

ADVENTURES IN THE ARTS

Dowson was, let us say not mockingly, the boyish whimperer in song. He was ineffectual, too much so, to take up the game of laughter for long. That would have been too strenuous for him, so he had to sit and weep tears of wordy rain. "Il pleut dans mon cœur" was the famous touch of his master, it was the loudest strain in him. That was the lover-strain, and Dowson was the lover dying of love, imaginary love probably, and saw everywhere something to remind him of what he had pathetically lost. If there had been a little savage in him, he would have walked away with what he wanted. He maybe did have a try or two, but they couldn't have endured, for he wasn't loving a particular Adelaide. That was the name he gave to love, for it was woman's lips, and eyes and hands that he cared most for, or at least seemed most to care.

It was in the vision that crossed his ways in the dark and boisterous taverns where love finds strange ways for expression, that the singleness of feeling possessed him. It was among the rougher elements of dock life that his refinements found their level. Dowson sang and sang and sang, until he grew old at thirty-three, "worn out by what was never really life to him". Aged pierrot, gone home to his mother, the Moon, to bask forever in the twilight of his old and vague fancies. There might he strum his heart out in the old way, and the world would never hear, for it has lost the ear for this kind of song. Perhaps in two hundred years, in other