

MUSICA

(Traduzione libera dal Herrick)

Incantami così, così mi struggi
 con le dolci tue note che, rapito
 in estasi, lontano io mi dilegui
 da questo mondo; alleviami il dolore
 che 'l cor, la mente, l'anima mi strazia;
 un origliere dammi tu che il male
 da me repente puoi fugar, se bene
 tu non arrivi a uccidermi la febbre
 che m'arde e mi dissolve.

Tu la febbre
 da foco edace in lieve agile fiamma
 puoi convertir soavemente e fare
 che si consumi a poco a poco. In tanto
 sopore immerso, piangere mi fia
 concesso tutte le mie pene e tale
 requie infine goder ch'io, poveretto,
 di sogno in sogno, mi lusinghi e creda
 di vivere e morire tra 'l soave
 profumo de le rose. Qual silente
 alma rugiada, quali antelucani
 nemi che tutta versano lor copia
 sui fior, su l'erba, tu, de le tue note
 tutto sul cuore il fascino mi piovi,
 l'angoscia mia tu placa, onde, dai mali
 alleviato, in piena ebrezza, io possa
 chiudere gli occhi ai rai del sole, e verso
 l'Infinito spiccar rapido il volo.

ALFONSO GIGLIO.

dicembre, 1920.

THE POWER OF POETRY

Literature and history are just exactly as old as each other. We call those ages concerning which we have no written record "prehistoric" ages; for what after all is history, when all is said and done, but a very little knowledge and a great deal of conjecture, the little knowledge being derived from the written records that have come down to us, and the great deal of conjecture based on the little knowledge thus obtained. In these ages without record which we denominate "prehistoric", men presumably existed and had their being no less than they do to-day, but inasmuch as they committed no part of that being of theirs to paper (or one of its many ancient equivalents), they are forgotten, and must owe the little of their story that we possess to the dim and often prejudiced conjecture of a fallible race of Scientists. Of that struggle which was theirs, as it is everywhere and at all times the life of man, of the toils that they underwent and the grudging harvests that they obtained, of the hopes that beckoned them from before, and the necessities that urged them from behind we know and can know next to nothing: only the fearsome frameworks of colossal monsters now happily extinct, such as are from time to time dug from the deep strata of earth, can enable us to hazard a guess at the literature of rare thrills which might have been ours, had our prehistoric fathers but been able to write. A great darkness broods over these ages of earth, wherein we dimly discern the furtive movements of strange beings; but though we strive with all our might to penetrate through the obscurity that surrounds them, these figures must remain an enigma to us until, in that twilight of literature which is likewise the twilight of history, we are able to affirm of them that these, like ourselves, are men. Those uncouth and elementary designs, those brief and interjectional inscriptions, are to literature, as they are to history, as the chill and comfortless twilight that precedes the dawn: for what, I ask you again, is history but a record, and what is a record but a little writing, and is not all writing some sort of a literature? If not all writing be literature, at least all literature is writing; and the age of these earliest archives is such as to make even the most elementary among them worthy the name of literature. The earliest masters of literature are those who with