



THE HILL-WATER

THERE is a little brook,
I love it well:
It hath so sweet a sound
That even in dreams my ears could tell
Its music anywhere:
Often I wander there,

And leave my book
Unread upon the ground,
Eager to quell
In the hushed air
That haunts its flowing forehead fair
All that about my heart hath wound
A trouble of care:
Or, it may be, idly to spell
Its runic rhythms rare,
And with its singing soul to share
Its ancient lore profound:
For sweet it is to be the echoing shell
That lists and inly keeps that murmurous miracle.

About it all day long
 In this June tide
 There is a myriad song.
 From every side
 There comes a breath, a hum, a voice :
 The hill-wind fans it with a pleasant noise
 As of sweet rustling things
 That move on unseen wings ;
 And from the pinewood near
 A floating whisper oftentimes I hear,
 As when, o'er pastoral meadows wide,
 Stealeth the drowsy rumour of a weir.
 The green reeds bend above it,
 The soft green grasses stoop and trail therein ;
 The minnows dart and spin ;
 The purple-gleaming swallows love it ;
 And, hush, its innermost depths within,
 The vague prophetic murmur of the linn.

But not in summertide alone
 I love to look
 Upon this rippling water in my glen :
 Most sweet, most dear my brook,
 When the grey mists shroud every ben,
 And in its quiet place
 The stream doth bare her face,
 And lets me pore deep down into her eyes,
 Her eyes of shadowy grey,
 Wherein from day to day
 My soul is startled with a new surmise,
 Or doth some subtler meaning trace
 Reflected from unseen, invisible skies.

Dear mountain-solitary, dear lonely brook,
Of hillside rains and dews the vagrant daughter,
Sweet, sweet thy music when I bend above thee,
When in thy fugitive face I look :
Yet not the less I love thee,
When, far away, and absent from thee long,
I yearn, my dark hill-water,
I yearn, I strain to hear thy song,
Brown, wandering water,
Dear murmuring water.

WILLIAM SHARP.

