

[*The London Mercury*]

THE SENSES

BY MARTIN ARMSTRONG

Lo, as a garden-wandering bee,
The soul seeks out her immortality
From all the growths and blossoms
manifold

Which in this life men hold.
As things material: plying busy rounds,
From the world's odors, sights, and
sounds
To fill her honeyed stores.

From the perfume acrid-sweet of dead
leaves burning

When autumn sunsets into dusk are
turning:

From the breath of damp stone floors
And paraffin, pervading the cool
porches

And aisles of village churches:
From the tepid, flat, mechanic ex-
halations

Of desolate tube stations:
From woody savors stirred when
children wrench

Tufts out of deep moss beds: from the
subtle stench

Of bad cigars and household slops, be-
getting

Delighted memory
Of sunny towns in France and Italy:
From the stronger, tawnier stink of
dust and sweat

And camel-dung which haunts the
glaring East;

And the heavy, sweet, heart-piercing
odors breathed

From pale large lilies and narcissus
wreathed

Round some dear head deceased.

Such smells as these, and of the sights,
The gleam on blue May nights
Of the young moon in high ancestral
boughs

Among the scant young leaves:
And in the wake of the moving ploughs
The shining earth that, as the straight
share cleaves,

Turns flowingly over: and the half-seen
sweep

Of the high circles and the looming
hollow

Of the dark opera house, where through
the leap

And lapse of the music unseen hun-
dreds follow

The curtain's slow ascent:
And the rosy apple blossom on the bent
And knotted bough, against the blue
of heaven:

And the sudden rainbows riven
By the salt breeze from the billows
many leaping

In the sunny Mediterranean.

And of things heard,

The cooling whisper of summer breezes
sweeping

The gray-green barley fields: and the
echoes stirred

By music interwoven in some dim-
lighted

Cavernous cathedral: and the eighteen
pounders'

Buoyant drum beats and hisses and
whoops united

In a hurricane barrage: and the clear
laughter and shouting

Of girls in old green gardens playing
rounders:

And the ripple of fountains spouting
Over marble nymphs and dolphins
drenched and cool

To the sun-splashed fountain pool,
Where golden in the Tuscan sun

The age-worn palace sleeps.

But deep in all the immortal Spirit
leaps

Unquenchably, the Imperishable One
To whom through all this multiplicity

Of scattered universes longingly
The Soul, world-wandering mendicant,
upreaches

Imploring hands, and as an alms be-
seeches

The humble coin which buys that one
small treasure

Beyond all worldly measure.

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