

# The Tolmen Stone

## DIRGE ON TOLMEN STONE

*Tolmen! Thy glory's gone,  
Thy grandeur is no more,  
No longer lost thou stand  
Majestic as of yore.*

*On that exalted crest,  
Thy head was raised on high,  
The winters' storms and blasts  
Thou proudly didst defy.*

*Through countless centuries  
Unsolved the mystery:  
No speech no language e'er  
Made known thy history.*

*Dumb the geologist,  
The antiquarian,  
Thy swan song may I sing  
Octogenarian?*

*On to thy dizzy top  
With ladder did I climb  
And wonderingly beheld  
The hollows scooped by Time.*

*Defiant didst thou stand  
With thy expanded chest,  
From far couldst thou be seen,  
The Pride of Cornwall West.*

*On two small granite rocks  
Fantastically perched;  
'Tween these I stood beneath,  
In vain thy secret searched.*

*'Tixt these sustaining rocks  
Oft did I clamber through,  
Thy giant weight above,  
Yet naught had I to rue.*

*When weird Tregeagle stalked the land  
Throughout the west Countrie,  
From Tintagel to Lizard Point,  
Was his shade known to thee?*

*When fairies danced at Merry Meet  
In ancient Constantine,  
From Pixies' Hall turned they their feet  
As to foregather round thy seat,  
Or worship at thy shrine?*

*In times when Centauri held sway,  
Thou monarch of them all;  
But no perfidious Nestor thou,  
No Hercules wrought thy fall.*

*Down through uncounted aeons  
Unchanged was thy sway;  
Did poet e'er invoke the Muse  
Thy wonders to portray?*

*But men of nineteenth century born,  
Cast longing eyes on thee:  
Six hundred tons of granite stone,  
Good value did they see.*

*Then to himself said he who held  
Of mineral rights the fee:  
"These granite rocks are worth an whole  
King's ransom now to me."*

*No doubt that for certain sum  
These rights lie would forego;  
Now Cornishmen these terms will ye  
Accept? Say "Yes" or "No."*

*Hear Constantine and Falmouth too,  
Heed Helston and Penryn;  
On these conditions would he cede  
His Interest therein.*

*Alas! From Truro to Penzance  
Comes no responsive word;  
The doom of Tolmen soon was sealed,  
Faint protest was there heard.*

*A bas! All sentiment,  
All hail material gain!  
We count thy worth in good hard cash,  
We nineteenth century men.*

*Antiquity and mystery,  
Mythology and history,  
The halo that encircled thee,  
The reverence that was due to thee,  
All ruthlessly ignored.*

*Down deep into the quarry rolled,  
By jumper, borer, wert thou holed,  
That thou for profit might be sold,  
Thus mercilessly bored.*

*From thy proud pedestal o'erthrown,  
By pick, and mallet, chisel, hewn,  
Shaped into many blocks of stone!  
Then borne to other lands and climes,*

*A sacrifice to dollars, dimes  
Of these materialistic times!  
Some humble place thy fragments fill  
In distant lands or near;  
But where they are, and what they do,  
And what their final destiny too,  
There's no one seems to care.*

*Cornubia! Cornubia!  
Thy Stupor we bewail;  
In visions of the future thou  
Didst miserably fail.*

*Tolmen! Inglorious was thy fall  
From thy sublime estate;  
But while life's lamp holds out to burn,  
One son of Constantine will mourn  
Thy ignominious fate.*

JAS. ROBERTS

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Nicholls, poet's grand-niece)