

Arthur O'Shaughnessy: A Pre-Raphaelite Poet in the British Museum by Jordan Kistler. London: Routledge, 2016. 200 pp. ISBN 978-1472467355. \$149.95 cloth.

While Arthur O'Shaughnessy's name may be unfamiliar even to the specialists who read this journal, some might remember a single lyric, "Ode," which begins,

We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers
And sitting by desolate streams; –
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties,
We build up the world's great cities.
And out of a fabulous story,
We fashion an empire's glory.
One man, with a dream, at pleasure
Shall go forth and conquer a crown.
And three, with a new song's measure
Can trample an empire down.

Lines of the poem were quoted by Franklin Roosevelt in his 1937 second inaugural address and by Gene Wilder in the 1971 film *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. Both Zoltán Kodaly and Sir Edward Elgar set this poem to music; it was widely anthologized, including by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and Louis Untermeyer. T.S. Eliot used this poem to exemplify the "minor" poet in his 1957 essay "What is Minor Poetry," to characterize the poet as a one-hit wonder.

O'Shaughnessy was born in London in 1844. At 17, through family connections to Lord Lytton, he obtained a post at the British Museum, first as a transcriber of printed materials and later in the burgeoning Departments of Natural History. At the time, the Museum was rapidly assembling botanical, animal, and mineralogical specimens from the Empire and its reaches. O'Shaughnessy, it seems, had no special liking or talent for the work; he had poor eyesight and manual dexterity and was thought little of by his supervisors and colleagues. He also lacked tact. For him, the job at the Museum was merely a way to make a living in order to fund his real love, the writing