

**BEEES IN AMBER; A
LITTLE BOOK OF
THOUGHTFUL VERSE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760570132

Bees in amber; a little book of thoughtful verse by John Oxenham

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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JOHN OXENHAM

**BEES IN AMBER; A
LITTLE BOOK OF
THOUGHTFUL VERSE**

JOHN OXENHAM'S NOVELS.

GOD'S PRISONER.
RISING FORTUNES.
OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.
A PRINCESS OF VASCOVY.
JOHN OF GERISAU.
UNDER THE IRON FLAIL.
BONDMAN FREE.
MR. JOSEPH SCORER.
BARBE OF GRAND BAYOU.
A WEAVER OF WEBS.
HEARTS IN EXILE.
THE GATE OF THE DESERT.
WHITE FIRE.
GIANT CIRCUMSTANCE.
PROFIT AND LOSS.
THE LONG ROAD.
CARETTE OF SARR.
PEARL OF PEARL ISLAND.
THE SONG OF HYACINTH.
MY LADY OF SHADOWS.
GREAT-HEART GILLIAN.
A MAID OF THE SILVER SEA.
LAURISTONS.
THE COIL OF CARNE.
THEIR HIGH ADVENTURE.
QUEEN OF THE GUARDED MOUNTS.
MR. CHERRY.
THE QUEST OF THE GOLDEN ROSE.
MARY ALL-ALONE.
RED WRATH.

~~MS. 10. 10. 10.~~

BEES IN AMBER A LITTLE
BOOK OF THOUGHTFUL
VERSE BY JOHN OXENHAM
PUBLISHED BY METHUEN
& CO. 36 ESSEX STREET
LONDON W.C. MDCCCXIII

429941
25. 11. 44

TO
THOSE
I HOLD DEAREST
THIS
OF MY BEST.

Author's Apology

In these rushful days an apology is advisable, if not absolutely essential, from any man, save the one or two elect, who has the temerity to publish a volume of verse.

These stray lines, such as they are, have come to me from time to time, I hardly know how or whence; certainly not of deliberate intention or of malice aforethought. More often than not they have come to the interruption of other, as it seemed to me, more important—and undoubtedly more profitable—work.

They are, for the most part, simply attempts at concrete and rememberable expression of ideas—ages-old most of them—which 'asked for more.'

Most writers, I imagine, find themselves at times in that same predicament—worried by some thought which dances within them and stubbornly refuses to be satisfied with the sober dress of prose. For their own satisfaction and relief, in such a case, if they be not fools they endeavour to garb it more to its liking, and so find peace. Or, to vary the metaphor, they pluck the Bee out of their Bonnet and pop it into such amber as they happen to have about them or are able to evolve, and so put an end to its buzzing.

In their previous states these little Bonnet-Bees of mine have apparently given pleasure to quite a number of intelligent and thoughtful folk; and now—chiefly, I am bound to say, for my own satisfaction in seeing them all together—I have gathered them into one bunch.

If they please you—good! If not, there is no harm done, and one man is content.

JOHN OXENHAM.

Credo

Not what, but **Whom**, I do believe,
That, in my darkest hour of need,
Hath comfort that no mortal creed
To mortal man may give ;—

Not what, but **Whom** !

For Christ is more than all the creeds,
And His full life of gentle deeds
Shall all the creeds outlive.

Not what I do believe, but **Whom** !

Who walks beside me in the gloom?
Who shares the burden wearisome?
Who all the dim way doth illumine,
And bids me look beyond the tomb
The larger life to live ?—

Not what I do believe,

But **Whom** !

Not what,

But **Whom** !

Bees in Amber.

New Year's Day—and Every Day.

*Each man is Captain of his Soul,
And each man his own Crew,
But the Pilot knows the Unknown Seas,
And He will bring us through.*

We break new seas to-day,—
Our eager keels quest unaccustomed waters,
And, from the vast uncharted waste in front,
The mystic circles leap
To greet our prows with mightiest possibilities ;
Bringing us—what ?
—Dread shoals and shifting banks ?
—And calms and storms ?
—And clouds and biting gales ?
—And wreck and loss ?
—And valiant fighting-times ?
And, maybe, Death!—and so, the Larger
Life !

*For should the Pilot deem it best
To cut the voyage short,
He sees beyond the sky-line, and
He'll bring us into Port.*

And, maybe, Life,—Life on a bounding tide,
And chance of glorious deeds ;—
Of help swift-born to drowning mariners ;
Of cheer to ships dismasted in the gale ;
Of succours given unasked and joyfully ;
Of mighty service to all needy souls.

*So—Ho for the Pilot's orders,
Whatever course He makes !
For He sees beyond the sky-line,
And He never makes mistakes.*

And, maybe, Golden Days,
Full freighted with delight !
—And wide free seas of unimagined bliss,
—And Treasure Isles, and Kingdoms to
be won,
—And Undiscovered Countries, and New
Kin.

*For each man captains his own Soul,
And chooses his own Crew,
But the Pilot knows the Unknown Seas,
And He will bring us through.*