Bellevue Home,  
7 April 1874

My Dear O'Shaughnessy

I have to thank you for your kind note in the first place and in the second for the pleasure of having read your new volume. We were unlucky the evening we called somehow, but Mr S. is going to write in anticipation of meeting Mr O'Shaughnessy soon.

As to "Music and Moonlight" I confer I wanted to see the book; you are now in some degree the representative of the young poets who call themselves {siuptes} and who claim to be a sort of priests of a vague Paradise, and on the whole you sustain the character in your present devil-torment. {In} my thinking indeed there ^are^ portions of the "Lays of France" more fully felt than any separate or separable things in the new poems, but there last appear to be a completer expression of yourself. Some of the songs are indeed very charming and perfect, owing that great and rare excellence of symbolism and {?} motive that utilizes poetry and makes it not only like nature, but in the mind, one with nature. {This} is the care also with some little pieces in your book {and} songs, and when I see you I shall show you a word sketch by my brother which accords curiously well with the meaning of the "Great Encounter." If I have a photo of it, I think you would like to have it.

This book surely shows that these short lyrics are your proper expression: it seems so to me at present at all events, more especially as the longest poem is not by any means of equal excellence-an unfortunate fact for the volume. It leaves the impression that you wrote without so clear of a motive, and introduced matter that did not quite well express what you felt and wished to communicate, and I hope you will allow me to say the subtlety in this longer poem is not, or ought not to have been, necessary, -indeed more subtlety in threatening to be the atrophy of our modern poetry-and the machinery of the poem is surely heterogeneous. The introduction of a recently living individual by name, and that individual a musician, (the musician being the artist who is least related to life, not representative of any thing, and exclusively the servant of a simple sense) is out of harmony {with } other imagery, and with the effect of the whole. But I fear you introduce him as a salve for all the defects of the solid earth, and "music" is part of the name of your book

But the more I write the more suggests itself of importance to be said- and after all I have no right ^either^ to take the place of critic or of special pleader.

With many thanks Yours

William B. Scott