

**ADVENTUROUS
LOVE
AND OTHER VERSES**

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Adventurous love and other verses by Gilbert Cannan

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GILBERT CANNAN

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ADVENTUROUS LOVE AND OTHER VERSES

BY

GILBERT CANNAN

[First ed.]

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AUTUMN 1914

BLOW, wind, and bear the dying thoughts
of men

Like yellow leaves to perish and decay:
Scatter them, strip the tree of life. O then
Bring up thy wintry gusts to play
Upon its trunk and branches till it groans
And turns thy breath to music. Fling
Thy snowy clouds and storms until the stones
About its roots are cracked and shivering.
O! sweep away in thy fierce hurricane
The exhalations of its festered limbs
And poisoned sap. Whirl on, and come again
When thou hast shed thy burden. Hymns
Of joy shall greet thy coming when the young
Sweet thoughts do bud in the old tree,
Each thought a soul, and each soul with a tongue
To sing All hail! to thy dear liberty.

ADVENTUROUS LOVE

I

NOW there is hung and fixed between us two
A curtain pieced together of strange things
Done, thought, and felt, unwilled; the puppet
strings

Of chance directing all we strove to do.

We had no skill to sift the false and true.

Love came disguised. Its stealthy whisperings

Of truth in falsehood lured us to the springs

Of feigning, where we drank to our own rue.

Yet more we willed than we could do or know.

We made a motley of our love, but still

Through all our mumming love not ceased to
grow.

We were unwilling players, and our will

Demanded more. Life is no passing show ;

It has a truth that feigning cannot kill.

Adventurous Love

II

If I could write your praise, or tell the story
Of that first golden dream wherein we trod
The ways of Heav'n, and took this little clod
Of earth and made a star of it, your glory
Should be in all men's minds, and the old
hoary

Legends of great loves and lovers, this abroad,
Should wake again and stir the heavy sod,
The lewdness of our modern purgatory.

Men should possess the wonder of your name
As they have air and light. They should be
moved

To snatch some beauty from their sloth and
shame.

Your loveliness by all men should be loved,
Your courage praised, your truth held up to
blame

Pretence by the reality you proved.

Adventurous Love

III

Your love was steadfast. Mine like water
danced

From pool to pool and never, never stayed,

But bubbled in the sun, and in the shade

Took on reflections. Kindness never glanced

At me in vain, brilliance and wit entranced,

Dazzled me, and by beauty was I swayed

Like a young poplar in a forest glade

Reaching to the sun. Yet it never chanced

That I could give for favours in return

Favours again, or ever yield my best

For good. My best was yours. I could
unlearn

To love you with my heart, but—there's the
test—

Your soul in mine had never ceased to
burn.

If that be constant, constancy's confessed.