

ADVENTURES IN THE ARTS

selves in these days, and yet Dowson was a poet. He caressed words until they sang for him the one plaint that he asked of them. That he was obsessed of the beauties and the intimations of Versailles, is seen in everything he did, or at least he imbibed this from Verlaine. He was himself a pale wanderer down soft green allées, he had a twilight mind struggling toward the sun, which was too bright for him, for the moon was his brightest light. Echoes of Verlaine linger through his verse and a strain of Poe is present, poet whom he with his French taste admired so much, two very typical idols for a young man with a sentimental journey to pursue. Lost Adelaides, to keep him steeped in the sorrow that he cherished, for he petted his miseries considerably; or was it that he was most at home when he was unhappy? He would rather have seen the light of day from a not quite clear window, for instead of a clear hill, he might see a vague castle of his fancy somewhere. He hadn't the sweep of a great poet, and yet somehow there was the linnets in him, there was the strain of the lute among the leaves, there was the rustle of a soft dress audible, and the passing of hands he could not ever hold.

He was the poet of the lost treasure. "Studies in Sentiment" is, I think, the title of a small book of prose of his. He might have called his poems "Studies in sentimentality". And yet, for his time, how virile and vigorous he sounds beside "Posies