

Dr. Shuddhananda  
Bharati

Francis  
Thompson

A critical study of  
his life & poetry



ASSA  
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## Editor's Notes

The gifted poet Francis Thompson is one among the geniuses of the world. His life was spent on the streets, sit-outs, in the cold and sun. His words flew in the sky of wisdom. Just like the Siddhas in India, he has made the truths felt by his spirit into poems. They were not of effort, but the flowers of poetry blossomed in his words.

Language skill is not alone enough to understand the poems of Thomson. One has to dive deep into it like pearl diving, to enjoy that.

The life history of Thompson and his writings are available to the readers in a sweet and easy manner. Kavi Yogi Sri Shudhananda Bharati, who has compiled the life histories and the words of many poets, has researched Thompson also. It tastes sweet as we read again and again.

Francis Thompson is one of great poets like Whitman, Molière, Hugo, Milton, Shelley, Byron, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Shakespeare, Homer, Virgil,

Goethe and it's nice to discover his life and his writings.

A warm thank you to Mr. E. Chelladurai for his translation from Tamil to English.

It is a real and nice pleasure for me to present *Francis Thompson* to you. Thank you, Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati for having transmitted *Francis Thompson* to us. With the blessing of *Aum Shuddha Shakti Aum*.

Christian Piaget



Francis Thompson



## Song of Unity

*Unite. Unite, Unite, Oh Souls  
Unite and play your roles  
Unite in mind, unite in heart  
Unite in whole, unite in part  
Like words and tunes and sense in song  
Let East and West unite and live long  
Trees are many; the grove is one  
Branches are many; tree is one  
Shores are many; sea is one  
Limbs are many; body is one  
Bodies are many; self is one  
Stars are many; sky is one  
Flowers are many; honey is one  
Pages are many; book is one  
Thoughts are many; thinker is one  
Tastes are many; taster is one  
Actors are many; the drama is one  
Nations are many; the world is one  
Religions are many; Truth is one  
The wise are many; Wisdom is one  
Beings are many; breath is one  
Classes are many; college is one  
Find out this One behind the many  
Then life shall enjoy peaceful harmony*

## Peace Anthem

*Peace for all, peace for all  
For all the countries peace  
Joy for all, joy for all  
For all the nations joy  
A rosy morning peace  
A smiling summer joy (Peace for all)*

*All for each and each for all  
This is the golden rule  
Life and Light and Love for all  
For all that live our love (Peace for all)*

*Work and food and clothes for all  
Equal status for all  
Health and home and school for all  
A happy world for all (Peace for all)*

*No idle rich, no more beggars  
All are equal workers  
No more tears, no more fears  
The heart is full of cheers (Peace for all)*

*No atom scare, no fat mammon  
No room for war demon  
Like leaves in trees, like rays in the sun  
We are one communion,  
One Divine communion (Peace for all)*

*The good in you is good for all  
Your life is life for all  
The God in you is God for all  
Your love is love for all (Peace for all)*

*For he or she or it or rest  
This collective life is best  
This Universal Life is best  
North or South, or East or West (Peace for all)*

*Peace for plants and birds and beasts  
For hills and streams and woods  
Peace in Home – land and air and sea  
Dynamic peace we see*

*Peace for all, peace for all*

*Immortal Peace for All*

## Courage!

*The night is through,  
The chain of slavery  
It is already broken -  
I am full of courage!*

*Peace in the morning,  
A golden sun rises,  
Like a lion superhuman  
To accomplish my dream.*

*A hopeful smile,  
Docile as a child  
Who plays in the infinite  
With a fiery star.*

*My journey is over;  
I enjoy time;  
The universe is my nest,  
Of eternal spring.*



# Presentation of Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati

11<sup>th</sup> May 1897 – 7<sup>th</sup> March 1990

The wise one to the cosmic age

Although more than 90 years old, in his school in the south of India, Kavi Yogi Maharishi (great divine visionary, wise poet), Kavi Yogi Swami Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati worked like a young man of twenty. When he was asked his age, he answered: "My age is Courage!"

The Yogi wrote several hundred works in English, French, Tamil, Hindi, Telugu and Sanskrit; five thousand songs, and fifteen hundred poems in French. The magnum opus of the man conscious of the presence of God in him, *Bharata Shakti*, (in 50,000 verses) described his ideal: only One Humanity living in communion with only One God in a transformed world! *Bharata Shakti* is a monumental and unique work. The Yogi depicts the essence of all the religions, of all the prophets and saints, all the approaches of Yoga and all the cultures on



an allegorical fabric. It is a book for any age which all spiritual researchers and all nations should read and meditate on.

His commitment is summarized in his book celebrating his life, *Pilgrim Soul*.

The two poems mentioned in the opening express perfectly his ideal.

His mantra, *Aum Shuddha Shakti Aum*, nourishes our souls and guides our steps toward the inner joy Ananda. It means: the light of Grace and power of the pure supreme Almighty bless us with peace, happiness and prosperity!

Let the beauty and greatness of soul of Kavi Yogi Maharishi Dr. Shuddhananda Bharati bloom and scent the entire Earth with its divine message and spiritual and unifying benefactor!

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# Francis Thompson

## Gifted Poet Thompson

### 1. Life and history

Tennyson and Browning were the two greatest English poets of the past century. After them the one who arose immediately on the poetic arena was Francis Thompson. The new poet Thompson was born on 16.12.1859 in Preston. His parents were medicos of Catholic background. They wanted their son to be a Catholic priest. So they put their son in a Catholic seminary at the age of eleven. There were more restrictions in the Catholic colleges; discipline was considered foremost. Thompson never submitted to anything; he wandered at his own free will. There was a great divide between him and religion. The head of the college wrote to Thompson's father: "Your son is not suitable for religious life; he is not interested; no discipline; we have sent him away from the college." The dream of the father was shattered.

Now Thompson was eighteen years old. He was not diligent in anything. If he was put in some job, he used to behave as though people were to think: "O God, why they have given him this job?"

Wherever he went he returned with the respect that: "Enough is enough, please can I quit!" Father was very sad. Finally he sent him to Manchester, saying: "Please study to be a doctor!" There also he behaved likewise; never touched the books; did not concentrate in classes; failed in exams; he wandered like a bull without a caretaker. He never mixed with others and spoke with no one. He roamed of his own free will! With that he picked up the habit of taking opium. A lad of twenty years; he spent the money his father sent in opium and liquors. If no money was at hand he would sell his books; the disheartened father warned him saying: "Why are you spoiled like this?" The son replied angrily: "I will only be like this." Father lost his hope and said: "He will not be good! Let him do whatever he wants to do."

The twenty-year-old Thompson left home and wandered like a lunatic in the streets of Manchester and London. He did not know what to do, never listened to others, had no job to do, so was left without money. No one will offer him even alms! His craze for opium intensified; his friends were hunger, sickness, starvation, laziness, and sorrow. He wandered like this for two and a half years. He got a job in a bookstore as a cashier, but that did not last long.

At that time poetry oozed out of Thompson's mind like a lotus coming out of mud. Thompson, who usually wandered doing nothing, now started whispering poems. He was still hungry and sick and had a yearning for opium. Poetry came out of his mouth like the lightning came out of terrible darkness.

Thompson used to write on papers he picked up from the garbage. He wrote articles and sent them to magazines. They all went to the dustbin, otherwise they came back. His poems blossomed lonely like a rose among the bushes of wilderness and were withering without support. Those

who witnessed him thought: "Crazy man! Blabbering drunk."

In 1887, he wrote an article to the magazine *Merry England*, and sent it with a letter: "Dear Sir, Attached is an article at last, to your magazine on dirty paper. Please forgive; it is not of my carelessness; it symbolizes my poverty. That shows my poor situation (I have no money to buy paper). My life has been spoiled because of my foolish behaviour. Please do not return this article. I don't like that; finally at least write to me saying my article is of no worth; I have attached a self addressed stamped envelope. Even if you do not like my prose, will you consider my poetry? Still as a final effort, I am sending a few poems with this. I send the prose and poems in anticipation that at least one can be accepted; forgive me for taking your time.

Yours despairingly,

Francis Thompson

Note: Please send your rejection letter to the Charing Cross Post Office."

One year passed after writing this letter. There was no reply, neither was the article returned. One day Thompson casually saw the magazine of *Merry England*. He jumped for joy. He felt released of all his sufferings henceforth. What happened? One of his poems he sent a year back to the magazine had been published! Immediately he ran to meet the publisher.

The editor of *Merry England*, Meynell, was a man who enjoyed poetry. He was generous. One day a man stricken with poverty entered his office. He had no shirt; an overcoat covered his body. The toes of his feet penetrated through his shoes. He was skinny. This tramp is our Thompson!

Meynell did not look at his dress; he looked into the mind from where the poem flowed out. He felt it. He marvelled at his innocent mind. Thompson had the mind of a child. He never knew of his own worth. Meynell accepted this wonderful poor poet and supported him. Thompson was in the support of Meynell for 19 years. His poems sprang out like the flowers of

spring. Meynell compiled all of that as a book, added Thompson's life history and made the world know about him. The grateful heart of Thompson, dedicated all his beautiful songs to Wilfred Meynell. Thus Thompson expresses his gratitude:

"The May rose dedicates its beauty to the gardener who nourished it. The goldmine dedicates its gold deposits to the owner. The glass submits its full wine to the grapes. The violin submits its music that is hidden in it to the musician. The smile of the lips is joy in itself. The scream that comes out of mind belongs to the sorrow within. The flowers of my poetry are yours. The liberal generous one, I dedicate this to you".

Just like the seasonal flowers, the poetry of Thompson blossomed unconsciously. He was careless as usual. As the days went by his affinity towards opium intensified. In the final days this blocked his springs of poetry. At last Thompson wrote only prose. The wicked opium that killed his poetry swallowed his prose too. On

13.11.1907 at the age of forty-nine, Thompson died at the London Hospital.

Among the books of Thompson, *The Hound of Heaven* is eternal. That poetry itself is enough to ensure the lasting fame of his poetry. Poems on children, *Sister Songs*, *Love in Dian's Lap*, *Sight and Insight*, *Ultima*, *A Narrow Vessel*, *Odes*, sonnets etc., are rich in verse, content and sweetness. Now let us study the poems of Thompson in comparison with other's poems.

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Editions ASSA  
Grand'Rue 180  
1454 L'Auberson – Switzerland  
Phone : +41 (0) 24 454 47 07  
Fax : +41 (0) 24 454 47 77  
Email : [info@editions-assa.ch](mailto:info@editions-assa.ch)  
Web : [www.editions-assa.ch](http://www.editions-assa.ch)

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