

teristic of all his verse is its atmosphere of gloom. Death, the grave, the charnel-house—these were the subjects from which he seems always to have drawn his inspiration. One might say that poetry so serious is almost fatal! But there are fine things scattered about in these dramas, and there are fine songs among the lyrics, from one of which, 'Dream Pedlary,' we quote. It is perhaps the most familiar and is certainly exquisite.

If there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy?
Some cost a passing bell;
Some a light sigh,
That shakes from Life's fresh crown
Only a rose leaf down.
If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rang the bell,
What would you buy?

* * *

If there are ghosts to raise,
What shall I call,
Out of hell's murky haze,
Heaven's blue pall?
Raise my loved, long-lost boy
To lead me to his joy.—
There are no ghosts to raise;
Out of death lead no ways;
Vain is the call.

Know'st thou not ghosts to sue
No love thou hast.
Else lie, as I will do,
And breathe thy last.
So out of Life's fresh crown
Fall like a rose-leaf down.
Thus are the ghosts to woo;
Thus are all dreams made true;
Ever to last!

Each of these beautiful little volumes is embellished by an etching by Mr. Herbert Railton.

Beddoes's Poetical Works *

TO THAT DELIGHTFUL series of books which Messrs. J. M. Dent & Co. name the Temple Library, the 'Poetical Works of Thomas Lovell Beddoes,' in two volumes, have recently been added. In these are comprised the contents of 'The Improvisatore' and 'The Bride's Tragedy' (volumes published during the author's lifetime), a greater part of 'Death's Jest-Book' (brought out by Thomas Forbes Kelsall, the poet's friend), and several pieces from MSS. now in the possession of Mr. Robert Barrett Browning. The revision of these previous collections and the editing of the present one have been carefully done by Mr. Edward Gosse, who furnishes an admirable introduction which is both biographical and critical. Beddoes, as the editor tells us, was born in 1803 and died in 1849. He was a young man when Keats and Shelley were just dead, and when Tennyson and Browning were schoolboys, and he began to write at the very moment when there was a complete exhaustion in the poetical field of literature. What he wrote was composed between 1821 and 1826, during which brief period he was, as Mr. Gosse puts it, 'the most interesting talent engaged in writing English verse.'

Beddoes was a great admirer of Shelley's poetry, and his own work bears the impress of the strong influence of this master. But he wrote little, and that little very spasmodically, his most extended work, 'Death's Jest-Book,' occupying him for several years. He was much given to the dramatic form of poetry, but his efforts in that form were far less successful than those in lyric verse. The main charac-

* The Poetical Works of Thomas Lovell Beddoes. Ed. by Edmund Gosse. 4s. Macmillan & Co.