thy charm remains—  
That subtle charm which round thy throne enchains—  
Adoring populace, enslaving them.  
How oft do visions of thee light the minds  
Of those who know thee but must live afar—  
Cathedral grey outlined 'gainst azure skies,  
Thy sparkling Avon as it onward winds,  
Thy many beauties free from storms which mar.  
Thou art a City fair to all men's eyes.