

*Tradition and the  
Individual Poem*

AN INQUIRY INTO  
ANTHOLOGIES

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*The Golden Treasury*: "If Shelley had lived to give an authentic edition of his works, or if I were printing one, or quoting the poem as a part of his biography, I should not think of omitting stanza v."<sup>43</sup> His justification as anthologist (though he called himself "editor" in the preface) was that without the omission, Shelley's poem would not have fitted into "the class of poems which Tennyson and I wished to unite in the selection."<sup>44</sup>

The distinction between the anthologist's role and the editor's or the author's is expressed in the titles of their different kinds of book. Titles for edited collections to this day copy the paradigm used by Thynne, stating what the contents are and naming their author in the third person to signal the presence of an editor. Titles for books of poems put together by their author mostly focus on their contents: on their formal variety, as in *Eglogs, Epitaphes, and Sonettes*; on their formal unity, as in *Pastorals*, or *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, or *Observations*; on their unifying interest, such as *Men and Women*, *Modern Love*, *Seeing Things*; on some metaphor for the poems like *Amoretti*, *Poetical Blossoms*, *Leaves of Grass*, *Black Magic*.<sup>45</sup> By contrast, soon after Tottel's venture, it became the convention for the form of title used for an anthology to characterize it as a containing space inseparable from, but not identifiable with, its content.

## THE DISPOSITION OF THE SPACE

Selection and arrangement are the broadest signals of the anthologist's role and presence, as Palgrave was the first to realize fully in both senses of *realizing*. That is, he was the first maker of such a collection to be aware of the richest possibilities built into these functions, and the first to make them work in an anthology as finely tuned instruments for educating readers of poetry, even perhaps the makers of it. It is of course not coincidental that he came to these realizations at the time when anthologies had accumulated their own history and tradition, which allowed them to be accepted among respectable sources of poetry by its most educated readers, and welcomed as the usual and perhaps only place where the less experienced looked for poems they would enjoy. This situation encouraged the multiplication of anthologies in a variety of forms, while it raised the self-consciousness of their makers. Their uneasiness intensified with the triumph of *The Golden Treasury*.

### PREFATORY CLAIMS

In the nineteenth century it became virtually obligatory for the maker of an anthology to open it with an apology for inflicting another such book on readers of poetry, an apology that had then to be turned into a self-justifying explanation of the new anthology's reason for being. Such a conventional justification opens the preface to the philologist Richard Chenevix Trench's *A Household Book of English Poetry*, published seven years after the first appearance of Palgrave's *The Golden Treasury of the Best Songs and Lyrical Poems in the English Language* in 1861. Trench's was the earliest collection after that shaping event in the history of anthologies to take itself, and to be taken, seriously enough (Palgrave called it "excellent" in his own preface to *The Treasury of Sacred Song* in 1889) to be worthy of comparison with *The Golden Treasury*.<sup>1</sup>

In presenting his book, Trench felt the need to add to the expected general apology a special excuse for making a new anthology after Palgrave's, a particular formula of justification which itself became a convention for anthologies to come. His preface begins with the "first question which I asked myself," which was "whether Mr. Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* had not so occupied the ground that there was no room for one who should come after. . . . But if Mr. Palgrave had not forestalled me, I certainly did not feel that any other had done so."<sup>2</sup>

His claim to deserve a share of "the ground" was that he did not limit his entries to one particular kind of poetry, that he did not exclude poems by living authors, that of more than three hundred of his chosen pieces, fewer than seventy duplicated Palgrave's. Even well into the twentieth century, "Palgrave" (his name eventually came to be used as a metonym for his book) was still the point of reference in justifications of new anthologies.

Ferdinand Earle, the editor of *The Lyric Year* (1912), set his collection apart from the "famous series of Francis T. Palgrave's" for the then novel reason that, of its "three hundred and thirty-nine poems, covering over three centuries, only five pieces are credited to women—whereas their work constitutes more than forty per cent. of this collection."<sup>3</sup> In 1914 Ernest Rhys blatantly appropriated Palgrave's title for *The New Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics* in order to advertise his anthology as "a companion book to the old *Golden Treasury*, ranging farther back in time and farther forward, and adding many poets who have enriched the lyric tongue, omitted in those pages."<sup>4</sup> T. Earle Welby explained that his borrowing from Palgrave's title for *The Silver Treasury of English Lyrics* (1925) did not reflect an intention to revise or "supersede" but merely to supplement his model: "My hope is, simply, that the possessor of Palgrave and of this book may feel he has as much of the best of English lyrical poetry as can be put between the covers of two small volumes."<sup>5</sup>

Later editors located their collections in relation to Palgrave's directly or by references to Quiller-Couch's most famous imitation of it. An instance is Louis Untermeyer's "excuse for thrusting yet another anthology upon the world" in the preface to *The Book of Living Verse* (1932): "I am, naturally, conscious of my debt . . . especially to Palgrave's *The Golden Treasury* and Quiller-Couch's *The Oxford Book of English Verse*" which "revalued Palgrave's collection." Untermeyer's "canons" for the selection of poems were

Palgrave's (as indeed were Quiller-Couch's).<sup>6</sup> Helen Gardner implied the need to bring *The New Oxford Book of English Verse* of 1972 up to date by calling attention to the fact that Quiller-Couch's two previous books in the series had their roots in a century-old model: "the most famous of Victorian anthologies, Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*."<sup>7</sup>

Other editors could avoid having to circumvent Palgrave's pre-eminence by simply reprinting his anthology in its entirety, adding their own introduction and supplementary section of poems by authors living after the closing date of around 1850 originally set by Palgrave. C. Day Lewis brought out an edition of this kind in 1954 (reprinted in 1973), justifying it in his own short introduction on the grounds that "Ninety years later, it ["Palgrave"] still holds its own among the flood of anthologies which have followed it" as a "selection of poems which as a whole transcends literary foibles and fashions, giving the reader the delight that comes from seeing something superlatively well done."<sup>8</sup> Essentially similar expanded reprints using Palgrave's title were brought out by Laurence Binyon in 1924, by Oscar Williams in 1953, by John Press in 1964 and 1994 (along with many editions advertising extended notes for use in schools, such as Walter Barnes's *Palgrave's Golden Treasury* of 1915).<sup>9</sup>

The decision of these twentieth-century editors to preserve Palgrave's own selection and arrangement a century later reflects a sense of *The Golden Treasury* as something more than an anthology or a piece of criticism, although of course it is both, but as a work of literature with an integrity of its own. C. Day Lewis suggested as much in his introduction, speaking of Palgrave's supreme gift as an anthology maker: "A satisfying arrangement of poems requires a special talent which can be fairly called 'creative.'"<sup>10</sup> Ricks brought out *The Golden Treasury* in 1991 in an annotated edition of the kind usually devoted to work by a single author rather than a gatherer of many.<sup>11</sup>

This chapter will consider Palgrave's gathering of poems as an imaginative creation as well as a remarkable event in the history of criticism. It will focus on the first edition, which displays Palgrave's designs in their original and clearest form, above all in his arrangement of poems in each of the four books. In 1883, in the earliest of his three revised editions, he added thirteen entries, probably in response to specific suggestions from friends and to meet criticisms of the first edition, for instance by adding a poem each by Blake and Smart, who had been excluded from it.

All the added poems were printed together in chronological sequence at the back of the volume, just after the last poem of the last book and continuing its numbering without a break. In the revised editions of 1890 and 1891, Palgrave gave up this odd format and inserted each of the much more numerous additions (eventually there were sixty, while ten entries were cut out) into the appropriate space in the order established for each book in 1861.

In the 1883 edition there is a hint in the paragraph Palgrave appended at the end of the original preface that the curious handling of the added poems was entirely in the interest of leaving the original arrangement of the anthology undisturbed. Paying tribute to the recommendations from friends and to reprints of "rare early writers" for poems to include, he explained his reasons for deciding to include so few new choices: "To have added all these pieces" would not only have made "a cumbrous enlargement," but would have given "a novel aspect to the selection."<sup>12</sup> This seems to suggest that what the maker of *The Golden Treasury* valued was not only the quality and range of the poetry it contained but also its arrangement according to his carefully considered original design.

Palgrave's preface to *The Golden Treasury* in the first edition opens with the conventional self-justifying claim that this "little Collection differs, it is believed, from others," one difference in the claim itself being that it is true.<sup>13</sup> His modest wording—"little Collection," "it is believed"—is also conventional, but the four short pages of the preface staking out the grounds of difference show Palgrave first subtly and then boldly making large claims for his book, fully confident of its distinguishing excellences.

This confidence was entirely justified, as even his early readers could recognize. In the words of the usually cantankerous critic John Churton Collins: "it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the appearance of the *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics* in 1861 initiated an era in popular taste."<sup>14</sup> We would expect this kind of statement to be reserved for the work of a greatly original artist.

The first of the two carefully crafted sentences that make up the opening paragraph of Palgrave's preface compresses several differences between this anthology and "others" politely unspecified:

This little Collection differs, it is believed, from others in the attempt made to include in it all the best original Lyrical pieces and Songs in our language, by writers not living,—and none beside the best.<sup>15</sup>

As a gathering of poems at once inclusive and selective, it offered a unique combination of advantages. It had the historical scope of comprehensive anthologies (though it was not as inclusive as "[Alexander] Chalmers' vast collection," *The Works of the English Poets* (1810), the only source Palgrave named in the preface along with "the best Anthologies of different periods").<sup>16</sup> At the same time, its focus on one kind of poem allowed it to fit into an elegant and convenient "little" volume (Chalmers's filled twenty-one), while its admission of "none beside the best" allowed it to escape the indiscriminateness of the many contemporaneous popular anthologies like Charles Mackay's *The Home Affections* (1858) and *Gems from the Poets Illustrated* (1860).

It was this difference of selectivity between *The Golden Treasury* and its less fastidious contemporaries that earned it the most praise in the nineteenth century, for instance from Churton Collins:

Whoever will turn to nine out of the ten Anthologies, most in vogue before 1861, will understand, that the same instinct which in the Dark Ages led man to prefer Sedulius and Avitus to Catullus and Horace, Statius to Virgil, and Hroswitha to Terence, led these editors to analogous selections.<sup>17</sup>

The second sentence of Palgrave's opening paragraph begins as if it were going to be a conventional self-defense against the accusation often aimed at anthologies, that this one includes many poems readers will inevitably have found in other such books:

Many familiar verses will hence be met with; many also which should be familiar:—the Editor will regard as his fittest readers those who love Poetry so well, that he can offer them nothing not already known and valued.<sup>18</sup>

Skillfully, what might be an apology turns into another claim for the book's special character: that it will satisfy a range of readers.

The "fittest" described in this sentence would be those who would recognize here Palgrave's revision of Milton's claim to have "fit audience . . . though few" (*P.L.* VII, 31). They would be readers educated in the same classical tradition as Palgrave himself, who could recognize and translate the untranslated and unidentified fragment from Euripides added as an epigraph to the volume in the printing of December 1861, and the mottoes from Virgil proposed for each section which, Palgrave noted in the manu-

script, Macmillan wanted to omit "lest they should give the book a learned look."<sup>19</sup> These readers would be prepared to enjoy the pleasure of recognition in meeting their favorite poems conveniently gathered unmixed with dross, and the satisfaction of having their own judgments confirmed by an editor at home in the classical and literary culture they themselves were brought up in.

Palgrave's substitution of "fittest" for Milton's "fit" could be taken simply for snobbish exclusiveness, but turns into an invitation to readers of different social classes, differently educated. That is, the grammatical superlative "fittest" implies that he expected several sorts of readers, all in some sense *fit* but some, comparatively, *fitter* than others (in contrast with the more homogeneous audience for retrospective anthologies in the eighteenth century). Besides those readers who shared the gentleman's education to be had at public and some grammar schools and at the two universities, Palgrave's anthology addresses a smaller, more highly learned group who would "take up the book in a serious and scholarly spirit," but also others of a very much more numerous class who respect a classical education without having experienced it.<sup>20</sup>

These are the readers who would enlarge their understanding of poetry with the help of Palgrave's notes glossing mythological references ("Amphion's lyre," "twins of Jove") and explicating figures of speech ("Time's chest" "Nature's Eremite"); who might be helped by his selection and commentary to recognize "highwrought and conventional Elizabethan Pastoralism" or the "simple pathos" mixed in with the "mannerism" of William Cowper's verse.<sup>21</sup> The range of readers, according to Palgrave's expressed hope in the dedication to the anthology, might even include those he uneasily hypostatized there as "Labour" and "Poverty."<sup>22</sup>

Whether or not that vague hope was quite realized, it is another sign of uniqueness that Palgrave's anthology attempted to fulfill it, showing respect for readers of every degree of fitness by offering those of each kind what might enhance their enjoyment, and doing so without condescension. In the preface he said that he had "found the vague general verdict of popular Fame more just than those have thought, who, with too severe a criticism, would confine judgments on Poetry to 'the selected few of many generations.'"<sup>23</sup>

Availability to all these hoped-for readers was made possible by the

modest price of *The Golden Treasury*, which originally sold, and sold astonishingly well, for 4s 6d (by contrast, for instance, with a volume of a single poet's new verse such as Elizabeth Browning's popular *Aurora Leigh*, which cost 12s in 1856).<sup>24</sup>

The appearance of the volume was also finely calibrated to appeal specially to certain groups of readers without putting off any. It was a pleasing size to hold and carry, bound in dark cloth, the face of the cover framed in two gold lines with Macmillan's emblematic medallion in the middle. On its title page was its only illustration, a vignette portraying in simple lines a naked youth playing a pipe, seated on a grassy knoll, a dog at his feet, a tree behind him with a bird perched among its branches.

The looks of the anthology defined it in contrast with a popular collection like Mackay's *The Home Affections* (1858), which its compiler's introduction addressed to "the most refined and fastidious as well as to the simple tastes of those who are not critical, provided their hearts be touched and their generous sentiments aroused."<sup>25</sup> This was a larger volume than Palgrave's, with an ornamental design in an elaborate frame on its cover; a full-page frontispiece like an illustration in a ladies' magazine, showing young lovers in vaguely medieval or Elizabethan dress on a grassy spot arched over by a tree, the youth piping to the maiden; the text sprinkled with other illustrations (the title page advertised one hundred engravings) ranging from stormy landscapes to cozy scenes of mid-Victorian family life such as parents reading to children at the parlor table. In a deliberate contrast of styles, *The Golden Treasury* represented classical simplicity that avoided both ostentation and pedantry. Plainly, it was classy without being expensive.

There must have been varieties among its readers to account for their numbers, or so Palgrave's daughter was convinced:

The first edition of the 'Golden Treasury' . . . was recognized from the beginning as the best anthology of its kind. . . . There is no doubt that this little book has taught many—in all ranks of life—to know and love much of our best lyrical poetry which might otherwise have always remained untrodden ground.<sup>26</sup>

Certainly the reception of *The Golden Treasury* was remarkable: four printings the year it came out; twenty-four more before the end of the century; countless reprintings and expansions since.

The claims to difference that Palgrave made for the anthology in the

opening of its preface are cloaked in conventional modesty that disappears altogether in the penultimate paragraph where he made his grandest claim for his collection's uniqueness (which he took out of the preface in 1883):

In the arrangement, the most poetically-effective order has been attempted. . . . within each book the pieces have therefore been arranged in gradations of feeling or subject. The development of the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven has been here thought of as a model, and nothing placed without careful consideration. And it is hoped that the contents of this Anthology will thus be found to present a certain unity, 'as episodes,' in the noble language of Shelley, 'to that great Poem which all poets, like the cooperating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world.'<sup>27</sup>

Here the anthology is not a "little Collection" but a finished and unified work of art, modeled not merely on symphonic form but, astonishingly, on heroic symphonies, and taking its place in the "great" tradition of poetry. This anthologist's role is not to compile but to compose. He is not an editor but an author, and his *Treasury* itself has the essential qualities required of each piece allowed a space in it: "the most poetically-effective order," "unity," "an arrangement" with the aim of "pleasure, and the Wisdom which comes through Pleasure."

In a letter of 1862 to Sir Alexander Grant, Palgrave hid his pride of achievement in his "little Anthology" behind a playfully off-hand manner—"I hope you liked the arrangement and my notes &c. In this sort of paste-and-scissors authorship these trifles are all one can call one's own"—but "authorship" gives him away in spite of the conventional self-deprecation of his "trifles."<sup>28</sup>

An unidentified reviewer of *The Golden Treasury* writing within a few months of its first printing called it "the most precious casket that ever accompanied traveller in his roamings, or laid beside the pillow, or on the table at home."<sup>29</sup> His enthusiasm was grounded in the recognition that "Mr. Palgrave's labour has not been that of an ordinary compiler" because of his choice to print "entire pieces" rather than the snippets found in "a common volume of 'Beauties' or 'Elegant Extracts,'" and because of his care in weighing the value of each chosen piece on "golden scales." The review merely mentions the arrangement of the contents, describing it briefly by virtually repeating Palgrave's own words in the preface.

The focus of praise on the quality of the selections is typical of remarks

about *The Golden Treasury* in its own time, unsurprisingly since the choice of its entries was guided by Tennyson (the one among his three advisers to whom Palgrave submitted each poem for final judgment). It reflected mid-Victorian taste in poetry, also largely shaped by Tennyson, at its most discriminating.

What still makes *The Golden Treasury* one of a kind is the brilliant originality of its arrangement, about which there have been no detailed discussions, but only some sentences of generalized praise. The fullest comment is by C. Day Lewis in the introduction to his expanded edition of Palgrave's collection:

His grouping of his material into successive but overlapping themes, within the period that each of his four books covers, was done with great delicacy, is never obtrusive, and enables the reader both to get more from individual poems and to receive general impressions about the style and poetic interest of each period.<sup>30</sup>

The only observation about the placing of particular poems still seems to be one by Matthew Arnold, who admired Palgrave's "plan of arrangement which he devised for that work," especially in "the juxtaposition, in pursuance of it, of two such pieces as those of Wordsworth and Shelley" ("My heart leaps up" and "O World! O Life! O Time!") that shows "a delicacy of feeling in these matters which is quite indisputable and very rare."<sup>31</sup>

#### THE ARRANGEMENT

Palgrave described in his preface the division of the collection into four books measuring the passage of time from the second quarter of the sixteenth century to about 1616; then to 1700; to 1800; and through the first half of the nineteenth century. The divisions, though marked off by convenient dates, are justified by the distinguishing "character" given each of them successively by Shakespeare, Milton, Gray, and Wordsworth. While the books are in temporal order, within each the poems are not arranged in "rigidly chronological sequence," but "in gradations of feeling or subject," to reflect "the natural growth and evolution of our Poetry," creating an organic "unity" rather than tracing a linear path.<sup>32</sup>

Implied are contrasts on the one hand with strictly chronological anthologies such as Campbell's *Specimens of the British Poets* (1819) and John Aiken's *Select Works of the British Poets* (1826); on the other with more popular collections arranged by topic, for instance Mackay's *The Home Af-*

fections. The first of this type serious enough to aim at historical range while rejecting the merely chronological model was *The Household Book of Poetry* of 1858, edited by the American journalist Charles Anderson Dana.

In Dana's preface he made the obligatory claim to difference:

The editor . . . flatters himself that in classifying so many immortal productions of genius according to their own ideas and motives, rather than according to their chronology, the nativity and sex of their authors, or any other merely external order, he has exhibited the incomparable richness of our language in this department of literature, quite as successfully as if he had followed a method more usual in such collections.<sup>33</sup>

Following the preface is an index of the topics such as "Nature," "Childhood," "Imagination," "Sentiment and Reflection," with poems listed alphabetically by title under each topic, while in the text entries are grouped according to more narrow categories, mixed out of chronological order. Among "Poems of Nature" on facing pages under the running head "Early Summer" are entries by—in this order—Beaumont and Fletcher, Denis Florence McCarthy, Alexander Montgomery, Wordsworth, Anonymous about 1250, William Motherwell. Grouping poems in this fashion to fit their compiler's chosen categories—several of Dana's are borrowed from Wordsworth—of common "ideas and motives" is as obviously a "merely external order" as is a sequence based on the date of birth of their authors or any other such single, simple principle of arrangement.

If Palgrave did have in mind any model for his different way to order the entries in an anthology, it was one he carefully left unmentioned in his preface. In 1860 the poet William Allingham had published under a pseudonym a gathering of slightly more than two hundred poems he had been working on for at least five years: *Nightingale Valley. A Collection, Including a Great Number of the Choicest Lyrics and Short Poems in the English Language*. Palgrave had seen Allingham's book, we learn from a letter written by their mutual friend Thomas Woolner, a sculptor and poet who was one of the judges of entries for *The Golden Treasury*, who invented its brilliant title and designed the vignette for its title page.<sup>34</sup> Woolner wrote in 1860 to Tennyson's wife that "Palgrave called in this evening; he is busy reading all the Poets for the purpose of making a collection to publish which he intends to beat that of Allingham."<sup>35</sup>

*Nightingale Valley* may have been a partial model for Palgrave's anthology both for its focus on *The Choicest Lyrics and Short Poems* and for ideas about arrangement suggested in Allingham's preface to this "little volume": "an arrangement of a limited number of short poems with some eye to grouping and general effect" aimed only to "delight."<sup>36</sup> This description of the arrangement makes it sound casual and uninsistent, and indeed it seems to be. The entries appear in the sequence listed in the table of contents with no divisions to suggest chronological or topical order, following one another in a flow of pleasing associations.

The anthology opens, as befits its title, with Milton's sonnet "To the Nightingale," where a lover invokes the bird to sing before night silences its "liquid notes that close the eye of day." Next, in a poem by Joanna Baillie, a lover exhorts his lady to rise and greet the day: "Up! quit thy bower, late wears the hour, / Long have the rooks caw'd round the tower; / O'er flower and tree loud hums the bee." Then comes Samuel Coleridge's "Inscription / For a Fountain on a Heath" where we hear again the "hum of murmuring bees!" A poem by Thomas Hood and the anonymous anthology-piece "Sic Vita" are followed by Wordsworth's sonnet upon sonnets ("Nuns fret not"), a seemingly abrupt shift in focus and in diction, except that again "bees" are heard to "murmur by the hour in foxglove bells." Linkings of this kind appear intermittently, with what seem like medleys interposed among them, so that the "general effect" is pleasantly idiosyncratic and therefore arbitrary, an expression of the anthologist's personal pleasure in browsing.

Since Palgrave thought Allingham's collection worth challenging, he must have found its selection attractive—eventually he included close to fifty of his rival's choices in the first edition of *The Golden Treasury*—and its placing of poems suggestive. Even so, arbitrariness, whether of topics or of personal preferences, is precisely what he set himself to avoid, at least in appearance. While adapting groupings like some of Allingham's to his own design, he tried to save his readers from the rather bewildering impression of serendipity that *Nightingale Valley* risks.

This undesirable effect seems to have been specifically in Palgrave's mind when in his preface he explained his own decision to divide entries in sections:

The English mind has passed through phases of thought and cultivation so various and so interposed during these three centuries of Poetry, that a rapid pas-

sage between Old and New, like rapid alteration of the eye's focus in looking at the landscape, will always be wearisome and hurtful to the sense of Beauty.<sup>37</sup>

By Palgrave's different decision to distribute poetry of three centuries in books marking off sweeps of time generous enough to show large differences, he hoped the poems could be seen to express interests and features reflecting historical processes of "natural growth and evolution." In ordering poems within those books by a different, atemporal principle, their "gradations of feeling or subject," his aim was to show their shared interests and characteristics in multiple, overlapping details of language.<sup>38</sup> That way, the reasons for their positioning could seem to have been generated from within. At the same time each poem would be seen to belong to a historical context created by the connections its inherent qualities make with the poems around it in the same book. Each poem, each book, the whole of *The Golden Treasury* would then reflect the "evolution" of English poetry, a process not arbitrary but inevitable.

To begin with, this intensely self-conscious design depends for its effectiveness, paradoxically, on its appearance of self-effacing simplicity. After Palgrave's very short preface is a table of contents which lists the four books by number only, but not their contents. Then the self-styled "editor" seems to remove himself, not reappearing until the notes, which the reader would come to after some three hundred pages of verse closed with a kind of colophon, "End of the Golden Treasury." At the very back are an index of authors, with their entries otherwise identified only by page and the Roman numeral above each in the text, followed by a separate index solely of first lines.

This postponement of explicit editorial guidance except for the brief prefatory apologia was a silent revolt against the conventional plan of nineteenth-century anthologies, which dictated that they list their entries in advance. Presumably, that format was for the convenience of possible buyers who would want a preview of what they might be getting, and for readers who would enjoy browsing, one of them being Woolner. He described in a letter his own enjoyment of anthologies, of being able to "dip from gem to gem without the trouble of getting up to take books down from the shelves," which was one of the often advertised conveniences of such books that determined their conventional format.<sup>39</sup>

Besides the prefixed table of authors and poems, anthologists often pre-

pared readers by a critical or historical survey of the span of poetry their collections included, either in an introduction or in summaries heading each group of entries. Palgrave delayed that kind of guidance by placing his brief summaries of the four sections that divide the poems at the back of the volume, as lead-paragraphs for the notes to each section. Since the radically abridged table of contents gave no preliminary clue to that plan, readers first looking into *The Golden Treasury* would not have thought to start by turning to the back pages for summaries to guide them through the collection.

#### FRAMING POEMS

This unexpected spatial arrangement seems designed to allow an unmediated experience of reading poetry—"she speaks best for herself," Palgrave said in closing the preface—as if the reader were a house-guest left alone to enjoy the host's private library.<sup>40</sup> By analogy with this social situation, the reader opens *The Golden Treasury* to page one, to find without further preliminary "Book First," Roman numeral I, and the title "Spring" above three four-line stanzas signed below "T. Nash," as they might have been in a sixteenth-century gentleman's commonplace book:

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;  
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,  
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,  
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,  
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay,  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,  
Young lovers meet, old wives a sunning sit,  
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!  
Spring! the sweet Spring!

This choice of opening poem is as fresh as the poem itself, which makes no other demands than that the reader be delighted and amused by it, as it seems to be delighted and amused by its own sweetly knowing simplicity. It is not an anthology-piece that readers would recognize, or a poem by an



author whose work would inevitably be included among English classics—for instance Spenser or Sidney, who were trotted out to open Elizabethan collections for the enticement of readers. The reader is left, with as little apparent guidance as possible from prior knowledge or editorial intrusion, to experience the verses immediately, on their own terms.

Besides its unencumbered immediacy, this first poem, without carrying much conceptual weight of its own, serves several more of Palgrave's designs. The most obvious is that it opens *The Golden Treasury* the way the mythologized natural world of pastoral begins, in "sweet Spring," an analogy expanded in the next, little-known poem, "Summons to Love" (II), which starts up the morning: "Phoebus, arise!"; "Spread forth thy golden hair"; "The clouds with orient gold spangle their blue." The world of the Golden Age is invoked by a vocabulary that unifies the first book, and in its later transformations the whole of Palgrave's collection.

This consistency is a reflection of both personal and mid-Victorian taste, but Palgrave, apparently trying to avoid the impression of arbitrary preference, offered a more general, even philosophical justification for it by conceptualizing the pastoral harmony among the selections all through his anthology in a sentence on the first page of the notes (in editions before 1890):

Great Excellence, in human art as in human character, has from the beginning of things been even more uniform than Mediocrity, by virtue of the closeness of its approach to Nature:—and so far as the standard of Excellence kept in view has been attained in this volume, a comparative absence of extreme or temporary phases in style, a similarity of tone and manner, will be found throughout:—something neither modern nor ancient, but true in all ages, and like the works of Creation, perfect as on the first day.<sup>41</sup>

Nashe's poem opens Book I in a way that coincides with another of Palgrave's conceptual schemes as he described it in the notes. Elizabethan poetry, he said there, exhibits "a wide range of style;—from simplicity expressed in a language hardly yet broken in to verse, through the pastoral fancies and Italian conceits" to poems by Shakespeare and William Drummond where "the 'purple light of Love' is tempered by a spirit of sterner reflection."<sup>42</sup>

The style of naively artless simplicity typical of popular songs and bal-

lads of the period is not actually represented among his selections, but Nashe's stanzas are a playful imitation of such a song. The poem placed at the end of the first book fits more closely Palgrave's description of the "spirit of sterner reflection" that brings the Elizabethan period to a close: a sonnet by Drummond (LXI) that closes both book and period with the darkened pastoral refrain of "echoes . . . / Rung from their flinty caves, Repent! Repent!"

The way the summary of the period maps out the general plan of the book is unmistakable. At the same time it is played down because the reader experiences the poems first in no announced or visibly explicit arrangement, and only later the explanatory description of their order. In its delayed position, the summary is offered as an account of poems in an already existing, as it were natural pattern which the compiler of the notes has discovered, rather than presenting itself as an outline of his making that he then put the poems in place to exemplify.

While first and last poems mark off the periods they frame, they also show continuities with other books. Book II opens, as Book I closes, with a Christian poem, Milton's "Ode/On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" (LXII). It is at the same time, like Nashe's song, a poem of beginnings, though the new season it celebrates is not "sweet Spring" but "winter wild," when "Nature . . . / Had doff'd her gaudy trim," as if laying aside the fictions of pastoral. The ode has replaced the song to reproduce the sound of "heaven's deep organ" rather than the piping of shepherds and the merry tunes of birds, but its music reinvoles the golden pastoral world transformed by "that Light unsufferable" of the Incarnation: "For if such holy song/Enwrap our fancy long,/Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold."

The rich pattern of connections made by this choice of first poem coincides with Palgrave's summarizing note on Book II, the "latter eighty years of the seventeenth century," which experienced "the close of our Early poetical style" in Milton, and "the commencement of the Modern" in Dryden, whose "Alexander's Feast, Or, the Power of Music" ends Book II.<sup>43</sup> Even so, chronology does not strictly dictate the disposition of poems within this frame: "Ode/On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" is immediately followed by Dryden's "Song for Saint Cecilia's Day, 1687," and "Alexander's Feast" is immediately preceded by Milton's "At a Solemn Music" in

order to show how their "splendid Odes" together "exhibit the wider and grander range which years and experience of the struggles of the time conferred on Poetry."<sup>44</sup>

Continuity and difference are more simply represented in the opening poem of Book III, Gray's smoothly measured—in the vocabulary of Palgrave's note "cultivated"—"Ode on the Pleasure Arising from Vicissitude" (CXVII). Pastoral nature is reawakened—"Now the golden Morn aloft/Waves her dew-bespangled wing"—making the poem clearly parallel to the openings of the two earlier books, but with Nashe's exuberance and Milton's power muted by the distancing poetic diction that gives the ode what it calls "A melancholy grace."<sup>45</sup>

A less graceful melancholy note is struck in the last poem of this third book, Anna Laetitia Barbauld's "Life! I know not what thou art," while in between are a few groupings—political or heroic poems, poems titled with common names like "John Anderson"—more disparate and discrete than many of the sequences elsewhere, which are bound together by more intricate affinities. Palgrave in his summarizing note confessed to this difference between Book III and the others. He found it "more difficult to characterize the English Poetry of the eighteenth century than any other," not because he was guilty of accepting the prevailing clichés that it is "artificial" or "tame and wanting in originality," but because of its "varieties in style," its "diversities in aim," and its "subjects so far apart."<sup>46</sup>

The pattern of framing poems set in the first three books makes Palgrave's choice of opening entry for the last book the most surprising, even though the poem was already well enough known to be a likely entry in an anthology: Keats's "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (CLVI). Readers following the order that unfolds in *The Golden Treasury* would have more reason to expect one among the many poems in Book IV that invoke, celebrate, or reflect on nature's beginnings in a vocabulary rich in continuities with earlier pastoral poems such as Wordsworth's "Ode On Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" (placed just before the closing poem of Book IV). In a critical article published the year after *The Golden Treasury*, Palgrave chose that ode to represent the "household delights" provided to mid-Victorian readers by Wordsworth's "favoured generation" of poets.<sup>47</sup> Instead, the more unlikely choice of Keats's sonnet gives the reader of Palgrave's anthology, who comes on it in its unexpected

place, a surprise analogous to the traveler's in the poem who hears Chapman's Homer for the first time.

In Keats's title, "First" makes one connection of the sonnet with the entries in the parallel spaces in earlier books as another poem of beginnings. A reader of *The Golden Treasury* who has reached the beginning of Book IV would be prepared to recognize an analogy between that initiating passage into the spatial territory of the book and the poet's journey in the sonnet: "Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold." The associations of "gold" in this opening line with the title of the anthology, and with the pastoral diction that gives the contents its intended unity are clear enough. They are made even stronger by a sentence in the exalted closing of the preface: "Poetry gives treasures 'more golden than gold,' leading us in higher and healthier ways than those of the world, and interpreting to us the lessons of Nature."<sup>48</sup>

Keats's traveler describes his often repeated experience of visiting the richly civilized "realms of gold" held by "bards in fealty to Apollo" in a vocabulary that would not disturb the harmony created in the first three books. Then line eight is interrupted by a voice—Homer's, Chapman's, Keats's—that we hear "speak out loud and bold" in loud and bold monosyllables, a break Palgrave emphasized by adding a dash at the beginning of line nine. A new kind of diction invokes a new world: a "wide expanse" of "skies" and ocean, uninhabited and unvisited until the worldly tourist turned discoverer and explorer first saw it spread before him. It is a premythologized world, not the pastoral Golden Age but primordial nature, on a scale that shrinks the many "western islands" crowded into well-traveled waters, and therefore might seem to diminish the poetry of Apollo's bards that fills the earlier books of *The Golden Treasury* and the opening lines of this poem.

If the sonnet could be read as a dismissal or even a denigration of "golden" poetry, it would have been better placed in a closing space, but Palgrave's positioning of it in the evolving design of his collection as a poem of beginnings encourages a fuller and more precise reading of it. While the poem reaches back into what it pictures as a deep and wild precivilized past, into the beginnings of poetry, it gives living voice to the ancient Greek poet through the voice of the Elizabethan translator in the sonnet's own voice. It speaks from within a highly organized literary form, first practiced to per-

fection by Shakespeare and renewed in the nineteenth century as part of the revival of interest in what was called (for instance by Thomas Warton in 1774, Robert Southey in 1807, John Churton Collins in 1905) *the Golden Age* of Elizabethan literature.<sup>49</sup> In the summary of Book IV, Palgrave praised “our own age in Poetry” for renewing “the half-forgotten melody and depth of tone” of that earlier period, where his selection begins.<sup>50</sup>

In the context Palgrave made for it, Keats’s poem can be read to be a history of poetry revealed in visionary moments as a process both temporal and timeless, like nature’s cycles. The sonnet celebrates private moments that became great historical events: when the astronomer (Sir William Herschel who discovered Uranus in 1781, but Galileo also seems to be meant, Milton’s “Tuscan Artist”) first saw a new planet through his “Optic Glass” (*P.L.* I, 288); when Cortez (mistaken for Balboa) stared for the first time at the Pacific.<sup>51</sup>

They take place—in the timeless grammar of similes—in the visionary moment when the poet could first “breathe” inspiration from Homer speaking through Chapman. Perhaps having in mind the choice of Keats’s sonnet to open the last book, Palgrave in his summary of it characterized the “modern” genius of the age as stirred by “that far wider and greater spirit which . . . sweeps mankind round the circles of its gradual development.”<sup>52</sup> It seems likely that Palgrave intended what he described as the symphonic “development” of *The Golden Treasury* to be an instrument for expressing this modern spirit.

#### SEQUENCES

Within the temporal frame of each book, the pieces of the whole spatial design are in connected sequences consisting of from two or three to more than a dozen entries, occasionally with one of them titled to suggest their common focus: “Time and Love,” “The Poetry of Dress.” They are not disposed according to a single principle like strictly chronological dating, or the logic of topical categories like Dana’s Wordsworthian “Poems of the Imagination” or “of Sentiment and Reflection.”

In the summarizing notes Palgrave described the contents of the four divisions as variously displaying range of style, of subject, of feeling and thought, of moods or tendencies, but since the books are not subdivided, the transitions from one sequence to the next as well as the shadings within a

series can be gradual, like those from book to book. For the same reason, the connections among them can be both multiple and detailed, sometimes only subtly suggested by key words and phrases.

An instance where Palgrave brings to bear on a single poem the context of two differently ordered sequences of entries in the last book (much the longest, containing 122 poems written within only fifty years) illustrates another form of implicit interpretive direction. It shows how Palgrave’s placing of an individual poem can make subtle suggestions that color the reader’s sense of it, giving it slightly different lights and shadows than it might be cast in apart from his carefully composed context.

Starting with Wordsworth’s “To the Skylark” are five poems (CCXL–CCXLIV) that form an immediately recognizable group. Defined by its focus on the image of a bird as a figure for poetic inspiration, it comments on a group of four poems in Book III with a similar focus: Thomas Gray’s “The Progress of Poesy/A Pindaric Ode”; William Collins’s “The Passions/An Ode for Music”; Gray’s “Ode on the Spring”; William Cowper’s “The Poplar Field” (CXL–CXLIII). The sequence comes to an end as the bird’s song “fades” (“The blackbird has fled from “The Poplar Field”) in the poem situated last in this arrangement of the five poems, Keats’s “Ode to a Nightingale.” Next are four birdless poems that might be thought to have been put together for their formal likeness, since they are all sonnets, three of them by Wordsworth: “Upon Westminster Bridge, Sept. 3, 1802”; Shelley’s “Ozymandias of Egypt”; “Composed at Neidpath Castle, / The Property of Lord Queensberry, / 1803”; “Admonition to a Traveller.” All but the first are clearly bound together by their double focus—on a figure identified generically as a “traveller” (like Keats’s), and on an object of “decay,” an actual or perhaps imminent ruin.

This double focus is not so clearly visible in “Upon Westminster Bridge” without a closer look at it in the context of the poems grouped just before and after it:

Earth has not anything to show more fair:  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty:  
This City now doth like a garment wear

The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky,  
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;  
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

The "sight" of the city, like the birds in the preceding poems, inspires a vision: "All bright and glittering in the smokeless air," it enchants the viewer. Like all the birds, the view of the city seems to be suspended in "air," so that it enjoys, as birds do, some other than human reciprocity with the "sky," while it also belongs to the "Earth" as distinct from the mortal "world" that Keats's nightingale has "never known."

The last lines of Keats's ode are the immediate link with "Upon Westminster Bridge": "Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music;—do I wake or sleep?" Wordsworth's sonnet in the end may imply a version of the same questioning: "the very houses seem asleep." Reverberations here of Keats's last line bring out the new tentativeness in the poet's voice: what he sees may only "seem" to be a "vision," may be as fragile and ephemeral as sleep. The tentativeness is in contrast with absolute assertions earlier in the sonnet that "Earth has not anything . . .," "Never did sun . . .," "Ne'er saw I . . .," affirmations but all in the negative, as if to fend off uncertainty.

This reading of "Upon Westminster Bridge" is compatible with the further interpretive suggestions made by the group of three sonnets immediately following it. Because a traveler figures in all three, they make the poet standing on the bridge more clearly recognizable as another transient viewer distanced from what he looks at, a traveler through the city seeing it as a stranger, as if from outside it rather than from his stopping place at the "heart" of its ordinary busy life.

Adding to the sense of this poet as a traveler from far away, he first describes "this City" as if it did not belong to the modern, industrial world of 1802, with its banks, shops, prisons, houses of parliament, but were a city in an "antique land," the home from which Shelley's mythologized traveler has come, with structures like the "ancient dome, and towers" of Neidpath

Castle. Then the city seems to dissolve into a ruin, its loftiest structures melting into "the fields," their roofs "Open . . . to the sky," "silent, bare" like the "boundless and bare" sands that surround the ruined colossus of Ozymandias. Even the bridge the traveler stops to look from seems to "melt away" like the "abode" imagined in "Admonition to a Traveller" if it were to be violated by human touch. All that remains is the untrammelled river, nature returned to its primordial state (as in "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer"), reclaiming what belongs to it. If the sight of the city is more than a waking dream, it is a momentary glimpse of a visionary world from which the viewer, who is like all human beings merely a passerby, must inevitably be excluded.

#### TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL ORDER

To consider the implications of the expressive use of physical and conceptual space and time in this anthology—Palgrave's placing of poems according to "gradations of feeling or subject" within books laid out in chronological order—we will look back at the poems grouped around bird images, which echo one another so closely that the slightest variation can express shadings of mood and feeling.

Wordsworth's "To a Skylark" is placed first of the five, each addressing or contemplating a bird as a visionary figure: "Ethereal minstrel," "blithe Spirit," "Presiding Spirit," "blithe-newcomer," "blessed bird," "immortal Bird." The ecstatic pitch of Wordsworth's apostrophe to the skylark harmonizes with the song of the bird: "To the last point of vision, and beyond, / Mount, daring warbler," to that height "Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood / Of harmony, with instinct more divine." Shelley also greets a skylark "That from heaven, or near it / Pourest thy full heart / In profuse strains of unpremeditated art." Then, midway in the poem, he begins to doubt his own figure: "What thou art we know not." In the last poem, Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," the poet, listening "While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad / In such an ecstasy!," thinks of his own mortality, and that reflection leads him to accuse the "immortal Bird" as a "deceiving elf" to be distrusted as a figure for poetic inspiration: "Was it a vision, or a waking dream?"

Because this poem is positioned last in the spatial sequence, allowing its closing lines to act also as a conclusion to the earlier four in this closely

bound group (as "The Poplar Field" completes its sequence), together they trace a defined curve of mood or feeling that emerges from Palgrave's ordering of them. This design makes the application of the word *earlier* to poems that come before Keats's in the sequence seem to have a special temporal reference, as if they somehow happened before, and not only in the time scheme of the reader turning the pages one after another.

As a group they have a kind of internal development that creates the illusion of a psychological narrative, as if their interwoven details expressed successive changes of mood and feelings, the evolution of a poet's inward experience. This fiction, entirely of Palgrave's making as an unobtrusive instrument for shaping the reader's sense of the poems, is not true to the actual experiences of the poets who wrote them: to their experiences of making their own and of reading each other's poems. That is, Keats composed "Ode to a Nightingale" six years before Wordsworth wrote his poem on a skylark, one year before Shelley wrote his. The same poems rearranged in the chronological order of their composition would tell a different story.

The illusion of temporality is created by the way the poems are arranged spatially, all equally present on the pages of the anthology while to the reader, coming on them one after another as they are ordered there, they form a psychological narrative of which Palgrave is the author.

The larger implication is that Palgrave orchestrated the expressively ordered sequences of poems within the framework of chronologically ordered books to reflect his conception of poetic tradition. It is simultaneously and equally historical and timeless, like Shelley's "great poem . . . built up since the beginning of the world," or like T. S. Eliot's imagining of it a century later as "a living whole of all the poetry that has ever been written."<sup>53</sup> The accumulation of poems in sequences within each book of the anthology, and from book to book, reflects the idea of tradition and the individual poem that Palgrave wanted to embody in *The Golden Treasury*.

#### FOLLOWERS AND CONSEQUENCES

Palgrave became an honored literary figure as the maker of *The Golden Treasury*—he was appointed Professor of Poetry at Oxford largely on the strength of its reputation—and the anthology was very early considered a kind of national treasure, a modern classic to set beside the works of distinguished English poets in every respectable library. No book of this kind had

ever before won that kind of general recognition, and none since except perhaps *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, which Robert Graves called "the Establishment's first choice for well-educated men and women."<sup>54</sup> In fact, its success enhanced the status of *The Golden Treasury*, which Quiller-Couch had meant to supersede, by being so recognizably an imitation of it.

Of course Quiller-Couch's preface begins by pointing out his collection's distinguishing features, though without actually saying they are precisely the ones that make it different from Palgrave's: the longer span of its contents from the thirteenth to the end of the nineteenth century; a wider range of poetry in English not restricted to "these Islands only"; the inclusion of epigrams as well as lyric poetry; a simpler scheme of arranging poets in order of their birth; the omission of notes to keep the larger number of entries from making the book "unwieldy."<sup>55</sup>

Still, these differences did not prevent the book from looking like a copy of *The Golden Treasury*. The dark binding ornamented only by letters and border-frame in gold, the unencumbered presentation of poems with no table of contents or other introductory editorial paraphernalia than its preface (as brief as Palgrave's), the uncrowded spacing of entries, are all designed to give the impression of unostentatiously elegant simplicity, while avoiding the learned look that would drive away some readers Palgrave had tactfully invited.

Again without saying so, Quiller-Couch fashioned himself as Palgrave's successor, sharing the classical education and editorial seriousness untainted by pedantry or condescension that gave Palgrave his unique status: at once a much respected man of letters and a maker of an anthology with an exceptionally wide and various audience. Particularly in the closing paragraph of his preface Quiller-Couch shaped himself in Palgrave's image:

For the anthologist's is not quite the *dilettante* business for which it is too often and ignorantly derided. I say this, and immediately repent; since my wish is that the reader should in his own pleasure quite forget the editor's labour, which too has been pleasant: that, standing aside, I may believe this book has made the Muses' access easier when, in the right hour, they come to him to uplift or to console—<sup>56</sup>

following which are two lines, unidentified and untranslated, of Greek verse.

What Quiller-Couch missed in Palgrave's presentation of himself was that, unlike other anthologists, he cast himself as an author, and his book as a creative arrangement displaying the unity and harmony of a work of art. The possibility of seeing an anthology in this strange and enhancing light as a heroic symphony escaped Quiller-Couch's capacity for imagining, but not some few twentieth-century poets who tried their hands at making original books out of compilations. Chief among them were Robert Bridges and Walter de la Mare; what they made were not logical but eccentric extensions of Palgrave's conception.

In 1907 Bridges said in a letter to Yeats, "I have a great abhorrence of these anthologists, tho' I now and then get something out of them. But I believe that the multiplication of their poetry books does really hinder the sale of poems."<sup>57</sup> Then six years later he wrote again to ask if he might include certain of Yeats's poems in what he variously called his "anthology," "so-called anthology," "queer . . . book."<sup>58</sup>

Longman the Publisher who lost his son early in the war asked me to make him up a volume of consolatory poetry. . . . I told him that I did not believe in the benefits of consolatory poems, but that if he liked I wd make a book that I thought people in distress would like to read. He came round to my notion of the book and putting it together has been a great distraction. . . . It is a very serious performance and I think unlike anything that has been done before.<sup>59</sup>

Then to overcome what he sensed might be Yeats's resistance, he added in closing his appeal, "I am quite sure that the way in which I set your poems will do them a lot of good."<sup>60</sup>

The title page announces a performance that is very serious indeed, on a grand scale, for a universal audience: *The Spirit of Man/An Anthology in English and French from the Philosophers & Poets*. Below the title a vignette shows the hand of God stretched out to Michelangelo's Adam. At the same time the unusual calligraphic design of the type face looks like handwriting, as if the book were a record of private reading. Altogether the title page, by its unconventional aspect, presents the anthology as a personal act of creation, which is what its very short preface—otherwise given over to a public denunciation of Prussia—claims for it. It is described there as "the work of one mind at one time; and its being such implies the presence of the peculi-

arities and blemishes that mark any personality and any time," which the compiler did not seek to avoid.<sup>61</sup>

The table of contents, probably in imitation of Palgrave's, gives only the division into four books without listing entries or authors, but it does name topics under each: for Book One, "Dissatisfaction"—"Retirement"—"Spiritual Desire"—"Idea of God"—"Spiritual Love & Praise." In the text these are further narrowed in running heads beginning with: "Sadness," "Dismay," "Weariness," "Dejection," "Sorrow's Springs," "Clouds."

Otherwise Bridges outdid Palgrave in suppressing explicit editorial guidance. He delayed giving titles for the entries and names or dates of their authors until the index at the back of the book, to allow "the demonstration of various moods of mind, which are allowed free play":

First then, the reader is invited to bathe rather than to fish in these waters: that is to say, the several pieces are to be read in context; and it is for this reason that no titles nor names of authors are inserted in the text, because they would distract the attention and lead away the thought and even overrule consideration.<sup>62</sup>

The waters the reader is left to sink or swim in are arrangements like this sequence of entries, numbered 274 through 280: a prose passage from Coleridge's "Lay Sermons," Blake's "The Tyger," lines from *Paradise Lost*, an extract from George Darley's allegorical poem "Nepenthe," sentences from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, a couplet from John Masefield's "The Everlasting Mercy," a passage of prose untranslated from Henri-Frederic Amiel's *Fragments d'un Journal Intime*.

Walter de la Mare wrote a review of *The Spirit of Man* for the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1916, praising the anthology mainly for its arrangement: no "mere succession of self-contained poems and fragments of prose," but an order designed to bring out their "interrelation and intercommunion one with another."<sup>63</sup> In the next sentence he compared the entries to "a host of candles" that illumine "the mind that set them in their places." The review lists some of the groupings that make these illuminating corollaries, but, de la Mare advised, "only a close study of the book can show the indefatigable pains of the artist to express an idea and an ideal with the world's masterpieces for his material."

There is no explicit evidence that Bridges was stirred to think about un-

conventional ways of arranging a compilation from studying *The Golden Treasury*, but we learn that he did study it closely from his endnote on Wordsworth's "It is a beauteous evening." It records laconically: "Palgrave prints *is on for broods o'er*."<sup>64</sup> We also learn from de la Mare's review that he too studied Palgrave's collection with special attention to his editorial presence by comparison with Bridges's, which suggests that de la Mare sensed some likeness in their designs. He praised Bridges for restricting his intrusions on the reader's experience to an occasional marginal gloss of explanation and to sparing endnotes in the index: "Help is freely given, but not indulgently. Digression into æsthetic appreciation—which sometimes enlightens and sometimes frets the reader in 'The Golden Treasury'—is rare, and, whenever present, terse."<sup>65</sup>

The portrait of the anthologist as an artist that de la Mare drew in his review of *The Spirit of Man* may have encouraged his own unconventionally personal version of an anthology, *Come Hither*, published first in 1923 and then in 1957 in a much expanded version. His inclusion of light verse, certainly not suggested by Bridges, may have been modeled on Allingham's *Nightingale Valley*, which de la Mare owned in a much worn copy.<sup>66</sup> It also seems possible that his study of *The Golden Treasury* suggested the notion of the anthologist as a literary critic. C. Day Lewis saw both Palgrave and de la Mare in that role when in the introduction to his expanded edition of *The Golden Treasury* he likened them in their "creative" gift for designing such books, "a rare talent: in our own day, Mr. de la Mare possesses it: Palgrave had it too."<sup>67</sup>

The introduction to *Come Hither*, called "The Story of this Book," is cast in narrative form as a quasi-allegorical fable of the author as a child finding "an enormous, thick, home-made-looking volume covered in a greenish shagreen or shark-skin" and filled with scrawled writings that he copied out into what eventually became the book in the reader's hand. In it nursery rhymes, popular songs, ballads, many anonymous verses, literary poems (especially lyrics), and extracts are grouped under mysterious topics like "Elph, Ouph and Fay," or "Far."<sup>68</sup> The entries are identified by title and author but they follow one another without commentary, so that the reader experiences recurring patterns of diction and specially of rhythm. The accumulated effects are simple and sensory, almost like charms. They create an "air of mystery," Elizabeth Bishop wrote in 1957 in her review of

the revised edition, that de la Mare's own poetry is famous for.<sup>69</sup> It is this unity and harmony of effect that gives the compilation the integrity of a created work.

Tucked here and there in "The Story of this Book" and everywhere in the chattily voluminous notes are simply expressed principles and examples of literary criticism, fitting for what the subtitle calls *A Collection of Rhymes and Poems for the Young of All Ages*. The reader comes on a rewriting of "Old King Cole" that demonstrates what would be lost by changing its meter and lineation; instructions about reading aloud and where to put the accent in a word; comments on the expressive value of archaisms and dialect. There are also unspoken critical criteria at work in the selection of entries: obscurely allusive or difficult poems are avoided; light verse is valued as much as high poetry; listening is promoted as essential to the experience of reading.

Like *The Golden Treasury*, *Come Hither* is a serious work of literary criticism for which poets have specially valued it. Auden was indebted to it for introducing him to light verse and to poems by Frost, one of his early masters.<sup>70</sup> Frost himself seems to have approvingly associated a collection of his own poems for children, *Come In*, with de la Mare's anthology (even while contrasting his own colloquial title with de la Mare's archaizing). Bishop revealed what was the special attraction of *Come Hither* for her when she wrote in her review of it: "He loves 'little articles', home-made objects whose value increases with age, Robinson Crusoe's lists of his belongings, homely employments, charms and herbs. As a result he naturally chose for his book many of what Randall Jarrell once called 'thing-y' poems, and never the pompous, abstract, or formal."<sup>71</sup>

Bishop also valued *Come Hither* more generally—she called it "the best anthology I know of"—as a work of criticism:

De la Mare has some practical things to say about meters (which he used so beautifully himself), and even suggests how to read certain of the poems; but he never speaks directly of any of the usual concerns of critics; for one, let's say, 'imagery.'<sup>72</sup>

High praise from a habitual critic of critics and anthologies.

De la Mare's book may also have been a model for the use by other writers of a personal compilation as a platform for their own critical views. Examples are: George Moore's *An Anthology of Pure Poetry* (1924); Pound's

*Profile* (1932); Aldous Huxley's *Texts & Pretexts* (1933); Auden's "common-place book" or "sort of anthology," *A Certain World* (1970).<sup>73</sup>

Conventions of anthology making from quite early dictated that anthologists, like other makers of products to be marketed, must define their work by criticizing rivals. In this situation there have always been some who have argued their differences as expressions of their sense of literary history and of their commitment to well-defined critical principles or attitudes.

This kind of distancing organizes F. O. Matthiessen's introduction to his edition of *The Oxford Book of American Verse* of 1950. He designed it to distinguish his collection most obviously from Bliss Carman's earlier anthology in this Oxford series, published in 1927 (which included some 175 poets, a hundred of them now virtually unknown). Behind Matthiessen's revised reading of American poetic tradition was Conrad Aiken's *American Poetry 1617–1928*, where diminished spaces had already been given to such nineteenth-century favorites as Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sidney Lanier, James Russell Lowell, and John Greenleaf Whittier in order to make appropriately proportioned spaces for Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and poets since 1910.

Matthiessen's ultimate target was not Carman's *Oxford Book* but *The Golden Treasury*. Like Palgrave, Matthiessen laid down rules for his choice of poems, most of his meant to revise the expectations of readers brought up on *The Golden Treasury* and its imitators: "fewer poets, with more space for each"; "not too many sonnets"; "no excerpts"; and one rule—on which the others pivot—that "runs counter to all Golden Treasuries by holding that, whenever practicable, a poet should be represented by poems of some length." Matthiessen overturned Palgrave's influential tenets so that his collection would not perpetuate what he saw as one of the most damaging among the "effects of anthologies upon popular taste," their tendency to "overemphasize the lyric at the expense of all other genres, to the point of establishing in unreflective minds the notion that the short lyric is the chief surviving poetic form."<sup>74</sup>

Matthiessen was no doubt thinking specifically of Palgrave's anthology, which focused an interest he did not invent. It had been fostered by the work of early-nineteenth-century poets, encouraged by the revival of interest in Elizabethan poetry, and expressed in words that could easily have been

Palgrave's in 1833 in an influential essay by Mill:

Lyric poetry as it was the earliest kind, is also . . . more eminently and peculiarly poetry than any other: it is the poetry most natural to a really poetic temperament, and least capable of being imitated by one not so endowed by nature.<sup>75</sup>

*Poetic*—meaning beautiful, mellifluous, elevated—was a favorite adjective used everywhere to describe the kind of poem readers of anthologies all through the nineteenth century liked and expected to find there.

Helen Gardner in *The New Oxford Book of English Verse* distanced herself from her predecessor in that series, Quiller-Couch, and by implication from his model, Palgrave, along lines that followed Matthiessen's from a slightly different angle: "Q's bias was towards the lyrical and the poem of personal joys and sorrows. This anthology balances against poems of the private life poems that deal with public events and historic occasions, or express convictions, religious, moral, or political."<sup>76</sup> In other words, she set out to rectify the neglect, encouraged by the two still most influential retrospective anthologies, of "the tradition of satiric, political, epistolary, and didactic verse"; to correct their "virtual exclusion of Pope" and much else of the best eighteenth-century poetry.<sup>77</sup>

The charge is deserved against both Quiller-Couch and Palgrave: their criteria for kinds of poems to be admitted imposed a powerfully distorted shape on the history of English poetry, most grotesquely on the eighteenth century. Pope is represented in Quiller-Couch's collection only by "On a Certain Lady at Court," "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady," "The Dying Christian to his Soul." Palgrave, whose even more exclusive criteria left out epigrams and religious verse, gave space only to "Ode on Solitude" (retitled "The Quiet Life"), which, besides being a short lyric, was in harmony with the overwhelmingly pastoral cast of his eighteenth-century selection. In consequence, Palgrave's anthology made an inadvertent but inevitable contribution to the devaluing of the eighteenth century "in the criticism now popular" that he himself set out to correct in the article on "English Poetry from Dryden to Cowper," published the year after *The Golden Treasury*.<sup>78</sup> The article reinforced the revisionist remarks he had already inserted for the same corrective purpose into the summary of Book III about the eighteenth century as "an age not only of spontaneous transition, but of bold experiment," characterized by "a nobleness of thought, a coura-



geous aim at high, and in a strict sense manly, excellence in many of the writers": "—nor can that period be justly termed tame and wanting in originality, which produced such poems as Pope's Satires, Gray's Odes and Elegy, the ballads of Gay and Carey, the songs of Burns and Cowper."<sup>79</sup>

Palgrave, it seems, believed, or hoped, that his clearly articulated focus on the best lyrics and songs in English would be understood to absolve his collection of the responsibility to be more inclusive, more representative of the best of all possible poems in the English language. To remind readers of that restriction, carefully explained in the preface to the anthology, he repeated it at the back of the book on the first page of the notes. He cautioned there that the summaries are meant mainly to describe the contents of his collection, "in which (besides its restriction to Lyrical Poetry) a strictly representative or historical Anthology has not been aimed at," but rather a "standard of Excellence . . . true in all ages."<sup>80</sup>

Besides his conviction that his narrowing of focus was legitimate and an inducement to discriminating critical judgment, Palgrave's wonderfully achieved aim of creating a unified work of art out of harmoniously arranged elements must also have encouraged him in thinking that his exclusion of disparate kinds of poetry was justified by that high purpose.

Above all, his prescription for the "Lyrical conditions" that a poem was required to meet to be admitted to his anthology so closely matched the mid-Victorian ideal for what constituted the truly poetic, that his readers, and probably Palgrave himself, could almost forget that the "best" poems in English are not all in *The Golden Treasury*. The grand finale to his preface, declaring that "Poetry gives treasures 'more golden than gold'" suggests that he did forget.

## THE ANTHOLOGIST IN THE POEM

Cultural historians have lately shown interest in anthologies by focusing on their compilers' choices of poems—what they leave out sometimes even more than what they include—as instances of canon formation; and selection is ultimately the most important sign of the anthologist's presence. Even so, this is not what many readers are or have ever been likeliest to be aware of as a sign of direction by the maker of an anthology. The simple reason is that a large proportion of anthology readers know only the poems they find there, which means they are not prepared to judge alternative choices. Even signs in the texts of the poems of changes made in them by the anthologist are likely to go unnoticed by readers who have not seen other versions. Still, anthologists since the beginning, and at least until quite recently, have left their imprint on poems by adding or changing their titles, correcting or modernizing their language, even restructuring their forms. Inevitably, to some degree or other, these revisions lead to reinterpretations of the poems so treated.

### TITLING

In 1573, a year before Tottel's *Songes and Sonettes* appeared in its seventh edition, the poet George Gascoigne brought out a book of poems to be discussed in detail in Chapter 8, under the title *A Hundreth sundrie Flowres bounde vp in one small Poesie*. Its allusion to the then current definition of *anthologia* as flower gathering was designed to pass the book off—how seriously is unclear—as a printed gathering of poems by various authors retrieved from privately circulating manuscript collections or loose sheets. At this date Gascoigne could only have been thinking of—and expecting that his readers would be reminded of—Tottel's book as the English model for the kind he pretended to offer, perhaps hoping the success of *Songes and*

40. Stuart Freibert and David Young, *The Longman Anthology of Contemporary American Poetry* (New York: Longman, 1989), 39.
41. Seamus Heaney and Ted Hughes, eds., *The Rattle Bag* (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), 19.
42. William Thynne, *The workes of Geffray Chaucer* (London, 1532), preface.
43. Gwenllian Palgrave, *Francis Turner Palgrave* (London, 1899), 66.
44. *Ibid.*
45. These are the titles of books by: Barnabe Googe, Alexander Pope, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Marianne Moore, Robert Browning, George Meredith, Seamus Heaney, Edmund Spenser, Abraham Cowley, Walt Whitman, Imamu Amiri Baraka.

### Chapter 2

1. Francis Turner Palgrave, ed., *The Treasury of Sacred Song* (Oxford, 1889), viii.
2. Richard Chenevich Trench, ed., *A Household Book of English Poetry* (London, 1868), v.
3. Ferdinand Earle, ed., *The Lyric Year* (New York: Mitchell Kennerly, 1912), vii.
4. Ernest Rhys, ed., *The New Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics* (London: J. M. Dent, 1914), vii.
5. T. Earle Welby, ed., *The Silver Treasury of English Lyrics* (New York: Dial, 1925), viii.
6. Louis Untermeyer, ed., *The Book of Living Verse* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1932), vi.
7. Helen Gardner, ed., *The New Oxford Book of English Verse 1250–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), v.
8. C. Day Lewis, ed., *The Golden Treasury* (London: Collins, 1954), 5.
9. Laurence Binyon, ed., *The Golden Treasury* (London: Collins, 1924), 15; Oscar Williams, ed., *F. T. Palgrave's The Golden Treasury* (New York: New American Library, 1953); John Press, ed., *The Golden Treasury* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964, 1994); Walter Barnes, ed., *Palgrave's The Golden Treasury* (Chicago: Row, Peterson, 1915).
10. Day Lewis, *Golden Treasury*, 15.
11. Christopher Ricks, ed., *The Golden Treasury* (London: Penguin, 1991).
12. Francis Turner Palgrave, ed., *The Golden Treasury* (London, 1883), 10.
13. Francis Turner Palgrave, *The Golden Treasury* (London, 1861), preface. Unless otherwise specified, all references to *The Golden Treasury* are to this first edition. All prose quotations from it are cited in the end notes; the locations of poems are indicated in the text by the roman numeral given them in this edition in all its reprints.
14. John Churton Collins, *Ephemeria Critica* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1902), 251.
15. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Churton Collins, *Ephemeria Critica*, 251.
18. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface. Herbert Tucker has suggested to me that *fitness* here may refer also to Spencerian and Darwinian discussions of evolution.
19. Ricks, *Golden Treasury*, 468.
20. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface.
21. *Ibid.*, 309, 311; 309, 321; 309, 319.
22. *Ibid.*, dedication.
23. *Ibid.*, preface.
24. Haass, "Victorian Poetry Anthologies," 55, 53.
25. Charles Mackay, *The Home Affections* (London, 1858), vii–viii.

26. G. Palgrave, *Palgrave*, 65.
27. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface.
28. G. Palgrave, *Palgrave*, 71.
29. Anonymous review, *Fraser's Magazine* 64 (Oct. 1861), reprinted in Ricks, *Golden Treasury*, 459–60.
30. Day Lewis, *Golden Treasury*, 15–16.
31. Matthew Arnold, *Essays Literary and Critical* (London: J. M. Dent, 1907), 45. One might dispute Arnold's own delicacy of feeling in singling out from the many much more richly suggestive juxtapositions this unobtrusive pairing of contrasting moods as the poets contemplate the end of "life" just before the end of *The Golden Treasury*.
32. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface.
33. Charles Anderson Dana, ed., *The Household Book of Poetry* (New York, 1858), preface.
34. Charles Graves, *Life and Letters of Alexander Macmillan* (London: Macmillan, 1910), 170.
35. Amy Woolner, *Thomas Woolner, R.A.* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1917), 199.
36. Giralduus [William Allingham], ed., *Nightingale Valley* (London, 1860), v.
37. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface.
38. *Ibid.*
39. Woolner, *Thomas Woolner*, 199.
40. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface.
41. *Ibid.*, 308.
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*, 311.
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Ibid.*, 316.
46. *Ibid.*, 316–17.
47. Francis Turner Palgrave, *Quarterly Review* 112 (1862): 157.
48. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface.
49. Thomas Warton, *The History of English Poetry* (London, 1774–83), III: 490; Robert Southey, ed., *Specimens of the Later English Poets* (London, 1807), I: xxiii; John Churton Collins, *Studies in Poetry and Criticism* (London: George Bell, 1905), 6.
50. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, 320.
51. Walter Jackson Bate, *John Keats* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 88.
52. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, 320.
53. T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1932), 7.
54. Robert Graves, *Collected Writings on Poetry*, ed. Paul O'Prey (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1995), 400.
55. A. T. Quiller-Couch, ed., *The Oxford Book of English Verse 1250–1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), vii–viii. All prose quotations from this edition are cited in end notes. The locations of poems are indicated in the text by the number given to them in this edition in all its reprints.
56. *Ibid.*, x.
57. Robert Bridges, *The Correspondence of Robert Bridges and W. B. Yeats*, ed. Richard Finneran (London: Macmillan, 1977), 24.

58. Robert Bridges, *The Selected Letters of Robert Bridges*, ed. Donald Stanford (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984), II: 661, 675, 661.
59. Bridges, *Correspondence with Yeats*, 28.
60. *Ibid.*, 29.
61. Robert Bridges, ed., *The Spirit of Man* (London: Longmans, 1916), preface.
62. *Ibid.* The omission of page numbers throughout the entire book was perhaps another, and still more extreme, effort to avoid distracting the reader's attention from the pure text.
63. Walter de la Mare, *T.L.S.* (Feb. 3, 1916), 49.
64. Bridges, *Spirit of Man*, note to entry 135.
65. De la Mare, *T.L.S.*, 50.
66. Theresa Whistler, *Imagination of the Heart* (London: Duckworth, 1993), 322.
67. Day Lewis, *Golden Treasury*, 15.
68. Walter de la Mare, *Come Hither* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1923), 17, 281.
69. Elizabeth Bishop, *Poetry* 93 (1958): 51.
70. W. H. Auden, *The Dyer's Hand* (New York: Random House, 1962), 36; Humphrey Carpenter, *W. H. Auden* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1981), 34.
71. Bishop, *Poetry*, 53.
72. *Ibid.*, 51, 53.
73. George Moore, *Pure Poetry* (London: Nonesuch, 1924); Ezra Pound, *Profile* (Milan: Typografti Card. Ferrari, 1932); Aldous Huxley, *Texts & Pretexts* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1933); W. H. Auden, *A Certain World* (New York: Viking, 1970).
74. F. O. Matthiessen, ed., *The Oxford Book of American Verse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), ix-xii.
75. Mill, *Dissertations and Discussions*, 85.
76. Gardner, *New Oxford Book*, vii.
77. *Ibid.*, v.
78. Palgrave, *Quarterly Review*, 146.
79. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, 316-17.
80. *Ibid.*, 308.

### Chapter 3

1. George Gascoigne, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* [from the 1st ed., 1573] (London: Frederick Eychells and Hugh Macdonald, 1926), 10, 31.
2. George Gascoigne, *Certain Notes of Instruction in Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. G. G. Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904), I: 55.
3. Gascoigne, *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, 8.
4. All quotations from poems in *Songes and Sonettes* are taken from Rollins's revised edition. Their locations are indicated by the Arabic numeral given in this edition. Prose quotations are cited in endnotes.
5. Gardner, *New Oxford Book*, 946.
6. John Skelton, *The Poetical Works of John Skelton*, ed. Alexander Dyce (New York: AMS Press, 1965), 378.
7. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Gladys Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 60.

8. *Tottel's Miscellany*, II: 94.
9. Richard Harrier, *The Canon of Sir Thomas Wyatt's Poetry* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 101.
10. *Tottel's Miscellany*, II: 94.
11. Thomas Percy, ed., *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, 4th ed. (London, 1794), I: xvii. Except where otherwise noted, the fourth edition has been used throughout this discussion because it is the most fully corrected and improved.
12. John Hales and Frederick Furnivall, eds., *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript* (London, 1867), I: xvii.
13. Thomas Warton, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Thomas Warton*, ed. M. G. Robinson and Leah Dennis, in *The Percy Letters*, ed. David Nichol Smith and Cleanth Brooks (Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 113.
14. Anonymous writer, *Gentleman's Magazine* 63 (Aug. 1793): 704.
15. Percy, *Reliques*, I: xiv.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, 232-33.
18. *England's Helicon*, ed. Hyder Rollins (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935), I: 184-85.
19. Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London, 1765), I: 199-200.
20. Percy, *Reliques*, I: 234-35.
21. Charles Gayley and Clement Young, eds., *The Principles and Progress of English Poetry* (New York: Macmillan, 1904), xii.
22. W. H. Auden and Norman Holmes Pearson, eds., *Poets of the English Language* (New York: Viking, 1950), I: vii.
23. Christopher Ricks, ed., *The Oxford Book of English Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), preface.
24. Arthur Eastman et al., eds., *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970), x.
25. Sir Thomas Wyatt, *Collected Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. Kenneth Muir and Patricia Thomson (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1969), 1-2. I have quoted Wyatt's poems from this edition rather than Harrier's (but with some emendations based on Harrier's transcription) because the markings used by him in reproducing the text of the Egerter manuscript are not familiar to readers untrained in transcription.
26. *Tottel's Miscellany*, II: 94.
27. *Ibid.*, 95.
28. Wyatt, *Collected Poems*, 27.
29. John Thompson, *The Founding of English Metre* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 15-29.
30. Sir Thomas Wyatt, *The Works of Henry Howard and of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. G. F. Nott (London, 1816), II: 23.
31. *Ibid.*, 546.
32. Palgrave, *Golden Treasury*, preface.
33. For comments on Palgrave's omissions see the notes to Ricks, *Golden Treasury*, 470-512.
34. Thomas Carew, *Poems* (London, 1640), 29.