

On chaliced flowers that lies;  
 And winking Mary-buds begin  
 To ope their golden eyes:  
 With every thing that pretty is,  
 My lady sweet, arise!  
 Arise, arise!

5

(From *Cymbeline*)

## EXERCISE:

1. None of these songs uses a commonly accepted stanza form. Can one justify the line patterns used here?
2. Write an analysis on technical grounds of Song II. Compare it with "Slow, Slow, Fresh Fount" (p. 245).
3. Discuss *euphony* (*Glossary*) in all of these songs.

## ROSE AYLMEYER

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR (1775-1864)

Ah, what avails the sceptred race,  
 Ah, what the form divinest!  
 What every virtue, every grace!  
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes  
 May weep, but never see,  
 A night of memories and of sighs  
 I consecrate to thee.

5

Like "After Long Silence," this poem is perfectly straightforward in its statement. But the statement alone does not give us the poem—that is, other factors are required to make the statement come alive for us. One thing that serves very obviously to convert the bare statement into poetry is the use made of the various elements which we have previously discussed in this general section. As a preliminary to analysis we may mark the accents:

Ah, <sup>what</sup> avails the <sup>sceptred</sup> race,  
 Ah, <sup>what</sup> the <sup>form</sup> divinest!  
 What <sup>every</sup> virtue, <sup>every</sup> grace!  
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes  
 May weep, but never see,  
 A night of memories and of sighs  
 I consecrate to thee.

In the first stanza, we may note, in the first foot of every line the hovering accent, and the length of the first syllable of the foot. These factors tend to give an unusual emphasis to those feet, especially since the remainder of each line is characterized by a very positive difference between accented and unaccented syllables; and those feet, by the repetitions, set the basic attitude of questioning. The marked regularity of the metrical pattern of each line, the definite stop at the end of each line, and the repetition involved in the first three lines—all of these factors contribute to a formal and elevated tone. (We can notice the formal tone supported, further, by the repetitive balance of the first and second lines, which is repeated by the balance within the third line. "What every virtue" is balanced against "[what] every grace." And we can notice how the distinction between the first and second parts of the line is marked by the pause, which tends to cause greater emphasis to fall on the first syllable of *every*.)

The first line of the second stanza, with the repetition of the name *Rose Aylmer*, picks up the metrical pattern characteristic of the first stanza, providing a kind of transition between the rhythm characteristic of the first stanza and that characteristic of the second. The difference in the rhythm of the second stanza is caused chiefly by the run-on lines, the absence of the hovering accents on the initial syllables of the last three lines, and the metrical accenting of syllables not usually accented. We may try to relate some of these special details to the meaning of the poem.

The first run-on line serves to emphasize the word *weep*: since the sense unit is so radically divided by the line end, when



we do pick up the rest of the clause at the beginning of the second line, it comes with a feeling of emphatic fulfilment, which is further supported by the marked pause after the word *weep*. The emphasis on the word *weep* is, of course, rhetorically right because it is set over in contrast with the word *see* at the end of the second line. And we may also observe how the alliteration of the word *weep* with the word *wakeful* in the preceding line helps to mark the association of the two ideas: it is not merely weeping which is to be contrasted with seeing, but the lonely weeping at night when the sense of loss becomes most acute.

The third line is also a run-on line, giving a kind of balance to the structure of the stanza, which functions as do the various balances of structure in the first stanza. Although neither the first line nor the third line of the second stanza is punctuated at the end, we can see that the tendency to run on into the next line is not so strong in the third line as in the first; we can see that the phrase "whom these wakeful eyes" strikes us with a more marked sense of incompleteness than does the phrase "A night of memories and of sighs." This is especially true because the first of the two phrases, coming early in the stanza, is less supported by a context, by the sense of things preceding it. But, even though the tendency to run on is not so strong in the third line as in the first, the tendency is still marked; and such a tendency to enjambment fixes our attention on the clause, "I consecrate," which begins the last line, and forces a pause after that clause.

The word *consecrate*, which is thereby emphasized, is very important. We can see how important it is, and how effective it is in avoiding a sentimental or stereotyped effect, by substituting other words which convey approximately the same meaning. For instance, the lines might be re-written:

A night of memories and sighs  
I now will give to thee.

We immediately see a great difference. The re-written passage tends toward sentimentality. The word *consecrate* means "to

set apart perpetually for sacred uses"; it implies the formality and impersonality of a ceremony. This implication in conjunction with the formality of tone, which has already been discussed in connection with the technique of the first stanza, helps to prevent any suggestion of self-pity.

Another technical feature appears in the use of the word *consecrate*, which does not appear in the re-written line

I now will give to thee.

The word *consecrate* is accented in ordinary usage on the first syllable. But when the word is used in this poem, meter dictates an additional accent on the last syllable, for the line is to be scanned as follows:

I cón/-secráte/to thée.

Thus the metrical situation tends to give the word an emphasis which it would not possess in ordinary prose usage; and this is appropriate because of the importance of the word in the poem.

#### EXERCISE:

1. What would have been the difference in effect if the poet had written, in the next to the last line, "an age" instead of "a night"?
2. Discuss the effect of the accent on the ordinarily unimportant word *and* in the same line.

#### A DEEP-SWORN VOW

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865- )

Others because you did not keep  
That deep-sworn vow have been friends of mine;  
Yet always when I look death in the face,  
When I clamber to the heights of sleep,  
Or when I grow excited with wine,  
Suddenly I meet your face.



## AN ODE FOR BEN JONSON

For ever set to us, by death 5  
 Sent to inflame the world beneath.  
 'Twas but a bud, yet did contain  
 More sweetness than shall spring again;  
 A budding star, that might have grown 10  
 Into a sun when it had blown.  
 This hopeful beauty did create  
 New life in love's declining state;  
 But now his empire ends, and we  
 From fire and wounding darts are free;  
 His brand, his bow, let no man fear: 15  
 The flames, the arrows, all lie here.

## EXERCISE:

Compare this poem with "An Epitaph on Salathiel Pavy."  
 What is the difference in tone and what elements contribute to  
 this difference?

## HIS PRAYER TO BEN JONSON

ROBERT HERRICK (1591-1634)

When I a verse shall make,  
 Know I have prayed thee,  
 For old religion's sake,  
 Saint Ben, to aid me.

Make the way smooth for me, 5  
 When I, thy Herrick,  
 Honoring thee, on my knee  
 Offer my lyric.

Candles I'll give to thee, 10  
 And a new altar;  
 And thou, Saint Ben, shalt be  
 Writ in my psalter.

## AN ODE FOR BEN JONSON

ROBERT HERRICK (1591-1634)

Ah, Ben!  
 Say how or when

## CHANNEL FIRING

Shall we, thy guests,  
 Meet at those lyric feasts,  
 Made at the Sun, 5  
 The Dog, the Triple Tun;  
 Where we such clusters had,  
 As made us nobly wild, not mad?  
 And yet each verse of thine  
 Out-did the meat, out-did the frolic wine. 10

My Ben!  
 Or come again,  
 Or send to us  
 Thy wit's great overplus;  
 But teach us yet 15  
 Wisely to husband it,  
 Lest we that talent spend;  
 And having once brought to an end  
 That precious stock, the store  
 Of such a wit the world should have no more. 20

## EXERCISE:

Both "His Prayer to Ben Jonson" and "Ode for Ben Jonson" were written by Herrick to the poet whom he regarded as his friend and master. (Consult the library for information concerning the relationship between the two poets.) In one of these poems the poet adopts a half-playful attitude and in the other an attitude of serious tribute. Attempt to define this difference more closely and more fully; and relate the difference to metrical and other technical factors.

## CHANNEL FIRING

THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928)

That night your great guns unawares,  
 Shook all our coffins as we lay,  
 And broke the chancel window squares,  
 We thought it was the Judgment-day



Upon the sighful branches of my mind. 140  
 Such is; what is to be?  
 The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?  
 I dimly guess what Time in mists confounds;  
 Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds  
 From the hid battlements of Eternity: 145  
 Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then  
 Round the half-glimpsed turrets slowly wash again;  
 But not ere him who summoneth  
 I first have seen, enwound  
 With glooming robes purpleal, cypress-crowned; 150  
 His name I know, and what his trumpet saith.  
 Whether man's heart or life it be which yields  
 Thee harvest, must Thy harvest fields  
 Be dunged with rotten death?  
  
 Now of that long pursuit 155  
 Comes on at hand the bruit;  
 That Voice is round me like a bursting sea:  
 "And is thy earth so marred,  
 Shattered in shard on shard?  
 Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me! 160  
 Strange, pitcous, futile thing!  
 Wherefore should any set thee love apart?  
 Seeing none but I makes much of naught"  
 (He said),  
 "And human love needs human meriting:  
 How hast thou merited— 165  
 Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?  
 Alack, thou knowest not  
 How little worthy of any love thou art!  
 Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,  
 Save Me, save only Me? 170  
 All which I took from thee I did but take,  
 Not for thy harms,  
  
 But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms,  
 All which thy child's mistake  
 Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home: 175  
 Rise, clasp My hand, and come!"  
  
 Halts by me that footfall:  
 Is my gloom, after all,

Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?  
 "Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,  
 I am He Whom thou seekest!  
 Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me." 180

## EXERCISE:

1. Make a careful study of the imagery in this poem, especially in the section from line 111 to line 154. How much variety is presented in the imagery? How does this affect the tone of the poem? How much does the poet depend upon his use of imagery for the communication of his idea as such?
2. Study the metrical and other technical factors involved in this poem in relation to particular effects. Consider especially the section from line 1 to line 15 and from line 122 to line 140.

## ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:  
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
 But being too happy in thine happiness,— 5  
 That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,  
 In some melodious plot  
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,  
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease. 10  
  
 O for a draught of vintage! that hath been  
 Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,  
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,  
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!  
 O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15  
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
 And purple-stained mouth;



That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim: 20  
 Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
 What thou among the leaves has never known,  
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;  
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs, 25  
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;  
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
 And leaden-eyed despairs,  
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
 Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow. 30

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:  
 Already with thee! tender is the night, 35  
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,  
 Clustered around by all her starry Fays;  
 But here there is no light,  
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown  
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet, 41  
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
 But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet  
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows  
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild; 45  
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;  
 Fast fading violets covered up in leaves;  
 And mid-May's eldest child,  
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves. 50

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time  
 I have been half in love with careful Death,  
 Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,  
 To take into the air my quiet breath;  
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55  
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad

In such an ecstasy!  
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
 To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!  
 No hungry generations tread thee down;  
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path 65  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
 The same that oft-times hath  
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell  
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self!  
 Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.  
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades 75  
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep  
 In the next valley-glades:  
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep? 80

This poem is essentially a reverie induced by the poet's listening to the song of the nightingale. In the first stanza the poet is just sinking into the reverie; in the last stanza, he comes out of the reverie and back to a consciousness of the actual world in which he and all other human beings live. The first lines of the poem and the last, therefore, constitute a sort of frame for the reverie proper.

The dominating idea in the reverie is the contrast between the world of the imagination (to which the song of the bird carries the poet and for which the life of the bird becomes a sort of symbol) and the world of actuality in which beauty is merely transient and in which life is beset by sorrow.

The poet has chosen to present his reverie largely in terms of imagery—imagery drawn from nature, the flowers and leaves, etc.



actually associated with the bird physically, and imagery drawn from myth and literature which has been associated with the nightingale imaginatively. The images are elaborate and decorative and the poet dwells upon them lovingly and leisurely, developing them in some detail as pictures. It is not the sort of method which would suit a poem exhibiting a rapid and dramatic play of thought such as one finds in the passages from Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (p. 527). But one remembers the general character of the poem. The loving elaboration and slowed movement resembles the slowed movement of meditative trance, or dream, and therefore is appropriate to the general tone of this poem. The imagery, then, in its elaboration is not merely beautifully decorative but has a relation to the general temper of the whole poem.

In the first stanza the poet is slipping off into the trance under the influence of the bird's song. But he does not represent the act as a merely facile and joyous release from the burden of actuality into the completely beautiful realm of the imagination. He is conscious of pain and numbness. The reverie, filled with beautiful images—as it is, is not merely an escape from life, therefore. And if it enables him to appreciate beauty more keenly, it also causes him to appreciate the sorrow of life more keenly too.

The progression of thought in the reverie—for there is a progression—is as follows. The poet, with his desire to escape from the world of actuality, calls for a drink of wine

That I might drink, and leave the world unseen.

But the wish for the draught of wine is half fancy. The poet lingers over the description of the wine, making it an idealized and lovingly elaborated thing too. We know that it is not a serious and compelling request. The grammar of the passage itself tells us this: after "O for a draught of vintage" the poet interposes seven lines of rich description identifying the wine with the spirit of summer and pastoral joys and with the romantic associations of Provence, and finally gives a concrete picture of a bubbling glass of the wine itself before he goes on to tell us why he wishes the draught of wine. (*Introduction*, p. 15)

The third stanza amplifies the desire to get away from the

world of actuality. The word *fade* in the last line of the second stanza is echoed in the next stanza in "Fade far away, dissolve . . ." The implication is that the poet wishes for a dissolution of himself; a wish which later in the poem becomes an explicit pondering on death as something attractive and desirable. The principal aspects of the actual world which the poet would like to escape are just those aspects of it which seem opposed to the world conjured up by the bird's song: its feverish hurry, the fact that in it youth dies and beauty fades. The world which the nightingale seems to inhabit is one of deathless youth and beauty. This idea too is to be developed explicitly by the poet in the seventh stanza.

In the fourth stanza the poet apparently makes a sudden decision to attempt to leave actual life and penetrate to the world of the imagination. The apparent suddenness of the decision is reflected in the movement of the first line of the stanza,

Away! away! for I will fly to thee.

But he will fly to it by exciting his mind, not with wine, but with poetry. And in line 5 of the stanza the poet has apparently been successful: "Already with thee," he says. There follows down to the opening of the sixth stanza a very rich description of the flowery, darkened thicket in which the nightingale is singing.

But stanzas six and seven imply that the poet, even though he has said "already with thee," has not really been able to win to the world which he imagines the nightingale to inhabit, for in these stanzas he is again occupied with the problem already dealt with earlier in the poem: the apparent antithesis between the transience of beauty in the actual world and the permanence of beauty in the imagination. His wish for dissolution, which he expresses in the third stanza, becomes in the sixth almost a wish for death itself, an utter dissolution. But the idea as repeated receives an additional twist. Earlier, his wish to fade away was a desire to escape the sorrow and sordidness of the real world. Now even death itself seems to the poet an easy and attractive thing; and, more than that, it seems even a sort of positive fulfillment to die to the sound of the nightingale's high requiem.

But the nightingale at the height of its singing seems not to be



subject to death at all. Not only does it seem the antithesis of the sorrowful world of actuality, but it actually seems to possess immortality. The poet goes on to describe the effect of the nightingale's song by two incidents drawn from the remote past as if he believed that the nightingale which he now hears had literally lived forever. The two incidents are chosen also to illustrate two different aspects of the bird's song. The first, the song as heard by Ruth, is an incident taken from biblical literature, and gives the effect of the song as it reminded the home-sick girl of her native land. The second, hinting at some unnamed romance of the Middle Ages, gives the unearthly magic of the song.

With the first word of the last stanza, the poet returns to himself. It is as if it had suddenly occurred to him that the word *forlorn*, which closes the previous stanza, applies to himself. He so applies it, and he gives up the attempt to escape from the world of actuality:

... the fancy cannot cheat so well.

He cannot escape. And as the song of the bird dies away, he is back where he began when the poem opened, and is asking himself whether the reverie out of which he has just come is a dream.

The structure of the poem, one may see, is not a logical one. Image leads on to image, or idea to idea, in a seemingly illogical sequence. As a matter of fact, the association of ideas in this poem is really very close in principle to that which one finds in "*stream of consciousness*" (*Glossary and analysis of "Patterns,"* pp. 139-43) writing—though it may be somewhat startling at first glance to associate this modern term with a poet like Keats. Here we come on the essential weakness of the poem (and it is a higher compliment to Keats to examine his poetry closely enough to find such a weakness than to rest our praise on those parts which are completely praiseworthy, the elaboration of the particular details). The weakness is that Keats has not made a virtue out of the abruptness of the shifts and contrasts—which do exist in the poem—by calling our attention to them, and by enforcing the irony inherent in the whole situation: the contrast between the world as it is and the world of ideal beauty which

the poet longs for. A certain irony does inhere in the poem. As a matter of fact, the poet attempts a mildly ironical ending in the last stanza. He catches up the word "*forlorn*" which he has used in describing one of the imagined settings, and suddenly finds that the word accurately describes himself. The psychological situation is that of a man who, trying to forget his pain and isolation and succeeding in forgetting it for the moment by weaving splendid descriptive tapestries, is carried suddenly back to his own case by his chance employment of a word which describes only too accurately his own plight. But the effect of irony here is not corroborated by what follows. He does not maintain this attitude in looking back at his reverie. Instead, he attacks it directly:

... the fancy cannot cheat so well  
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.

The poem as a whole lives obviously in terms of its imagery, but the emphasis on the imagery is on the decorative side. The imagery is not welded sufficiently to the theme; the ironical effect of the experience as a whole is not achieved through the imagery. Indeed, this imagery, superb as it is, lies closer to surface description than does, for example, the highly functional imagery of, say, Shakespeare. But admitting this defect, we can consider the imagery of this ode as carrying almost as far as is humanly possible beautiful description rich in association. Consider, for example, in the second stanza the description of the wine. The poet uses the term *vintage* rather than *wine* because of the associations of vintage with age and excellence. It tastes of Flora (goddess of flowers) and the country green (a land predominantly fruitful and rich) and of dance and Provençal song (associations with the merry country of the Troubadours and associations with the period of the troubadours) and sunburnt mirth. Mirth cannot in fact, of course, be sunburnt, but the sensitive reader will not be troubled by this. The phrase is a condensation of the fuller phrase: mirth of hearty folk who live close to nature and to the earth and whose sunburnt faces and arms indicate that they live close to nature. These associations of the wine with Provence and with all that Provence implies are



caught up and corroborated by another bold and condensed phrase: "full of the warm South." For the word, *South*, not only carries its associations of warmth but also of the particular South which the poet has just been describing: the south of France, Provence. Thus, the form of the statement carries with it a sort of shock and surprise such as we often find in great imaginative poetry. Then having built up the associations with the wine, the poet presents us with a very vivid concrete picture of the wine itself sparkling in its glass.

This for a rather inadequate account of only one item of the sort of description which fills the poem. The student might attempt to analyze in the same way certain other passages. In making such an examination, he will notice that Keats does not sacrifice sharpness of perception to mere prettiness. Again and again it is the sharp and accurate observation which gives the richness a validity. For example,

The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

The passage is not merely beautiful and rich. It embodies an item of observation which the poet has made. We feel that he knows what he is talking about. A poorer poet would try only for the decorative effect and would fail. Moreover, much of the suggestiveness resides also in the choice of precise details. Many a poet feels that, because the stimulus to the imagination makes for an indefinite richness of association, this indefiniteness is aroused by vague, general description. On the contrary, the force of association is greatest when it is aroused by precise detail. For example, consider the passage most famous for its suggestiveness.

Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in færy lands forlorn.

After all, the item is a scene precisely visualized. If the casements opening on the seas and framing the scene were omitted, the general, vague words, *perilous*, *færy*, and *forlorn* would not be

sufficient to give the effect actually transmitted by this part of the poem.

This poem, then, will furnish the student with a very illuminating exercise in imagery. For on one side—what we may call the picturesque or decorative or surface side—the imagery is about as fine as it is possible for it to be; but on the functional side, in which idea is transmitted and developed through images, Keats' images are not so closely knit and so coherent as the images which one finds, to take a minor poem, in Marvell's "The Definition of Love" or, to take a major poem, in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. We do not need to disparage a fine poem, however, in order to make this point. Moreover, we are allowed to do justice to Keats the critic as well as Keats the poet. For Keats himself realized that his weakness lay in general structure and in the occasional lack of positive relation between meaning and imagery in his work.

## WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822)

When the lamp is shattered  
The light in the dust lies dead—  
When the cloud is scattered  
The rainbow's glory is shed.  
When the lute is broken,  
Sweet tones are remembered not;  
When the lips have spoken,  
Loved accents are soon forgot.

5

As music and splendor  
Survive not the lamp and the lute,  
The heart's echoes render  
No song when the spirit is mute:—  
No song but sad dirges,  
Like the wind through a ruined cell,  
Or the mournful surges  
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

10

15



## EPITAPH ON AN ARMY OF MERCENARIES

When hearts have once mingled  
 Love first leaves the well-built nest,  
 The weak one is singled  
 To endure what it once possessed. 20  
 O Lovel who bewailest  
 The frailty of all things here,  
 Why choose you the frailest  
 For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee 25  
 As the storms rock the ravens on high:  
 Bright reason will mock thee,  
 Like the sun from a wintry sky.  
 From thy nest every rafter  
 Will rot, and thine eagle home 30  
 Leave thee naked to laughter,  
 When leaves fall and cold winds come.

## EXERCISE:

What is the principle upon which the various images have been selected? Are the images bound together on any consistent principle?

## EPITAPH ON AN ARMY OF MERCENARIES

A. E. HOUSMAN (1859-1936)

These, in the day when heaven was falling,  
 The hour when earth's foundations fled,  
 Followed their mercenary calling  
 And took their wages and are dead.

Their shoulders held the sky suspended;  
 They stood, and earth's foundations stay;  
 What God abandoned, these defended,  
 And saved the sum of things for pay. 5

## EXERCISE:

What do the "mercenaries" symbolize?

## ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

Much have I traveled in the realms of gold,  
 And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;  
 Round many western islands have I been  
 Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
 Oft of one wide expanse had I been told 5  
 That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;  
 Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
 Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:  
 Then felt I like some watcher of the skies 10  
 When a new planet swims into his ken;  
 Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
 He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
 Looked at each other with a wild surmise—  
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

## EXERCISE:

The poet is here attempting to describe the effect made upon him by his first reading of the translation of Homer by Chapman, the Elizabethan poet and dramatist. May it be said that the real statement of the poem is not made except by the last two images? Analyze as carefully as possible the appropriateness of these two images.

## ADONAIIS

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822)

I weep for Adonais—he is dead!  
 O, weep for Adonais! though our tears  
 Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!  
 And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years  
 To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,  
 And teach them thine own sorrow! Say: "With me 5  
 Died Adonais; till the Future dares  
 Forget the Past; his fate and fame shall be  
 An echo and a light unto eternity!"  
 What does this mean?