By bequest of William Lukens Shoemaker
And the dead
Steer'd by the dumb went upward with the flood—
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter.

For she did not seem as dead,
But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled.
THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

ALFRED TENNYSON,

POET LAUREATE.

NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

NEW YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,
FRANKLIN SQUARE
1871.
To the present edition are added "Timbuctoo," the author's Cambridge University Prize Poem; Poems published in the London editions of 1830 and 1833, and omitted in later editions; and a number of hitherto uncollected Poems from various sources.

Gift.
W. L. Shoemaker
7 S '06
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MUSIC FOR THE ABOVE, BY ARTHUR SULLIVAN. 
APPENDIX: 1-54

* The Music was composed to an earlier version of this Song.
† This Song has not been set to Music.
THE POET LAUREATE.
POEMS.

(PUBLISHED 1830.)

TO THE QUEEN.

REVERED, beloved—O you that hold
A nobler office upon earth
Than arms, or power of brain or birth
Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria,—since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that utered nothing base;

And should your greatness, and the care
That yokes with empire, yield you time
To make demand of modern rhyme
If aught of ancient worth be there;

Then—while a sweeter music wakes,
And thro' wild March the thrrostle calls,
Where tall about your palace-walls
The sunlit almond-blossom shakes—

Take, Madam, this poor book of song:
For tho' the fruits were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule us long,

And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble till the latest day!
May children of our children say,
"She wrought her people lasting good;

"Her court was pure; her life serene;
God gave her peace; her land reposed;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen;

"And statesmen at her counsel met
Who knew the seasons, when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet

"By shaping some august decree,
Which kept her throne unshaken still,
Broad based upon her people's will,
And compassed by the inviolate sea."

MARCH, 1851.

CLARIBEL.

A MELODY.

1.

Where Claribel low-lieth
The breezes pause and die,
Letting the rose-leaves fall:
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,

Thick-leaved, ambrosial,
With an ancient melody
Of an inward agony,
Where Claribel low-lieth.

2.

At eve the beetle boomed
Athwart the thicket lone:
At noon the wild bee hummed:
About the moss'd headstone:
At midnight the moon cometh,
And looketh down alone.

LILIAN.

1.

Aray, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Chops her tiny hands above me,
Laughing all she can;
She'll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lilian.

2.

When my passion seeks
Pleasance in love-sighs
She, looking thro' and thro' me
Thoroughly to undo me,
Smiling, never speaks:
So innocent, so cunning-simply,
From beneath her gather'd wimple
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughter dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks;
Then away she flies.

3.

Prythee weep, May Lilian!
Gayety without eclipse
Wearieth me, May Lilian;
Tho' my very heart it thrilleth
When from crimson-threaded lips
Silver-treble laughter trilleth:
Prythee weep, May Lilian.
4.

Praying all I can,
If prayers will not hush thee,
Aly Lilian,
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,
Fairy Lilian.

ISABEL.

1.

Ever not down-dropped nor over-bright, but fed
With the clear-pointed flame of charity,
Clear, without heat, undying, tended by
Pure vestal thoughts in the translucent fane
Of her still spirit: locks not wide dispread,
Madonna-wise on either side her head;
Sweet lips whereon perpetually did reign
The summer calm of golden charity,
Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,
Revered Isabel, the crown and head,
The stately flower of female fortitude,
Of perfect wisdom, and pure lowlihead.

2.

The intuitive decision of a bright
And thorough-edged intellect to part
Error from crime; a prudence to withhold;
The laws of marriage character’d in gold
Upon the blanched tablets of her heart;
A love still burning upward, giving light
To read those laws: an accent very low
In blandishment, but a most silver flow
Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,
Right to the heart and brain, tho’ undescribed,
Winning its way with extreme gentleness
Thro’ all the outworks of suspicious pride;

A courage to endure and to obey;
A hate of gossip parlance and of sway,
Crown’d Isabel, thro’ all her placid life,
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.

3.

The mellowed reflex of a winter moon;
A clear stream flowing with a muddied one,
Till in its onward current it absorbs
With swifter movement and in purer light
The vexed eddies of its wayward brother;
A leaping and upbearing parasite,
Clothing the stem, which else had fallen quite,
With cluster’d flower-bells and ambrosial orbs
Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each other—
Shadow forth thee;—the world hath not another
(Though all her fairest forms are types of thee,
And thou of God in thy great charity)
Of such a finish’d chasten’d purity.

MARIANA.

"Mariana in the moated grange."

Measure for Measure.

Wrvn blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all;
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the peach to the garden-wall.
The broken sheds look’d sad and strange;
Unlifted was the chinking latch;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

"Her tears fell with the dews at even;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried."
Her tears fell with the dews at even;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eve and even.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow;
The cock sung out an hour ere light:
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her: without hope of change,
In sleep she seemed to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "The day is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

About a stone-cast from the wall
A shrive with blacken'd waters slept,
As over it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marsh-marshes crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gazedlark bar:
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

And ever when the moon was low,
And the shrill winds were up and away,
In the white curtain, too and fro,
She saw the gusty shadow away.
But when the moon was very low,
And wild winds bound within their cell,
The shadow of the poplar fell
Upon her bed, across her brow.
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creak'd;
The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse
Behind the moandering wainscot shriek'd,
Or from the crevice peered about.
Old faces glimmered thro' the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound.
Her sense and sensibility the hour
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bow.
Then said she, "I am very dreary,
He will not come," she said;
She wept, "I am aweary, aweary,
O God, that I were dead!"
SONGS.—RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

The flush of anger'd shame
O'erflows thy calmer glances,
And o'er black brows drops down
A sudden-curved frown,
But when I turn away,
Thou, willing me to stay,
Woost not, nor vainly wrangle;
But, looking fixedly the while,
All my bounding heart cutanglent:
In a golden-netted smile;
Then in madness and in bliss,
If my lips should dare to kiss
Thy taper fingers amorously,
Again thou blushest angrily,
And o'er black brows drops down
A sudden-curved frown.

SONG.—THE OWL.

1.
When cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirling sail goes round,
And the whirling sail goes round;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

2.
When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

SECOND SONG.

to the same.

1.
Thou art AMIDST it, I wot,
Thy tuhoos of yesternight,
Which upon the dark adont,
So took echo with delight,
So took echo with delight
That her voice untuneful grown,
Wears all day a fainter tone.

2.
I would mock thy chantant anew;
But I cannot mimic it;
Not a whit of thy tuhoo,
Thee to woo to thy tuhoo,
Thee to woo to thy tuhoo,
With a lengthen'd loud hallow,
Tuhoo, tuhoo, tuhoo—o—o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

When the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flow'd back with me,
The forlorn-drowning tide of time:
And many a shifty summer morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdâ's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old;
True Musulman was I and sworn.
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Aïraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
The low and bloomed foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadowed in the blue:
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broiler'd sofas on each side:
In sooth it was a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Aïraschid,

Often, where clear-stem'd platans guard
The outlet, did I turn away
The boat-head down a broad canal
From the main river sluiced, where all
The sloping of the moon-lit sward
Was damask-work, and deep inlay
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
Adown where the water slept.
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Aïraschid.

A motion from the river won
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
Until another night in night
I entered, from the clearer light,
Imbro'd with speckles of pillar'd palm,
Imprisoning sweets, which as they clomb
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the dome
Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Aïraschid.

Still onward; and the clear canal
Is rounded to as clear a lake.
From the green rivage many a fall
Of diamond rills musical,
Thro' little crystal arches low
Down from the central fountain's flow
Fall'n silver-chiming, seem'd to shake
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Aïraschid.

About thro' many a bowery turn
A walk with many-color'd shells
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
All round about the fragrant marge
From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tars, fed the time
With odor in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Aïraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
In closest coverture upspring
The living airs of middle night
Died round the bulbul as he sang;
Not he; but something which possess'd
The darkness of the world, delight.
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
Ceasing not, mingled, unexpress'd,
Apart from peace, withholding time,
But flattering the golden prime
Of good Haroun Aïraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
Slumber'd: the solemn palms were ranged
Above, unw'od of summer wind:
A sudden splendor from behid
Flash'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,
And, flowing rapidly between
Their interspaces, counterchanged
The level lake with diamond-plots
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Araschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
Grew darker from that under-light:
So, leaping lightly from the boat,
With silver anchor left aloft,
In marvel whose joy glory came
Upon me, as in sleep I sank
In cool soft turf upon the bank,
Enclosed with that place and time,
So worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Araschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—
A realm of pleasure, many a mound,
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
Full of the city's stilly sound,
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round
The stately cedar, tamarisks,
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
Graven with emblems of the time,
In honor of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Araschid.

With dazed vision unwares
From the long alley's latticed shade
Emerged, I came upon the great
Pavilion of the Caliphat.
Right to the carven cedar doors,
Flung inward over spangled floors,
Broad-based flights of marble stairs
Ran up with golden balustrade,
After the fashion of the time,
And humor of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Araschid.

The fourscore windows all alight
As with the quintessence of flame,
A million tapers flaring bright
From twisted cresset-holders sheen:
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
Upon the mooned domes aloof
In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
Hundreds of crescents on the roof
Of night new-risen, that marvellous time,
To celebrate the golden prime
Of good Haroun Araschid.

Then stole I up, and timely
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
Serene with argent-lidded eyes
Amorous, and lashes like to rays
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
Tressed with redolent ebony.
In many a dark delicious glare
Flowing beneath her rose-tinted zone;
The sweetest lady of the time,
Well worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Araschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
Pure silver, underpotted a rich
Throne of the massive ore, from which
Down-droop'd in many a floating fold,
Engrafted and diaper'd
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
With merriment of kingly pride,
Solo star of all that place and time,
I saw him—in his golden prime,

The Good Haroun Araschid!

ODE TO MEMORY.

1.
Thou who sealest fire,
From the fountains of the past,
To glorify the present; oh, haste,
Visit my low desire!
Strengthen me, enlighten me!
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dowy dawn of memory.

2.
Come not as thou comest of late,
Flinging the gloom of yesternight
On the white day; but robed in softest light
Of orient state.
Whilome thou comest with the morning mist,
Even as a maid, whose stately brow
The dew-impearled winds of dawn have kiss'd,
When she, as thou.
Stays on her floating locks the lovely freight
Of overflowing blooms, and earliest shoots
Of orient green, giving safe pledge of fruits,
Which in the winter's snow shall bear.
The black earth with brilliance rare.

3.
Whilome thou comest with the morning mist,
And with the evening cloud,
Showering thy gleaned wealth into my open breast,
(Thou pleasest flowers which in the rudest wind
Never grow sere,
When rooted in the garden of the mind,
Because they are the earliest of the year).
So was the night thy strong
In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest
Thou lestdest by the hand thine infant Hope.
The eddying of her garments caught from thee
The light of thy great presence; and the cope
Of the half-catch'd futurity,
Though deep not fathomless,
Was cloven with the million stars which tremble
O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy,
Small thought was there of life's distress;
For sure she deem'd no mist of earth could dull
Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and beautiful.
Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,
Listening the lordly music flowing from
The illimitable years,
0 strengthen me, enlighten me!
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dowy dawn of memory.

4.
Come forth I charge thee, arise,
Thou of the many tongues, the myriads eyes!
Thou comest not without shows of flowering vines
Unto mine inner eye,
Divinest Memory!
Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall
Which ever sounds and shines
A pillar of white light upon the wall
Of purple cliffs, aloof deserted
Come from the woods that belt the gray hillside.
The seven elms, the poplars four
That stand beside my father's door,
And chiefly from the brook that loves
To pour o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,
Or dimple in the dark of rusky coves,
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
In every elbow and turn,
The flitter'd tribute of the rough woodland,
O! hither lead thy feet!
Pour round mine ears the livelong beat
Of the thick-reefed sheep from wattled folds,
Upon the rigid wolds,
SONG.—ADELINE.

1.  
Mystery of mysteries,  
Fainthly smiling Adeline,  
Scarce of earth nor all divine,  
Nor unhappy, nor at rest,  
But beyond expression fair  
With thy floating flaxen hair;  
Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes  
Take the heart from out my breast.  
Wherefore those dim looks of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

2.  
Whereat that airy bloom of thine,  
Like a lily which the sun  
Looks thro' in his sad decline,  
And a rose-bush leans upon,  
Thou that faintly smiles still,  
As a Naiad in a well,  
Looking at the set of day,  
Or a phantom two hours old  
Of a maiden past away,  
Ere the placid lips be cold?  
Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,  
Spiritual Adeline?

3.  
What hope or fear or joy is thine?  
Who talketh with thee, Adeline?  
For sure thou art not all alone:  
In beating hearts of salient springs  
Keep measure with thine own?  
Hast thou heard the butterflies,  
What they say betwixt their wings?  
Or in stillst evenings  
With what voile the violet woos  
To his heart the silver dew?  
Or when little airs arise,  
How the merry bluebell rings  
To the mosses underneath?  
Hast thou look'd upon the breath  
Of the lilies at sunrise?  
Wherefore that faint smile of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

4.  
Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,  
Some spirit of a crimson rose  
In love with thee forgets to close  
His curtains, wasting odorous sighs  
All night long on darkness blind.  
What solace thee? whom waitest thou  
With thy soft'en'd, shadow'd brow,  
And those dew-lit eyes of thine,  
Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

5.  
Lowest thou the doleful wind  
When thou gazest at the skies?
A CHARACTER.—THE POET.—THE POET’S MIND.

1. Vex not thou the poet’s mind
With thy shallow wit;
Vex not thou the poet’s mind;
For thou must not fathom it.
Clear and bright it should be ever,
Flowing like a crystal river;
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

2. Dark-brow’d sophist, come not anear:
All the place is holy ground;
Hollow smile and frozen sneer
Come not here.
Holy water will I pour
Into every spic’d flower
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it round.
The flowers would faint at your cruel cheer.
In your eye there is death,
There is frost in your breath
Which would blight the plants.
Where you stand you cannot hear
From the groves within
The wild-bird’s din.

THE POET.

The poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dower’d with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
The love of love.

He saw thro’ life and death, thro’ good and ill
He saw thro’ his own soul.
The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll,

Before him lay: with echoing feet he threaded
The secretest walks of fame:
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were headed
And wing’d with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver tongue,
And of so fierce a light,
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore
Them earthward till they lit;
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower,
The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing forth anew,
Where’er they fell, behold,
Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish’d all abroad to sing
The winged shafts of truth,
To throng with stately blooms the breathing spring
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with beams,
Thou’ one did fling the fire.
Heaven flow’d upon the soul in many dreams
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world
Like one great garden show’d,
And thro’ the wreaths of floating dark upcur’d,
Rare sunrise flow’d.

And Freedom read’d in that august sunrise
Her beautiful bold brow,
When rites and forms before his burning eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
Sana’d by those orient skies:
But round about the circles of the globes
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment’s hem was traced in flame
Wisdom, a name to shake
All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.
And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they rau,
And as the lightning to the thunder
Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
Making earth wonder;

So was their meaning to her words. No sword
Of wrath her right arm whirld’d,
But one poor poet’s scroll, and with his word
She shook the world.

A CHARACTER.

When a half-glance upon the sky
At night he said, “The wanderings
Of this most intricate Universe
Teach me the nothingness of things.”
Yet could not all creation pierce
Beyond the bottom of his eye.

He spake of beauty: that the dull
Saw no divinity in grass,
Life in dead stones, or spirit in air;
Then looking as ’twere in a glass,
He smooth’d his chin and sleek’d his hair,
And said the earth was beautiful.

He spake of virtue: not the gods
More purely, when they wish to charm
Pallas and Juno sitting by:
And with a sweeping of the arm,
And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,
Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately by hour
He canvass’d human mysteries,
And trod on silk, as if the winds
Blew his own praises in his eyes,
And stood aloof from other minds
In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress’d as he were meek,
Himself unto himself he sold:
Upon himself himself did feed:
Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,
And other than his form of creed,
With chisel’d features clear and sleek.

Both the low-tongued Orient
Wander from the side of the morn,
Dripping with Saharan spice
On thy pillow, lowly head;
With melodious airs lovorn,
Breathing Light against thy face,
While his locks a-dropping twined
Round thy neck in subtle ring
Make a casquet of rays,
And ye talk together still,
In the language wherewith Spring
Letters cowslips on the hill?
Hence that look and smile of thine,
Spiritual Adeline.

THE POET’S MIND.

1. Vex not thou the poet’s mind
With thy shallow wit;
Vex not thou the poet’s mind;
For thou must not fathom it.
Clear and bright it should be ever,
Flowing like a crystal river;
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

2. Dark-brow’d sophist, come not anear:
All the place is holy ground;
Hollow smile and frozen sneer
Come not here.
Holy water will I pour
Into every spic’d flower
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it round.
The flowers would faint at your cruel cheer.
In your eye there is death,
There is frost in your breath
Which would blight the plants.
Where you stand you cannot hear
From the groves within
The wild-bird’s din.
In the heart of the garden the merry bird chants,

It would fall to the ground if you came in.

In the middle leaps a fountain

Like sheet lightning,

Ever brightening;

With a low melodious thunder;

All day and all night it is ever drawn

From the brain of the purple mountain

Which stands in the distance yonder;

It springs on a level of bowery lawn,

And the mountain draws it from Heaven above,

And it sings a song of undying love;

And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and full,

You never would hear it; your ears are so dull;

So keep where you are; you are fool with sin;

It would shrink to the earth if you came in.

THE SEA-FAIRIES.

Slow sail'd the weary mariners and saw,

Betwixt the green brink and the running foam,

Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms prest

To little harps of gold; and while they mused,

Whispering to each other half in fear,

Shrill music reach'd them on the middle sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither away? fly no more.

Whither away from the high green field, and the happy blossoming shore?

Day and night to the bellow the fountain calls;

Down shower the gambolling waterfalls

From wandering over the lee:

Out of the live-green heart of the dells

They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,

And thick with white bells the clover-hill swells

High over the full-toned sea;

O hither, come hither and turi your sails,

Come hither to me and to me;

Hither, come hither and frolic and play;

Here it is only the new that wails;

We will sing to you all the day:

Mariner, mariner, turi your sails,

For here are the blissful downs and dales,

And merrily merrily carol the gales,

And the spangle dances in light and bay,

And the rainbow forms and flies on the land

Over the islands free;

And the rainbow lives in the curve of the sand:

Hither, come hither and see;

And the rainbow hangs on the poising wave,

And sweet is the color of cave and cave,

And sweet shall your welcome be;

O hither, come hither, and be our lords,

For merry brides are we:

We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak sweet words;

Listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten

With pleasure and love and jubilee;

Listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten

When the sharp clear twang of the golden chords

Rises up the ridged sea.

Who can light on as happy a shore

All the world o'er, all the world o'er?

Whither away? listen and stay: mariner, mariner,

fly no more.

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

1.

Life and Thought have gone away

Side by side,

Leaving door and windows wide:

Careless tenants they;

2.

All within is dark as night:

In the windows is no light;

And no murmur at the door,

So frequent on its hinges before.

3.

Close the door, the shutters close,

Or thro' the windows we shall see

The nakedness and vacancy

Of the dark deserted home.

"Life and Thought have gone away
Side by side."
4. Come away: no more of mirth
   Is here or merry-making sound.
The house was builded of the earth,
   And shall fall again to ground.
5. Come away: for Life and Thought
   Here no longer dwell;
   But in a city glorious—
   A great and distant city—have bought
   A mansion incorruptible.
   Would they could have stayed with us!

THE DYING SWAN.

1. The plain was grassy, wild and bare,
   Wide, wild, and open to the air,
   Which had built up everywhere
   An under-roof of doleful spray.
   With an inner voice the river ran,
   Adown it floated a dying swan,
   And loudly did lament.
   It was the middle of the day,
   Ever the weary wind went on,
   And took the reed-tops as it went.

2. Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
   And white against the cold-white sky,
   Shone out their crowning snows.
   One willow over the river wept,
   And shook the wave as the wind did sigh:
   Above in the wind was the swallow,
   Chasing itself at its own wild will,
   And far thro' the marish green and still
   The tangled water-connex slept,
   Shot over with purple, and green, and yellow.

3. The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul
   Of that waste place with joy.
   Hidden in sorrow: at first to the ear
   The warble was low, and full and clear;
   And floating about the under-sky,
   Prevailing in weakness, the coronach stole;
   Sometimes afar, and sometimes near,
   But anon her awful, jubilant voice,
   With a music strange and manifold,
   Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold;
   As when a mighty people rejoice,
   With shawms, and with cymbals, and harps of gold,
   And the tumult of their acclains is roll'd
   Thro' the open gates of the city afar,
   To the shepherd who watcheth the evening star.
   And the creeping mosses and chambering weeds,
   And the willow-branches bear and dank,
   And the wary swell of the songing reeds,
   And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,
   And the silvery marsh-flowers that throng
   The desolate creeks and pools among,
   Were flooded over with eddying song.

A DIRGE.

1. Now is done thy long day's work;
   Fold thy palings across thy breast,
   Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.
   Let them rave.

2. Shadows of the silver birk
   Sweep the green that folds thy grave.
   Let them rave.

3. Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed;
   Chanteth not the brooding bee
   Sweeter tones than calumny?
   Let them rave.

4. Crocodiles wept tears for thee;
   The woodbine and egbertare
   Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.
   Let them rave.

5. Thou wilt never raise thine head
   From the green that folds thy grave.
   Let them rave.

6. The gold-eyed kingcups fine;
   The frail bluebell peereth over
   Rare brodality of the purple clover.
   Let them rave.

7. Kings have no such couch as thine,
   As the green that folds thy grave.
   Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

What time the mighty moon was gathering light
Love paced the thorny plots of Paradise,
And all about him roll'd his lustre eyes:
When, turning round a cassia, fall in view
Death, walking all alone beneath a yew,
And talking to himself, first met his sight:
"You must be gone," said Death, "these walks are mine."
Love went and spread his sheeny vane for flight;
Yet ere he parted said, "This hour is thine:
Thou art the shadow of life, and as the tree
Stands in the sun and shadows all beneath,
So in the light of great eternity
Life eminent creates the shade of death;
The shadow passeth when the tree shall fall,
But I shall reign forever over all."
THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.—CIRCUMSTANCE.—THE MERMAN.

My heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.
There is no rest for me below,
Oriana.
When the long dun wold are ribb’d with snow,
And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow,
Oriana,
Alone I wander to and fro,
Oriana.
Ere the light on dark was growing,
Oriana.
At midnight the cock was crowing,
Oriana:
Winds were blowing, waters flowing,
We heard the steeds to battle go,
Oriana;
Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,
Oriana.
In the yew-wood black as night,
Oriana,
Ere I rode into the fight,
Oriana,
While blissful tears blinded my sight
By star-shine and by moonlight,
Oriana,
I to thee my troth did plight,
Oriana.
She stood upon the castle wall,
Oriana:
She watch’d my crest among them all,
Oriana:
She saw me fight, she heard me call,
When forth there steped a foeman tall,
Oriana,
Atween me and the castle wall,
Oriana.
The bitter arrow went aside,
Oriana:
The false, false arrow went aside,
Oriana:
The damned arrow glanced aside,
And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride,
Oriana!
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,
Oriana!
Oh! narrow, narrow was the space,
Oriana.
Loud, loud rung out the bugle’s brays,
Oriana.
Oh! deathful stabs were dealt apace,
The battle deeper’d in its place,
Oriana;
But I was down upon my face,
Oriana.
They should have stabb’d me where I lay,
Oriana!
How could I rise and come away,
Oriana?
How could I look upon the day?
They should have stabb’d me where I lay,
Oriana—
They should have trod me into clay,
Oriana.
O breaking heart that will not break,
Oriana!
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,
Oriana!
Thou smil’st, but thou dost not speak,
And then the tears ran down my cheek,
Oriana:
What wantest thou? whom dost thou seek,
Oriana?
I cry aloud: none hear my cries,
Oriana.
Thou comest atween me and the skies,
Oriana.
I feel the tears of blood arise
Up from my heart unto my eyes,
Oriana.
Within thy heart my arrow lies,
Oriana.
O cursed hand! O cursed blow!
Oriana!
O happy thou that liest low,
Oriana!
All night the silence seems to flow
Beside me in my utter woe,
Oriana.
A weary, weary way I go,
Oriana.
When Norland winds pipe down the sea,
Oriana,
I walk, I dare not think of thee,
Oriana.
Thou liest beneath the Greenwood tree,
I dare not die and come to thee,
Oriana.
I hear the roaring of the sea,
Oriana.

CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbor villages
Playing mad pranks along the healthy leas;
Two strangers meeting at a festival;
Two lovers whispering by an orchard wall;
Two lives bound fast in one with golden ease;
Two graves grass-grown beside a gray church-tower;
Wash’d with still rains and daisy-blossomed;
Two children in one hamlet born and bred:
So runs the round of life from hour to hour.

THE MERMAN.

1.
Who would be
A merman bold,
Sitting alone,
Singing alone
Under the sea,
With a crown of gold,
On a throne?

2.
I would be a merman bold;
I would sit and sing the whole of the day;
I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of power;
But at night I would roam abroad and play
With the mermaids in and out of the rocks,
Dressing their hair with the white sea-dower;
And holding them back by their flowing locks
I would kiss them often under the sea,
And kiss them again till they kissed me
Laughingly, laughingly;
And then we would wander away, away
To the pale-green sea-groves straight and high,
Chasing each other merrily.

3.
There would be neither moon nor star;
But the wave would make music above us afar—
Low thunder and light in the magic night—
Neither moon nor star.
THE MERMAID.—SONNET TO J. M. K.—THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,
Call to each other and whoop and cry
All night, merrily, merrily;
They would pet us with starry spangles and shells,
Laughing and clapping their hands between,
All night, merrily, merrily;
But I would throw to them back in mine
Turks'is and agate and almandine;
Then leaping up upon them unseen
I would kiss them often under the sea,
And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
Laughingly, laughingly.
On't what a happy life were mine
Under the hollow-hung ocean green!
Soft are the moss-beds under the sea;
We would live merrily, merrily.

THE MERMAID.

1.
Woo would be
A mermaid fair,
Singing alone,
Comb the her hair
Under the sea,
In a golden curl
With a comb of pearl,
On a throne?

2.
I would be a mermaid fair;
I would sing to myself the whole of the day;
With a comb of pearl I would comb my hair;
And still as I comb'd I would sing and say,
"Who is it loves me? who loves not me?"
I would comb my hair till my ringlets would fall,
Low adown, low adown,
From under my starry sea-bed crown
Low adown and around,
And I should look like a fountain of gold
Springing alone
With a shrill lusher sound,
Over the throne
In the midst of the hall:
Till that great sea-snake under the sea
From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps
Would slowly trail himself sevenfold
Round the hall where I sat, and look in at the gate
With his large calm eyes for the love of me.
And all the mermen under the sea
Would feel their immortality
Die in their hearts for the love of me.

3.
But at night I would wander away, away,
I would fling on each side my low-flowing locks,
And lightly vault from the throne and play
With the mermen in and out of the rocks;
We would run to and fro, and hide and seek,
On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson shells,
Whose silverly spikes are highest the sea,
But if any came near I would call, and shrick,
And adown the steep like a wave I would leap
From the diamond-ridges that jut from the dells;
For I would not be kiss'd by all who would list,
Of the bold merry mermen under the sea;
They would sue me, and woo me, and flatter me
In the purple twilights under the sea;
But the king of them all would carry me,
Woo me, and win me, and marry me,
In the branching jaspers under the sea;
Then all the dry ped things that be
In the knoseless mosses under the sea
Would curl round my silver feet silently.
All looking up for the love of me,
And if I should care aloud, from aloft
All things that are forked, and horned, and soft
Would lean out from the hollow sphere of the sea,
All looking down for the love of me.

SONNET TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou wilt be
A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest
To scarce church-harples from the master's feast:
Our dusky velvets have much need of thee;
Thou art no Saba-th-drawer of old saws,
Distill'd from some worm-canker'd homily;
But spurr'd at heart with fiercest energy
To embattail and to wall about thy cause
With iron-worded proof, hating to bark
The humming of the drowsey pulpit-drone
Half God's good Sabbath, while the worn-out clerk
Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from a throne
Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the dark
Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and mark.

POEMS.

(Published 1832.)

[This division of this volume was published in the winter of 1832. Some of the poems have been considerably altered. Others have been added, which, with one exception, were written in 1833.]

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows white, aspen quiver,
Little breezes dress and silver

Thro' the wave that runs forever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-velv'd,
Shide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhall'd
The shallop flitted silken-sail'd
Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott?
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly,
From the river winding clearly,

And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers, "'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

PART II.

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot;
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the early village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot;

And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two.
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funereal, with plumes and lights.
And music went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half-sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A redcross knight forever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hang,
And as he rode his armor rang,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode.
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three pages thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow broad about
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse—
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
"Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day,
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot:
And as the boat-head wound along
The willow hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot;
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape was floated by,
A corse between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot,
Out upon the wharf they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer:
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot made a little space:
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott."


MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

Wurr one black shadow at its feet,
The house thro' all the level shines,
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
And silent in its dusty vines:
A faint-blue ridge upon the right,
An empty river-bed before,
And shallows on a distant shore,
In glaring sand and glowing bright.
But "Ave Mary," made she moan,
And "Ave Mary," night and morn,
And "Ah," she sang, "to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

She, as her carol saddler grew,
From brow and bosom slowly down
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
Her streaming curls of deepest brown
To left and right, and made appear,
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,
Her melancholy eyes divine,
The home of woe without a tear,
And "Ave Mary," was her moan,
"Madonna, said it night and morn;"
And "Ah," she sang, "to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

Till all the crimson changed, and past
Into deep orange o'er the sea,
Low on her knees herself she cast,
Before Our Lady murmur'd she;
Complaining, "Mother, give me grace
To help me of my weary head, and
On the liquid mirror glow'd
The clear perfection of her face.
"Is this the form," she made her moan,
"That won his praises night and morn?"
And "Ah," she said, "but I wake alone,
I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn."

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would bleat,
Nor any cloud would cross the vault,
But day incensed from heat to heat,
On stony drought and steaming salt;
Till now at noon she slept again,
And seem'd knee-deep in mountain grass,
And heard her native breezes pass,
And runlets babbling down the glen.
She breathed in sleep a lover moan,
And murmuring, as at night and morn,
She thought, "My spirit is here alone,
Walks forgotten, and is forlorn."

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream:
She felt he was and was not there.
She woke: the babble of the stream
Fell, and without the steady glare
Shrank one sick willow sere and small.
The river-bed was dusty-white;
And all the furnace of the light
Struck up against the blindsing wall.
She whisper'd, with a stifled moan
"More loward than at night or morn,
"Sweet Mother, let me not here alone
Live forgotten and die forlorn."
And, rising, from her bosom drew
Old letters, breathing of her worth,
For "Love," they said, "must needs be true,
To what is loveliest upon earth."
An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look at her with slight, and say,
"But now thy beauty flows away,
So be alone forevermore."
"O cruel heart," she changed her tone,
"And cruel love, whose end is scorn,
Is this the end to be left alone,
To live forgotten, and die forlorn!"

But sometimes in the falling day
An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look into her eyes and say,
"But thou shalt be alone no more."
And flaming downward over all
From heat to heat the day decreased,
And slowly rounded to the east
The one black shadow from the wall.
"The day to night," she made her morn,
"The day to night, the night to morn,
And day and night I am left alone
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

At eve a dry clara sung,
There came a sound as of the sea;
Backward the latticed-blind she flung,
And lean'd upon the balcony.
There all in spaces rosy-bright
Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,
And deepening through the silent spheres,
Heaven over Heaven rose the night.
And weeping then she made her morn,
"The night comes on that knows not morn,
When I shall cease to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

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ELEANORE.

1.

Twr dark eyes open'd not,
Nor first reveal'd themselves to English air,
For there is nothing here,
Which, from the outward to the inward brought,
Mould'd thy baby though of unborn woe,
Far off from human neighborhood,
Thou wert born, on a summer morn,
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.
Thy bounteous forehead was not fam'd
With breezes from our oaken glades,
But thou wert nursed in some delicious land
Of lavish lights, and floating shades:
And flattering thy childish thought
The oriental fairy brought.
At the moment of thy birth,
From old well-heads of haunted rills,
And the hearts of purple hills,
And shadow'd coves on a sunny shore,
The choicest wealth of all the earth,
Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
To deck thy cradle, Eleanore.

2.

Or the yellow-banded bees,
Thro' half-open lattices
Coming in the scented breeze,
Fed thee, a child, lying alone,
With whitest honey in fairy gardens cult'd—
A glorious child, dreaming alone,
In silk-soft folds, upon yielding down,
With the hum of swarming bees
Into dreamfull slumber lulld.'

3.

Who may minister to thee?
Summer herself should minister:
To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded
On golden savers, or it may be,
Youngest Autumn, in a bower
Grape-thicken'd from the light, and blinded
With many a deep-hued bell-like flower
Of fragrant trailers, when the air
Sleepeth over all the heaven,
And the crag that fronts the Even,
All along the shadowing shore,
Crimsons over an inland mere,
Eleanore!

4.

How may full-sald verse express,
How may measured words adore
The full-flowing harmony
Of thy swan-like stateliness,
Eleanore?

The luxuriant symmetry
Of thy floating gracefulness,
Eleanore?

Every turn and glance of thine,
Every lineament divine,
Eleanore,
And the steady sunset glow,
That stays upon thee? For in thee
Is nothing sudden, nothing singie:
Like two streams of incense free
From one censer, in one shrine,
Thought and motion mingie,
Mingle ever. Motions flow
To one another, even as tho' they
Were modulated so
To an unheard melody,
Which lives about thee, and a sweep
Of richest praises, evermore
Drawn from each other mellow-deep,
Who may express thee, Eleanore?

5.

I stand before thee, Eleanore;
I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
Daily and hourly, more and more.
I muse, as in a trance, the while
Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,
Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.
I muse, as in a trance, wherein
The langormus of thy love-deep eyes
Float on to me. I would I were
So tranz'd, so rapt in ecstacies,
To stand apart, and to adore,
Gazing on thee forevermore,
Serene, Imperial Eleanore!

6.

Sometimes, with most intensity
Gazing, I seem to see
Thought folded over thought, smiling asleep,
Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep
In thy large eyes, that, over power'd quite,
I cannot veil, or drop my sight,
But am as nothing in its light:
As tho' a star, in utmost heaven set,
Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,
And draw itself to what it was before,
So full, so deep, so slow.
Thought seems to come and go
In thy large eyes, imperial Eleanore.

7.

As thunder-clouds, that, hung on high,
Roost'd the world with doubt and fear.
Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,  
Grow golden all about the sky:  
In thee all passion becomes passionless,  
Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,  
Losing its fire and active might  
In a silent meditation.  
Falling into a still delight,  
And luxury of contemplation:  
As waves that up a quiet cove  
Rolling slide, and lying still  
Shadow forth the banks at will:  
Or sometimes they swell and move,  
Pressing up against the land,  
With motions of the outer sea:  
And the selfsame influence  
Controlleth all the soul and sense  
Of Passion gazing upon thee.

His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love,  
Leaning his cheek upon his hand,  
Droops both his wings, regarding thee,  
And so would languish evermore,  
Serene, imperial Eleonore.

But when I see thee room, with tresses unconfined,  
While the amorous, odorous wind  
Breathes low between the sunset and the moon:  
Or, in a shadowy saloon,  
In silken curtains half reclined;  
I watch thy grace; and in its place  
My heart a charmed slumber keeps,  
While I muse upon thy face;  
And a languid fire creeps  
Thro' my veins to all my frame,  
Dissolently and slowly: soon  
From thy rose-red lips my name  
Floweth; and then, as in a swoon,  
With dimming sound my ears are rife,  
My tumultuous tongue faltereth,  
I lose my color, I lose my breath,  
I drink the cup of a costly death.

Edmund with delirious draughts of warmest life.  
I die with my delight, before  
I hear what I would hear from thee;  
Yet tell my name again to me,  
I would be dying evermore,  
So dying ever, Eleonore.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I see the wealthy miller yet,  
His double chin, his portly size,  
And who that knew him could forget  
The busy wrinkles round his eyes?  
The slow wise smile that, round about  
His dastly forehead dryly curl'd,  
Seem'd half-within and half-without,  
And full of dealings with the world?

In yonder chair I see him sit,  
Three fingers round the old silver cup—  
I see his gray eyes twinkle yet  
At his own jest—gray eyes lift up  
With summer lightnings of a soul  
So full of summer warmth, so glad,  
So healthy, sound, and clear and whole,  
His memory scarce can make me sad.

Yet fill my glass: give me one kiss:  
My own sweet Alice, we must die.  
There's somewhat in this world amiss  
Shall be muddled by-and-by.  
There's something wrong in us life,  
But more is taken quite away.  
Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,  
That we may die the selfsame day.

Have I not found a happy earth?  
I least should breathe a thought of pain.  
Would God renew me from my birth  
I'd almost live my life again.  
So sweet it seems with thee to walk,  
And once again to woo thee mine—  
It seems in after-dinner talk  
Across the walnuts and the wine—

To be the long and listless boy  
Late-left an orphan of the square,  
Where this old mansion mounted high  
Looks down upon the village spire:  
For even here, where I and you  
Have lived and loved alone so long,  
Each morn my sleep was broken thro'  
By some wild sky-kark's matin-song.

And oft I heard the tender dove  
In tarry woodlands making morn;  
But ere I saw your eyes, my love,  
I had no motion of my own.  
For scarce my life with fancy play'd  
Before I dream'd that pleasant dream—  
Still hither thither idly away'd  
Like those long mosses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I leant'd to hear  
The mildlum rushing down with noise,  
And see the ultramons everywhere  
In crystal eddies glance and pole;  
The tall flag-flowers when they sprung  
Below the range of stepping-stones,  
Or those three chestnuts near, that hung  
In masses thick with milky cones.

Bat, Alice, what an hour was that,  
When after roving in the woods  
(Twas April then), I came and sat  
Below the chestnutts, when their buds  
Were glistening to the breezy blue;  
And on the slope, an absent foot,  
I cast me down, nor thought of you,  
But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read,  
An echo from a measured strain,  
Best time to nothing in my head  
From some odd corner of the brain.  
It haunted me, the morning long,  
With weary sameness in the rhymes,  
The phantom of a silent song,  
That went and came a thousand times.

Then leapt a truant. In lazy mood  
I watch'd the little circles die;  
They past into the level flood,  
And there a vision caught my eye:  
The reflex of a beauteous form,  
A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,  
As when a sunbeam wavers warm  
Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,  
That morning, on the casement's edge  
A long green box of mignonette,  
And you were leaning from the ledge:  
And when I raised my eyes, above  
They met with two so full and bright—  
Such eyes! I swear to you, my love,  
That these have never lost their light.  
I loved, and love dispell'd the fear  
That I should die an early death;  
For love possess'd the atmosphere,  
And fill'd the breast with purer breath  
My mother thought, What ais the boy?  
For I was alter'd, and began.
To move about the house with joy,
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam
T'aro' quiet meadows round the mill,
The sleepy pool above the dam,
The pool beneath it never still,
The meal-sacks on the whitden' door,
The dark round of the dripping wheel,
The very air about the door:
Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,
When April nights began to blow,
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,
I saw the village lights below;
I knew your taper far away,
And full at heart of trembling hope,
From off the wold I came, and lay
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the mill;
And "by that lamp," I thought, "she sits!"
The white chalk-quarry from the hill
Gleaned to the flying moon by fits.
"O that I were beside her now!
O will she answer if I call?
O would she give me vow for vow,
Sweet Alice, if I told her all?"

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin;
And, in the pauses of the wind,
Sometimes I heard you sing within;
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the blind.
At last you rose and moved the light,
And the long shadow of the chair
Flitted across into the night,
And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,
The lanes, you know, were white with May,
Your ripe lips moved not, but your cheek
Flush'd like the coming of the day;
And so it was—half-sly, half-shy,
You would, and would not, little one!
Although I pleaded tenderly,
And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought
To yield consent to my desire:
She wisht'd me happy, but she thought
I might have look'd a little higher;
And I was young—too young to wed:
"Yet must I love her for your sake:
Go fetch your Alice here," she said:
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride:
But, Alice, you were ill at ease!
This dress and that by turns you tried,
Too fearful that you should not please.
I loved you better for your fears,
I knew you could not look but well;
And dews, that would have fall'n in tears,
I kis'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings,
The doubt my mother would not see;
She spoke at large of many things,
And at the last she spoke of me;
And turning look'd upon your face,
As near this door you sat apart,
And rose, and, with a slye grace
Approaching, press'd you heart to heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song
I gave you, Alice, on the day
When, arm in arm, we went along,
A pensive pair, and you were gay
With bridal flowers—that I may seem,
As in the nights of old, to lie
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,
While those full chestuas whisper by.

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles at her ear:
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty, dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest:
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her bawny bosom,
With her laughter or her sighs,
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclesp'd at night.

A tripe, sweet! which true love spells—
True love interprets—right alone.
His light upon the letter dwells,
For all the spirit is his own.
So, if I waste words now, in truth,
You must blame Love. His early rage
Had force to make me rhyme in youth,
And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,
Like mine own life to me thou art,
Where Past and Present, wound in one,
Do make a garland for the heart:
So sing that other song I made,
Half-anger'd with my happy lot,
The day, when in the chestnut-shade
I found the blue Forget-me-not.

—Love that hath us tr. the net.
Can be pass, and we forget?
Many suns arise and set.
Many a chance the years beget,
Love the gift is Love the debt,
Even so.

Love is hurt with jar and fret.
Love is made a vague regret.
Eyes with idle tears are wet.
Idle habit links us yet.

What is love? for we forget:
Ah, no! no!

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True wife,
Round my true heart thine arms entwine;
My other dearer life in life,
Look thro' my very soul with thine!
Untouch'd with any shade of years,
May those kind eyes forever dwell!
They have not shed a many tears,
Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

Yet tears they shed; they had their part
Of sorrow; for when time was ripe,
The still affection of the heart
 Became an outward breathing type,
That into stillness past again,
And left a want unknown before:
Although the loss that brought us pain,
That loss but made us love the more,
With farther lookings on. The kiss,  
The woven arms, seem but to be  
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,  
The comfort, I have found in thee:  
But that God bless thee, dear—who wrought  
Two spirits to one equal mind—  
With blessings beyond hope or thought,  
With blessings which no words can find.  

Arose, and let us wander forth,  
To yon old mill across the woids;  
For look, the sunset, south and north,  
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,  
And fires your narrow casement glass,  
Touching the hidden pool below:  
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass  
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

---

**FATIMA.**

O Love, Love, Love! O withering might!  
O sun, that from thy noonday height  
Shoulderest when I strain my sight,  
Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,  
Lo, falling from my constant mind,  
Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and blind,  
I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours  
Below the city's eastern towers:  
I thirsted for the brooks, the showers:  
I roll'd among the tender flowers:  
I crash'd them on my breast, my mouth:  
I look'd athwart the burning drouth  
Of that long desert to the south.

Last night, when some one spoke his name,  
From my swift blood that went and came  
A thousand little shafts of flame  
Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.  
O Love, O fire! once he drew  
With one long kiss my whole soul thro'  
My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know  
He cometh quickly: from below  
Sweet gales, as from deep gardens, blow  
Before him, striketh on my brow:  
In my dry brain my spirit soon,  
Down-deepening from swoon to swoon,  
Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,  
And from beyond the noon a fire  
Is pour'd upon the hills, and higher  
The skies stoup down in their desire;  
And, isled in sudden seas of light,  
My heart, pierced thro' with fierce delight,  
Bursts into blossom in his sight.

My whole soul waiting silently,  
All naked in a sultry sky,  
Droops blinded with his shining eye:  
I will possess him or will die.  
I will grow round him in his place,  
Grow, live, die looking on his face,  
Die, dying, asleep'd in his embrace.

---

**GENONE.**

Tuana lies a vale in Idá, lovelier  
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
The swimming vapor slopes athwart the glen,  
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,  
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand  
The lawns and meadow-edges midway down  

Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars  
The long brook falling thro' the colvin's ravine  
In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
Behind the valley topmost Gargarús  
Stands up and takes the morning; but in front  
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
Tros and Ithion's column'd citadel,  
The crown of Tros.

Hither came at noon  
Monstrous Genone, wandering forlorn  
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.  
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck  
Float'd her hair or seem'd to float in rest.  
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,  
Sung to the stillness, till the mountain-shade  
Sloped downward to her seat in the upper clift.

"O mother Idá, many-fountain'd Idá,  
Dear mother Idá, hearken ere I die  
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill:  
The grasshopper is silent in the grass:  
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,  
Rests like a shadow, and the chilca sleeps.  
The purple flowers droop: the golden bee  
Is lily-cradi'd: I alone awake.  
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,  
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,  
And I am all awerey of my life.

"O mother Idá, many-fountain'd Idá,  
Dear mother Idá, hearken ere I die  
Hear me, O Earth, hear me O Hills, O Caves  
That upon the cold-crown'd snake! O mountain brooks.  
I am the daughter of a River-God,  
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all  
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls  
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed  
A cloud that gather'd shape: for it may be  
That, while I speak of it, a little while  
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Idá, many-fountain'd Idá,  
Dear mother Idá, hearken ere I die  
I walked underneath the dawnning hills,  
Alot the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,  
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine:  
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Nys,  
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd, white-hooved,  
Came up from reedy Simols all alone.

"O mother Idá, hearken ere I die.  
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft:  
Far up the solitary morning smote  
The streaks of virgin snow.  
With down-dropt eyes  
I sat alone: white-breasted like a star  
Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin  
Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair  
Cluster'd about his temples like a God's:  
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens  
When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart  
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

"Dear mother Idá, hearken ere I die.  
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm  
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold  
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd  
And listen'd, the full flowing river of speech  
Came down upon my heart.

"My own Genone,  
Beautiful-brow'd Genone, my own soul,  
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming ring engrav'n  
"For the most fair," would seem to award it thine,  
As lovelier than whatever Gread haunt  
The knolls of Idá, loveliest in all grace.  
Of movement, and the charm of married brows.

"Dear mother Idá, hearken ere I die.  
He preest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added, 'This was cast upon the board, When all the full-faced presence of the Gods Ranged in the halls of Pelus; wherenon Rose food, with question unto whom 'twere due: Hat light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve, Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Here comes to-day, Pallias and Aphrodite, claiming each This need of fastest. Thou, within the cage Behind you whispering tuf of oldest pine, Mayst well behold them unbeknown, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
It was the deep midnoon: one silvery cloud
Had lost its way between the piny shades
Of this long glen. Then to the bowery they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bowery,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaranth, and asphodel.
Lotus and lilies: and a wind arose,
And overhand the wandering hy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Run riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With buch and berry and flower thro' and thro.'

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and lea'd
Upon him, slowly drooping fragrant dew
Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom
Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue
Wherewith to embellish state, from many a vale
And river-sunder'd campagna clothed with corn,
Or lab'rd mines undrainless of ore.
Honor," she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,
From many an inland town and haven large,
Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel
In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
'Which in all action is the end of all:
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And crowned with wisdom—from all neighbor crowns
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,
From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power
Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power
Flutter'd his spirit: but Pallias where she stood
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
Overtliarnt with the brazen-headed spear
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye
Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
Yet not for power, (power of herself)
Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear:
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Again she said: 'I woo thee not with gifts.
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To falter. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.'
Yet, indeed,
If gazing on divinity disrobed
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbiased't by self-profit, oh! lest thee sure
That I should love thee well and leave to thee,
So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Silent with action, and the full-grown will,
Circled tho' all experiences, pure law,
Commeasure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceased,
And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O Paris,
Give it to Paris?' but he heard me not,
Or hearing would not hear me, wo e me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,
With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder: from the violets her light foot
Stone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise thee
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece,'
She spoke and laughed: I shut my sight for fear:
But when I look'd, Paris had raised his arm,
And I beheld great Here's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bowery;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I passed by, a wild and wanton pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with plume and plume,
Croucht fawning in the weed. Most loving is she?
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips press
Close, close to thy in that quick-falling dow
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Antinmus
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My dark tall pines, that planned the rugged ledge
High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Foster'd the callow eaglet—from beneath
Whose thick mysterious bows in the dark morn
The panting horse's ear muffling, while he sat
Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Gnome see the morning mist
Sweep thro' them: never see them overlaid
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the rain'd drops,
Among the fragments tumbled from the gles,
Or the dry thicket, I could meet with her,
The Abominable, that unlived came
THE SISTERS.—TO

THE PALACE OF ART.

Into the fair Pelian banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change; that I might speak my mind,
And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hath he not sworn my love a thousand times,
In this green valley, under this green hill,
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
Soul'd it with kisses? water'd it with tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight?
O death, death, death, thou ever-dying cloud,
There are enough unhappily on this earth,
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live:
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.

Thou weightiest heart on the heavy within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and more,
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child
Ere it is born: her child: a shudder comes
Across me: never child be born of me,
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
Walking the cold and starless road of Death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
What this may be I know not, but I know
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire."

THE SISTERS.

We were two daughters of one race:
She was the fairest in the face:
The wind is blowing in turret and tree.
They were together, and she fell:
Therefore revenge became me well.
O the Earl was fair to see!

She died: she went to burning flame:
She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.
The wind is howling in turret and tree.
Whole weeks and months, and early and late,
To win his love I lay in wait:
O the Earl was fair to see!

I made a feast; I bade him come;
I won his love, I brought him home.
The wind is roaring in turret and tree.
And after supper, on a bed,
Upon my lap he held his head:
O the Earl was fair to see!

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest;
His ruddy cheek upon my breast.
The wind is raging in turret and tree.
I hated him with the hate of hell,
But I loved his beauty passing well.
O the Earl was fair to see!

I rose up in the silent night:
I made my dagger sharp and bright.
The wind is raving in turret and tree
As half-asleep his breath he drew,
The times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.
O the Earl was fair to see!

I car'd and comb'd his comely head,
He look'd so grand when he was dead.
The wind is howling in turret and tree.
I wapt his body in the sheet,
And laid him at his mother's feet.
O the Earl was fair to see!

TO

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I send you here a sort of allegory,
(For you will understand it) of a soul,
A sinful soul possessed of many gifts,
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen
In all varieties of mind and soul,
And Knowledge for its beauty: or if Good,
Good only for its beauty, seeing not
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
That deat upon each other, friends to man,
Living together under the same roof,
And never can be sunder'd without tears,
And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall be
Shut out from Love, and on her threshold lie
Howling in outer darkness. Not for this
Was common clay ta'en from the common earth,
Moulded by Go., and temper'd with the tears
Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

THE PALACE OF ART.

I build my soul a lordly pleasure-house,
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,
Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd brass,
I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
From level meadow-bases of deep grass
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf
The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
My soul would live alone unto herself
In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and round," I said,
"Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
Still as while easturn whirrs, his steadfast shade
Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily:
"Trust me, I'll bless I shall abide
In this great mansion, that is built for me,
So royal-rich and wide."

Four courts I made, East, West and South and North,
In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there ran a row
Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,
Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
Of spouted fountain-floods.
And round the roofs a gilded gallery
That cast broad verge to distant lands,
Far as the wild swan wings, to where the sky
Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one swell
Across the mountain stream'd below
In misty folds, that floating as they fell
Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze upon
My palace with unblinded eyes,
While this great bow will wave in the sun,
And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never fall'd,
And, while day sank or mounted higher,
The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd and traced,
Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
From shadow'd grots of arches interlaced,
And tipt with frost-like spires.

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
Thro' which the live-long day my soul did pass,
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,
All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green and blue,
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puffed cheek the belted hunter blew
His wreath'd bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red,—a tract of sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced forever in a glimmering land,
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry waves.
You seem'd to hear them climb and fall
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing caves,
Beneath the winy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil,
In front they bound the sheaves. Behind
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
And hoary to the wind.

And one, a foreground black with stones and slags,
Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
All hard'd with long white cloud the scornful crags,
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home,—gray twilight pour'd
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep,—all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,
As fit for every mood of mind,
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was there,
Not less than truth design'd.

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wait'd city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;
An angel looked at her.

Or throwing all one porch of Paradise,
A group of Hours bow'd to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a footfall, ere he saw
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Auseonian king to near
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd
A summer faun'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unchas'p'd,
From off her shouder backward borne:
From one hand droop'd a crocus; one hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flushed Guymode, his rosy thigh
Half-barb'd in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone: but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, design'd.

Then in the towers I placed great bells that swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver sound;
And with choice paintings of wise men I hung
The royal dale round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild;
And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd his song
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest;
A million wrinkles carved his skin;
A hundred winters snow'd upon his breast,
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choiceely plann'd
With cycles of the human tale.
Of this wide world, the times of every land
So wrought, they will not fall.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and stings;
Here play'd a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose an athlete, strong to break or bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man declin'd,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod: and those great bells
Began to chime. She took her throne:
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' color'd flame
Two godlike faces gazed below;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their motion were
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts wereazou'd fair
In diverse raiment strange:

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emerald, blue,
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon, drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preambles all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd song
'Throb thro' the ribbed stone;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible earth,
Lord of the senses five;

Communing with herself: "All these are wise,
And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me."—She—when young night divine
Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven; and clapt her hands and cried,
"I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so royal-rich, and wide,
Be fitter'd to the height.

"O all things fair to sate my various eyes!
O shapes and hues that please me well!
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell!

"O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves of swine
That range on yonder plain.

"In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and sleep;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep."

Then of the moral instinct would she prate,
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate;
And at the last she said:

"I take possession of man's mind and deed.
I care not what the sects may bawl
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."
LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Of me you shall not win renown:
You thought to break a country heart:
For pastime, ere you went to town.
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled
I saw the snare, and I retired:
The daughter of a hundred Earls,
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I came.
Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that doats on truer charms.
A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats of arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some meek pupil you must find,
For were you queen of all that is,
I could not stoop to such a mind.
You sought to prove how I could love,
And my disdain is my reply.
The lion on your old stone gates
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
You put strange memories in my head.
Not thrice your branching limbs have blown
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.
Oh your sweet eyes, your low replies:
A great enchantress you may be;
But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
When thus he met his mother's view,
She had the passions of her kind,
She spake some certain truths of you.
Indeed I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear;
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
There stands a spectre in your hall:
The guilt of blood is at your door:
You changed a wholesome heart to gall.
THE MAY QUEEN.

You held your course without remorse,
To make him trust his modest worth,
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent
The grand old gardener and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.

How'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere:
You pine among your halls and towers:

The languid light of your proud eyes
Is wearied of the rolling hours.

In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as these.

Clara, Clar Vere de Vere,
If Time be heavy on your hands,
Are there no beggars at your gate,
Nor any poor about your lands?
Oh! teach the orphan-boy to read,
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,
Pray Heaven for a human heart,
And let the foolish yeoman go.

"You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear."

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear;
To-morrow 'll be the happiest time of all the glad New-year;
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine;
There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline;
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break;
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree?
He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,—
But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,
And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.
They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be:
They say his heart is breaking, mother,—what is that to me?
There's many a holder but 'll woo me any summer day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.
Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
And you'll be there, too, mother, to see me make the Queen;
For the shepherd lads on every side I'll come from far away,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has worn its wavy bowers,
And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cowslip-flowers;
And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass;
There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, I'll be fresh and green and still,
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,
And the rivulet in the flowery dale I'll merrily glance and play,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,
To-morrow I'll be the happiest time of all the glad New-year:
To-morrow I'll be of all the year the maddest merriest day,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

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NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking, call me early, call me early, mother dear,
For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.
It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,
Then you may lay me low in the mould and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set: he set and left behind
The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind;
And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers: we had a merry day:
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May;
And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel cope,
Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills: the frost is on the pane:
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again:
I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high:
I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook I'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,
And the swallow I'll come back again with summer o'er the wave,
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

"Last May we made a crown of flowers, we had a merry day:
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May."
Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,  
In the early early morning the summer sun 'll shine,  
Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,  
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light  
You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night;  
When from the dry dark world the summer airs blow cool  
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the mulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,  
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.  
I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you pass,  
With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now;  
You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go;  
Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,  
You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place;  
Thou'lt hark me, mother, I shall look upon your face;  
Thou'lt not speak a word, I shall hear thou what you say,  
And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

Good-night, good-night, when I have said good-night forevermore,  
And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door;  
Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing green;  
She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor;  
Let her take 'em: they are hers: I shall never garden more:  
Tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rose-bush that I set  
About the parlor-window and the box of mimoniaette.

Good-night, sweet mother; call me before the day is born,  
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn:  
But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,  
So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

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CONCLUSION.

I mourn to pass away before, and yet alive I am;  
And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.  
How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year:  
To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,  
And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,  
And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,  
And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,  
And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done!  
But still I think it can't be long before I find release;  
And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair!  
And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there!  
O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head!  
A thousand times I bless him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he shoul'd me all the sin.  
Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's one will let me in;  
Nor would I now be well, mother, again, if that could be,  
For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,  
There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet;  
But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,  
And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call:  
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all;  
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,  
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.
"But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign."

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear:
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here;
With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resigned,
And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,
And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said;
For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,
And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping; and I said, "It's not for them: it's mine."
And if it comes three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.
And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.
But Effie, you must comfort her when I am past away.

"And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret;
There's many worthier than I, would make him happy yet."
And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret;
There's many warther than I, would make him happy yet.
If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife;
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow;
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.
And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done
The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun—
For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—
And what is life, that we should mourn? why make we such ado?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—
And there to wait a little while till you and Effe come—
To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast—
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

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THE LOTOS-EATERS.

"COTTAGE!" he said, and pointed toward the land,
"This mounting wave will roll its shoreward soon."
In the afternoon they came unto a land,
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Half-faced above the valley stood the moon;
And like a downward smoke, the smaller stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fail did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinest lawn, did go;
And some thro' waving lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flushed: and, dew'd with showery drops,
Up-climb the shadowy pine above the woven cope.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West: thro' mountain clefs the date
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Bordered with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale:
A land where all things always seem'd the same!
And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rose flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, wherefose they gave
To each, but whose did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake.
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the air,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no more;"
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."

CHORIC SONG.

1.
There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentler on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes:
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
Here are cool moses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

2.
Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm:
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

3.
Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woof'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-streap'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweet'en'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toll,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

4.
Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Depth is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labor be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave,
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence; ripen, fall and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

5.
How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to see
Falling asleep in a half-dream.
To dream and dream, like tender amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

6.
Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears: but all hath suffer'd change;
For surely now our household hearths are cold:
Our sons inherit us: our looks are strange:
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the mistrel singers
Before them of the ten-years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile;
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There is confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labor unto aged breath,
Sore task to heartie worn out with many wars,
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

7.
But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelids still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
His waters from the purple hill—
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—
To watch the emerald-color'd water falling
Thro' many a won'n acanthus-wreath divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

8.
The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone:
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spiky downs the yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Rolli'd to starboard, rolli'd to larboard, when the surge was soothing free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foaming
Fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of man-kind.

For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurled,
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly car'd.
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world:
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring
Deep and dirty sands,
Clanging lights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song
Steamling up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong.
Like a tale of little meaning the' words are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave
the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine, and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whispered—down in hell.
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, summer is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oat;
O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I hear, before my eyelids drop their shade,
"The Legend of Good Women," long ago
Sung by the morning star of song, who made
His music heard below;
Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his art
Held me above the subject, as strong gales
Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho' my heart,
Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In every land
I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song
Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars,
And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars;
And clattering flints batter'd with clanging hoofs;
And I saw crowds in column'd sanctuaries;
And forms that pass'd at windows and on roofs
Of marble palaces;

Corpses across the threshold; heroes tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall;
Lances in ambush set;

And high, shine-doors burst thro' with heated blasts
That ran before the fluttering tongues of fire;
White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and masts,
And ever climbing higher;
Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair field Myself for such a face had boldly died." I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd To one that stood beside. But she, with sick and scornful looks averse, To her full height her stately stature draws: "My youth," she said, "was blasted with a curse: This woman was the cause."

"I was cut off from hope in that sad place, Which yet to name my spirit创伤s and fears: My father held his hand upon his face: I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak: my voice was thick with sights As in a dream. Dully I could desery The stern black-bearded kings with wolfsk eyes, Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flicker'd as they lay aloft; The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and the shore; The bright death quiver'd at the victim's throat; Touch'd; and I knew no more."

Wherefore the other with a downward brow: "I would the white cold heavy-plunging foam, Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep below, Then when I left my home."

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence drear, As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea; Sudden I heard a voice that cried, "Come here, That I may look on thee."

I turning saw, throne'd on a flowery rise. One sitting on a crimson scarp unroll'd; A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes, Brow-bound with burning gold. She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began: "I govern'd men by change, and so I sway'd All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen a man. Once, like the moon, I made

"The ever-shifting currents of the blood According to my humor ebb and flow. I have no men to govern in this wood: That makes my only woe."

"Nay—yet it chases me that I could not bend One will; nor tame and tutor with mine eye That dull cold-blooded Caesar. Prythee, friend, Where is Mark Antony?

"The man, my lover, with whom I rode sublime On Fortune's neck: we sat as God by God: The Nils would have risen before his time And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep, and lit Lamps which outburn'd Canopus. O my life In Egypt! O the dalliance and the wit, The flattery and the strife,"

"And the wild kiss, when fresh from war's alarms, My Heracles, my Roman Antony, My mailed Bacchus leap'd into my arms, Contented there to die!"

"And there he died: and when I heard my name Sigh'd forth with life I would not brook my fear Of the other: with a worm I bulk'd his fame. What else was left? I look here!"
A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

The valleys of grape-loaded vines that glow
Beneath the battled tower.

"The light white cloud swam over us. Anon
We heard the lion roaring from his den;
We saw the large white stars rise one by one
Or, from the darkness, gleam,

"Saw God divide the night with flying flame,
And thunder on the everlasting hills.
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief became
A solemn scorn of ills.

"When the next moon was roll'd into the sky,
Strength came to me that equal'd my desire.
How beautiful a thing it was to die
For God and for my sire!

"It comforts me in this one thought to dwell,
That I subdued me to my father's will:
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
Sweetens the spirit still.

"Moreover it is written that my race
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aror
On Arnon unto Minneth. Here her face
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips; she left me where I stood:
"Glory to God," she sang; and past afe,
Thrilling the sombre barkage of the wood,
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,
As one that from a casement leans his head,
When midnight bells cease ringing suddenly,
And the old year is dead.

"Alas! alas!" a low voice, full of care,
Murmard beside me: "Turn and look on me:
I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,
If what I was I be.

"Would I had been some maiden coarse and poor!
O me, that I should ever see the light!
Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor
Do hunt me, day and night.

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and trust:
To whom the Egyptian: "O, you tamely died!
You should have clung to Fulvia's waist, and thrust
The dagger thro' her side."

With that sharp sound the white dawn's creeping beams,
Sto'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery
Of folded sleep. The captain of my dreams
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the dark,
Ere I saw her, who clamp'd in her last trance
Her murder'd father's head, or Joam of Arc,
A light of ancient France;

Or her, who knew that Love can vanquish Death,
Who kneeling, with one arm about her king,
Drew forth the poison with her balmy breath,
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labors longer from the deep
Gold-mines of thought to lift the hidden ore
That glimpses, moving up, than I from sleep
To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what dull pain
Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to strike
Into that wondrous track of dreams again! But
No two dreams are like.
MARGARET.—THE BLACKBIRD.—THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR. 39

As when a soul laments, which hath been blest,
Desiring what is mingled with years past,
In yearnings that can never be express
By sighs or groans or tears;
Because all words, tho’ call’d with choicest art,
Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
Faints, faded by its heat.

MARGARET.

1.
O sweet pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,
What lit your eyes with tearful power,
Like moonlight on a falling shower?
Who lent you, love, your mortal dower
Of pensive thought and aspect pale,
Your melancholy sweet and frail
As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?
From the westward-winning flood,
From the evening-lighted wood,
From all things onward you have won
A tearful grace, as tho’ you stood
Between the rainbow and the sun.
The very smile before you speak,
That dimples your transparent cheek,
Keeps all the beauty, and feeds it
The senses with a still delight.
Of dainty sorrow without sound,
Like the tender amber round,
Which the moon about her spreadeth,
Moving thro’ a fleecy night.

2.
You love, remaining peacefully,
To hear the murmour of the strife,
But enter not the toil of life.
Your spirit is the calm sea,
Laid by the tumult of the fight.
You are the evening star, alway
Remaining betwixt dark and bright:
Laid’d echoes of laborious day.
Come to you, gleams of mellow light
Float by you on the verge of night.

3.
What can it matter, Margaret,
What songs below the waning stars
The lion-heart, Plantagenet,
Sang looking thro’ his prison bars?
Exquisite Margaret, who can tell
The last wild thought of Chatelet,
Just ere the fallen axe did part
The burning brain from the true heart,
Even in her sight he loved so well?

4.
A fairy shield your Genius made
And gave you on your natal day.
Your sorrow, only sorrow’s shade,
Keeps real sorrow far away,
You move not in such solitude,
You are not less divine,
But more human in your moods,
Than your twin-sister, Adelina.
Your hair is darker, in your eyes
Touch’d with a somewhat darker hue,
And less aurally blue
But ever trembling thro’ the dew
Of dainty-woful sympathies.

5.
O sweet pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,

Come down, come down, and hear me speak:
Tie up the ringlets on your cheek:
The sun is just about to set.
The arching lines are tall and shady,
And faint, rainy lights are seen,
Moving in the leafy beech.
Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,
Where all day long you sit between
Joy and woe, and whisper each.
Or only look across the lawn,
Look out below your bower-caves,
Look down, and let your blue eyes dawn
Upon me thro’ the jasmine-leaves.

THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD! sing me something well:
While all the neighbors shoot the round,
I keep smooth plate of fruitful ground,
Where thou may’st warble, eat, and dwell.
The espiers and the standards all
Are thine: the range of lawn and park:
The unnettled black-hearts ripen dark,
All thine, against the garden wall.
Yet, tho’ I spared thee all the Spring,
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,
With that gold daggar of thy bill
To fret the Summer jeneucting.
A golden bill! the silver tongue,
Cold February loved, is dry:
Pleaty corrupts the melody
That made thee famous once, when young:
And in the sultry garden-squares,
Now thy flute-notes are changed to coarse,
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse
As when a hawker hawks his wares.
Take warning! he that will not sing
While you sun prosperes in the blue,
Shall sigh for want, ere leaves are now,
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

Fell knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sighing:
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.
Old year, you must not die:
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still: he doth not move:
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above.
He gave me a friend, and a true, true-love,
And the New-year will take ’em away.
Old year, you must not go;
So long as you have been with us,
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.

He feth’d his bumpers to the brim:
A jollier year we shall not see.
But tho’ his eyes are waxing dim,
And tho’ his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.
Old year, you shall not die:
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
But he'll be dead before.
Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my friend,
And the New-year blithe and bold,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows thicker to and fro:
The cricket chirps: the light burns low:
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.
Shake hands, before you die.
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you:
What is it we can do for you?
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.
Alack! our friend is gone,
Close up his eyes: tie up his chin:
Step from the corpse, and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my friend,
And a new face at the door, my friend,
A new face at the door.

TO J. S.

The wind, that beats the mountain, blows
More softly round the open wold,
And gently comes the world to those
That are cast in gentle mould.

And me this knowledge bolder made,
Or else I had not dare to flow
In these words toward you, and invade
Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,
Those in whose laps our limbs are nursed,
Fall into shadow, soonest lost:
Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love
He lends us; but, when love is grown
To ripeness, that on which it threw
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas!
In grief I am not all unlearn'd;
Once thro' mine own doors Death did pass;
One went, who never hath return'd.

He will not smile—nor speak to me
Once more. Two years his chair is seen
Empty before us. That was he
Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer; for this star
Rose with you thro' a little arc
Of heaven, nor having wander'd far
Shot on the sudden into dark.
I knew your brother: his mute dust
I honor and his living worth:
A man more pure and bold and just
Was never born into the earth.
I have not look'd upon you nigh,
Since that dear soul hath fall'n asleep.
Great Nature is more wise than I:
I will not tell you not to weep.
And tho' mine own eyes feel with dew,
Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,
I will not even preach to you,
"Weep, weeping dulls the inward pain."

Let Grief be her own mistress still.
She loveth her own anguish deep
More than much pleasure. Let her will
Be done— to weep or not to weep.
I will not say "God's ordinance
Of death is blown in every wind;"
For that is not a common chance
That takes away a noble mind.
His memory long will live alone
In all our hearts, as mournful light
That broods above the fallen sun,
And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace! Memory standing near
Cast down her eyes, and in her throat
Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear
Dropt on the letters as I wrote.
I wrote I know not what. In truth,
How should I soothe you anyway,
Who miss the brother of your youth?
Yet something I did wish to say:
For he too was a friend to me:
Both are my friends, and my true breast
Beleedeth for both: yet it may be
That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would make
Grief more: 'Twere better I should cease;
Although myself could almost take
The place of him that sleeps in peace.
Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace;
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
While the stars burn, the morns increase,
And the great ages onward roll.
Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.
Nothing comes to thee new or strange,
Sleep full of rest from head to feet;
Lio still, dry dust, secure of change.

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.
True love turn'd round on fixed poles,
Love, that endures not sordid ends,
For English natures, freemen, friends,
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
From those, not blind, who wait for day,
Thou' sitting girl with doubtful light.
THE GOOSE.

I knew an old wife lean and poor,
Her ragged cloak held together;
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,
He uttered rhyme and reason,
"Here, take the goose, and keep you warm,
It is a stormy season."

She caught the white goose by the leg.
A goose—twas no great matter.
The goose let fall a golden egg
With cackle and with clatter.

She dropped the goose, and caught the pelt,
And ran to tell her neighbors;
And bless'd herself, and cursed herself,
And rested from her labors.

And feeling high, and living soft,
Grew plump and able-bodied;
Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,
The parson smirk'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,
She felt her heart grow prouder:
But ah! the more the white goose laid
It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there;
It sist'r'd the old wife's mettle;
She shifted in her elbow-chair,
And hung the pan and kettle.

"A quaisy choke thy cursed note!"
Then wax'd her anger stronger.
"Go, take the goose, and wring her throat,
I will not hear it longer."

Then Yelp'd the cat, and yaw'd the dog;
Ram Gaffer, stumbled Gammer,
The goose flew this way and flew that,
And all'd the house with clamor.

As head and heels upon the floor
They floundered all together,
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather:

He took the goose upon his arm,
He uttered words of scolding;
"So keep you cold, or keep you warm,
It is a stormy morning."

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Make knowledge circle with the winds:
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years:
Cut Prejudice against the grain:
But gentle words are always gain:
Regard the weakness of thy peers:

Nor toll for title, place, or tone,
Of pension, neither count on praise:
It grows to grandeur after-days:
Nor deal in watch-words over-much:

Not clinging to some ancient saw;
Not master'd by some modern term;
Not swift or slow to change, but firm;
And in its season bring the law;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly, binds—
Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interest of all.

For Nature, also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
Those many agents making strong,
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control
Our being, lest we rust in ease.
We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free
To ingroove itself with that, which flies,
And work, a joint of state, that plies
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act;
For all the past of Time reveals
A brief dawn of thunder-peals,
Whereover Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
A motion tolling in the gloom—
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
Completion in a painful school;
Phantoms of other forms of rule,
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,
But vague in vapor, hard to mark;
And round them sea and air are dark
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aply join'd,
Is bodied forth the second whole,
Regard gradation, lest the soul
Of Discord race the rising wind;

A wind to puff your idol-flies,
And heap their ashes on the head;
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

O yet, if Nature's evil star
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
To follow flying steps of Truth
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
Must ever shock, like armed foes,
And this be true, till Time shall close,
That Principles are rain'd in blood;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
But with his hand against the bill,
Would pace the troubled land, like Peace:

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
Would serve his kind in deed and word,
Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that broke
From either side, nor veil his eyes:
And if some dreadful need should rise
Would strike, and truly, and one stroke:

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
As we bear blossom of the dead;
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.
The wild wind rang from park and plain,
And round the stiles rumbled,
Till all the tables danced again,
And half the chimney's tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
The blast was hard and harder.

Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,
And a whirlwind clear'd the larder;
And while on all sides breaking loose
Her household fled the danger,
Quoth she, "The Devil take the goose,
And God forget the stranger!"

"As head and heels upon the floor
They bounded all together,
There strode a stranger to the door."

The wild wind rang from park and plain,
And round the stiles rumbled,
Till all the tables danced again,
And half the chimenys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
The blast was hard and harder.

"And I," quoth Everard, "by the wassail-bowl."
"Why yes," I said, "we knew your gift that way
At college: but another which you had—
I mean of verse (for so we held it then,)
What came of that?" "You know," said Frank,
"He burn'd
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books"—
And then to me demanding why? "O, sir,
He thought that nothing new was said, or else
Something so said 'twas nothing—that a truth
Looks freshest in the fashion of the day:
God knows: he has a mint of reasons: ask
It pleased me well enough." "Nay, nay," said Hall,
"Why take the style of those heroic times?
For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
Nor we those times; and why should any man
Remodel models? these twelve books of mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
Mere chaff and draff, much better burn'd." "But I,
Said Francis, "pick'd the eleventh from this hearth,
And have it: keep a thing, its use will come.
I heard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."
He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like a horse
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears;
Morte d'Arthur.

For I remember'd Everard's college fame
When we were Freshmen: then at my request
He brought it; and the poet, little urged,
But with some prelude of disparagement,
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this result.

Morte d'Arthur.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonnnes about their Lord,
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chair with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knighting deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I rowed across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
Inaftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And ring him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word."
To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy best will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."
So saying, from the ruined shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang:
Shril, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down By zig-zag paths over pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen against the hill.
For all the haft twinkled with diamond studs,
Myrads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtletest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes blazed, as though he stood,
This way, and that dividing the swift wind,
In act to throw; but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded king.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou performed my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen or what hast heard?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ring, knocking in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."
To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as becometh
Thy natal, nor like a noble knight,
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou didst, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."
Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, and 'thought:
But at and by the haft of the hill,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud.
"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeking obedience of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Shall be to afterwards, or to the haft empty heart
And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lovely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the aftermath
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honor and much 'reconnoiter'
Were lost.

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"Was it for this that thou didst hast hear?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."
To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unhind, unwise,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That how'd he will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eye.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."
Thereupon rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plung'd
Among the bulrush-blots, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made echolings in the splendor of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whir'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Cloth'd in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And then went the other to the House.
Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I clos'd my eyelids, let the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hill.
Then when both hands did flavor him, wheeling him;
But when I look'd again, holdeth an arm,
Cloth'd in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."
And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh: 'tis time that I was gone,
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin: yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."
So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remember'd regarded by his ears,
And would have spok'n, but found not words,
Then took with care, and kneel'd on one knee,
'Over both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.
But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his head.
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and mumurring at his ear 'Quick, quick! I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breadth, and walking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a good.
Dry clings his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right.
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo, the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.
Then saw they how there have a dusty barge,
Dark as a funeral scar from stem to stern,
Beneath them: and descending they were ware
That all their decks were with starry forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cheer that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,  
Or hath come, since the making of the world.  
Then murmured Arthur, “Place me in the barge,”  
And to the barge they came. There those three  
Queens  
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.  
But she that rose the tallest of them all  
And fairest, broid her head upon her lap.  
And loosed the shatter’d casque, and chafed his hands,  
And call’d him by his name, complaining loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against his brow  
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white  
And colorless, and like the wither’d moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;

And God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.  
Comfort thyself, what comfort is in me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I have done  
May He within himself make pure! but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats?  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?  
For now I see the true old times are dead,  
When every morning brought a noble chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble knight.  
Such times have been not since the light hath led  
The holy Elters with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole Round Table is dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty world;  
And I, the last, go forth compassionless,  
And the days darken round me, and the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."  
And slowly answer’d Arthur from the barge:

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER.

Both for themselves and those who call them friends?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Round by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thorn seats—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valet of Avalon:
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-wooded, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grief-wound.

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan—
That, flouting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webes. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and one last light, that long
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and fell:
At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,
And waked with silence, granted "Good!" but we
Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read—
Perhaps some modern tomes of latter dates
Re deem'd it from the charge of nothingness—
Or else we loved the man, and prized his work;
I know not: but we sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud; as at that time of year
The last bird takes his flight, and trece as fair.
Then Francis, mattering, like a man ill-used,
"There now—that's nothing!" drew a little back,
And drove his heel into the smother'd log,
That sent a blast of sparks up the flame:
So to express delight, when in sleep I seem'd
To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
There came a bark that, glowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateless port; and all the people cried,
"Arthur is come again: he cannot die."
Then those that stood upon the hills behind
Rode out of "Come out, all ye and thrice as fair."
And, farther inland, voices echoed—"Come
With all good things, and war shall be no more."
At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I wak'd, and heard indeed
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas morn.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER; OR,
THE PICTURES.

Thus morning is the morning of the day,
When I and Eustace from the city went
To see the Gardener's Daughter; I and he,
Brothers in Art; a friendship so complete
Portion'd in halves between us, that we grew
The faile of the city where we dwelt.
My Eustace might have sat for Hercules;
So muscular he spread, so broad of breast.
He, by some law that holds in love, and draws
The greater to the lesser, long desired
A certain miracle of symmetry,
A miniature of loveliness, all grace
Stirred into it; even as theullet, she
So light of foot, so light of spirit—oh, she
To me myself, for some three careless moons,
The summer pilot of an empty heart
Unto the shores of nothing! Know you not
Such torches are but emblems of love,
To tamper with the feelings, ere he found
Empire for life? but Eustace painted her,
And said to me, she sitting with us then,
"When will you paint like this?" and I replied,
(My words were half in earnest, half in jest.)
"'Tis not your work, but Love's, Love, unperceived,
A more ideal Artist he than all,
Came, drew your pencil from you, made those eyes
Darker than darkest pantanges to me,
More black than asbuds in the front of March." And Juliet answer'd laughing, "Go and see
The Gardener's daughter: trust me, after that,
You scarce can fail to match his masterpiece."
And up we rose, and on the spurt we went.
Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
News from the hummimg city comes to it
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
And, sitting mufled in dark leaves, you hear
The windy clanging of the minister clock;
Although between it and the garden lies
A league of grass, wash'd by a bold broad stream,
That, still'd with languid pulses of the ear,
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crown'd with the minister towers.

The fields between
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-herd'd Ewe,
And all about the large lime feathers low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous wings.
In that still place she, hoarded in herself,
Grew, seldom seen: not less among his lives
Her family of lip to lip. With her he heard
Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter? Where was he,
So blunt in memory, so old at heart,
At such a distance from his youth in grief,
That, having seen, forgot? The common month
So gross to express delight, in praise of her
Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
And Beauty such a mistress of the world.
And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,
Would play with flying forms and images,
Yet this is also true, that, long before
I look'd upon her, when I heard her name
My heart was like a prophet to my heart
And told me I should love. A crowd of hopes,
That sought to sow themselves like winged seeds,
But the heat of summer scorch'd them, and the sun,
Flut'erd about my senses and my soul;
And vague desires, like dishful blasts of balm
To one that travels quickly, made the air
Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,
That weap upon them, and turn them, in the Dream
Dream'd by a happy man, when the dark East,
Unseen, is brightening to his bridal morn.

And sure this orbit of the memory folds
Forever in itself the day we went
To see her. All the land in flowery squares
Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,
Smelt of the coming summer, as one large cloud
Drew downward; but all else of Heaven was pure
Up to the Sun, and May from verge to verge,
And May with me from head to head. And now,
As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it were
The hour just flown, that morn with all its sound,
(For those old Mays had thrice the life of these),
Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot to graze,
And, where the hedge-row cuts the pathway, stood
Leaning his horns into the neighbor field,
And lowing to his fellows. From the woods
Came voices of the well-toned doves.
The dark could scarce get out his notes for joy,
But showed his song together as he hear'd
His happy home, the ground. To left and right,
The cackl'd told his name to all the hills:
The mellow cowl flut'd in the elm;
The reed-cap whistled; and the nightingale
Sing loud, as tho' he were the bird of day.

And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said to me,
"Hear how the bushes echo! by my life,
These birds have joyous thoughts. Think you they sing
Like poets, from the vanity of song?
Or have they any sense of why they sing?
And would they praise the heavens for what they do?
And I made answer, "Were there nothing else
For which to praise the heavens but only love,
That only love were cause enough for praise."
Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read my thought,
And on we went; but ere an hour had pass'd,
We reach'd a meadow belonging to the North;
Down which a well-worn pathway courted us
To one green wicket in a privat hedge;
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk
That, crow'ded ilke-amush trimly pruned;
And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume, blew
Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.

The garden stretches southward. In the midst
A cedar spread his dark-green layers of shade.
The garden-glasses shone, and momently
The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.
"Eustace," I said, "this wonder keeps the house."
He nodded, but a moment afterwards
He cried, "Look! look!" Before he ceased I turn'd,
And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.
For up the porch there grew in slender rose,
That, flowering high, the last night's gale had caught,
And blown across the walk. One arm afoot—
Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the shape—
Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood.
A single stream of all her softest hair
Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the flowers
Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering
Lovingly, trembled on her waist. —
Ah, happy shade—and still went wavering down,
But, ere the touch'd a foot, that might have danced
The greenwird into greener circles, dipt,
And mix'd with shades of the common ground!
But the full day dwelt on her brows, and sunn'd
Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe-bloom,
And doubled her own warmth against her lips,
And on the honnrous wave of such a breast
As never pencil drew. Half light, half shade,
She stood, a sight to make an old man young.
So rapt, we near'd the house; but she, a Rose
In roses, mingle'd with her fragment tell,
Shew'd us how she came, nor from her base turn'd
Into the world without; till close at hand,
And almost ere I knew mine own intent,
This murmure broke the stillness of that air
Which brooded round about her:
"Ah, one rose,
One rose, but one, by those fair fingers call'd,
Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on lips
Less exquisite than thine."
She look'd: but all
Suffused with blushes—neither self-possess'd:
Nor star'd, but betwixt this mood and that,
Divided in a graceful quiet—paus'd,
And dropt the branch she held, and turning, wound
Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd her lips
For some sweet answer, tho' no answer came,
Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,
And moved away, and left me, statue-like,
In act to render thanks.
I, that whole day,
Saw her no more, aloho! I linger'd there
Till every daisy slept, and Love's white star
Beam'd thro' the thick'en'd cedars in the dark.
So home we went, and all the livelong way
With solemn glee old Eustace bunter me.
"Now," said he, "will you climb the top of Art,
Tun cannot fail but work in hews to dim
The Titanic Flora. Will you match
My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master, Love,
A more ideal Artist be than all."
Of that which came between, more sweet than each, In whispers, like the whispers of the leaves That tremble round a nightingale—in sighs Which perfect joy, Kepler'd for utterance, 
Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I not tell Of difference, reconciliation, pledges given, And vows, where there was never need of vows, And kisses, where the heart on one wild leap Hung to itself from all limitation, as above 
The heavens between their fairy fleeces pale 
Sow'd all their mystic gifts with fleeting stars; Or while the balmy glosening, crescent-iti, Spread the light haze along the river-shores, And in the hollow with no call of owl 
Unheeded, tho' beneath a whispering rain Night slid down one long stream of sighing wind, And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.

But this whole hour your eyes have been intent On that well's picture—well'd, for what it holds. May not be dwelt on by the common day. This prelude has prepared thee. Raise thy soul: Make thine heart ready with thine eyes; the time Is come to raise the veil. Behold her there, As I beheld her ere she knew my heart, My first, last love; the idol of my youth, The darling of my manhood, ang, alas! Now the most blessed memory of mine age.

DORA.

Wرن farmer Allan at the farm abode William and Dora. William was his son, And she his niece. He often look'd at them, And often thought "I'll make them man and wife," Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all, And yearnd towards William; but the youth, because He had been always with her in the house, Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day When Allan call'd his son, and said, "My son: I married late, but I would wish to see My grandchild on my knees before I die: And I have set my heart on a match. Now therefore look to Dora; she is well To look to; thrifty too beyond her age. She is my brother's daughter: he and I Had once hard words, and parted, and he died In foreign lands; but for my sake I broke His daughter Dora; take her for your wife: For I have wish'd this marriage, night and day, For many years." But William answer'd short: "I cannot marry Dora; by my life, I will not marry Dora." Then the old man Was wroth, and doubled up his hands, and said: "You will not, boy! you dare to answer thus! But in my time a father's word was law, And so it shall be now for me. Look to it: Consider, William: take a month to think, And let me have an answer to my wish. Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall pack, And never more darken my doors again." But William answer'd madly; bit his lips, And broke away. He look'd at her The less he liked her; and his ways were harsh; But Dora bore them weekly. Then before The month was out he left his father's house, And hired himself to work within the fields; And half to love, half spite, he wroth and wed 
A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison. Then when the bells were ringing, Allan call'd 
His niece and said: "My girl, I love you well: But if you speak with him that was my son, Or change a word with her he calls his wife, My home is none of yours. My will is law." And Dora promised, being meek. She thought, "It cannot be: my uncle's mind will change!" And days went on, and there was born a boy To William, who was determined; and 
And day by day he pass'd his father's gate, Heart-broken, and his father help'd him not, But Dora stored what little she could save, And sent it them by stealth, nor did they know Who sent it till at last a fever seized 
On William, and in harvest time he died. Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat 
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and thought Hard things of Dora. Dora came and said: "I have obey'd my uncle until now; And I have sin'd, for it was all thro' me This evil came on William at the first. But, Mary, for the sake of him that's gone, And for your sake, the woman that he chose, And for his orphan, I am come to you: You know there has not been for these five years So full a harvest: let me take the boy, And I will set him in my uncle's eye Among the reapers; that when his heart is glad Of the full harvest, he may see the boy, And bless him for the sake of him that's gone." And Dora took the child, and went her way Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound 
That was unsoiled, where many poppies grew. For off the farmer came into the field He spied her not; but none of all his men Dare tell him Dora waited with the child; And Dora would have risen and gone to him, But her heart fail'd her; and the reapers reap'd, And the sun shone, and all the land was bright. But when the morning came, she rose and took The child once more, and sat upon the mound 
And made a little wreath of all the flowers That grew below it, and tied it round his hat To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye, Then when the farmer pass'd into the field He spied her, and he left his men at work, And came and said: "Where were you yesterday? Whose child is this? What are you doing here?" So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground, And answer'd softly, "This is William's child!" "And did I not," said Allan, "did I not Forbid you, Dora?" Dora said again, "Do you think I would, but take the child And bless him for the sake of him that's gone!" And Allan said, "I see it is a trick Got up betwixt you and the woman there. I must be taught my duty, and by you! You know my word was given you to dare To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy, But go you hence, and never see me more." So saying, he took the boy, that cried aloud And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell At Dora's feet. She bow'd without her hands, And the boy's cry came to her from the field, More and more distant. She bow'd down her head, Remembering the day when first she came, And all the things that had been. She bow'd down And wept in secret; and the reapers reap'd, And the sun fell, and all the land was dark. Then Dora went to Mary's house, and stood Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy Was not with Dora. She broke out in praise To God, that help'd her widowhood. And Dora said, "My uncle took the boy; But, Mary, let me live and work with you: He says that he will never see me more." Then answer'd Mary, "This shall never be, That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself: And now I think, he shall not have the boy, For he will teach him hardness, and to slight His mother; therefore thou and I will go And I will have my boy, and bring him home; And I will beg of him to take thee back;
But if he will not take thee back again,
Then thou and I will live within one house,
And work for William's child, until he grows
Of age to help us.

So the women kiss'd
Each other, and set out, and reach'd the farm.
The door was off the latch: they peep'd, and saw
The boy set up between his grandsire's knees,
Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
And cross'd him on the hands and on the cheeks,
like one that loved him: and the lad stretch'd out
And bubbled for the golden seal, that hung
From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the fire.
Then they came in: but when the boy beheld
His mother, he cried out to come to her:
And Allan set him down, and Mary said:
"O Father—if you let me call you so—
I never came a-begging for myself,
Or William, or this child: but now I come
For Dora: take her back: she loves you well.
O Sir, when William died, he died at peace
With all men; for I ask'd him, and he said,
He could not ever see his marrying me—
I had been a patient wife: but, Sir, he said
That he was wrong to cross his father thus:
'God bless him,' he said, 'and may he never know
The troubles I have gone thro'!" Then he turn'd
His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am!
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you
Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight
His tender memories, and take Dora back,
And let all this be as it was before.

So Mary said, and Dora bid her face
By Mary. There was silence in the room;
And all at once the old man burst in sob's:
"I have been to blame—to blame. I have kill'd
my son.
I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my dear son.
May God forgive me!—I have been to blame.
Kiss me, my children."

Then they clang about
The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times,
And all the man was broken with remorse;
And all his love came back a hundred fold;
And for three hours he sobb'd over William's child,
Thinking of William.

So those four abode
Within one house together: and as years
 Went forward, Mary took another mate;
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

AUDLEY COURT.—WALKING TO THE MAIL.

"Turn Bull, the Fleece are cramm'd, and not a room
For love or money. Let us picnic there
At Audley Court."

I spoke, while Audley feast
Ham'm like a hive all round the narrow quay,
To Francis, with a basket on his arm,
To Francis just alight'd from the church
And breathing of the sea. "With all my heart."
"Said Francis. Then we shoulder'd thro' the swarm,
And rounded by the stillness of the beach
To where the bay runs up its latest horn.
We left the dying ebb that faintly lip'd
The flat red granite: so by many a sweep
Of meadow smooth from afterward we reach'd
The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro' all
The pillard'ed flank of sounding syenorees,
And cross'd the garden to the gardener's lodge.
With all its casements bedded, and its walls
And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.
There on a slope of orchard, Francis laid
A damask napkin wrought with horse and hound,
Brought out a dainty leaf that smells of home,
And, half-cut down, a pasty costly made,
Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret lay,
Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolk
Imbedded and injellied; fast, with these,
A dark of cider from his father's vats,
Primo which I knew: and so we eat and eat
And talk'd old matters over: who was dead,
Who married, who was like to be, and how
The races went, and who would rout the hall:
Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce it was
This season; glancing thence, discussed the farm,
The fourfield system, and the price of grain;
And struck upon the corn-laws, where we split,
And came again together on the king
With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;
And turned the blackbird on the pippin hung
To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and sang:
"O, who would fight and march and counter-march,
Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,
And shoul'd'd up into a bloody trench
Where no one knows? but let me live my life.
"O, who would cast and balance at a desk,
Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legged stool,
Till all his juice is dried, and all his joints
Are as red as chalk? but let me live my life.

"Who'd serve the state? for if I carved my name
Upon the cliffs that guard my native land,
I might as well have traced it in the sands;
The sea wastes all: but let me live my life.
"O, who would love? I wou'd a woman once,
But she was sharper than an eastern wind,
And all my heart turn'd from her, as a thorn
Turns from the sea: but let me live my life."

He sang his song, and I replied with mine:
I found it in a volume, all of songs,
Brought down to me, when old Sir Robert's pride,
His books—the more 1-hep'y, so I said—
Came to the hammer here in March—and this—
I set the words, and added names I knew.
"Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and dream of me:
Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,
And sleep ing, haply dream her arm is mine.
"Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;
Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,
For though art fairer than all else that is,
"Sleep, by breathing health and peace upon her breast,
Sleep, breathing love and trust against her lip:
I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.
"I go, but I return: I would I were
The pilot of the darkness and the dream.
Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of me."

So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,
The farmer's son who lived across the bay,
My friend; and I, that having wherewithal,
In the follow labour of my life,
Did what I would: but ere the night we rose
And sunder'd home beneath the moon, that, just
In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf
Twilight's of airy silver, till we reach'd
The limit of the hills; and as we sank
Rock to rock upon the glistening quay,
The town was hush'd beneath us: lower down
The bay was olly-calm; the harbor-bay
With one green sparkle ever and anon
Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

WALKING TO THE MAIL.

John. I'm glad I walk'd. How fresh the mead
looks own
Above the river, and, but a month ago,
The whole hillside was redder than a fox.
Is your plantation where this byway joins
The turnpike?"

James. Yes.
EDWIN MORRIS.

I was at school—a college in the South:
There lived a dayflint near: we stole his fruit,
His hens, his eggs; but there was law for us;
We paid in person. He had a sow, sir. She,
With meditative grunts of much content,
Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun and mud.
By night we drag'd her to the college tower
From her warm bed, and up the corkscrew stair.
With hand and rope we haled the groaning sow,
And on the leads we kept her till she pig'd.
Large range of prospect had the mother sow,
And but for daily loss of one she loved,
As one by one we took them—but for this—
As never sow was higher in this world—
Might have been happy; but what lot is pure?
We took them all, till she was left alone
Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,
And so return'd unfaired' to her sty.
John. They found you out?
James. Not they.
John. Well—after all—
What know we of the secret of a man?
His nerves were wrong. What all us, who are
Some, are none?
That we should mimic this raw foal the world,
Which charts us all in its coarse blacks or whites,
As ruthless as a baby with a worm,
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows
To Pity—here from ignorance than will.
But put your best foot forward, or I fear
That we shall miss the mail: and here it comes
With five at top; as quint a four-in-hand
As you shall see—three plebeads and a roan.

EDWIN MORRIS; OR, THE LAKE.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake.
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of a year,
My one Oasis in the dust and drouth
Of city life; I was a sketcher then:
See here, my doing: curves of mountain, bridge,
A marked, rutted track, a boat, Isaiah's hill,
When men knew how to build, upon a rock,
With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock:
And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,
New-comers from the Mersey, millionnaires,
Here lived the Hills—Tudor chimneyed bulk
Of mellow brickwork on an isle of leaves.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake
With Edwin Morris and with Edward Bell
The curate; he was fatter than his cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the names,
Long learned names of agric, moss, and fern,
Who forged a thousand theories of the rocks,
Who taught me how to skate, to row, to swim,
Who read me rhymes elaborately good,
His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he seem'd
All-perfect, flush'd to the finger nail.

And once I ask'd him of his early life,
And his first passion; and he answer'd me;
And well his words became him: was he not
A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence
Stored from all flowers? Poet-like he spoke.

"My love for Nature is as old as I:
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to that,
And three rich sennights more, my love for her.
My love for Nature and my love for her,
Of different ages, like twin-sisters grow,
Twin-sisters differently beautiful.
To some full music rose and sank the sun,
And some full music seem'd to move and change
ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

With all the varied changes of the dark,
And either twilight and the day between;
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again
Revolution long, festal, went, made me sweet
To walk, to sit, to sleep, to breathe, to wake."

Or this or something like to this he spoke.
Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull:

"I take it, God made the woman for the man,
And for the good and increase of the world.
A pretty face is well, and this is well,
To have a daim indoors, that trims us up,
And keeps us tight; but these unreal ways
Seem but the theme of writers, and indeed
Worn threadbare. Man is made of solid stuff.
I say, God made the woman for the man,
And for the good and increase of the world."

"Parson," said I, "you pitch the pipe too low:
But I have suddentouches, and can run
My faith beyond my practice into his:
Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,
I do not hear the bells upon my cap,
I scarce hear other music; yet say on.
What should one give to light on such a dream?"
I ask'd him half-serendipically.

"Give?
Give all thou art," he answer'd, and a light
Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy cheek;
"I would have hid her needle in my heart,
To save her little finger from a scratch.
No deeper than the skin: my ears could hear
Her lightest breaths; her least remark was worth
The experience of the wise. I went and came;
Her voice fled always thro' the summer land;
I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy days!
The flower of each, those moments when we met,
The crown of all, we met to part no more."

Were not his words delicious, I a beast
To take them as I did? but something jarr'd;
Whether he spoke too largely: that there seem'd
A touch of something false, some self-conceit,
Or over-smoothness: howsoever it was,
He scarcely hit my humor, and I said:

"Friend Edwin, do not think yourself alone
Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,
As in the Lathe song I learnt at school,
Suenta and a full God-bless-you sing on and left?
But you can talk: yours is a kindly vein.
I have, I think,—Heaven knows,—as much within;
Have, or should have, but for a thought or two,
That like a purple beech among the greens
Looks out of place: 'tis from no want in her;
It is my shyness, or my self-distraction,
Or something of a wayward modern mind
 Diselecting passion. Time will set me right."

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.
Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull:
"God made the woman for the use of man,
And for the good and increase of the world."
And I and Edwin laugh'd: and now we paused
About the windings of the marge to hear
The soft wind blowing over meadow holms
And alders, garden-isles; and now we left
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shadows of the leaping lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the sound.

But, when the bracken rustled on their crags,
My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him
That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The reprobate Cupid of our rainy lands,
'Tis true, we met; one hour I had, no more:
She sent a note, the seal an Elle vors slut,
The close "Your Letty, only yours:" and this
Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn
Chung to the lake. I bosted over, ran
My craft a-ground, and heard with beating heart
The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving keel:
And out I stept, and up I crept; she moved,
Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering flowers:
Then low and sweet I whistled thrice; and she,
She turn'd, we closed, we kis'd, swore faith, I breathed
In some new planet: a silent cousin stole
Upon us and depair'd: "Leave," she cried,
"O leave me!" "Never, dearest, never: here
I bave the worst:" and with us she did look like fools
Embracing, all at once a score of pugs
And poodles yield'd within, and out they came
Trustees and Aunts and Uncles. "What, with him!"
"Go" (shri'd the cotton-spinning chorus) "him?"
I chok'd. Again she shri'd the barthoon "him!
Again with hands of wild rejection "Go—
Girl, get you in!" She went—and in one month
They wed'd her to sixty thousand pounds,
To lands in Kent and messengers in York,
And slight Sir Robert with his watery smile
And red-clothed whiskers. But for me
They set an ancient creditor to work:
It seems I broke a close with force and arms:
There came a mystic token from the king:
To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy!
I read, and flew by night, and flying turn'd:
Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below:
I turn'd once more, close button'd to the storm,
So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen
Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to hear.

Nor cared to hear? perhaps, yet long ago,
I have pardon'd little Letty: not indeed,
It may be, for her own dear sake but this,
She seems a part of those fresh days to me;
For in the dust and drouth of London life
She moves among my visions of the lakes,
While the prime swallow dips his wing, or then
While the gold-dyly blows, and overhead
The light cloud smouther on the summer crag.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

Alto' I be the basest of mankind,
From scalp to sole one slough and crust of sin,
Unit for earth, unit for heaven, scarce meet
For troops of devils, mad with blasphemy,
I will not cease to grasp the hope I hold
Of saintdom, and to clamon, mourn, and sob,
Buttering the gales of heaven with storns of prayer.
Have mercy, Lord, and take away my sin.
Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty God,
This not be all in vain, that thrice ten years,
Thrice multiplied by superhuman pangs,
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and cold,
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes and
Cramps,
A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud,
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and sleet, and
Snow.
And I had hoped that ere this period closed
Thon wouldst have taught me up into thy rest,
Denying not these weather-beaten limbs
The need of saints, the white robe and the palm.
O take the meaning, Lord: I do not breathe,
Not whisper any murmur of complaint,
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold to this, were still
Less barren, by ten-hundred-fold, to bear.
Then would those leard-Mike tons of sin, that crush'd
My spirit flat before thee.
O Lord, Lord,
Thou knowest I bore this better at the first,
For I was strong and hale of body then;  
And tho' my teeth, which now are dropt away,  
With drops of chitter wit by their all making dead,  
Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the moon,  
I drownd the whoopings of the owl with sound  
Of plous hymns and psalms, and sometimes saw  
An angel stand and watch me, as I snog.  
Now am I feeble grown; my end draws nigh,  
I hope my end draws nigh: half dead I am,  
So that I scarce can hear the people hum  
About the column's base, and almost blind,  
And scarce can recognize the fields I know;  
And both my thighs are rotted with the dew;  
Yet cease I not to clamor and to cry,  
While my stiff spine can hold my weary head,  
'Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from the stone,  
Have mercy, mercy: take away my sin.  
O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul,  
Who may be saved? who is it may be saved?  
Who may be made a saint, if I fall here?  
Show me the man hath suffer'd more than I.  
For did not all thy martyrs die one death?  
And did they strew not the earth, and bear,  
Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or sawn  
In twain beneath the ribs; but I die here  
To-day, and whole years long, a life of death.  
Bear witness, if I could have found a way  
(And need not) to lift my wretched body  
More slowly-painful to subdue this home  
Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate,  
I had not stinted practice, O my God.  
For not alone this pillar-punishment,  
Nor was alone I laid to the wind  
In the white convent down the valley there,  
For many weeks about my loins I wore  
The rope that haled the buckets from the well,  
Twisted as tight as I could knot the noose;  
And speak not of it to a single soul.  
Until the uler, eating thro' my skin,  
Betray'd my secret pence, so that all  
My brethren marvel'd greatly. More than this  
I care, whereof, O God, thou knowest.  
Three winters, that my soul might grow to thee,  
I lived up there on yonder mountain side.  
My right leg chaid into the crag, I lay  
Pent in a roofless close of ragged stones;  
Insolent sometimes in wandering mist, and twice  
Black'd with thy brambles, and sometimes  
Sucking the damps for drink, and eating not,  
Except the spare chance-gift of those that came  
To touch my body and behead, and live:  
And they say thou that I work'd miracles,  
Whereof my fame is in the world, and  
Cured lameness, palseys, cancers. Thou, O God,  
Knowest alone whether this was or no.  
Have mercy, mercy; cover all my sin.  
There, that I might be more more and more,  
Three years I lived upon a pillar, high  
Six cubits, and three years on one of twelve;  
And twice three years I crook'd on one that rose  
Twenty by measure; last of all, I grew,  
Twice kee long weary years or more to this,  
That numbers forty cubits from the soil.  
I think that I have borne as much as this—  
Or else I dream—and for so long a time,  
If I may measure time by you slow light,  
And this high dial, which my sorrow crowns—  
So much—even so.  
And yet I know not well,  
For that the evil ones come here, and say,  
"Fall down, O Simeon: thou hast suffer'd long  
For ages and for ages; than the state  
Of penances I cannot have gone thro'.  
Perplexing me with lies; and oft I fall,  
Maybe for mouths, in such blind lethargies,  
That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are choked."

But yet  
Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all the saints  
Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on earth  
House in the shade of comfortable roof,  
Sit at their chitter wit with their eat wholesome food,  
And wear warm clothes, and even beasts have stalls,  
I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the light,  
Bow down one thousand and two hundred times,  
To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the Saints;  
Or in the night, after a little sleep,  
I wake: the chill stars sparkle; I am wet  
With drenching dews, or stiff with crackling frost,  
I wear an undress'd goatekin on my back;  
A grazing iron collar grinds my neck;  
And in my weak, lean arms I lift the cross,  
And strive and wrestle with thee till I die:  
O mercy, mercy I wash away my sin.  
O Lord, thou knowest what a man I am;  
A sinful man, conceived and born in sin:  
'Tis their own doing; this is none of mine;  
Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for this,  
That here come those that worship me? Ha! ha!  
They think that I am somewhat. What am I?  
The sily people take me for a saint,  
And bring me offerings of fruit and flowers:  
And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness here)  
Have all in all endured as much, and more  
Than many just and holy men, whose names  
Are register'd and calendar'd for saints.  
Good people, you do ill to kneel before me.  
What is it I can have done to merit this?  
I am a sinner viler than you all.  
It may be I have wrought some miracles,  
And cured some halt and maim'd; but what of that?  
It may be, no one ever been the like;  
May match his pains with mine; but what of that?  
Yet do not rise: for you may look on me,  
And in your looking you may kneel to God.  
Speak! is there any of you halt or maim'd?  
I think you know I have some power with Heaven  
From my long penance: let him speak his wish.  
Yes, I can heal him. Power goes forth from me.  
They say that they are heal'd. Ah, hark! they shout  
"St. Simeon Styliites." Why, if so,  
God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,  
God reaps a harvest in me. If this be,  
Can I work miracles and not be saved?  
This is not told of any. They were saints.  
It cannot be but that I shall be saved.  
Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout, "Behold a saint!"  
And lower voices saint me from above.  
Conrage, St. Simeon! This dali chrysaltis  
Cracks into shining wings, and hope ere death  
Spreads more and more and more, that God hath now  
Sponged and made blank of criminal record all  
My mortal archives.  
O my son, my sons,  
I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname  
Styliites, among men; I, Simeon,  
The watcher on the column till the end;  
I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine bakes;  
I, whose baid brows in silent hours become  
Unnaturally bore with time, do now  
From my high nest of penance here proclaim  
That Pontius and Iscariot by my side  
Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals I lay,  
A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath  
Made me roll over. Devils pluck'd my sleeve;  
Ahaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.  
I smote them with the cross; they swarm'd again.  
In bed like monstrous apes they crush'd my chest:  
They flipp'd my light out as I read: I saw  
Their faces grow between me and my book:  
With calf-like whinnies and with howl and whine  
They burst my prayer. Yet this way was left,  
And by this way I escaped them. Mortify  
Your flesh, like me, with scourgis and with thorns:  
Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may be, fast  
Whole Lentis, and pray. I hardly, with slov step,
With slow, faint steps, and much exceeding pain,
I have scrambled past those piles of fire, that still
Sing in mine ears. But yield not me the praise:
God only thro' his bounty hath thought fit,
Among the powers and princes of this world,
To make me an example to mankind,
Which few can reach to. Yet I do not say
But that a time may come—yea, even now,
Now, now, his footstools smite the threshold stairs
Of life—I say, that time is at the doors
When you may worship me without reproach;
For I will leave my relics in your land,
And you may carve a shrine about my dust,
And burn a fragrant lamp before my bones,
When I am gather'd to the glorious saints.

While I spake then, a stwig of shrewdest wind
Rau shrivelling thro' me, and a cloud-like change,
In passing, with a grosser film made thick
These heavy, horny eyes. The end! the end!
Surely the end! What's here? a shape, a shade,
A flash of light. Is that the angel there
That holds a crown? Come, blessed brother, come,
I know thy glittering face. I waited long;
My brows are ready. What! deny it now?
Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I clutch it. Christ!
'Tis gone: 'tis here again; the crown! the crown!
So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me.
And from it melt the dews of Paradise,
Sweet! sweet! spikenard, and balm, and frankincense.
Ah! let me not be foo'd, sweet saints; I trust
That I am whole, and clean, and meet for Heaven.
Speak, if there be a priest, a man of God,
Among you there, and let him presently
Approach, and lean a ladder on the shaft,
And climbing up into my airy home,
Deliver me the blessed sacrament;
For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,
I prophesy that I shall die to-night,
A quarter before twelve.
But thou, O Lord,
Aid all this foolish people; let them take
Example, pattern: lead them to thy light.

THE TALKING OAK.

Once more the gate behind me falls;
Once more before my face
I see the monaster's Abbey-walls,
That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,
Beneath its drift of smoke;
And ah! with what delighted eyes
I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,
Ere that, which in me burn'd,
The love, that makes me thrice a man,
Could hope itself return'd;

To yonder oak within the field
I spoke without restraint,
And with a larger faith appeal'd
Than Papist unto Saint.

For of I talk'd with him apart,
And told him of my choice,
Until he plagiarized a heart,
And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven
None else could understand;
I found him garrulously given,
A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply
Is many a weary hour:

'Twere well to question him, and try
If yet he keep the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
Broad Oak of Summer-chace,
Whose topmost branches can discern
The roots of Summer-place!

Say thou, wherein I carved her name,
If ever maid or spouse,
As fair as my Olivia, came
To rest beneath thy boughs.—

"O Walter, I have shelter'd here
Whatever maiden grace
The good old Summers, year by year,
Made ripe in Summer-chace:

"Old Summers, when the monk was fat,
And, lesions shorn and sleek,
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
The girls upon the cheek,

"Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
And number'd head and slub,
Bluff Harry broke into the spindle,
And turn'd the cows ask'd:

"And I have seen some score of those
Fresh faces that would thrive
When his man-minded offset rose
To chase the deer at five;

"And all that from the town would stroll,
Till that wild wind made work
In which the gloomy brewer's soul
Went by me, like a stork:

"The slight she-elips of loyal blood,
And others, passing praise,
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
For puritanic stays:

"And I have shadow'd many a group
Of beauties that were born
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
Or while the patch was worn;

"And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,
About me leap'd and laugh'd
The modish Cupid of the day,
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

"I swear (and else may insects prick
Each leaf into a gall) This girl, for whom your heart is sick,
Is three times worth them all;

"For those and theirs, by Nature's law,
Have faded long ago;
But in these latter springs I saw
Your own Olivia blow,

"From when she gambold'd on the greens,
A baby-germ, to when
The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number fire from ten.

"I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear we with thine ears)
That, tho' I circle in the grain
Five hundred rings of years—

"Yet, since I first could cast a shade,
Did never creature pass
So slightly, mystically made,
So light upon the grass:

"For as to fairies, that will flit
To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knelt,  
But far too spare of flesh."

O, hide thy knotted knees in fern,  
And overlook the chace;  
And from thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Sumner-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,  
That oft hast heard my vows,  
Declare when last Olivia came  
To sport beneath thy boughs.

"O yesterday, you know, the fair  
Was holden at the town:  
Her father left his good arm-chair,  
And rode his hunter down.

"And with him Albert came on his,  
I look'd at him with joy:  
As cowslip unto oxlip is,  
So seems she to the boy.

"An hour had past—and, sitting straight  
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,  
Her mother trundled to the gate  
Behind the dappled grays.

"But, as for her, she stay'd at home,  
And on the roof she went,  
And down the way you use to come  
She look'd with discontent.

"She left the novel half-fanc'd  
Upon the rosewood shelf;  
She left the new piano shut:  
She could not please herself.

"Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,  
And livelier than a lark  
She sent her voice thro' all the holt  
Before her, and the park.

"A light wind chased her on the wing,  
And in the chase grew wild,  
As close as might be would he cling  
About the darling child:

"But light as any wind that blows  
So fleetly did she stir,  
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and rose,  
And turn'd to look at her.

"And here she came, and round me play'd,  
And sang to me the whole  
Of those three stanzas that you made  
About my 'giant bole';

"And in a fit of frolic mirth  
She strove to span my waist;  
Alas, I was so broad of girth,  
I could not be embraced.

"I wish'd myself the fair young beech  
That here beside me stands,  
That round me, clasping each in each,  
She might have lock'd her hands.

"Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as sweet  
As woodbine's fragile hold,  
Or when I feel about my feet  
The berried briony fold."

O muffle round thy knees with fern,  
And shadow Summer-chose!  
Long may thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Summer-place!

But tell me, did she read the name  
I carved with many vows  
When last with throbbing heart I came  
To rest beneath thy boughs?

"O yes, she wander'd round and round  
These knotted knees of mine,  
And found, and kiss'd the name she found,  
And sweetly murmured thine.

"A teardrop trembled from its source,  
And down my surface crept.  
My sense of touch is something coarse,  
But I believe she wept.

"Then flash'd her cheek with rosy light,  
She glanced across the plain;  
But not a creature was in sight;  
She kiss'd me once again.

"Her kisses were so close and kind,  
That, trust me on my word,  
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,  
But yet my sap was stirr'd;

"And even into my inmost ring  
A pleasure I discern'd,  
Like those blind motions of the Spring,  
That show the year is turn'd.

"Thrice-happy he that may caress  
The ringlet's waving balm—  
The cushions of whose touch may press  
The maiden's tender palm.

"I, rooted here among the groves,  
But languidly adjust  
My vivid vegetable loves  
With anthers and with dust:

"For ah! my friend, the days were brief  
Whereof the poets talk,  
When that, which breathes within the leaf,  
Could slip its bark and walk.

"But could I, as in times foregone,  
From spray, and branch, and stem,  
Have suck'd and gather'd into one  
The life that spreads in them,

"She had not found me so remiss;  
But lightly issuing thro',  
I would have paid her kiss for kiss  
With nesry thereto."

O flourish high, with leafy towers,  
And overlook the lea,  
Purse thy loves among the bowers,  
But leave them mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,  
Old oak, I love thee well;  
A thousand thanks for what I learn  
And what remains to tell.

"Tis little more; the day was warm,  
At last, tired out with play,  
She sank her head upon her arm,  
And at my feet she lay.

"Her eyelids dropp'd their silken caves  
I breathed upon her eyes  
Thro' all the summer of my leaves  
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

"I took the swarming sound of life—  
The music from the town—
The murmurs of the drum and sê,
And hût'd them in my own.

"Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
To light her shaded eye;
A second flutter'd round her lip
Like a golden butterfly;

"A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine;
Another slid, a sunny flicker,
From head to ankle fine.

"Then close and dark my arms I spread,
And shadow'd all her rest—
Dropt dews upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast.

"But in a pet she started up,
And puck'd it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And flung him in the dew.

"And yet it was a graceful gift—
I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
His axe to slay my kin.

"I shook him down because he was
The finest on the tree.
He lies beside thee on the grass.
O kiss him once for me.

"O kiss him twice and three for me,
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lee
Shall grow so fair as this."

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
Look farther thro' the chace,
Spread upward till thy boughs discern
The front of Summer-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,
That but a moment lay
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,
The warmth it thence shall win
To ripen life may magnetize
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset
Or lapse from hand to hand,
Thy leaf shall never fall, nor yet
Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee,
Nor wielded axe disjoint,
That art the fairest-spoken tree
From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery top
All throats that gurgle sweet!
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet!

All grass of silky feather grow—
And while he sinks or swells
The full south-breeze around thee blow
The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
That under deëpiy strikes!
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up, in silver spikes!

Nor ever lightening char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
That makes thee broad and deep!

And hear me swear a solemn oath,
That only by thy side
Will I to Olive plight my troth,
And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,
She, Dryad-like, shall wear
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball
In wreath about her hair.

And I will work in prose and rhyme,
And praise thee more in both
Than bard has honor'd beech or lime,
Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthys ringdoxes sat,
And mystic sentence spoke;
And more than England honors that,
Thy famous brother-oak,

Wherein the younger Charles abide
Till all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And humm'd a surly hymn.

—

LOVE AND DUTY.

Or love that never found his earthly close,
What sequel? Streaming eyes and breaking hearts?
Or all the same as if he had not been?
Not so. Shall Error in the round of time
Still father Truth? O shall the bragart shoot
For some blind glimpse of freedom work itself
Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to law
System and empire? Sin itself be found
The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun?
And only he, this wonder, dead, become
Mere highway dust! or year by year alone
Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of himself?
If this were thus, If this, indeed, were all,
Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
The staring eye glanced o'er with rapLas days,
The long mechanic pacings to and fro,
The set gray life, and apathetic end.
But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?
Or three times less unworthy! likewise thou
Art more thro' Love, and greater than thy years.
The Sun will run his orbital, and the Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will bring
The drooping flower of knowledge changed to fruit
Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in Time,
And that which shapes it to some perfect end.
Will some one say, then why not fill for good
Why look ye not your pastime? To that man
My work shall answer, since I knew the right
And did it: for a man is not as God,
But then most Godlike being most a man,
—So let me think 'tis well for thee and me—
Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
Whose foresight pronounces peace, my heart so slow
To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to me,
When eyes, love-languid thro' half-tears, would dwell
One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,
Then not to dare to see! when thy low voice,
Faltering, would break its syllables, to keep
My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a leash,
And not leap forth and fall about thy neck,
And on thy bosom, (deep-desired relief)!—
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that weigh'd
Upon my brain, my senses, and my soul!
THE GOLDEN YEAR.—ULYSSES.

For Love himself took part against himself
To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love—
O this world's curse,—beloved but hated—came
Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and mine,
And crying, Who is this? behold thy bride,"—
She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is hard
To alien ears, I did not speak to these—
Nor, not to thee, but to myself in these:
Hard is my doom and thine: thou knowest it all.
Could Love part this? was't not well to speak,
To have spoken once? It could not but be well.
The slow sweet hours that bring us all things good,
The slow sad hours that bring us all things ill, And all good things from evil stare. how to the night In which we sat together and alone,
And to the want, that hollow'd all the heart,
Have utterance by the yearning of an eye,
That burn'd upon its object thro' such tears
As flow but once a life.

The trance gave way
To those careness, when a hundred times
In that last kiss, which never was the last,
 Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and died.
Then follow'd counsel, comfort in the words
That make a man feel strong in speaking truth;
Till now the dark was worn, and overhead
The lights of sumset and of sunrise mix'd.
In that brief night; the summer night, that passed
Among the last of the wild stars, and the last
Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels of Time
Span round in station, but the end had come.
O then like those, who clench their nerves to rush
Upon their dissolution, we two rose,
There—closing like an individual life—
In one blind cry of passion and of pain,
Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,
Caught up the whole of love and utter'd it,
And bade adieu forever.
Live—yet live—
Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing all
Life needs for life is possible to will—
Live happy; tend thy flowers; be tended by
My blessing! Should my shadow cross thy thoughts
Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou,
For calmer hours to Memory's darkest hold,
If not to be forgotten—not at once—
Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy dreams,
O might it come like one that looks content,
With pleasant eyes and the softest light.
And point thee forward to a distant light,
Or seem to lift a barrier from thy heart
And leave thee fresh, till thou wake refresh'd,
Then when the low matin-chirp hath grown
Full choir, and morning drian her plough of pearl
Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
Beyond the fair green field and eastern sea.

That float about the threshold of an age,
Like truths of Science waiting to becaught—
Catch me who can, and make the catcher crown'd—
Are taken by the forelock. Let it be.
But if you care indeed to listen, hear
These measured words, my work of yesternorn.
"We sleep and wake and sleep, but all things move;"
The Sun flings forward to his brother Sun;
The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her ellipse;
And human things returning on themselves
Move onward, leading up the golden year.
"Ah, thou' the times, when some new thought can bud,
Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,
Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,
Have ebb and flow conditioning their march,
And slow and sure comes up the golden year.
"When wealth no more shall rest in moundcd hues,
But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
In many streams to fallen lower lands,
And light shall spread, and man be liker man
Then all the season of the golden year.
"Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be wrens?
If all the world were falcons, what of that?
The wonder of the eagle were the less,
But he not less the eagle. Happy days
Roll onward, leading up the golden year.
"Fly, happy happy happy soils and bear the Press:
Fly, happy with the mission of the Cross;
Knit land to land, and blowing havenward
With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of toll
Enrich the markets of the golden year.
"But we grow old. Ah! when shall all men's good
Be each man's rule, and universal Peace
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro' all the circle of the golden year?"
Thus far he flowed, and ended; whenupon
"Ah, folly!" in mimic cadence answer'd James—
"Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,
Not in our time, nor in our children's time,
'T is like the second world to us that live;
'T were all as one to fix our hopes on Heaven
As on this vision of the golden year."
With that he struck his staff against the rocks
And broke it:—James,—you know him, old, but full
Of force and cheer, and firm upon his feet,
And like an oaken stick in winter woods,
O'erflourish'd with the hoary cramps;
Then added, all in heat:
"What stuff is this!"
Old writers push'd the happy season back,
The more fools they,—we forward: dreamers both:
You most, that in an age, when every hour
Must sweat her sixty minutes to the death,
Live on, God love us, as if the seedsmen, rapt
Upon the teeming harvest, should not dip
His hand into the bag: but well I know
That unto him who works, and feels he works,
This same grand year is ever at the doors."
He spoke; and, high above, I heard them blast
The steep slate-quarry, and the great echo clap
And buffet round the bills from bluff to bluff.

THE GOLDEN YEAR.—ULYSSES.

WELL, you shall have that song which Leonard wrote—
It was last summer on a tour in Wales:
Old James was with me; we that day had been
Up Snowden; and I wish'd for Leonard there,
And found him in Llambersi: then we cross
Between the lakes, and clamber'd half way up
The counter side; and that same song of his
He told me; for I banter'd him, and swore
They said he lived shut up within himself,
A tongue-ied Poet in the feverous days,
That, setting the bow much before the bow,
Cry, like the daughters of the horse-leech, "Give,
Cram us with all," but count not me the herid!
To which "They call me what they will," he said:
"But I was born too late: the fair new forms,
Ir little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags.
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Next the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honor'd of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravel'd world, whose margin fades
Forever and forever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life pined on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfill
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail

In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought
with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moun's round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smile
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the guls will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

"There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas."
LOCKSLEY HALL.

Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn; Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call, Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts, And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest, Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiade, rising thro' the mellow shade, Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land repose; When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed:

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see; Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.—

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast; In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove; In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young, And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me, Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light, As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs— All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong!" Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands: Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might: Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copse ring, And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships, And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more! O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung, Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me—to decline On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!
Yet it shall be; thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought;
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou were dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better than and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.
Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No—she never loved me truly: love is love forevermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memorie, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and then art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the “Never, never,” whisper'd by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears:

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.
‘Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guiles the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd."—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?
Every door is bar'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guineas helps the hurt that Honor feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relieve in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway, near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men:

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do.

For I dip into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be:
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;  

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain’d a ghastly dew  
From the nations’ airy navies grappling in the central blue;  

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro’ the thunder-storm:  

Till the war-drum throb’d no longer, and the battle-flags were furled  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.  

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.  

So I triumph’d, ere my passion sweeping thro’ me left me dry,  
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;  

Eye, to which all order fester, all things here are out of joint,  
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point:  

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,  
Glances at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.  

Yet I doubt not thro’ the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen’d with the process of the suns.  

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,  
Tho’ the deep heart of existence beat forever like a boy’s?  

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,  
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.  

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.  

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,  
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn:  

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulderd string?  
I am shamed thro’ all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.  

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman’s pleasure, woman’s pain—  
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain:  

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match’d with mine,  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—  

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat:  

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr’d;—  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle’s ward.  

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,  
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.  

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,  
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.  

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,  
Slides the bird o’er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag:  

Droops the heavy-blossom’d bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.  

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,  
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.  

There the passions cramp’d no longer shall have scope and breathing-space—  
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.  

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew’d, they shall dive, and they shall run,  
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their ladies in the sun:  

Whistle back the parrot’s call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,  
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—
Pool, again the dream, the fancy! but I know my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua’s moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range.
Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro’ the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day:
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro’ all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

GODIVA.

I waited for the train at Coventry;
I hung with grooms and porters on the bridge,
To watch the three tall spires; and there I shaped
The city’s ancient legend into this:

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that prose
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the people well,
And loathed to see them overtaxed: but she
Did more, and underwent, and overcame,
Then to the still small voice I said:  
"Let me not cast in endless shade  
What is so wonderfully made."

To which the voice did urge reply:  
"To-day I saw the dragon-fly  
Come from the wells where he did lie."

"An inner impulse rent the veil  
Of his old husk: from head to tail  
Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

"He dried his wings: like gauze they grew:  
Thro' crozes and pastures wet with dew  
A living flash of light he flew."

I said, "When first the world began,  
Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,  
And in the sixth she moulded man."

"She gave him mind, the lordliest  
Proportion, and, above the rest,  
Dominion in the head and breast."

Thero the silent voice replied:  
"Self-blinded are you by your pride!  
Look up thro' night: the world is wide."

"This truth within thy mind rehearse,  
That in a boundless universe  
Is boundless better, boundless worse."

"Think you this mould of hopes and fears  
Could find no stanchier than his peers  
In yonder hundred million spheres?"

It spake, moreover, in my mind:  
"Tho' you wert scattered to the wind,  
Yet is there plenty of the kind."  

Then did my response clearer fall:  
"No compound of this earthly ball  
Is like another, all in all."

To which he answered scoffingly:  
"Good soul! suppose I grant it thee,  
Who 'll weep for thy deficiency?"

"Or will one beam be less intense,  
When thy peculiar difference  
Is cancell'd in the world of sense?"

I would have said, "Thou canst not know  
But my full heart, that work'd below,  
Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow."

Again the voice spake unto me:  
"Thou art so steep'd in misery,  
Surely, 't were better not to be."

"Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,  
Nor any train of reason keep:  
Thou canst not think but thou wilt weep."

I said, "The years with change advance:  
If I make dark my countenance,  
I shut my life from happier chance."

"Some turn this sickness yet might take  
Ev'n yet."  
But he:  
"What drug can make  
A wither'd palsie cease to shake?"

I wept, "Thou! I should die, I know  
That all about the thorn will blow  
In tuffs of rosy-tinted snow;  
"And men, thro' novel spheres of thought  
Still moving after truth long sought,  
Will learn new things when I am not."
"Yet," said the secret voice, "some time
Sooner or later, will gray prime
Make thy grass grow with early rime.

"Not less swift souls that yearn for light,
Rapt after heaven's starry flight,
Would sweep the tracks of day and night.

"Not less the bee would range her cells,
The fiery prickle fire the dells,
The foxglove cluster dappled bells." I said that "all the years invent-
Each month is various to present
The world with some development.

"Were this not well, to hide mine hour,
Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower
How grows the day of human power?"

"The highest-mounted mind," he said,
"Still sees the sacred morning spread
The silent summit overhead.

"Will thirty seasons render plain
Those lonely lights that still remain,
Just breaking over land and main?

"Or make that morn, from his cold crown
And crystal silence creeping down,
Flood with full daylight glebe and town?

"Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set
In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

"Thou hast not gained a real height,
Nor art thou nearer to the light,
Because the scale is infinite.

"I were better not to breathe or speak,
Than cry for strength, remaining weak,
And seem to find, but still to seek.

"Moreover, but to seem to find
Asks what thou lackest, thought resign'd,
A healthy frame, a quiet mind."

I said, "When I am gone away,
He durst not tarry;'men will say,
Doing dishonor to my clay.

"This is more vile," he made reply,
"To breathe and loathe, to live and sigh,
Than once from dread of pain to die.

"Sick art thou—a divided will
Still heaping on the fear of ill
The fear of men, a coward still.

"Do men love thee? Art thou so bound
To men, that how thy name may sound
Will vex thee lying underground?

"The memory of the wither'd leaf
In endless time is scarce more brief
Than of the garner'd Autumn sheaf.

"Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,
Heara little of the false or just."

"Hard task, to pluck resolve," I cried.
"From emptiness and the waste wide
Of that abyss, or scornful pride!

"Say—rather yet that I could raise
One hope that warm'd me in the day;
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

"When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,
Among the tents I passed and sung,
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

"I sang the joyful Pean clear,
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

"Waiting to strive a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the good of life—

"Some hidden principle to move,
To put together, part and prove,
And mete the bounds of hate and love—

"As far as might be, to carve out
Free space for every human doubt,
That the whole mind might orb about—

"To search thro' all I felt or saw,
The springs of life, the depths of awe,
And reach the law within the law:

"At least, not rotting like a weed,
But, having sown some generous seed,
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

"To pass, when Life her light withdraws,
Not void of righteous self-applause,
Nor in a merely selfish case—

"In some good cause, not in mine own,
To perish, wept for, honor'd, known,
And like a warrior overthrown:

"Whose eyes are dim with glorious tears,
When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears
His country's war-song thrill his ears:

"Then dying of a mortal stroke,
What time the foeman's line is broke,
And all the war is roll'd in smoke."

"Yea!" said the voice, "thy dream was good,
While thou abodest in the bnd.
It was the stirring of the blood.

"If Nature put not forth her power
About the opening of the flower,
Who is it that could live an hour?

"Then comes the check, the change, the fall.
Pain rises up, old pleasures fall.
There is one remedy for all.

"Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain
Link'd month to month with such a chain
Of knitted purport, all were vain.

"Thou hadst not between death and birth
Dissolved the riddle of the earth.
So were thy labor little-worth.

"That men with knowledge merely play'd,
I told thee—hardly higher made,
Tho' seal'd slow from grade to grade;

"Much less this dreamer, deaf and blind,
Named man, may hope some truth to find,
That bears relation to the mind.

"For every worm beneath the moon
Draws different threads, and late and soon
Spins, tolling out his own cocoon.

"Cry, faint not: either Truth is born
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
Or in the gateways of the morn.
"Cry, faint not, climb: the summits slope
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

"Sometimes a little corner shines,
As over rainy mist inclines
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

"I will go forward, sayest thou,
I shall not fail to find her now.
Look up, the fold is on her brow.

"If straight thy tract, or if oblique,
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost strike,
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like:

"And owning but a little more
Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,
Calling thyself a little lower

"Than angels. Cease to wall and brawl!
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?
There is one remedy for all."

"O dull, one-sided voice," said I,
"Wilt thou make everything a lie,
To flatten me that I may die?

"If I know that age to age succeeds
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,
A dust of systems and of creeds.

"I cannot hide that some have striven,
Achieving calm, to whom was given
The joy that mixes man with Heaven:

"Who, rowing hard against the stream,
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,
And did not dream it was a dream:

"But heard, by secret transport led,
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,
The murrmur of the fountain-head—

"Which did accomplish their desire,
Bore and forbore, and did not tire,
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

"He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,
Tho' cure'd and scorn'd, and bruised with stones:

"But looking upward, full of grace,
He pray'd, and from a happy place
God's glory smote him on the face.

The sullen answer slid betwixt:
"Not that the grounds of hope were fix'd,
The elements were kindlier mix'd."

I said, "I tell beneath the curse,
But, knowing not the universe,
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

"And that, in seeking to undo
One riddle, and to find the true,
I knit a hundred others new:

"Or that this anguish fleeting hence,
Umanacled from bonds of sense,
Be fix'd and frozen to permanence:

"For I go, weak from suffering here;
Naked I go, and void of cheer:
What is it that I may not fear?"

"Consider well," the voice replied,
"His face, that two hours since hath died:
Wilt thou find passion, pain, or pride?

"Will he obey when one commands?
Or answer should one press his hands?
He answers not, nor understands.

"His palms are folded on his breast:
There is no other thing express'd
But long disquiet merged in rest.

"His lips are very mild and meek:
Tho' one should smite him on the cheek,
And on the mouth, he will not speak.

"His little daughter, whose sweet face
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,
Becomes dishonor to her race—

"His sons grow up that bear his name,
Some grow to honor, some to shame,—
But he is chill to praise or blame.

"He will not hear the north-wind rave,
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave
From winter rains that beat his grave.

"High up the vapors fold and swim:
About him broods the twilight dim;
The place he knew forgetteth him."

"If all be dark, vague voices," I said,
"These things are wrapt in doubt and dread,
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

"The sap dries up: the plant declines.
A deeper tale my heart divines.
Know I not Denth? the outward sigus?"

"I found him when my years were few;
A shadow on the graves I knew,
And darkness in the village yew.

"From grave to grave the shadow crept:
In her still place the morning wept:
Torch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

"The simple senses crown'd his head:
'Omega! thou art Lord,' they said,
'We find no motion in the dead.'

"Why, if man rot in dreamless case,
Should that plain face, as taught by these,
Not make him sure that he shall cease?

"Who forged that other influence,
That heat of inward evidence,
By which he doubts against the sense?"

"He owns the fatal gift of eyes,
That read his spirit blindly wise,
Not simple as a thing that dies.

"Here sits he shaping wings to fly:
His heart forebodes a mystery:
He names the name Eternity.

"That type of Perfect in his mind
In Nature can he nowhere find.
He sows himself on every wind.

"He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,
And thro' thick veils to apprehend
A labor working to an end.

"The end and the beginning vex
His reason: many things perplex,
With motions, checks, and counter-checks.

"He knows a baseness in his blood
At such strange war with something good,
He may not do the thing he would.
"Heaven opens inward, chaos awn,
Vast images in glimmering dawn,
Half-shown, are broken and withdrawn.

"Ah! sure within him and without,
Could his dark wisdom find it out,
There must be answer to his doubt.

"But thou canst answer not again.
With those own weapon art thou slain,
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

"The doubt would rest, I dare not solve.
In the same circle we revolve.
Assurance only breeds resolve."

As when a billow, blown against,
Falls back, the voice with which I fenced
A little ceased, but recommenced:

"Where went thou when thy father play'd
In his free field, and pastime made,
A merry boy in sun and shade?

"A merry boy they called him then.
He sat upon the knees of men
In days that never come again.

"Before the little ducts began
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran
Their course, till thou wert also man:

"Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,
Whose troubles number with his days:

"A life of nothing, nothing-worth.
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth?"

"These words," I said, "are like the rest,
No certain clearness, but at best
A vague suspicion of the breast:

"But if I grant, thou might'st defend
The thesis which thy words intend—
That to begin implies to end;

"Yet how should I for certain hold,
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mould?

"I cannot make this matter plain,
But I would shoot, how'er in vain,
A random arrow from the brain.

"It may be that no life is found,
Which only to one engine bound
Falls off, but cycles always round.

"As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state.

"As here we find in trances, men
Forget the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

"So might we, if our state were such
As one before, remember much,
For those two likes might meet and touch.

"But, if I lapsed from nobler place,
Some legend of a fallen race
Alone might hint of my disgrace:

"Some vague emotion of delight
In gazing up an Alpine height,
Some yearning toward the lamps of night.

"Or if thro' lower lives I came—
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame—

"I might forget my weaker lot;
For is not our first year forgot?
The haunts of memory echo not.

"And men, whose reason long was blind,
From cells of madness unconquered,
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

"Much more, if first I floated free,
As naked essence, must I be
Incompetent of memory:

"For memory dealing but with time,
And he with matter, could she climb
Beyond her own material prime?

"Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

"Of something felt, like something here
Of something done, I know not where:
Such as no language may declare.'

The still voice laugh'd. "I talk," said he,
"Not with thy dreams. Suflice it thee
Thy pain is a reality."

"But thou," said I, "hast miss'd thy mark.
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,
By making all the horizon dark.

"Why not set forth, if I should do
This rashness, that which might cause
With this old soul in organs new?

"Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly long'd for death.

"T is life, whereof our nerves are scant,
O life, not death, for which we paut;
More life, and fuller, that I want."

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn:
"Behold, it is the Sabbath more.

And I arose, and I released
The casement, and the light increased
With freshness in the dawning east.
Like soft'en'd airs that blowing steal,
When meres begin to uncongeal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest:
Passing the place where each mast rest,
Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and child,
With measure'd footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,
The little maiden walk'd demure,
Facing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its nuclear heat.

I bless them, and they wander'd on:
I spoke, but answer came there none:
The dull and louter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,
A little whisper silver-clear,
A murmur, "Be of better cheer."
THE DAY-DREAM.

PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak:
A pleasant hour has past away;
While, dreaming on your damask cheek,
The dewy sister-eyelids lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
I went thro' many onward moods,
To see you dreaming—and, behind,
A summer sleep with shining woods.
And I too dream'd, until at last
Across my fancy, brooding warm,
The reflex of a legend past;
And lovelier settled into form.
And would you have the thought I had,
And see the vision that I saw,
Then take the broderie-frame, and add
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
And I will tell it. Turn your face,
Nor look with that too earnest eye—
The rhymes are dazzled from their place,
And order'd words asunder fly.

THE DAY-DREAM.

2.
Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
On every slumbering terrace-lawn.
The fountain to his place returns,
Deep in the garden lawn withdrawn.
Here droops the banner on the tower,
On the hall-hearth the misty fires,
The peacock in his laurel bower,
The parrot in his gilded wires.

3.
Roof-haunting martins warp their eggs:
In these, in those the life is stay'd,
The mantles from the golden peg
Droop sleepily: no sound is made,
Not even of a gnat that sings.
More like a picture seeneth all
Than those old portraits of old kings.
That watch the sleepers from the wall.

4.
Here sits the butler with a flask
Between his knees half-drained; and there
The wrinkled steward at his task,
The maid-of-honor blooming fair:
The page has caught her hand in his:
His lips are sever'd as to speak:
His own are pointed to a kiss:
The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

5.
Till all the hundred summers pass;
The dreams, that through the oval shine,
Make prisms in every carved glass,
And beaker brim'd with noble wine.
Each bason at the banquet sleeps,
Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
His state the king reposeth keeps.
He must have been a jovial king.

6.
All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
At distance like a little wood;
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
And grapes with bunches red as blood:
All creeping plants, a wall of green
Close-matted, and brake and brier,
And glimmering over these, just seen,
High up the topmost palace-spire.

7.
When will the hundred summers die,
And thought and time be born again,
And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
Bring truth that aways the soul of men?
Here all things in their place remain,
As all were order'd, ages since.
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and Pain,
And bring the faded fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

1.
Year after year unto her feet,
She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purpled coverlet,
The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
On either side her trance'd form
Forth streaming from a braid of pearl;
The slimbrous light is rich and warm,
And moves not on the rolled curt.

2.
The silk star-broider'd coverlid
Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Langessly ever; and, amid
Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
The Day-Dream.

1. All precious things, discover'd late,
   To those that seek them leave forth:
   For love in sequel works with fate,
   And draws the veil from hidden worth.
   He travels far from other skies—
   His mantle glitters on the rocks—
   A Fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
   And lighter-footed than the fox.

2. The bodies and the bones of those
   That strove in other days to pass,
   Are wither'd in the thorny close,
   Or scattered branching on the grass.
   He gazes on the silent dead,
   "They perish'd in their daring deeds."
   This proverb flashes thro' his head,
   "The many full: the one succeeds."

3. He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks:
   He breaks the hedge: he enters there:
   The color flies into his cheeks:
   He trusts to light on something fair;
   For all his life the charm did talk
   About his path, and hover near
   With words of promise in his walk,
   And whisper'd voices at his ear.

4. More close and close his footsteps wind;
   The Magic Music in his heart
   Beats quick and quicker, till he find
   The quiet chamber far apart,
   His spirit flutters like a lark,
   He stoops—tis kiss her—on his knee.
   "Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
   How dark those hidden eyes must be!"

The Revival.

1. A touch, a kiss! the charm was snapt,
   There rose a noise of striking clocks,
   And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
   And barking dogs, and crowing cocks:
   A fuller light illumined all,
   A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
   A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
   And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

2. The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
   The butler drank, the steward strain'd,
   The fire shot up, the martin flew,
   The parrot scream'd, the peacock squall'd,
   The maid and page renew'd their strife,
   The palace hung'd, and buzz'd, and clink't,
   And all the long-pent stream of life
   Dash'd downward in a cataract.

3. And last with these the king awoke,
   And in his chair himself upright
   And yaw'd, and rubb'd his face, and spoke,
   "By holy rood, a royal heard!"
   How say you? we have slept, my lords.
   My beard has grown into my lap."
   The barons swore, with many words,
   "Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

4. "'Pardy," return'd the king, "but still
   My joints are something stiff or so.
   My lord, and shall we pass the bill
   I mention'd half an hour ago?"
   The chancellor, sedate and vain,
   In courteous words return'd reply:
   But dallied with his golden chain,
   And, smiling, put the question by.

The Departure.

1. And on her lover's arm she leaned,
   And round her waist she felt it fold,
   And far across the hills they went
   In that new world which is the old:
   Across the hills, and far away
   Beyond their utmost purple rim,
   And deep into the dying day
   The happy princess follow'd him.

2. "I'd sleep another hundred years,
   O love, for such another kiss;"
   "O wake forever, love," she hears,
   "O love, 1 was such as this and this."
   And o'er them many a sliding star,
   And many a merry wind was borne,
   And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
   The twilight melted into morn.

3. "O eyes long laid in happy sleep!"
   "O happy sleep, that lightly fled!"
   "O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!"
   "O love, thy kisses would wake the dead"
   And o'er them many a flowing range
   Of vapor buoy'd the crescent-bark,
   And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
   The twilight died into the dark.

4. "A hundred summers! can it be?
   And whither goest thou, tell me where?"
   "O seek my father's court with me,
   For there are greater wonders there."
   And o'er the hills, and far away
   Beyond their utmost purple rim,
   Beyond the night, across the day,
   Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

Moral.

1. So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
   And if you find no moral there,
   Go, look in any glass and say,
   What moral is in being fair.
   O, to what use shall we put
   The wildwood flower that simply blows?
   And is there any moral shut
   Within the bosom of the rose?

2. But any man that walks the mead,
   In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
   According as his humors lead,
   A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications tie
In Art like Nature, dearest friend;
So 't were to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOL.

1.
You shake your head. A random string
Your finer female sense offence.
Well—were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends;
To pair with all one's social ties
To silence from the paths of men;
And every hundred years to rise
And learn the world, and sleep again;
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
And wake on science grown to more,
On secrets of the brain, the stars,
As wild as aught of fairy lore;
And all that else the years will show
The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
The vast Republics that may grow,
The Federations and the Powers;
Titanic forces taking birth
In divers seasons, divers climes;
For we are Ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times.

2.
So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
Thro' sunny decades new and strange,
Or gay quinquenniads we reap
The flower and quintessence of change.

3.
Ah, yet would I—and would I might!
So much your eyes my fancy take—
Be still the first to leap to light
That I might kiss those eyes awake!
For, am I right or am I wrong,
To choose your own you did not care;
You'd have my moral from the song,
And I will take my pleasure there;
And, am I right or am I wrong,
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
To search a meaning for the song,
Perforce will still revert to you;
Nor finds a closer truth than this
All-graceful head, so richly car'd,
And evermore a costly kiss
The prelude to some brighter world.

4.
For since the time when Adam first
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
And every bird of Eden burst
In carol, every bud to flower,
What eyes, like thine, have wak'en'd hopes?
What lips, like thine, so sweetly Jol'n'd?
Where on the double rosebud droops
The fulness of the pensive mind;
Which all too dearly self-involved,
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me;
A sleep by kisses undissolved,
That lets thee neither hear nor see;
But break it. In the name of wife,
And in the rights that name may give,
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
And that for which I care to live.

EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And, if you find a meaning there,
O whisper to your glass, and say,
"What wonder, if he thinks me fair?"
What wonder I was all unwise,
To shape the song for your delight,

Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise,
That float thro' Heaven, and cannot light?
Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—
But take it—earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,
But it is wild and barren,
A garden too with scarce a tree
And waster than a Warren:
Yet say the neighbors when they call,
It is not bad but good land,
And in it is the germ of all
That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great
In days of old Amphion,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
Nor cared for seed or scion!
And had I lived when song was great,
And legs of trees were limber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And fiddled in the timber!

"T is said he had a tuneful tongue,
Such happy intonation,
Wherever he sat down and sung
He left a small plantation;
Wherever in a lonely grove
He set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oak began to move,
And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirr'd its bashy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down
Coquettling with young beeches;
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.

The birch-tree swang her fragrant hair,
The Bramble cast her berry,
The gin within the juniper
Began to make him merry,
The poplar, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers gallopaded.

Came wet-shot alder from the wave,
Came yew, a dismal coterie;
Each pluck'd his one foot from the grave,
Poussetting with a sloe-tree;
Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vine stream'd out to follow,
And, sweating resin, plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And was n't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landlisp, tree by tree,
The country-side descended;
And shepherds from the mountain-eaves
Look'd down, half-pleased, half-frightend,
And hide'd about the drunken leaves
The random sunshine lighten'd!

O, nature first was fresh to men,
And wanton without measure;
So youthful and so flexile then,
You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle! shake the twig!  
And make her dance attendance;  
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set springs,  
And scirrrous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain! in such a brassy age  
I could not move a whistle;  
The very sparrows in the hedge  
Scarcely answer to my whistle;  
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick  
With strumming and with scraping,  
A jackass heebaws from the rick,  
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear? a sound  
Like sleepy counsel pleading:  
O Lord!—I's in my neighbor's ground,  
The modern Muses reading.  
They read Botanic Treatises,  
And Works on Gardening through there,  
And Methods of transplanting trees,  
To look as if they grew there.

The whiter'd Misses! how they proce  
O'er books of travel'd seamen,  
And show you slips of all that grows  
From England to Van Diemen.  
They read in arbors clipt and cut,  
And alleys, fabled places,  
By squares of tropic summer shut  
And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,  
Are neither green nor sappy:  
Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,  
The spindlings look unhappy.  
Better to me the meanest weed  
That blows upon its mountain,  
The vilest herb that runs to seed  
Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' mouths of toil,  
And years of cultivation,  
Upon my proper patch of soil  
To grow my own plantation.  
I'll take the showers as they fall,  
I will not vex my bosom:  
Enough if at the end of all  
A little garden blossom.

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,  
To which I most resort,  
How goes the time? 'Tis five o'clock.  
Go fetch a pint of port:  
But let it not be such as that  
You set before chance-comers,  
But such whose father-grape grew fat  
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,  
But may she still be kind,  
And whisper lovely words, and use  
Her influence on the mind,  
To make me write my random rhymes,  
Ere they be half-forgotten;  
Nor add and alter, many times,  
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips  
Her laurel in the wine,  
And lays it thrice upon my lips,  
These fav'rd lips of mine;

Until the charm have power to make  
New lifeblood warm the bosom,  
And barren commonplaces break  
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board;  
Her gradual fingers steal  
And touch upon the master-chord  
Of all I felt and feel.  
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,  
And phantom hopes assemble;  
And that child's heart within the man's  
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns  
By many pleasant ways,  
Against its fountain upward runs  
The current of my days:  
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd;  
The gas-light wavers dimmer;  
And softly, thro' a vious mist,  
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,  
Unboding critic-pen,  
Or that eternal want of peace,  
Which vexes public men,  
Who hold their hands to all, and cry  
For that which all deny them,—  
Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry.  
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,  
Tho' fortune clip my wings,  
I will not cramp my heart, nor take  
Half-views of men and things.  
Let Whig and Tory stir their blood;  
There must be stormy weather:  
But for some true result of good  
All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes,  
If old things, there are new;  
Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,  
Yet glimpses of the true.  
Let raffs be rife in prose and rhyme,  
We lack not rhymes and reasons,  
As on this whirligig of Time  
We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid:  
With fair horizons bound!  
This whole wide earth of light and shade  
Comes out, a perfect round.  
High over roaring Temple-bar,  
And, set in Heaven's third story,  
I look at all things as they are,  
But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honor'd by the guest  
Half-mused, or reeling-ripe,  
The port you brought me, was the best  
That ever came from pipe.  
But tho' the port surpasses praise,  
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.  
Is there some magic in the place?  
Or do my peptics differ?

For since I came to live and learn,  
No pint of white or red  
Had ever half the power to turn  
This wheel within my head,  
Which bears a season'd brain about,  
Unsubject to confusion,  
Tho' sook'd and sature, out and out,  
Thro' every convolutions.

For I am of a numerous house,  
With many kinsmen gay,
LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

Where long and largely we carouse,
As who shall say me nay:
Each mouth, a birthday coming on,
We drink defying trouble,
Or sometimes two would meet in one,
And then we drank it double.

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,
Had relish new-new,
Or, elbow-deep in something slept,
As old as Waterloo;
Or stow'd (when classic Canning died)
In dusty bins and chambers,
Had cast upon its crusty side
The gleam of ten December.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is!
She answer'd to my call,
She changes with that mood or this,
Is all-in-all to all.
She lit the spark within my throat,
To make my blood run quicker,
Used all her fergy will, and smote
Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about
The waiter's hands, that reach
To each his perfect pint of stout,
His proper cup to each.
He looks not like the common breed
That with the napkin daily:
I think he came like Country-Nede,
From some delightful valley.

The Cocks was of a larger egg
Than modern poultry drop,
Step forward on a firmer leg,
And cram'd a plumpper crop:
Upon an auger dunghill trod,
Crow'd laster late and early,
Spt wine from silver, praising God,
And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,
Till in a court he saw
A something-pottle-bodied boy
That knocked at the taw:
He stoop'd and clinch'd him, fair and good.
Flew over roof and casement:
His brothers of the weather stood
Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe, and spire,
And follow'd with archilms,
A sign to many a staring shire,
Came crowing over Thames.
Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
Till, where the street grows straiter,
One is'd forever at the door,
And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go?
How out of place she makes
The violet of a legend blow
Among the chops and steaks!
Tis but a steward of the can,
One shade more plump than common.
As just and mere a serving-man
As any, born of woman.

I ranged too high: what draws me down
Into the common day?
Is it the weight of that half-crown,
Which I shall have to pay?
For, something diller than at first,
Nor wholly comfortable,
I sit (my empty glass reversed),
And thrumming on the table:

Half fearful that, with self at strife,
I take myself to task;
Lest of the fulness of my life
I leave an empty flask:
For I had hoped by something rare,
To prove myself a poet;
But, while I plan and plan, my hair
Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,
Till they be gather'd up:
The truth, that flies the flowing can.
Will haunt the vacant cup:
And others' follies teach us not,
Nor much their wisdom teaches:
And most, of sterling worth, is wha;
Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone!
We know not what we know.
But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone
'Tis gone, and let it go.
'Tis gone: a thousand such have slip
Away from my embraces,
And fall'n into the dusty crypt
Of darkness forms and faces.

Go, therefore, than! thy betters went
Long since, and came no more:
With peals of genial clamor sent
From many a tavern-door,
With twisted quirks and happy bits.
From misty men of letters;
The tavern-hours of mighty wits—
Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and looks
Had yet their native glow:
Not yet the fear of little books
Had made him talk for show:
But, all his vast heart sheriis-warm'd
He dash'd his random speeches;
Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd
His literary leeches.

So mix forever with the past,
Like all good things on earth:
For should I prize thee, couldst thou last,
At half thy real worth?
I hold it good, good things should pass
With time I will not quarrel,
It is but yerder empty glass
That makes us manolin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
To which I most resort.
I too must part: I hold thee dear
For this good pint of port.
For this, thou shalt from all things suck
Marrow of mirth and laughter:
And, whereasco'er thou move, good luck
Shall fling her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,
The sphere thy fate allot's.
Thy latter days increased with peace
Go down among the pots:
Thon battened by the greasy gleam
In haunts of hungry sinners.
Old boxes, larded with the steam
Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, we fume, would shift our skins,
Would quarrel with our lot:
Thy care is, under polish'd tins,
To serve the hot-and-hot;
To come and go, and come again,
Returning like the pewter,
And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
That trifle with the cruet.


They two will wed the morrow morn:
God's blessing on the day!

"He does not love me for my birth,
Nor for my lands so broad and fair:
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, "Who was this that went from thee?"
"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare.
"To-morrow he weds with me."

"O God be thank'd!" said Alice the nurse,
"That all comes round so just and fair:
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are not the Lady Clare."

"Are ye not of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?"
Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"
"As God's abode," said Alice the nurse,
"I speak the truth: you are my child.

The old Earl's daughter died at my breast
I speak the truth, as I live by bread;
I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead."

"Palely, falsely have ye done,
O mother," she said, "if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his duc.

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,
When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar born," she said,
"I will speak out, for I dare not lie.
Pull off, pull off, the bright of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by.

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret all ye can."

She said "Not so: but I will know
If there be any faith in man."

"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse,
"The man will cleave unto his right.
And he shall have it," the lady replied,
"Tho' I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear.
Ah! my child, I shan't do thee.
"O mother, mother, mother," she said,
"So strange it seems to me.

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,
And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare:
She went by dale, and she went by dale
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought
Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And followed her all the way.

Down slept Lord Ronald from his tower.
"O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!
Why come you dreist like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth?"

"If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are:
I am a beggar born," she said,
"And not the Lady Clare."
"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"For I am yours in word and in deed,
Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"Your riddle is hard to read."

O and proudly stood she up!
Her heart within her did not fail:
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn:
He turn'd, and kiss'd her where she stood:
"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare."

ST. AGNES.

Deep on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon:
My breath to heaven like vapor goes:
May my soul follow soon!
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord:

Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soiled and dark,
To yonder shining ground;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee;
So in mine earthly house I am,
To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;
The flashes come and go;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strews her lights below,
And deepens on and up! the gates
Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
To make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity,
One sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
The Bridegroom with his bride!

"Deep on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon."
SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My rough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.
How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favors fall?
For them I battle to the end,
To save from shame and thrill:
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice, but none are there:
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chants resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, spins from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hall.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields:
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear:
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odors haunt my dreams;
And, strik'den by an angel's hand,
This mortal armor that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.

Then move the trees, the cypresses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on; the prize is near."

So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whatever betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

TO E. L.—THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls
Of water, sheets of summer glass,
The long divine Peneian pass,
The vast Akrokeranian walls,

Tomomith, Athos, all things fair,
With such a pencil, such a pen,
You shadow forth to distant men,
I read and felt that I was there:

And trust me while I turn'd the page,
And track'd you still on classic ground,
I grow'd in gladness till I found
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
And glisten'd—here and there alone
The broad-lim'd Gods at random thrown
By fountain-arms;—and Nalada one'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
Of cavern pillars; on the swell
The silver lily heaved and fell;
And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks,
To him who sat upon the rocks,
And flitted to the morning sea.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

In her ear he whispers gayly,
"If my heart by sighs can tell,
Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
And I think thou lov'st me well."

She replies, in accents fainter,
"There is none I love like thee."
He is but a landscape-painter,
And a village maiden she.

He to lips, that fondly falter,
Presses his without reproof:
Leads her to the village altar,
And they leave her father's roof.

"I can make no marriage present;
Little can I give my wife.
Love will make our cottage pleasant,
And I love thee more than life."

They by parks and lodges going
See the lordly castles stand;
Summer woods, about them blowing,
Made a murmur in the land.

From deep thought himself he rouses,
Says to her that loves him well,

"Let us see these handsome houses
Where the wealthy nobles dwell."
So she goes by him attended,
Hears him lovingly converse,
Sees whatever fair and splendid
Lay betwixt his home and hers;
Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
Parks and order'd gardens great,
Ancient homes of lord and lady,
Built for pleasure and for state.
All he shows her makes him dearer:
Even more she seems to gaze
On that cottage growing nearer,
Where they twain will spend their days.

But she will love him truly!
He shall have a cheerful home;
She will order all things duly,
When beneath his roof they come.
Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
Till a gateway she discerns
With armorial bearings stately,
And beneath the gate she turns;
Sees a mansion more majestic
Than all those she saw before:
Many a gallant gay domestic
Bows before him at the door.

And they speak in gentle murmurs,
When they answer to his call,
While he treads with footstep firm,
Leading on from hall to hall.

And, while now she wonders blindly,
Nor the meaning can divine,
Proudly turns he round and kindly,
"All of this is mine and thine."

Here he lives in state and bounty,
Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
Not a lord in all the county
Is so great a lord as he.
All at once the color flashes
Her sweet face from brow to chin:
As it were with shame she blushes,
And her spirit changed within.

Then her countenance all over
Pales again as death did prove;
But he clasps'd her like a lover,
And he cheek'd her soul with love.

She strove against her weaknesses,
Tho' at times her spirits sank:
Shaped her heart with woman's meekness.
To all duties of her rank:
And a gentle consort made he,
Her gentle mind was such
That she grew a noble lady,
And the people loved her much.
But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
And perplex'd her, night and morn,
With the burden of an honor
Unto which she was not born.

Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
As she murmur'd, "O, that he
Were once more that landscape-painter,
Which did win my heart from me!"

So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
Fading slowly from his side:
Three fair children first she bore him,
Then before her time she died.

Weeping, weeping late and early,
Walking up and pacing down,
Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.

And he came to look upon her,
And he look'd at her and said,
"Bring the dress and put it on her,
That she wore when she was wed."

Then her people, softly treadling,
Bore to earth her body, drest
In the dress that she was wed in,
That her spirit might have rest.
EDWARD GRAY.

Sweet Emma Moreland of yonder town
Met me walking on yonder way,
"And have you lost your heart?" she said:
"And are you married yet, Edward Gray?"

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me:
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away:
"Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

Ellen Adair she loved me well.
Against her father's and mother's will:
To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

"Shy she was, and I thought her cold;
Thought her proud, and fled over the sea;
Fell'd I was with folly and spite.
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

Cruel, cruel the words I said!
Crucely came they back to-day:

"Love may come, and love may go.
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree:
But I will love no more, no more.
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

"Bitterly wept I over the stone:
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away:
There lies the body of Ellen Adair!
And there the heart of Edward Gray!"

"Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me:
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away."
A FAREWELL. - THE VISION OF SIN.

1. I had a vision when the night was late:
A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.
He rode a horse with wings, that would have flown,
But that his heavy rider kept him down.
And from the palace came a chime of sin,
And took him by the carse, and led him in,
Where sat a company with huentoys,
Expecting when a fountain should arise:
A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and capes—
Suffused them, sitting, lying, lambid shapes,
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine, and piles of grapes.

2. Then methought I heard a mellow sound,
Gathering up from all the lower ground:
Narrowing in to where they sat assembled
Low voluptuous music winding trembled,
Woven in circles: they that heard it sigh'd,
Panted hand in hand with faces pale,
Swung themselves, and in low tones replied;
Till the fountain spouted, showering wide
Sleet of diamond-drift and peary hail;
Then the music touch'd the gates and died:
Rose again from where it seem'd to fall,
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale;
Till thro'nging in and in, to where they waited,
As 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale,
The strong tempestuous treble thrubb'd and palpitat'd;
Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid maze,
Flung the torrent rainbow round:
Then they started from their places,
Moved with violence, changed in hue,
Caught each other with wild grinnaces,
Half-invisible to the view,
Wheeling with precipitate pace.
To the melody, till they flew,
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
Like to Parke, like to Graces,
Dash'd together in blinding dew:
Till, kipp'd with some luxuriant agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

3. And then I look'd up toward a mountain-tract,
That girt the region with high cliff and lawn:
I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
God made himself an awful rose of dawn,
Unheeded: and detaching, fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly drawing near
A vapor heavy, hulsey, formless, cold,
Came floating on for many a mouth and year,
Unheeded: and I thought I would have spoken,
Andwarned that madman ere it grew too late:
But, as in dreams, I could not.
Mine was broken,
When that cold vapor touch'd the palace gate,
And link'd again.
I saw within my head
A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as death,
Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said:

4. "Wrinkled hostler, grim and thin:
Here is custom come your way:
Take my bridle, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

"Bitter barren, walling fast!
See that sheets are on my bed:
What the flower of life is past:
It is long before you wed.

"Slip-shod waiter, lanx and sour,
At the Dragon on the heath!
Let us have a quiet hour,
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

"I am old, but let me drink:
Bring me spices, bring me wine.
I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine.

"Wine is good for shrivel'd lips,
When a blanket wraps the day,
When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

"Sit thee down, and have no shame.
Check by jowl, and knee by knee:
What care I for any name?
What for order or degree?
"Let me screw thee up a peg:
Let me loose thy tongue with wine:
Callest thou that thing a leg?
Which is thinnest? thine or mine?
"Thou shalt not be saved by works:
Thou hast been a slaver too:
Ruins trunks on wither'd forks,
Empty scarecrows, I and you!
"Fill the cup, and fill the can:
Have a rouse before the morn:
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.
"We are men of rain'd blood;
Therefore comes it we are wise.
Fish are we that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy-dies.
"Name and fame! to fly sublime
Through the courts, the camps, the schools,
Is to be the ball of Time,
Bandied in the hands of fools.
"Friendship!—to be two in one—
Let the canting har par!
Well I know, when I am gone,
How she mouths behind my back.
"Virtue!—to be good and just—
Every heart, when sifted well,
is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.
"O! we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbor's wife.
"Fill the cup, and fill the can:
Have a rouse before the morn:
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.
"Drink, and let the parties rave:
They are fill'd with idle spleen,
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.
"He that roars for liberty
Faster blinds a tyrant's power;
And the tyrant's cruel gleam
Forces on the freer hour.
"Fill the can, and fill the cup:
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.
"Greet her with applausive breath,
Freedom, gayly doth she tread;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.
"No, I love not what is new;
She is of an ancient house:
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.
"Let her go! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs:
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.
"Drink to lofty hopes that cool—
Visions of a perfect State:
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.
"Chant me now some wicked stave.
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.
"Fear not thou to loose thy tongue;
Set thy hoary fancies free.
What is loathsome to the young
Savors well to thee and me.
"Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.
"Tell me tales of thy first love—
April hopes, the fools of chance:
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.
"Fill the can, and fill the cup:
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.
"Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads:
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads.
"You are bones, and what of that?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.
"Death is king, and Vivat Rex!
Tread a measure on the stones,
Maidam—if I know your sex
From the fashion of your bones.
"No, I cannot praise the fire
In your eye—nor yet your lip:
All the more do I admire
Johns of cunning workmanship.
"Lo! God's likeness—the ground-plan—
Neither modell'd, glazed, or framed.
Bass me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed!
"Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath!
Drink to heavy Ignorance!
Hob-and-nob with brother Death!
"Thou art mazed, the night is long.
And the longer night is near:
What! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.
"Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.
"Fill the cup, and fill the can!
Mingle madness, mingle scorn!
Dregs of life, and lees of man:
Yet we will not die forlorn."

5.

The voice grew faint: there came a further change
Once more uprose the mystic mountain-range:
Below were men and horses pierced with worms,
And slowly quickening into lower forms:
By shreds and scarf of salt, and scum of dross,
Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd with moss,
Then some one spoke: "Behold! it was a crime
Of sense avenged by sense that wore with time."
Another said: "The crime of sense became
The crime of malice, and is equal blame."
And one: "He had not wholly quench'd his power; A little grain of conscience made him sour."
At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, "Is there any hope?"
To which an answer peal'd from that high land,
But in a tongue no man could understand;
And on the glimmering limit far withdrawn
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

Come not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover cry;
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest:
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where I lie:
Go by, go by.

THE EAGLE.
FRAGMENT.
He clasps the crag with hooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
You orange sunset waning slow;
From fringes of the faded eve,
O, happy planet, eastward go:
Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, lightly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn;
And round again to happy night.

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

"Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!"
And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

THE BEGGAR MAID.
Her arms across her breast she laid;
She was more fair than words can say:
Barefooted came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.

In robe and crown the king stept down,
To meet and greet her on her way:
"It is no wonder," said the lords,
"She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen:
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovely mien.

So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been:
Cophetua swore a royal oath:
"This beggar maid shall be my queen!"

THE POET'S SONG.
The rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
He pass'd by the town and out of the street,
A light wind blow from the gates of the sun,
And waves of shadow went over the wheat,
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild-swan pause in her cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,
The snake slipt under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,
And stared, with his foot on the prey,
And the nightingale thought, "I have sung many songs,
But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away."
PROLOGUE.

SIR WALTER VIVIAN all a summer's day
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun
Up to the people; thither flock'd at noon
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half
The neighboring borough with their Institute
Of which he was the patron. I was there
From college, visiting the son,—the son
A Walter too,—with others of our set,
Five others: we were seven at Vivian-place.

And me that morning Walter show'd the house,
Grock, set with busts: from vases in the hall
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,
Grew side by side; and on the pavement lay
Carved stones of the Abbey-run in the park.
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time;
And on the tables every clime and age
Jumbled together: celts and calves,
Claymore and snow-shoe, toys in lave, fans
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,
The carved Malayans crease, and battle-clubs
From the isles of palm: and higher on the walls,
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,
His own forefathers' arms and armor hung.

And "this," he said, "was Hugh's at Agincourt;
And that was old Sir Ralph's at Aecelon:
A good knight he! we keep a chronicle
With all about him,"—which he brought, and I
Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with knights
Halflegend, half-historic, counts and kings
Who laid about them at their wills and died;
And mixt with these, a lady, one that arm'd
Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the gate,
Had bent her foes with slaughter from her walls.

"O miracle of women," said the book,
"O noble heart who, being strait-besieg'd
By this wild king to force her to his wish,
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a soldier's death,
But now when all was lost or seem'd as lost—
Her stature more than mortal in the burst
Of sunrise, her arm lift'd, eyes on fire—
Brake with a blast of trumpets from the gate,
And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,
She trampled some beneath her horses' heels,
And some were whelm'd with missles of the wall,
And some were push'd with lances from the rock;
And part were drown'd within the whirling brook:
O miracle of noble womanhood!"

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle;
And, I all rapt in this, "'Come out," he said,
"To the Abbey: there is Aunt Elizabeth
And sister Lilla with the rest." We went
(1 kept the book and had my finger in it)
Down thro' the park: strange was the sight to me;
For all the sloping pasture murmur'd, sown
With happy faces and with holiday.
There moved the multitude, a thousand heads;
The patient leaders of their Institute
Taught them with facts. One roar'd a foot of stone
And drew from butts of water on the slope,
The fountain of the moment, playing now
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,
Or steep-up spout wherein the gilded ball
Danced like a wisp: and somewhat lower down
A man with knobs and wires and vials fired
A cannon: Echo answer'd in her sleep
From hollow fields; and here were telescopes
For azure views; and there a group of girls
In circle waited, whom the electric shock
Dislack'd with shrieks and laughter: round the lake
A little clock-work steamer paddling piled
And shook the lillies: perch'd about the knolls
A dozen angry models jett'd steam:
A petty railway ran: a fire-balloon
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves
And dropt a fairy parachute and past:
And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph
They dash'd a sancy message to and fro
Between the mimic stations; so that sport
Went hand in hand with Science; otherwhere
Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamor how'd,
And stamp'd the wicket: babies roll'd about
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maides
Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light
And shadow, while the twangling violin
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and overhead
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty line
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight and snacking of the time;
And long we gazed, but satiated at length
 Came to the ruins. High-arch'd andivy-chaspt,
Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire
Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost they gave
The park, the crowd, the house; but all within
The sword was trim as any garden lawn:
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
And Lilla with the rest, and lady friends
From neighbor seats: and there was Ralph himself,
A broken statue propt against the wall,
As gay as any, Lilla, wild with sport,
Half child, half woman as she was, and wound
A scarf of orange round the stony helm,
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,
That made the old warrior from his ivied nook
Glow like a sunbeam: near his tomb a feast
Shone, silver-set; about it lay the guests.
And there we joined them: then the maiden Aunt
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

83

Took this fair day for text, and from it preach'd
An universal culture, and
And all things great; but we, unworthy, told
Of College: he had climb'd across the skies,
And he had squeezed himself betwixt the bars,
And he had breathed the Proctor's dogs: and one
Discuss'd his tator, rough to sagacious men,
But honeying at the whisper of a lord;
And one the Master, as a rogue in grain
Veined with sanctimonious theory.

But while they talk'd, above their heads I saw
The feudal warrior lady-clad; which brought
My book to mind: and opening this I read
Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that rang
With till and tourney; then the tale of her
That drov'd her foes with slaughter from her walls,
And much I praised her nobleness, and "Where,"—
Ask'd Walter, putting Lilia's head (she lay
Beside him) "lives there such a woman now?"
Quick answer'd Lilia, "There are thousands now
Such women, but convention in their blown down:
It is but bringing up; no more than that:
You men have done it: how I hate you all!
Ah, were I something great! I wish I were
Some mighty poetess, I would shame you then,
That love to keep the truth; of which I wish
That I were some great Princess, I would build
Far off from men a college like a man's,
And I would teach them all that men are taught:
We are twice as quick." And here she shook aside
The hand that play'd the patron with her curls.

And one said smiling, "Pretty were the sight
If our old halls could change their sex, and flaut
With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair,
I think they should not wear our rusty gowns,
But move as rich as Emperor-moths or Ralph
Who shines so in the corner; yet I fear,
If there were many Lilias in the brood,
However deep you might embower the nest,
Some boy would spy it."

At this upon the sward
She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:
"That's your light way: but I would make it death
For any male thing but to peep at us."

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she laugh'd:
A rose-bed set with little wily thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her, she:
But Walter half'd a score of names upon her,
And "Percy Grymes," and "Percy Grymes Pass,"
And swore he long'd at College, only long'd,
All else was well, for she-society.
They boasted and they cricked; they talk'd
At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics;
They lost their weeks; they vast the souls of deans;
They rode; they betted; made a hundred friends,
And caught the blossom of the flying terms,
But miss'd the mimgnomte of Vivian-place,
The little heath-flower Lilia. Thus he spoke,
Part bonier, part affection."

"True," she said,
"We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd us much.
I'll stake my ruby ring upon you it did."

She held it out; and as a parrot turns
Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,
And takes a lady's finger with all care,
And bites it for true heart and not for harm,
So he with Lilia's. Daintily she chow'd
And wrung it. "Don't my word again!" he said.
"Come, listen! here is proof that you were miss'd:
We seven stay'd at Christmas up to read,
And there we took one bitter as to read:
The hard-grain'd Muse of the cube and square
Were out of season: never man, I think,

So moulder'd in a sincere as he:
For while our cloisters echoed frosty feet,
And our long walls were stiff as bare as brooms,
We did but talk you over, pledge you all
In wassail: often, like as many girls—
Sick for the bollies and the yews of home—
As many little girlish Lilius play'd
Chariots and riddles as at Christmas here,
And what's my thought and when and where and how,
And often told a tale from mouth to mouth
As here at Christmas." She remember'd that:
A pleasant game, she thought: she liked it more
Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.
But these—what kind of tales did men tell men,
She wonder'd, by themselves?

A half-detest
Perch'd on the ponted blossom of her lips:
And Walter nodd'd at me; "He began,
The rest would follow, each in turn; and so
We forg'd a sevenfold story. Kind? what kind?
Chimera, crotchety, Christmas solemnes,
Seven-headed monstrous only made to kill
Time by the fire in winter."

"Kill him now,
The tyrant! kill him in the summer too."
Sis Lilia; "I say not now, the maiden Aunt.
"Why not a summer's as a winter's tale?
A tale for summer as befits the time,
And something it should be to suit the place,
Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,
Grave, solemn!"
Walter warp'd his mouth at this:
To something so mock-solem, that I laugh'd
And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling mirth
An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,
Hisd in the ruins; till the maiden Aunt
(A little sense of wrong and touch'd her face
With color) turn'd to me with "As you will;
Heroic if you will, or what you will,
Or be yourself your hero if you will."
"Take Lilia, then, for heroine," clamor'd he.
"And make her some great Princess, six feet high,
Grand, epic, homielical; and be you
The Prince to win her!"

"Then follow me, the Prince,"
I answer'd, "each her hero in his turn!
Seven and yet one, like shadowes in a dream—
Heroic seems our Princess as required—
But something made to suit with Time and place,
A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,
A feudal knight in silken masquerade.
And, yonder, shrinks and strange experiments
For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt them all—
This were a medley! we should have him back
Who told the 'Winter's tale' to do it for us.
No matter: we will say whatever comes.
And let the ladies sing us, if they will,
From time to time, some ballad or a song
To give us breathing-space."

So I began,
And the rest follow'd: and the women sang
Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:
And here I give the story and the songs.

I.
A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair in face,
Of temper amorous, as the first of May,
With lengths of yellow ringlet, like a girl,
On my cradle shook the Northern star.

There lived an ancient legend in our house.
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire burnt
Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,
Dying, that none of all our blood should know
The shadow from the substance, and that one
Should come to fight with shadows and to fall.
For so, my mother said, the story ran
And, truly, waking dreams were, more or less, an old and strange affection of the house.
Myself too had weird seizures. Heaven knows what:
On a sudden in the midst of men and day, and while I walk'd and talk'd as heretofore,
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts,
And feel myself the shadow of a dream.
Our great court-Galen pouss'd his shah-cane,
And paw'd his beard, and muttered "catelepy,
My mother plying made a thousand prayers;
My mother was as mild as any saint,
Half-canonical by all that look'd on her,
So grand was her tact and tenderness;
But my good father thought a king a king:
He cared not for the affection of the house;
He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand
To lash offence, and with long arms and hands
Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from the mass
For judgment.

Now it chanced that I had been,
While life was yet in bud and blade, betroth'd
To one, a neighboring princess: she to me
Was proxy-wedded with a hoakly back cane.
At eighteen years old; and still from time to time
Came murmur'd of her beauty from the South,
And of her brethren, youths of puissance;
And still I wore her picture by my heart,
And one dark tress; and all around them both
Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I should wed,
My father sent ambassadors with furs
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her: these brought back
A present, a great labor of the loom;
And therewithal an answer vague as wind:
Besides, they saw the king: he took the gifts.
He said there was a compact; that was true:
But then she had a will; was he to blame?
And maiden fancies: loved to live alone
Among her women; certain, would not wed.

That morning in the presence-room I stood
With Cyril and with Florian, my two friends:
They were a gentleman of broken means
(His father's fault) but given to start and burns
Of revel; and the last, my other heart,
And almost my half-self, for still we moved
Together, twin'd as horse's ear and eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my father's face
Grow long and troubled like a rising moon,
Inflamed with wrath: he started on his feet,
Tore the king's letter, snore'd it down, and rent
The wonder of the loom thro' warp and web
From skirt to skirt: and at the last he swore
That he would send a hundred thousand men,
And bring her in a whirlwind: then he chew'd
The thriee-turn'd eul of wrath, and couk'd his spleen,
Communing with his capitains of the war.

At last I spake. "My father, let me go.
It cannot be but some gross error lies
In this report, this answer of a king.
Whom all men, the kind and hospitable:
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,
Whate'er my grief to find her less than fame,
May rise the bargain made." And Florian said:
"I have a sister at the foreign court,
What moves about the Princes: she, you know,
Who wed'd with a noblieman from thence:
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,
The lady of three castles in that land:
Thro' her this matter might be sifted clean."
And Cyril whisper'd: "Take me with you too."

Then laughing "what, if these weird seizures come
Upon you in those lands, and no one near
To point you out the shadow from the truth!
Take me: I'll serve you better in a strait;
I grate on rusty hinges here: but 'Nyt
Roard the rough king, 'you shall not me: we ourselves
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead.
In iron gauntlets: break the council up."

But when the council broke, I rose and past
Thro' the wild woods that hang about the town,
Found a still place, and pluck'd her likeness out.
Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying bathed
In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd trees:
What were those fancies wherefore her break't troth?
Proud look'd the lid: but while I meditated
A wind arose and rush'd upon the South,
And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks
Of the wild woods together; and a Voice
Went with it, "Follow, follow, thou shalt win."

Then, ere the silver sicker of that month
Became her golden shield, I stole from court
With Cyril and with Florian, unperceiv'd,
Cut-footed thro' the town and half in dread
To keep my father's consort at our will.
With Ho! from some bay-window shake the night;
But all was quiet: from the bastion'd walls
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropt,
And flying reach'd the frontier: then we cross'd
A valley land; and lost by hill and range,
And vines, and boiling books of wilderness,
We gain'd the mother-city thick with towers,
And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama: crack'd and small his voice,
But bland the smile that like a wrinkling wind
On glassy water drove his cheek in lines;
A little dry old man, without a star,
Not like a king: three days he trusted us,
And on the fourth I spake of why we came,
And my betroth'd. "You do us, Prince," he said,
Airing a snowy hand and signet gem,
"All honor. We remember love ourselves
In our sweet youth: there did a compact pass
Long summers back; a kind of ceremony—I
Think the year in which our olive fail'd.
I would you had her, Prince, with all my heart,
With my full heart: but there were widows here,
Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche;
They fed her furies, in and out of place
Maintaining that with equal husbandry.
The woman were an equal to the man.
They harp'd on this; with this our banquets rang;
Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots of talk;
Nothing but this; my very ears were hot
To hear them: knowledge, so my daughter held,
Was all in all; they had but been, she thought,
As children: they must lose the child, assume
The woman: then, Sir, awful odes she wrote,
Too awful, sure, for what they treated of,
All she is and does is awful; odes
About this losing of the child; and rhymes
And dismal lyrics, prophesy a change
Beyond all reason: these the women sang;
And they that know such things—I sought but peace;
No crime I—would call them masterpieces;
They master'd me. At last she begg'd a boon
A certain summer-palace which I have
Hard by your father's frontier: I said no,
Yet being an easy man, gave it; and there,
All wild to found an University,
For manners, on the spur she fled; and more
We know not,—only this: they see no men,
Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins
Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her
As on a kind of paragon; and I
(Pardon me saying it) were much loath to breed

THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.
Dispute betwixt myself and mine: but since (And I confess with right) you think me bound In some sort, I can give you letters to her; And, yet, to speak the truth, I rate your chance Almost at naked nothing." 

Thus the king: And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to shun With garrulous ease and oily contesries Our formal compact, yet, not less (all rates But choking me on fire to find my bride) Went forth again with both my friends. We rode Many a long league back to the North. At last From hills, that look'd across a land of hope, We dropt with evening on a rustling stream. Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve, Close at the boundary of the liberties; There enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine host To council, pled him with his richest wines, And show'd the late-write letters of the king.

He with a long low sibilation, stared As blank as death in marble; then exclaimed Averring it was clear against all rules For any man to go: but as his brain Began to mellow, "If the king," he said, "Had given us letters, was he bound to speak? The king would bear him out;" and at the last— The summer of the vine in all his veins— "No doubt that we might make it worth his while. She once had past that way: he heard her speak; She scared him; life! he never saw the like; She look'd as grand as doomsday and as grave: And he, he reverence his liege-lady there; He always made a point to post with mares; His daughter and his household were the boys: The land he understand for miles about Was till'd by women; all the swine were sows, And all the dogs—"

But while he jest'd thus A thought flash'd thro' me which I cloth'd in act, Remembering how we three presented Maid Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of feast, In masque or pageant at my father's court. We sent mine host to purchase female gear; He brought it, and himself, a sight to shake The midriff of despair with laughter, holp To face us up, till each, in maiden planes We rustled: him we gave a costly hribe To gaudron silence, mount'd on jewell'd steeds, And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode, And rode till midnight when the college lights Began to glitter fire-like in corpse And linden alley: then we past an arch, Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings From four wing'd horses dark against the stars; And some inscription ran along the front, But deep in shadow: further on we gan'd A little street half garden and half house; But scarce could hear each other speak for noise Of clocks and chimies, like silver hammers falling On silver anvils, and the splash and stir Of fountains spouted up and showering down In meshes of the jasmine and the rose: And all about us peal'd the nightingale, Rapt in her song, and careless of the snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign, By two sphere lamps blazon'd like Heaven and Earth With constellation and with continent, Above an entry: riding in, we call'd; A plump-arm'd Oustress and a stable wench Came running at the call, and help'd us down. Then step a boxom hostess forth, and sail'd, Full blown, before us into rooms which gave Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost In laurel: her we ask'd of that and this, And who were tutors. "Lady Blanche," she said, "And Lady Psyche." "Which was prettiest, Best-natured?" said Lady Psyche. "Hers are we," One voice, we cried; and I sat down and wrote, In such a hand as when a field of corn Bows all its ears before the roaring East:

"Three ladies of the Northern empire pray Your Highness would enroll them with your own, As Lady Psyche's papa."

This I seal'd: The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll, And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung, And raised the blinding bondage from his eyes: I gave the letter to be sent with dawn: And then to bed, where half in doze I seem'd To float about a glimmering night, and watch A full sea glazed, with muffled moonlight, swing On some dark shore just seen that it was rich.

As thro' the land at eve we went, And pluck'd the ripen'd ears, For all our, my wife and I, O we fell out I know not why, And kiss'd again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child We lost in other years, There above the little grave, O there above the little grave, We kiss'd again with tears.

II.

At break of day the College Porthouse came: She brought us Academic silks, in hue The lince, with a silken hood to each, And zoned with gold; and now when these were on, And we as rich as moths from dark cocoon, Sue, curtseying her obedience, let us know The Princess Isla waited: out we paced, I first, and following thro' the porch that sang All round with laurel, issued in a court Compact of falds marble, boss'd with lengths Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay Betwixt the pillars, and with great urns of dowers. The Muses and the Graces, group'd in threes, Earn'd a bellowing fountain in the midst; And here and there on lattice edges lay Or book or lute; but hardly we past, And up a flight of stairs into the hall. There a board by tome and paper sat, With two tame leopards couched beside her throne, All beauty compass'd in a female form, The Princess; liker to the inhabitant Of some clear planet close upon the Sun, Than our man's earth; such eyes were in her head, And so much grace and power, breathing down From over her arch'd brows, with every turn Lived thro' her to the tips of her long hands, And to her feet. She rose her height, and said:

"We give you welcome: not without redound Of our and glory to yourselves we come. The first-fruits of the stranger: aftertime, And that full voice which circles round the grave, Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me. What I are the ladies of your land so tall?" "We of the court," said Cyril. "From the court," She answer'd, "then ye know the Prince?" and he: "The climax of his age! as tho' there were One rose in all the world, your Highness that, He worships your idol." She replied: "We scarcely thought in our own hall to hear This barren verbiage current among men, Like coin, the tinsel cline of compliment. Your flight from out your bookless wilds would seem As arguing love of knowledge and of power;"
Your language proves you still the child. Indeed, We dream not of him: when we set our hand To this great work, we purposed with ourself Now to wed. We likewise will do well, Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling The tricks, which make us toys of men, that so, Some future time, if so indeed you will, You may with those self-styled our lords ally Your fortunes, justier balanced, scale with scale.

At those high words, we, conscious of ourselves, Perused the matting; then an officer Rose up, and read the statutes, such as these: Not for three years to correspond with home; Not for three years to cross the borders; Not for three years to speak with any men; And many more, which hastily subscribed, We enter'd on the boards: and "Now," she cried, "Ye are green wood, see ye warp not. Look, our bull!

Our statues!—not of those that men desire, Sleck Oedalishes, or oracles of mode, Nor stunted squaws of West or East; but she That taught the Sibyl how to rule, and she The foundress of fothlyonian wall, The Carian Artemisia strong in war, The Rhodope, that built the pyramid, Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene That fought Aurelian, and the Roman brow Of Agela with tear her close Convention, since to look on noble forms Makes noble thro' the sensuous organism That which is higher. O lift your natures up: Embrace our aims: work out your freedom. Girls, Knowledge is now no more a fountain seal'd: Drink deep, until the habits of the slave, The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite And slander, die. Better not be at all Than not be noble. Leave us: you may go: To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue: The fresh arrivals of the week before; For they press in from all the provinces, And fill the hive.

She spoke, and bowing waved Dismissal: back again we cross the court To Lady Psyche's: as we enter'd in. There sat along the forms, like morning doves That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch, A patient range of pupils; she herself Erect behind a desk of satin-wood, A quick brimette, well-moulded, falcon-eyed, And on the hither side, or so she look'd, Of twenty summers. At her left, a child, In shining draperies, headed like a star, Her maiden bobe, a double April old, Agrafa slept. We sat: the Lady glanced: Then Florian, but no livelier than the dame That whisper'd: "Asses ears" among the sedge, "My sister." "Comely too by all that's fair," Said Cyril. "O hush, hush!" and she began.

"This world was once a fluid baze of light, Till toward the centre set the stary tides, And eddied into suns, that wheeling east The planets; then the monster, then the man; Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins, Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate: As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here Among the lowest."

Therupon she took A bird's-eye view of all the ungracious past, Glanced at the legendary Amazon As emblematic of a nobler age: Appear'd the Lydian custom, spoke of those That lay at wine with Lar and Lacmeo; Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman lines Of empire, and the woman's state in each, How far from just; till, warming with her theme, She fulmin'd out her scorn of laws Salique And little-footed Chins, touch'd on Mahomet: With much contempt, and came to chivalry: When he and respect, however slight, was paid To woman, superstition all away: However then commenced the dawn: a beam Had slanted forward, falling in a land Of promise; fruit would follow. Deep, indeed, Their debt of thanks to her who first had dared To leap the rotten pales of prejudice, Dissolve their necks from custom, and assert None lordlier than themselves but that which made Woman and man. She had founded; they must build. Here shew the learn whatever men were taught: Let them not fear: some said their heads were less: Some men's were small; not they the least of men; For often fluency compensated size:

Besides the brain was like the hand, and grew With using; thence the man's, if more, was more; He took advantage of his strength to be First in the field: some ages had been lost; But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life Was longer; and albeit their glorious names Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since in truth The highest is the measure of the man, And not the Kaflir, Hotentott, Malay, Nor those horu-handed breakers of the globe, But Homer, Plato, Vernelam; even so With woman: and in arts of government Elizabeth and others: arts of war. The peasant Joan and others; arts of grace Sappho and others vied with any man: And, fast not least, she who had left her place, And bow'd her state to them, that they might grow To use and power on this Oasis, laps In the arms of leisure, sacred from the blight Of ancient influence and scorn."

At last She rose upon a wind of prophecy Dilating on the future; "everywhere Two heads in council, two beside the heart, Two in the tangled business of the world, Two in the liberal offices of life, Two plummets drop for one to sound the abyss Of science, and the secrets of the mind: Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more: And everywhere the broad and bounteous Earth Should bear a double growth of those rare souls, Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of the world."

She ended here, and beckon'd us: the rest Parted; and, glowing full-faced welcome, she Began to address us, and was moving on In gratulation, till as when a bent Tacks, and the sienk'd still flaps, all her voice Furling and fluttering in her throat, she cried, "My brother!" "Well, my sister." "O," she said, "What do you here? and in this dress? and these? Why who are these? a wolf within the fold! A pack of wolves! the Lord be gracious to me! A plot, a plot, a plot to ruin all!" "No plot, no plot," he answer'd. "Wretched boy, How saw you not the inscription on the gate, Let no man enter in on pain of death?" "And if I had," he answer'd, "who could think The sober Adams of your Academe, O sister, Sirene tho' they be, were such As chantted on the blanching bones of men?" "But you will find it otherwise," she said. "You jest: ill jesting with edge-tooth! my vow Binds me to speak, and O that iron will, That axlelike edge unturnable, our Head, The Princess." "Well then, Psyche, take my life, And nail me like a weasel on a grange For warning; bury me beside the gate, And eat this epitaph above my breast." Here ties a brother by a sister statis, All for the common good of womankind."
"Let me die too," said Cyrl, "having seen And heard the Lady Psyche." 

I struck in:

"Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the truth; Receive it; and in me behold the Prince Your countryman, unmask'd a few years ago To the Lady Ida: here, for here she was, And thus (what other way was left?) I came." "O Sir, O Prince, I have no country; none; If any, this; but none. What's'er I was Disroosted, what I am is granted here. Afflienced, Sir? love-whispers may not breathe With this her royal highness' restful limit, and how should I, Who am not mine, say, live; the thunderbolt Hangs silent: but prepare: I speak; it falls." "Yet pause," I said: "for that inscription there, I think no more of deadly lurks therein, Than in a clapper clapping in a garth, To scare the fowl from fruit: if more there be, If more and acted on, what follows? warm; Your own work marr'd: for this your Academe, Whichever side be Victor, in the hallies Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass With all fair theories only made to gild A stormless summer." "Let the Princess judge Of that," she said; "farewell, Sir—and to you. I shudder at the sequel, but I go." "Are you that Lady Psyche," I rojol'd, "The fifth in line from that old Florian, Yet hangs his portrait in my father's hall (The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow Stood, so in that vast landscape),
As he bestrode my Greenside, when he fell, And all else fled: we point to it, and we say, The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold, But branches current yet in kindred veins." "Are you that Psyche," Florian asked, "she With whom I sang about the morning hills, Flung ball, flew kite, and rapped the purple fly, And smur'd the squirrel of the glen? are you That Psyche, wont to bind my throstling brow, To smooth my pillow, mix the foaming draught Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read My sickness down to happy dreams? are you That brother-sister Psyche, both in one? You were that Psyche, but what are you now?" "Are you that Psyche, Florian asked, the whom I would be that forever which I seem, Woman, if I might sit beside your feet, And glean your sister's sapience." Then once more, "Are you that Lady Psyche," I begot, "That on her bridal morn before she past From all her old companions, when the king Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that ancient ties Would still be dear beyond the southern hills; That were there any of our people there In want or peril, there was one to hear And help them: look! for such are these and I." "Are you that Psyche," Florian ask'd, "to whom In gentler days, your arrow-wounden fawn Came dyling to this lady of the whom I would be that forever which I seem, Woman, if I might sit beside your feet, And glean your sister's sapience."

As I might stay this child, if good need were, Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on whom The secular empannacles turn. Of half this world, be swerved from right to save A prince, a brother? a little will I yield, Best so, perchance, for us, and well for you. O hard, when love and duty clash! I fear My conscience will not answer me;—yet— Hear my conditions; promise (otherwise You perish) as you came to slip away, To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be said, These women are too barbarous, would not learn; They fled, who might have shamed us: promise, all."

What could we else, we promised each; and she, Like some wild creature newly caged, commenced A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused By Florian; holding out her lil'y arms Took both her hands, and smiling faintly said: "I knew you at the first: tho' you have grown You scarce have alter'd: I am sad and glad To see you, Florian. I give thee to death, My brother! It was duty spoke, not I, My needful seeming harshness, pardon it. Our mother, is she well?"

With that she kis'd
His forehead, then, a moment after, cling About him, and betwixt them blossom'd up From out a common vein of memory Sweet household talk, and phrases of the hearth, And far allusion, till the gracious dews Began to glister and to fall: while They stood, not rapt, but gazing on each other, "I brought a message here from Lady Blanche," Back started she, and turning round we saw The Lady Blanche's daughter where she stood, Melissa, with her hand upon the lock. A rosy blush, and in a college gown, That clid her like an April daffodilly (Her mother's color) with her lips apart, And ah her thoughts as fair within her eyes, As bottom agates seen to wave and float In crystal currents of clear morning seas.

So stood that same fair creature at the door. Then Lady Psyche, "Ah—Melissa—you! You heard us? and Melissa, "O pardon me! I heard, I judged not, it did not wish; But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not, Nor think I bear that heart within my breast, To give three gallant gentlemen to death." "I trust you," said the other, "for we two Were always friends, none closer, elm and vine: But yet your mother's jealous temperament! Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse, or prove The Danaid of a leaky vase, for fear This whole foundation ruin, and I lose My honor, these their lives," "Ah, fear me not," Replied Melissa; "no—I would not tell, No, not for all Aspasia's cleaverness, No, not to answer, Madam, all those hard things That Sheba came to ask of Solomon." "Be it so," the other, "that we still may lead The new light up, and culminate in peace, For Solomon may come to Sheba yet." Said Cyril, "Madam, be the wisest man Feasted the woman wisest then; in halls Of Lebannon, none would ask (Tho' Madam you should answer) we would ask Less welcome find among us, if you came Among us, debtors for our lives to you, Myself for something more." He said not what, But "Thanks!" she answer'd, "go: we have been too long Together: keep your hoods about the face; They do so that affect abstraction here. Speak little; mix not with the rest; and hold Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be well."
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the child,
And held her round the knees against his waist,
And blew the swollen cheek of a trumpeter,
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling, and the child
Fash'd her flat hand against his face and laugh'd:
And thus our conference closed.

And then we strolled
For half the day thro' stateley theatres
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat, we heard
The gentle Professor. On the lecture plate
The circle rounded under female hands
With flawless demonstration; follow'd then
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thunderous Epic litter'd out
By violet-studded elegies
And tinted odes, and jewels five-words-long
That on the stretch'd forehead of all Time
Sparkle forever; then we dipp'd in all
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,
The total chronicles of man, the mind,
The morals, something of the frame, the rock,
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the flower,
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,
And whatsoever can be taught and known:
'Till like three horses that have been fenced,
And gaited all night long breast-deep in corn,
We iss'd gorged with knowledge, and I spoke:
"Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as we."
"They hunt old trails," said Cyril, "very well;
But when did woman ever yet live
'Enthusiast'!" answer'd Floriana, "have you learnt
No more from Psyche's lecture, you that talk'd
The trash that made me sick, and almost sad?"
"O trash," he said, "but with a kernel in it.
Should I not call her wise, who made me wise?
And learn from her, I learnt more from her in a flash,
Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,
And every Muse tumbl'd a science in.
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,
And round these halls a thousand baby loves
Fly twanging headless arrows at the hearts,
Whence follows many a vacant pang: but O
With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,
The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,
The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche too;
He clift me thro' the stoncher; and now
What think you of it, Floriana? do I chase
The substance or the shadow? will it hold?
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,
No ghostly hauntings like his Highness. I
Flatter myself that always everywhere
I know the substance when I see the shell.
Well, are castles shadows? three of them? is she
The sweet proprietress a shadow? if not,
Shall those three castles patch my tatter'd coat?
For dear are those three castles to my wants,
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,
And two dear things are one of double worth,
And much I might have said, but that my zone
Umann'd me: then the Doctors! O to hear
The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty plants
Imbibing! once or twice I thought to roar,
To break my chain, to shake my manes: but thou,
Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimicry!
Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my throat;
Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet
Star-sisters answering under crescent brows;
Abate the strike, which speaks of man, and loose
A flying charm of brushes o'er this cheek,
Where they like swallows coming out of time
Will wonder why they came; but hark the bell
For dinner, let us go on.

And in we stream'd
Among the columns, pacing staid and still
By twos and threes, till all from end to end
With beatitudes every shade of brown and fair,
In colors gayer than the electric mist,
The long hall glitter'd like a bed of flowers.

How might a man not wander from his wits
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept mine own
Intent on her, who rapt in glorious dreams,
The second-sight of some Astran age,
But compass'd with professors: they, the while,
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and fro:
A clamar thick'en'd, mixt with inmost terms
Of art and science: Lady Blanche alone
Of faded form and haggiest lineaments,
With all her Autumn tresses falsely brown,
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat
In act to spring.

At last a solemn grace
Concluded, and we sought the gardens: there
Gentle walk'd reciting by herself, and one
In this hand held a volume as to read,
And smoothed a petted peacock down with that:
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge
Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some hid and sung
In the orange thickets: others tost a ball
Above the fountain-jets, and back again
With laughter: others lay about the lawns,
Of the older sort, and murn'd that their May
Was pass'd, and what was learning among them?
They wish'd to marry; they could rule a house:
Men hated learned women: but we three
Sat muffled like the Fates; and often came
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts
Of general satire, kin to charity.

That harrow'd not: then day dropt: the chapel bells
Call'd us: we left the walks; we mixt with those
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,
Before two streams of light from wall to wall,
While the great organ almost burst his pipes,
Grunning for power, and rolling thro' the court
A long melodies thunder to the sound
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,
The work of Ida, to call down from Heaven
A blessing on her labors for the world.

—

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Winds of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!

Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the drying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me,
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon:
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon:
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west.
Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

III.

Moms in the white wake of the morning star
Come furrowing all the orient into gold.
We rose, and each by other drest with care
Descended to the court that lay three parts
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were touch'd
Above the darkness from their native East.

There while we stood beside the fount, and watch'd
Or seem'd to watch the dancing bumble, approach'd Melissa,
Ting'd with wan from lack of sleep,
Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes
The circled Iris of a night of tears;
"And fly," she cried, "O fly, while yet you may!
My mother knows: and when I ask'd her "how,"
"My fault," she wept, "my fault! and yet not mine:
Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon me.
My mother, 't is her wont from night to night
To rail at Lady Psyche and her side. 
She says the Princess should have been the Head, 
Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms; 
And so it was agreed when first they came; 
But Lady Psyche was the right hand, now, 
And she the left, or not, or seldom used; 
Hers more than half the students, all the love. 
And so last night she fell to canvass you: 
'Her countrywomen! she did not envy her. 
Who ever saw such wild barbarians! 
Girls!'—more like men! and at these words the snlce, 
My secret, seem'd to stir within my breast; 
And G, Sirs, could I help it, but my cheek 
Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye 
To fix and make me hotter, till she laugh'd: 
'O marvellously modest maiden, you! 
Men! girls, like men! why, if they had been men You need not set your thoughts in rubric thus 
For wholesale comment.' Pardon, I am shamed That I must needs repeat for my excuse 
What looks so little graceful: 'men' (for still 
My mother went revolving on the word) 
And so they are,—very like men indeed— 
And write that woman clostest for hours! 
'Why—these—are—men! I shudder'd: 'and you 
know it.' 
Then came these dreadful words out one by one, 
'O ask me nothing,' I said: 'And she knows too, 
And conceal this hour! 
The truth at once, but with no word from me; 
And now thus early risen she goes to Inform 
The Princess: Lady Psyche will be crush'd; 
But you may yet be saved, and therefore fly: 
But heal me with your pardon ere your go.' 

"What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a blush?" 
Said Cyril: "Fane one, blush again: than wear These diamond's, better blush on hours 
Yet let us breathe for one hour more in Heaven," 
He added, "lest some classic Angel speak 
In scorn of us, 'they mounted, Ganymedes, 
To tumble, Vulcans, on the second morn.' 
But I will melt this marble into wax, 
To yield us farther furlough:' and he went. 
Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and thought He scarce would prosper. 'Tell us,' Florian ask'd; 
"How grew this feud betwixt the right and left. 
'O long ago,' she said, 'betwixt these two 
Division smoulders hidden: 't is my mother, 
Too jealous, often fitful as the wind. 
Peat in a crotchet: much I fear with her; 
I never knew my father, but she says (God help her) she was wedded to a fool; 
And still she rall'd against the state of things. 
She had the care of Lady Ida's youth, 
And from the Queen's decease she brought her up. 
But when your sister came she won the heart 
Of Ida: they were still together, grew 
(For so they said themselves) inoscillated; 
Consommate choirs that shiver to one note: 
One mind in all things: yet my mother still 
Affirms your Psyche thiev'd her theories, 
And angled with them for her pupil's love: 
She calls her plagist; I know not what: 
But I must go: I dare not tarry, and light, 
As leaves the shadow of a bird, she fled. 
Then murr'd Florian, gaz'd after her: 
'A open-hearted maiden, true and pure. 
If I could love, why this were she: how pretty 
Her blushing was, and how she blush'd again, 
As if to close with Cyril's random wish: 
Not like your Princess cramm'd with ering pride, 
Nor like poor Pluto whom she drag in tow.'" 

"The crane," I said, "may chatter of the crane, 
The dove may murmur of the dove, but I 
An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere. 
My princess, O my princess! true er she, 
But in her own grand way: being herself. 
Three times more noble than three-score of men, 
She sees herself in every woman else, 
And so she wears her error like a crown 
To blind the truth and me: for her, and her, 
Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix 
The nectar; but—ah she—where'er she moves 
The Samian heres rises and she speaks 
A Mennom emittt with the morning Sun," 
So saying, from the court we paced, and gain'd 
The terrace ranged along the Northern front, 
And leaning there on the riv baulisters, high 
Above the empurpled champain, drunk the gale 
That blown about the foliage underneath, 
And sated with the innumerable rose, 
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither came 
Cyril, and yowling "O hard task," he cried: 
"No fighting shadows here! I forced a way 
Through solid opposition crabb'd and guar'd. 
Better to clear prime forest, heave and thump 
A league of street in summer solstice down, 
Than hem its orad, or at this reverend gate. 
I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd; found her there 
At point to move, and settled in her eyes 
The green malignant light of coming storm. 
Sirs, I was courteous, every phrase wellb'd, As man's could be; yet maiden-meekness, for 
Concealment: she demanded who we were, 
And why we came? I fabled nothing fair, 
But, your example pilot, told her all. 
Up went the blush'd amaze of hand and eye. 
But when I dwelt upon your old affiance, 
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd astray, 
I urged the fierce inscription on the gate, 
And our three lives. True—we had lined ourselves, 
With open eyes, and we must take the chance. 
But such extreme, I told her, well might harm 
The woman's cause. 'Not more than now,' she said, 
'So puffed as it is with favoritism.' 
I tried the mother's heart. Shame might befall 
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew: 
Ior answer was, 'Leave me to deal with that.' 
I spoke of war to come and many deaths, 
And she replied, her duty was to speak, 
And duty duty, clear of consequences. 
I grew discouraged, Sir, but since I knew 
No rock so hard but that a little wave 
May beat admission in a thousand years, 
I recommenced: 'Decide not are you pause. 
I find you here but in the second place, 
Some say the third—' the anthemic roundness you. 
I offer boldly: we will seat you highest: 
Wink at our advent: help my prince to gain 
His rightful bride, and here I promise you 
Some palace in our land, where you shall reign 
The head and heart of all our fair she-world, 
And your great name flow on with broadcasting time 
Forever.' Well, she balanced this a little, 
And told me she would answer us to-day, 
Meantime be mute: thus much, nor more I gain'd." 

He ceasing, came a message from the head. 
"That afternoon the Princess rode to take 
The dip of certain strata to the North. 
Would we go with her? we should find the land 
Worth seeing; and the river made a sharper club. 
Out yonder;" then she pointed on to where 
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks 
Beyond the thick-leaved platanus of the vale. 

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro' all 
Its range of duties to the appointed hour. 
Then summon'd to the porch we went. She stood 
Among her maidens, higher by the head,
Her back against a pillar, her foot on one Of those teame landscapes. Kittenlike he rol'd And paw'd about her sandal. I drew near: I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure came Upon me, the weird vision of our house: The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show, Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy, Her college and her maidens, empty masks, And I myself the shadow of a dream, For all things were and were not. Yet I felt My heart beat thick with passion and with awe; Then from my breast the involuntary sigh Brake, as she smote me with the light of eyes That could not fail to know it shook My pulses, till to horse we got, and so Went forth in long retinue following up The river as it narrowed to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said: "O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us not Too harsh to your companion yester-morn; Unwillingly we spake." "No—not to her," I answer'd, "but to one of whom we spake Your Highness might have seem'd the thing you say," "Again!" she cried, "are you ambassadresses From him to me? we give you, being strange, A license: speak, and let the topic die." I stammer'd that I knew him—could have wish'd— "Our king expects—was there no precontract? There is no true-heart'd—ah, you seem All he prefigur'd, and he could not see The bird of passage flying south but long'd To follow: surely, if your Highness keep Your purport, you will shock him e'en to death, Or base courses, children of despair."

"Poor boy," she said, "can he not read—no books? Quoit, tennis, ball—no games? nor deeds in that Which men delight in, martial exercise? To nurse a blind ideal like a girl, Methinks he seems no better than a girl; As girls were once, as we ourself have been: We had our dreams—perhaps he mixt with them: We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it, Being other—since we learnt our meaning here, To lift the woman's fall'n divinity, Upon an even pedestal with man."

She paused, and added with a laughter smile: "And as to precontracts, we move, my friend, At no man's beck, but know ourself and thee, O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out She kept her state, and left the drunken king To brawl at Shusuan underneath the palms."

"Alas your Highness breathes full East," I said, "On that which leans to you. I know the Prince, I prize his truth: and then how vast a work To assall this gray pre-eminence of man! You grant me license; might I use it? think, Ee hal'f be done perchance your life may fall; Thuc comus the feebler hearse of your plan, And takes and ruins all: and thus your pains May only make that footprint upon sand Which old-recurring waves of prejudice Resmooth to nothing; might I dread that you, With only Flame for spouse and your great deeds For ever yet may live in war, and miles, Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due, Love, children, happiness?"

And she exclaim'd, "Peace, you young savage of the Northern wild! What! thou, the Prince's lover, were like a God's, Have we not made ourself the spacious void? You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd to thus: Yet will we say for children, would they grew,

Like field-dowers everywhere! we like them well: But children die; and let me tell you, girl, How'er you bubble, great deeds cannot die: They may with the sun and moon remain their light Forever, blessing those that look on them.

Children—that men may pluck them from our hearts, Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves—
O—children—is there nothing upon earth More miserable than she that has a son. And sees him err: nor would we work for fame; Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause of Great, Who learns the one row e're whence afterhands May move the world, tho' she herself effect But little, wherefore rash and act, the elrirk For fear our solid aim be dissipate
By frail successors. Would, indeed, we had been, In lieu of many mortal flies, a race Of giants living, each, a thousand years, That we might see our own work out, and watch The sandy footprint harden into stone."

I answer'd nothing, doubtfull in myself If that strange Poet-princess with her grand Imaginations might at all be won. And she broke out interpreting my thoughts:

"No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you; We are used to that: for women, up till this Cramped under worse than South-seas'le taboo, Dwarfs of the gynaeicum, fall so far In high desire, they know not, cannot guess How much their welfare is a passion to us. If we could give them sure, quicker proof— O if our end were less precarious By slow approaches, than by single act Of immolation, any phase of death, We were as prompt to spring against the pikes, Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it, To compass our dear sisters' liberties."

She bow'd as if to vell a noble tear; And up we came to where the river sloped To plunge in catacatac, shattering on black blocks A breath of thunder. O'er it shook the woods, And danced the color, and, below, stick out The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roar'd Before man was. She gazed awhile and said, "As these rude bones to us, are we to her That will be." "Dare we dream of that," I asked, "With what we are, and the workman and his work, That practice betters?" "How," she cried, "you love The metaphysist! read and earn our prize, A golden broach: beneath an emerald plane Sit! Diotima, teaching him that died Of hemlock; our device; wrought to the life; She rapt upon her subject, he on her: For there are schools for all." "And yet," I said, "Methinks I have not found among them all One anatomic," "Nay, we thought of that," She answer'd, "but it pleased us not: in truth We shudder but to dream our maids should ape Those monarchs males that carve the living hound, And cram him with the fragments of the grave, Or in the dark dissolving human heart, And holy secrets of this micromocsm, Dabbled, in a shameless hand with shameful jest, Eucarnalize their spirits: yet we know Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs: Howbeit ourselves, foreseeing casualty, Nor willing men should come among us, learnt, For may wearchy their this before we come This craft of healing. Were you sick, ourself Would tend upon you. To your question now, Which touches on the workman and his work. Let there be light and there was light: 't is so. For where end is, and wherein it lies? And all creation is one act at once, The birth of light: but that we are not all,
As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that, 
And live, perform, from thought to thought, and 
make 
One act a phenomenon of succession: thus 
Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time; 
But in the shadow will we work, and mould 
The woman to the fuller day."

She spoke 
With kindled eyes: we rode a league beyond, 
And, over a bridge of pinewood crossing, came 
On flowery levels underneath the crag, 
Full of all beauty. "O how sweet," I said, 
(For I was half-oblivious of my mask.) 
"To linger here with one that loves me?" "Yea," 
She answered, "or with fair philosophies 
That lift the fancy; for indeed these fields 
Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns, 
Where paced the Demigods of old, and saw 
The soft white vapor streak the crowned towers 
Built to the Sun"; then, turning to her maids, 
"Pitch our pavilion here upon the sward; 
Lay out the viands." At the word, they raised 
A tent of satins, elaborately wrought 
With fair Corinthian triumph; here she stood, 
Engrace with many a florid cheek-blush, 
The woman-conquer: woman-conquer'd there 
The bearded Victor of ten-thousand hymns, 
And all the men mourn'd at his side: but we 
Set forth to climb; then, climbing, Cyril kept 
With Psyche, with Melissa Euforion. I 
With mine afloat. Many a little hand 
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks, 
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set 
In the dark crag: and then we turn'd, we wound 
About the cliffs, the clefts, the crevices, and in, 
Hammering and clinking, chattering stony names 
Of shade and horizon, rag and trap and cuff, 
Amygdaloid, and trachyte, till the Sun 
Grew broader toward his death and fell, and all 
The rosy heights came out above the lawns.

The splendor falls on castle walls 
And snowy summits old in story: 
The long light shafts cross the lakes 
And the wild cataract leaps in glory. 
Blow, bagle, blow, set the wild echoes flying. 
Blow, bagle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying, dying. 
O hark, O hear! how thin and clear, 
And thinner, clearer, farther going! 
O sweet and far from cliff and gulf 
The horns of Eilinor faintly booming! 
Blow, let us hear the purple glesse replying: 
Blow, bagle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in you rich sky, 
They faint on hill or field or river: 
Our echoes roll from soul to soul, 
And grow forever and forever. 
Blow, bagle, blow, set the wild echoes flying, 
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

IV.

"Turn sinks the nebulous star we call the Sun, 
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound," 
Said Ida: "let us down and rest:" and we 
Down from the lean and wrinkled precipices, 
By every cockpice-feather'd chasm and cleft, 
Drop like the dank embroiled croon to where below 
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the tent 
Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she lean'd on me, 
Descending: once or twice she lent her hand, 
And blissful palpitations in the blood, 
Stirring a sudden transport rose and fell.

But when we planted level feet, and dipt 
Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in, 
There leaning deep in brodered arms we sank 
Our elbows: on a tripod in the midst 
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glow'd 
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and gold.

Then she, "Let some one sing to us: lightlier move 
The minutes fledged with music:" and a maid, 
Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang:

"Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean, 
Tears from the depth of some divine despair 
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes, 
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields, 
And thinking of the days that are no more.

"Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail, 
That brings our friends up from the underworld, 
Sad as the last which reddens over one 
That sinks with all we love below the verge; 
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

"Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns 
The earliest pipe of half-wakening birds 
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes 
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square; 
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

"Dear as remember'd kisses after death, 
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy felicit'd 
On lips that are for others; deep as love, 
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret; 
O Death in Life, the days that are no more."

She ended with such passion that the tear, 
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring pearl 
Lost in her bosom: but with some disdain 
Answer'd the Princess: "If indeed there haunt 
About the monolith's lodges of the Past 
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men, 
Well needs it we should cram our ears with woe 
And so pac'd by: but thine are fancies hatch'd 
In silken-folded idleness; nor is it 
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost, 
But trim our sails, and let old bygones be, 
While down the streams that float us each and all 
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs of ice, 
Throne after throne, and molten on the waste 
Becomes a cloud: for all things serve their time 
Toward that great year of equal rights and rights, 
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the end 
Forud golden: let the past be past; let be 
Their cancel'd Babels: tho' the rough kex break 
The starr'd mosaic, and the wild goat hang 
Upon the shafts, and the wild fig-tree split 
Their monstrous Idols, care not while we hear 
A trumpet in the distance pealing news 
Of better, and Hope, a poising eagle, burns 
Above the unseen morrow:" then to me, 
"Know you no song of your own land," she said, 
"Not such as moons about the retrospect, 
But deals with the other distance and the hues 
Of promise; not a death's-head at the wine."

Then I remember'd one myself had made, 
What time I watch'd the swallow winging south 
From mine own land, part made long since, and part 
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as far 
As I could ape their trouble, did I sing:

"O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South, 
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves, 
And tell her, tell her what I tell to thee.

"O tell her, Swallow, than that knowest each, 
That bright and fierce and sickle is the South, 
And dark and true and tender is the North."

THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.
"O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheap and twitter twenty million loves.
"O were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.
"Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
to clothe herself, when all the woods are green?
"O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown:
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.
"O tell her, brief is life, but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.
"O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee."

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,
Like the Ithucausian suitors in old time,
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd with alien lips,
And knew not what they meant; for still my voice rang false; but smiling, "Not for thee," she said;
"O Bulbul! any rose of Galian
Shall burst her veil; marsi-divers, rather, maid,
Shall crook thee sister, or the meadow-crake
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass; and this
A mere love poem! O for such, my Friend,
We hold them slight: they mind us of the time
When we made bricks in Egypt. Knaves are men,
That late and flute fantastic tenderness,
And dress the victor to the offering up,
And paint the gates of Hell with Paradise,
And play the slave to gain the tyranny.
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once;
She wept her true eyes blind for such a one,
A rogue of canonets and serenades.
I loved her. Peace be with her. She is dead.
So they blaspheme the muse! but great is song
Used to great ends: curlew have often tried
Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have dash'd
The passion of the prophetess; for song
Is duer unto freedom, force and growth
Of spirit, than to juncteting and love.
Love, is it? Would this same mock-love, and this
Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter bats,
Till all men grew to rate us at our worth,
Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes
To be dandled, no, but living wills, and shivered
Whole in ourselves and owed to none. Enough!
But now to leave play with profut, you,
Know you no song, the true growth of your soil,
That gives the manners of your countrywomen?"

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous head with eyes
Of shining expectation fixt on mine.
Then while I dragg'd my brains for such a song,
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd dask had wrought,
Or master'd by the sense of sport, began
To trol a careless, careless tavern-catch
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences
Unmeet for ladies. Florian noddled at him,
I frowning; Psyche flush'd and wan'd and shook.
The lovely Melissia, from where the royal mind, fondly bending
I emote him on the breast; he started up;
There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;
Melissa clamor'd, "Flee, the death!" "To horse!"
"Haste me!" said Ida; "haste me!" and fled, as flies

A troop of snowy doves athwart the dask,
When some one batters at the dovecote doors,
Disorderly the women. Alone I stood
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at heart,
In the presently there like parting eyes
I heard them passling from me: hoof by hoof,
And every hoof a knell to my desires,
Clang'd on the bridge; and then another shriek,
"The Head, the Head, the Princess, O the Head!"

For blind and rage she misl'd the plank, and roll'd
In the river. Out I sprang from glow to gloom:
There whirl'd her white robe like a blossom'd branch
Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I gave,
No more; but woman-vested as I was
Plunged, and the flood drew; yet I caught her:
Then
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left
The weight of all the hopes of half the world,
Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree
Was half-disrooted from its place and stoo'd
To drench his dark locks in the gurgling wave
Mid-channel. Right on this we drove and caught,
And grasping down the boughs I gain'd the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmeringly group'd
In the hollow bank. One reaching forward drew
My burthen from mine arms; they cried, "She lives!"
They bore her back into the tent; but I,
So much a kind of shame within me wrought,
Not yet enquired to meet her opening eyes,
Nor found my friends; but push'd alone on foot
(For since her horse was lost I left her mine)
Across the woods, and less from Indian craft
Than beelike instinct hievward, found at length
The garden portals. Two great statutes, Art
And Science, Caryatids, lifted up
A weight of emblem, and betwixt were valves
Of open-work in which the hunter read
His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows
Had sprouted, and the branches thence
Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the gates.

A little space was left between the horns,
Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top with palm,
Dropt on the sword, and up the linden walk;
And, lost on thoughts that changed from hue to hue,
Now poring on the glow-worm, now the star,
I paced the terrace till the bear had wheel'd
Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.

A step
Of lightest echo, then a loftier form
Than female, moving thro' the uncertain gloom,
Distrurb'd me with the doubt "if this were she,"
But it was Florian. "Hist, O hist," he said,
They seek us out so late is out of time,
Moreover ' Selze the strangers ' is the cry.
How came you here?" I told him: "I," said he,
"Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
To whom none spake, half-sick at heart, return'd;
Arriving all confused among the rest.
With hooded bra's I creep into the hall,
And, couch'd behind a Judith, underneath
The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.
Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each
Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last of all,
Melissa; trust me, Sir, I plet her.
She, question'd if she knew us men, at first
Was silent; closer press, denied it not:
And then, demanded if her mother knew,
Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied;
"Let me see me, trust me, Sir," she flung.
Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent
For Psyche, but she was not there; she call'd
For Psyche's child to cast it from the doors;
She sent for Blanche to accuse her face to face;
And I slip out: but whither will you go?
And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are fled:
What, if together? that were not so well. 
Would rather we had never come! I dread 
His wildness, and the chances of the dark."

"And yet," I said, "you wrong him more than I 
That stroke him: this is proper to the clown, 
Thou' smock'd, or far'd and purpled, still the clown, 
To harm the thing that trusts him, and to shame 
That which he says he loves; for Cyd, how'er 
He deal in frolic, as to-night—the song 
Might have been worse and sin'd in grosser lips 
Beyond all pardon—as it is, I hold 
These flashes on the surface are not he. 
He has a solvent of temperament; 
But as the water-lily starts and slides 
Upon the level in little puffs of wind, 
Thou' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he."

Sceare had I ceased when from a tamarisk near 
Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying, "Names," 
He, standing still, was clatch'd; but I began 
To thrid the mousy-circled mazes, wind 
And double is and out the boles, and race 
By all the fountains: fleet I was of heart 
Before me show'er'd the rose in flakes; behind 
I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine ear 
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not, 
And secret laughter tickled all my soul. 
At first I thought it was a visit. 
That clasp the feet of a Mnemosyne, 
And falling on my face was caught and known. 
They bailed us to the Princess where she sat 
High in the hall; above her dropt a lamp, 
And made the single jewel on her brow 
Barn like the mystic fire on a mast-head, 
Prophet of storm: a handmaid on each side 
Bow'd toward her, coming out her long black hair 
Dow'd in a brow-leaf, of which she stood. 
Eight daughters of the plough, stronger than men, 
Huge women blowzed with health, and wind, and rain, 
And labor. Each was like a Druid rock; 
Or like a spire of land that stands apart 
Cleft from the main, and wall'd about with mews. 

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing clove 
An advent to the throne; and there-beside, 
Half-dead as if it came from some sound, 
And tumble on the purple footcloth, lay 
The silly-shining child; and on the left, 
Bow'd on her palms and folded up from wrong, 
Her round white shoulder shaken with her sobs, 
Melissa knew; but Lady Blanche erected, 
Stood up and spake, an affluent orator. 

"It was not thus, O Princess, in old days: 
You priced my counsel, lived upon my lips: 
I led you then to all the Castelles; 
I fed you with the milk of every Muse; 
I loved you like this kneeler, and you me 
Your second mother: those were gracious times. 
Then came your new friend: you began to change— 
I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to cool; 
Till taken with her seeming openness 
You turned your warmer currents all to her, 
To me you froze; this was my need for all. 
Yet I bore up in part from ancient love, 
And partly that I hoped to win you back, 
And partly consents of my own deserts, 
And partly that you were my civil head, 
And chiefly you were born for something great, 
In which I might your fellow-worker be. 
When time should serve; and thus a noble scheme 
Grew up from seed we two long since had sown; 
In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd, 
Up in one night and due to sudden sun: 
We took this palace; but even from the first 
You stood in your own light and darken'd mine. 
What student came but that you planed her path 
To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise, 
Aforename, and I your countrywoman, 
I your old friend and tried, she new in all? 
But still her lists were swell'd and mine were lean; 
Yet I bore up in hope she would be known: 
Then came these wolves: they knew her: they en- 

dared."

Long-closeted with her the yester-morn, 
To tell her what they were, and she to hear: 
And me none told: not less to an eye like mine, 
A lidless watcher of the public weal, 
Last night their mask was pulled, and my foot 
Was to you: but I thought again: I fear'd 
To meet a cold! "We thank you, we shall hear of it 
From Lady Psyche; you had gone to her, 
She told, perforse; and winning easy grace, 
No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd among us 
In our young nursery still unknown, the stem 
Less grain than touchwood, while my honest heat 
Were all misconceived as malignant haste 
To push my rival out of place and power. 
But public use required she should be known; 
And since my oath was taken for public use, 
I broke the letter of it to keep the sense. 
I spoke not then at first, but watch'd them well, 
Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done; 
And yet (the (you should know me for) 
I came to tell you: found that you had gone, 
Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now, I thought, 
That surely she will speak; if not, then I: 
Did she? These monsters bazine'd what they were, 
Accordant to the circumstance of their lives. 
For thus I hear; and known at last (my work) 
And full of cowardice and guilty shame, 
I grant in her some sense of shame, she flies; 
And I remain on whom to wreak your rage, 
And tell how in my life I have hurt her. I, 
That I have wasted here health, wealth, and time, 
And talents, I—you know it—I will not boast: 
Dismiss me, I and propheys your plan, 
Divorced from my experience, will be staff 
For every gust of chance, and men will say 
We did not know the real light, but chose 
The wsp that flickers where no foot can tread."

She ceased: the Princess answer'd coldly "Good: Your oaths be broken: we despise your tear. 
For this lost lamb (she pointed to the child) 
Our mind is changed: we take it to ourself."

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulpine throat, 
And shot from her crooked lips a haggard smile. 
"The plan was mine. I built the nest," she said, 
"To catch the cuckoo. Rise!" and stoop'd to adpair 
Melissa; she, half on her mother propt, 
Half-drooping from her, turn'd her face, and cast 
A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer, 
Which melt'd Florian's fancy as she hung, 
A Niobian daughter, one arm out, 
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven; and while 
We gazed upon her came a little stir 
About the doors, and on a sudden rush'd 
Among us, out of breath, as one pursu'd, 
A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear 
Stared in her eyes, and chaldk'd her face, and wing'd 
Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell 
Delivering seal'd despatches which the Head 
Took half-amazed, and in her lion's mood 
Tore open, silent we with blind sarmise 
Regarding, while she read, till over brow 
And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful bloom 
As of some fire against a stormy cloud. 
When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick 
Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens; 
For anger most it seem'd, while now her breast, 
Bidden with some great passion at her heart,
Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard
In the dead haul the papers that she held
Rustle: at once the last lamb at her feet
Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;
The plaintive voice, you hear, the sullen
Scrolls together, made a sudden turn
As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,
She whirl'd them on to me, as who should say
"Tread," and I read—two letters—one her sire's.

"Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince your way
We knew not your ungracious laws, which learnt,
We, conscious of what temper you are built,
Came in haste to hinder wrong, but fell
Into his father's hands, who has this night,
You lying close upon his territory,
Slip round and in the dark invested you,
And here he keeps me hostage for his son."

The second was my father's, running thus:
"You have our son; touch not a hair of his head:
Render him up unscathed: give him your hand:
Cleave to your contract: tho' indeed we hear
You hold the woman is the better man;
A rampant hero, such as you seek
Would make all women kick against their lords
Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve
That we this night should pluck your palace down;
And we will do it, unless you send us back
Our son, on the instant, whole."

So far I read;
And then stood up and spoke impetuously.

"O not to try and peer on your reserve,
But led by golden wishes, and a hope
The child of regal compact, did I break
Your precipice; not a scarner of your sex
But venerator, zealous it should be
All that it might be; hear me, for I hear,
Tho' man, yet human, whatsoever your wrongs,
From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a life
Less unie than yours: my nurse would tell me of you;
I babbed for you, as babies for the moon,
Vague brightness; when a boy, you stoop'd to me
From that a famous man, lived in all fair lights,
Came in long breezes rapt from utmost south
And blown to utmost north; at eve and dawn
With Idæ, Idæ, Idæ, rang the woods;
The leader wildswan in among the stars
Would cling it, and lap in wreaths of glow-worm light
The mellow breaker murmur'd Idæ. Now,
Because I would have reach'd you, had you been
Sphered up with Cassiopeia, or the enthroned
Persephone in Hades, now at length,
Those winters of abeyance all worn out,
A man I came to see you: but, indeed,
Not in this frequency can I lead full tongue,
O noble Idæ, to those thoughts that wait
On you, their centre: let me say, so this,
That many a famous man and woman, town
And landskip, have I heard of, after seen
The dwarfs of prestige; tho' when known, there grew
Another kind of beauty in detail
Made them worth knowing: but in you I found
My boyish dream involved and dazzled down
And master'd, while that after-beauty makes
Such head from act to act, from hour to hour,
Within me, that except you, say me here,
According to your bitter statute-book,
I can not cease to follow you, as they say
The seal does music; who desire you more
Than growing boys their manhood: dying lips,
With many thousand matters left to do.

The breath of life; O more than pure wealth,
Than sick men health—yours, yours, not mine—but half
Without you, with you, whole: and of those halves
You worthless; and house ye you block and bar
Your heart with system out of mine, I hold
That it becomes no man to nurse despair,
But in the teeth of everyth'd antagonists
To follow up the worthiest till he die:
Yet that I came not all unauthorized
Befold your father's letter."

On one knee
Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and dash'd
Unopen'd at her feet: a tide of fierce
Invective seem'd to wait behind her lips,
As waits a river level with the damp
Ready to burst and flood the world with foam;
And so she would have spoken, but there rose
A hubbub in the court of half the maids
Gather'd together: from the illuminated hall
Long lanes of splendid splendor o'er a press
Of snowy shoulders, thick as headed eves,
And rainbow robes, and gems and gem-like eyes,
And gold and golden heads; they to and fro
Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale,
All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the light,
Some crying there was an army in the land,
And some that men were in the spindles,
And some they cared not; till a clamor grew
As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
And worse confounded: high above them stood
The phleic marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head: but rising up
Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so
To the open window moved, remaining there
Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye
Cleres round, and in the wild birds on the wing
Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd her arms and
call'd
Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

"What fear ye brawlers? am not I your Head?
On me, me, me, the storm first breaks: I dare
All these male thunderbolts: what is it ye fear?
Peace! there are those to avenge us and they come:
If not,—myself were like enough, O girls,
To unbind the maiden bower of all our rights,
And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,
Or, falling, promontory of our cause,
Dye: yet I blame ye not so much for fear:
Six thousand years of fear have made ye that
From which I would redeem ye: but for those
That stir this hubbub—ye and you—I know
Your faces there in the crowd—to-morrow morn
We hold a great convention: then shall they
That love their voices more than duty, learn
With whom they deal, dismiss'd in shame to live
No wiser than their mothers, household stuff,
Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
Full of weak poison, turnspits for the clown,
The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,
Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,
But fit to flout, to dress, to dance, to thrum,
To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to scornt
Forever slaves at home and fools abroad."

She, ending, waved her bands; thereat the crowd
Muttering dissolved: then with a smile, that look'd
A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,
When all the gleeu are drown'd in azure gloom
Of thunder-shower, she floated us and said:

"You have done well and like a gentleman,
And like a prince: you have our thanks for all:
And you look well too in your woman's dress:
Well have you done and like a gentleman.
You saved our life: even you, O ye ladies:
Better have died and spilt our bones in the flood—
Then men had said—but now.—What hinders me
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

To such bloody vengeance on you both?—
Yet since our father—Wars and our good life,
You would-be quenchers of the light to be,
Barbarians, grosser than your native bears—
O would I had his sceptre for one hour.
You that have dared to break our bound, and gull'd
Our servants, wrong'd and lied and thwarted us—
I wed with thee! I bound by precontract
Your bride, your bondslavé I not tho' all the gold
That rails in the world were pack'd to make your crown,
And every spoken tongue should lord you. Sir,
Your falsehood and yourself are hateful to us:
I trample on your offers and on you:
Begone: we will not look upon you more.
Here, push them out at gates."

In wrath she spake.

Then those eight mighty daughters of the plough
Bent their broad faces toward us and address'd
Their motion: twice I sought to plead my case,
But on my shoulder hung their heavy hands,
The weight of destiny: so from her face
They push'd us, down the steps, and thro' the court,
And with grif' laughter thrust us out at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a petty mound
Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and heard
The voices murmuring. While I listen'd, came
On a soundless wing the Weird and grosser doubt:
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts;
The Princess with her monstrous woman-guard,
The jest and earnest working side by side,
The cataract and the tumult and the kings
Were shadows; and the long fantastic night
With all its doings had and had not been,
And all things were and were not.

This went by
As strangely as it came, and on my spirits
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy:
Not long: I shook it off; for spite of doubts
And sudden ghostly shadowings I was one
To whose the touch of all mischance but came
As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees in the moonbeams, by night, no light,
But the sun set into sunrise: then we moved away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands:
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his broad about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

So Lilia sang: we thought her half-possess'd,
She struck such warbling fury thro' the words;
And, after, feigning plique at what she call'd
The raffiry, or grotesque, or false sublime—
Like one that wishes at a dance to change
The music—clap her hands and cried for war,
Or some grand fight to kill and make an end:
And he that next inherited the tale
Half turn'd to the broken statute said,
"Sir Ralph has got your colors: if I prove
Your knight, and fight your battle, what for me?"
It chance'd, her empty glove upon the tomb
Lay by her like a model of her hand.
She took it and she flung it. "Fight," she said;
"And make us all that make good, great and good."
He knightlike in his cap instead of casque,
A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hall,
Arranged the favor, and assumed the Prince.

V.

Now, scarce three paces measured from the mound,
We stumbled on a stationary voice,
And "Stand, who goes?" "Two from the palace," I,
"The second two: they wait," he said, "pass on:
His Highness wakes!" and one, that crash'd in arms,
By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas, led
Threaded the soldier-city, till we heard
The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial tent
Whispers of war.

Entering, the sudden light
Dazed me half-blind: I stood and seem'd to hear,
As in a poplar grove when a light wind awakes
A lipping of the innumerable leaf and dies,
Each bissing in his neighbor's ear; and then
A strangleditter, out of which there brake
On all sides, clambering etiquette to death.
Unmeasured mirth; while now the two old kings
Began to wag their baldness up and down,
The fresh young captains flash'd their glittering teeth,
The huge bush-bearded Barons heared and blew,
And slain with laughter roll'd the gilded Squire.
At length my Sire, his rough cheek wet with tears,
Panted from weary sides, "Kingly, you are free!
We did but keep you surety for our son,
If this be he,—or a dragged mawkwin, thou,
That tends her thral'd grummers in the slingie;
For I would drench'd with oозe, and torn with briers,
More crump'd than a poppy from the sheath,
And all one rag, disprised from head to heel.
Then some one sent beneath his vaulted palm
A whisper'd jest to some strange hearing voice,
He has been among his shadows." "Satan take
The old women and their shadows! (this the King
Roar'd) make yourself a man to fight with men.
Go: Cyril told us all."

As boys that slink
From ferule and the trespass'd-crying eye,
Away we stole, and transmigrate in a trance
From what was left of faded woman-slong
To sheathing splendors and the golden scale
Of harness, issued in the sun, that night,
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the Earth,
And hit the northern hills. Here Cyril met us,
A little shy at first, but by and by
We twain, with mutual pardon ask'd and given
For stroke and song, resolued peace, whereon
Follow'd his tale. Amazed he died away.
Thro' the dark land, and later in the night
Had come on Psyche weeping: "then we fell
Into your father's hand, and there she lies,
But will not speak, nor stir."

He show'd a tent
A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and there
Among piled arms and rough accoutrements,
Pitiful sight, wrap't in a soldier's cloak,
Like some sweet sculpture draped from head to foot,
And push'd by rude hands from its pedestal,
All her fair length upon the ground she lay:
And at her head a follower of the camp,
A char'd and wrinkled piece of womanhood,
Sat watching like a watchter by the dead.

Then Florian kneel'd, and "Come," he whisper'd to her,
"Lift up your head, sweet sister: he not thus,
What have you done, but right? you could not slay
Me, nor your prince: look up: be comforted:
Sweet is it to have done the thing one ought,
When fall'n in darker ways." And likewise I:
"Be comforted: have I not lost her too,
In whose dear act abides the nameless charm
That has else for me?" She heard, she moved,
She moan'd, a folded voice; and up she sat,
And raised the cloak from brows as pale and smooth
As those that morn'd half-shrouded over death
In deathless marble. "Her," she said, "my friend—
Partied from her—betray'd her cause and mine—
Where shall I breathe? why kept ye not your faith?
O base and bad! I what comfort? none for me!"
To whom remorseful Cyril, "Yet I pray
Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your child!"
At which she lifted up her voice and cried.

"Ah me, my baby, my blossom, ah my child, My own sweet child, my child I shall have no more! For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
And either she will die for want of care, Or sicken with ill usage, when they say The child is hers—for every little fault, The child is hers; and they will slay my girl Remembering her mother: O my flower! Or they will take her, they will make her hard, And she will pass me by in after-life With some cold reverence worse than were she dead. Ill mother thou! I give her there, To lag behind, scared by the cry they made, The horror of the shame among them all: But I will go and sit beside the doors, And make a wild petition night and day, Until they hate to hear me like a visit Wailing forever, till they open to me, And lay my little blossom at my feet, My babe, my sweet Agala, my one child: And I will take her up and go my way, And bury my soul with kissing her. Ah! what might that man not deserve of me, Who gave me back my child?" "Be comforted,
Said Cyril, "you shall have it," but again She veil'd her brows, and proue she sank, and so Like tender things that being caught feign death, Spoke not, nor stirr'd.

By this a murmur ran Thro' all the camp and inward raced the scouts With rumor of Prince Arrc hard at hand. We left her by the woman, and without Found the king's kingly at prayer: and "Look you," cried My father, "that our compact be fulfil'd You have spoil'd this child; she laugh's at you and man She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and him: But red-faced war has rods of steel and fire; She yields, or war." Then a Gama turn'd to me: "We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time With three, and one; and yet they say that still You love her. Give us, then, your mind at large: How say you, war or not?"

"Not war, if possible, O King," I said, "lest from the abuse of war, The desecrated shrine, the trampled tomb, These unhithering honestead, and household flower Torn from the lintel—all the common wrong— A smoke go up thro' which I loom to her Three times a monster; now she lightens scorn At him that mars her plan, but then would hate (And every voice she talk'd with ruffly it, And every face she look'd on justify it) The general foe. More solvable is this knot, By gentleness than war. I want her love. What were I righer this atho' we dash'd Your snakes into the shades with cathers she Would not love—or bring her chaf'd, a slave, The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord, Not ever would she love; but broothing turn The book of scorn till all my little chance Were a chapter within the record of her wrongs, And crawl'd to death: and rather, Sire, than this I would the old god of war himself were dead, Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills, Rotting on some wild shore with rise of wreck, Or like a void-world mammoth bulk'd in ice, Not to be molten out."

And roughly spake My father, "Tut, you know them not, the girls. Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think That's not godly credible. Look you, Sir! Man is the hunter; woman is his game:

The sleek and shining creatures of the chase, We hunt them for the beauty of their skins; They love us for it, and we ride them down, Wheeling and sliding with them! Out! for shame! Boy, there is no rose that's half so dear to them As he that does the thing they dare not do, Breathing and sounding beantous battle, comes With the air of the trumpet round him, and leaps In among the women, snarls them by the score Fluster'd and fluster'd, wins, though dash'd with death He reddens what he kisses: thus I won Your mother, a good mother, a good wife, Worth winning; but this firebrand—gentleness To such as her! if Cyril spake her true, To catch a dragon in a cherry net, To trip a tigress with a gossamer, Were wisdom to it."

"Yea, but Sire," I cried, "Wild natures need wise curbs. The soldier? No: What dares not Ida do that should prize The soldier? I behold her, when she rose The yester-night, and storming in extremes Stood for her cause, and flung defiance down GAPAGGile to man, and had not shun'd the death, No, not: the soldier's: yet I hold her, King True woman: but you dash them as in one. That have as many differences as we. The violet varies from the lily as far As oak from elm: one loves the soldier, one The silken priest of peace, one this, one that, And some unworthily; their sinless faith, A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty, Glorifying clown and satyr; whence they need More breadth of culture; is not Ida right? They worth it? truer to the law within? Severer is the logic of a life? Twice as magusitque to sweet influences Of earth and heaven? and she of whom you speak, My mother, looks as whole as some serene Creation minted in the golden moods Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a touch, But pure as lines of green that streak the white Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves; I say, Not like the piebald misellaney, man, Burst's of great heart and slice in seneal mere, But whole and one: and take them all, Were we ourselves but half as good, as kind, As truthful, much that Ida claims as right Had ne'er been mouted, but as frankly theirs As daces of Nature. To our point: not war: Least I lose all." "Nay, nay, you spake but sense, said Gama. "We remember love ourselves In our sweet youth; we did not rate him then This red-hot iron to be shaped with blows. You talk almost like Ida: she can talk; And there is something in it as you say: But you talk kindlier: we esteem you for it— He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince, I would he had our daughter: for the rest, Our own deception, why the causes weigh'd, Fatherly fears—you need us courteously— We? we must mnrh to gratify your Prince— We pardon it; and for your ingress here Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair land, You did but come as goblius in the night, Nor in the farrow broke the ploughman's head, Nor burn'd the grange, nor bu'ss'd the milkmaid, Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of cream: But let your Prince (our royal word upon it, He comes back safe) ride with us to the lines, And spake with Arac's word is three As ours with Ida: something may be done— I know not what—and ours shall see us friends. You, likewise, our late guests, if so you will. Follow us: who know? we four may build some Islaé Foursquare to opposition."
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

A taunt that clench'd his purpose like a blow!
For fiery-short was Cyrril's counter-scoff,
And sharp I answer'd, touch'd him upon the point
Where idle boys are cowards to their shame,
"Decide it here: why not? we are three to three."

Then spoke the third, "But three to three? no more?
No more, and in our noble sister's cause?
More, more, for honor: every captain waits
Hungry for honor, angry for his king.
More, more, some fifty on a side, that each
May breathe himself, and quick! by overthrow
Of these or those, the question settled die."

"Yea," answer'd I, "for this wild wreck of air,
This flake of rainbow flying on the highest
Foum of men's deeds—this honor, if Ye will.
It needs must be for honor if at all:
Since, what decision? if we fall, we fall,
And if we win, we fall; she would not keep
Her compact." "Sdeath: but we will send to her,"
Said Arac, "worthy reasons why she should
Bide by this issue: let our mission thro',
And you shall have her answer by the word."

"Boys!" shriek'd the old king, but vailier than a hen
To her false daughters in the pool; for none
Regarded; neither seemed there more to say:
But rode we to my father's camp, and found
He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,
To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,
Or by denial flush her babbling wells.
With her own people's life: three times he went:
The first, he blew and blew, but none appear'd;
He batter'd at the doors; none came: the next,
An awful voice within had warn'd him thence:
The third, and those eight daughters of the phong
Come sallyng thro' the gates, and caught his hair,
And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek
They made him wild: not less one glance he caught
Tho' open doors of Ida station'd there
Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm
Tho' compass'd by two armies and the noise
Of arms, and standing like a stately Pine
Set in a cataract on an island-crag.
When storm is on the heights, and right and left
Suck'd from the dark heart of the long hills roll
The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and yet her will
Bred will in me to overcome it or fail.

But when I told the king that I was pledged
To fight in tourney for my bride, he clench'd
His from palms together with a cry;
Himself would lift it out among the lads:
But overcome by all his bearded lords
With reasons drawn from age and state, perforce
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce demur:
And many a bold knight started up in heat,
And aware to combat for my claim till death.

All on this side the palace ran the field
Flat to the garden wall: and likewise here,
Above the garden's glowing blossom-belts,
A column'd entry shone and marble stairs,
And great bronze valves, emboss'd with Tommys
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,
But now fast hard: so here upon the flat
All that long morn the lists were hammer'd up,
And all that morn the heralds to and fro
With message and defiance, went and came;
Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,
But shaken here and there, and rolling words
Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.

"O brother, you have known the pangs we felt,
What heats of indignation when we heard
Of those that iron-cramp'd their women's feet.
Of lands in which at the altar the poor bride
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a scourge;
Of living hearts that crack within the fire
Where smoulder their dead despot's; and of those—
Mask'd like our maidens, blustering I know not what
Of insolence and love, some pretent hold
Of baby truth, invalid, since my will
Seal'd not the bond—the striplings!—for their sport!—
I tamed my leopards: shall I not tame these?
Or for my life? for that I think, the touch'd
In honor—what, I would not aught of false—
Is not our cause pure? and whereas I know
Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's blood
You draw from, flight; you failing, I abide
What and soever: fall. Still
Take not his life: he risk'd it for my own;
His mother lives: yet whatsoever you do,
Fight and fight well; strike and strike home. O dear
Brother, the woman's Angel guards you, you
The sole men to be mingled with our cause,
The prize in life's the prize in time,
Your very armor hallow'd, and your statics
Reard, sung to, when this gad-fly brush'd aside,
We plant a solid foot into the Time,
And mould a generation strong to move
With clime on clain from right to right, till she
Whose name is yoked with children's, know herself;
And Knowledge in our own land make her free,
And, ever following those two crowned twins,
Commerce and conquest, show'er the fiery grain
Of freedom broadcast over all that orb
Between the Northern and the Southern morn.

Then came a postscript dash'd across the rest.
"See that there be no traitors in your camp:
We seem a nest of traitors—none to trust:
Since our arms fall'd—this Egypt plague of men!
Almost our maidens were better at their homes,
Than thus man-grilled here: indeed I think
Our chiefest comfort is the little child
Of one unworthy mother; which she left:
She shall not have it back: the child shall grow
To price the authentic mother of her mind.
I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning: there the tender orphan hands
Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world: farewell."

I ceased: he said: "Stubborn, how she may sit
Upon a king's right hand in thunder-storms,
And breed up warriors! See now, tho' yourself
Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs
That swallow common sense, the spindling king,
This Guma swamp'd in lazy tolerance.
When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up,
And topples down the scales: but this is fxt
As are the roots of earth and base of all;
Man for the field and woman for the hearth;
Man for the sword and for the needle she:
Man with the woman with the heart;
Man to command and woman to obey:
All else confusion. Look you! the gray mare
Is ill to live with, when her whiny shrills
From the to scullery, and her small goodman
Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires of Hell
Mix with his heart: but you—she's yet a colt—
Take, take, young lady: strongly grooms'd,
She might not rank with those detestable
That let the bantling scald at home, and brav
Their rights or wrongs like potherbs in the street.
They say she's comely; there's the falser chance:
I like her none the less for rating at her!
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,
But suffers change of frame. A lusty brace
Of twins may weed her of her folly. Boy,
The bearing and the training of a child
Is woman's wisdom."

Thus the hard old king:
I took my leave, for it was nearly noon:
I pored upon her letter which I held,
And on the little clause "take not his life:"
I mused on that wild morning in the woods,
And on the "Follow, follow, thou shalt win!"
I thought on all the wrathful king had said,
And how the strange betrothment was to end:
Then I remember'd that burnt sorcerer's curse
That one should fight with shadow and should fall;
And if a flash the weird affection came:
King, camp and college turn'd to hollow shows;
I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,
And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,
To dream myself the shadow of a dream;
And ere I woke it was the point of noon,
The lists were ready. Empanoll'd and plumed
We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared
At the barrier like a wild horn in a land
Of echoes, and a woman, and once more:
The trumpet, and again: at which the storm
Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of spears
And riders front to front, until they closed
In conflict with the crash of shivering points,
And out of stricken helmets sprang the fire.
A noble dream! what was it else I saw?
Part sail'd on rocks: part roe'd but on their seats.
Part roll'd on the earth and rose again and drew:
Part stumpled mixt with floundering horses. Down
From those two bulks at Arac's side, and down
From Arac's arm, as from a giant's fall,
The ladies' whole rainbow, as here and everywhere
He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing lists,
And all the plain—brand, mace, and shaft, and shield—
Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvils bang'd
With hammers; till I thought, can this be he
From Gama's dwarfish lobs? if this be so,
The mother makes us most—and in my dream
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-frout
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies' eyes,
And highest, amongst the staines, stand a stake,
Between a cymbald Miriam and a Joel,
With psyche's babe, was Ida watching us,
A single band of gold about her hair,
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven: but she
No saint—inexorable—no tenderness—
Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me fight,
Yes, let her see me fall: with that I drave
Among the thickest and bore down a Prince,
And Cyril, one. Yet, let me make my dream
All that I would. But that larger-souled man,
His visage all a grin as at a wake,
Made at me thro' the press, and, staggering back
With stroke on stroke the horse and horesman, came
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
Playing the roofs and sucking up the drains,
And shadowing down the campaign till it strikes
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and cracks, and splits,
And twists the grain with such a roar that Earth
Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for everything
Gave way before him: only Florian, he
That loved me closer than his own right eye,
Thrust in between; but Arac rode him down:
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the Prince,
With Psyche's color round his helmet, tough,
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at arms;
But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that smote
And threw him: last I spurn'd: I felt my veins
Stretch with fierce heat; a moment hand to hand,
And sword to sword, and horse to horse we hung,
Till I struck out and shout'd: the blade glanced;
I did but shear a feather, and dream and truth
Flow'd from me; darkness closed me; and I fell.

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:
"All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior step,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knees—
Like summer tempest came her tears—
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

My dream had never died or lived again.
As in some mystic middle state I lay
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard:
Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all
So often that I spake as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to me,
That all things grew more tragic and more strange;
That when our side was vanquish'd and my cause
Forever lost, there went up a great cry,
The Prince is slain. My voice is heard and run
In on the lists, and there unlinked my casque
And govell'd on my body, and after him
Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaia.

But high upon the palace Ida stood
With Psyche's babe in arm: there on the roof
Like that great dame of Laplotho she sang.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: the seed
The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,
Has risen and clef the soil, and grown a bulk
Of spanless grit, that lays on every side
A thousand arms and rushes to the Sun.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came:
The leaves were wet with women's tears: they heard
A noise of songs they would not understand:
They mark'd it with the red cross to the fall,
And would have strown it, and are fall'n themselves.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came,
The woodmen with their axes to the tree!
But we will make it fagots for the hearth,
And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor,
And boats and bridges for the use of men.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they struck
With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain:
The glittering axe was broken in their arms,
Their arms were shattered to the shoulder blade.

"Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall grow
A night of Summer from the heat, a breadth
Of Autumn, and the dropping fruits of power;
And roll'd With music in the growing breeze of Time,
The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs
Shall move the stony bases of the world.

"And now, O maidens, behold our sanctuary
Is violate, our laws broken: fear we not
To break them more in their behalf, whose arms
Champion'd our cause and won it with a day
Blanche'd in our annals, and perpetual feast,
When dames and heroines of the golden year
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of Spring,
To rain an April of ovation round
Their statues, borne aloft, the three: but come,
We will be liberal, since our rights are won.
Let them not lie not hourly contumely,
Ill nurses; but descend, and proffer these
The brethren of our blood and cause, that there
Lie bruised and maltid, the tender ministries
Of female hands and hospitality."

She spoke, and with the babe yet in her arms,
Descending, burst the great bronze valves, and led
A hundred maids in train across the Park.
Some cow'd, and some bare-headed, on they came,
Their feet in flowers, her loveliest: by them went
The enamor'd air sighing, and on their curls
From the high tree the blossom wawering fell,
And over them the tremulous isles of light,
Slid, they moving under shade: but Blanche
At distance follow'd: so they came: anon
Thyro' open field into the lists they wound
Timorously; and as the leader of the herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun,
And follow'd up by a hundred dryl does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay; there stay'd;
Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,—and prest
Their hands, and call'd them dear deliverers,
And happy warriors and immortal names,
And said, "You shall not lie in the tents but here,
And nared by those for whom you fought, and served
With female hands and hospitality."

Then, whether moved by this, or was it chance,
She past my way. Up started from my side
The old lion, glaring with his wheelless eye,
Silent; but when she saw me lying stark,
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionless pale,
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd; and when she saw
The haggard father's face and reverend beard
Of grisly twine, all dabb'd with the blood
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of pain
Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead past
A shadow, and her hue changed, and she said:
"He saved my life: my brother slew him for it."
No more: at which the king in bitter scorn
Drew from my neck the painting and the treas,
And held them up: she saw them, and a day
Rose from the distance on her memory,
When the good Queen, her mother, shrouded the tree
With kisses, ere the days of Lady Blanche;
And then once more she look'd at my pale face:
Till understanding all the foolish work
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,
Her iron will in mind:
Her noble heart was molten in her breast;
She bow'd, she set the child on the earth; she laid
A feeling finger on my brow, and presently
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

"O Sire," she said, "he lives: he is not dead:
O let me have him with my brethren here
In our own palace: we will tend on him
Like one of these: if so, by any means,
To lighten this great cloud of thanks, that make
Our progress falter to the woman's goal."

She said: but at the happy word "he lives,"
My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my wounds.
So those two foes above my fallen life,
With brow to brow like night and evening mixt
Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever stole
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
Half-lapt in glowing gaze and golden brede,
Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the grass,
Uncared for, spied its mother and began
A blind and bawbling laughter, and to dance
Its body, and reach its fatal innocent arms
And lzy lingering fingers. She the appeal
Brook'd not, but clamoring out "Mine—mine—not yours
It is not yours, but mine: give me the child,"
Ceased all on tremble; piteous was the cry:
So stood the nnhhappy mother open-mouth'd,
And turn'd each face her way: wan was her cheek
With down-brow'd watch, her brown locks torn,
Red grief and mother's hunger in her eye,
And down dead-heavy sink her curls, and half
The sacred mother's bosom, pouting, burst
The eyes toward her babe: but she nor cared
Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida heard,
Look'd up, and rising slowly from me, stood
Erect and silent, striking with her glance
The mother, me, the child; but he that lay
Beside us, Cylus, mother'd as he was,
Train'd himself up on one knee: then he drew
Her robe to meet his lips, and down she look'd
At the arm'd man sideways, pitying, as it seem'd,
Or self-involved; but when she learnt his face,
Remembering his ill-omen'd song, arose
Once more thro' all her height, and o'er him grew
Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and he said:
"O fair and strong and terrible! Lioness
That with your long locks play the Lion's mane!
But love, and Nature, these are two more terrible
And stronger. See, your foot is on our necks,
We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your will.
What would you more? give her the child! remain
Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,
Or all as dead: here we let him be:
Win you the hearts of women; and beware
Lest, where you seek the common love of these,
The common hate with the revolving wheel
Should drag you down, and some great Nemesis
Break from a darkness' future, crowned with fire,
And trend you out forever: but howsoever
Ft'd in yourself, never in your own arms
To hold your own, deny not hers to her,
Give her the child! O if, I say, you keep
One pulse that beats true woman, if you love
The heart that fed or arm that defended you,
Or one own part of sense not flint to prayer,
Give her the child! or if you scorn to lay it,
Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with yours,
Or speak to her, your dearest, her one fault
The generness, not yours, that could not kill,
Give me it; I will give it her."

He said:
At first her eye with slow dilatation roll'd
Dry flame, she listening; after sank and sank
And melting mournful twilight, mellow'd, dwelt
Full on the child; she took it: "Pretty bud!
Lily of the vale: half-open'd bell of the woods!
Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a world
Of traitorous friend and broken system made
No purple in the distance, mystery,
Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell:
These men are hard upon us as of old,
We two must part: and yet how falu was I
To dream thy cause embraced in mine, to think
I might be something to thee, when I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my hand to breast
In the dead prime: but may thy mother prove
As true to thee as false, false, false to me!
And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I wish it
Gentle as freedom—here she kissed it: then—
All good go with thee! take it, Sir," and so
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed hands,
Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she sprang
To meet it, with an eye that swum in thanks;
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,
And hagg'd and never hagg'd it close enough,
And in her hunger mouth'd and mumbled it;
And hid her bosom with it; after that
Put on more calm and added suppliantly:

"We two were friends; I go to mine own land
Forever: find some other: as for me
I scarce am fit for your great plains: yet speak
To me, Say one soft word and let me part forgiven."

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the child.
Then Arc. "Ida—sdeath! you blame the man;
You wrong yourselves—the woman is so hard
Upon the woman. Come, a grace to me!
I am your warrior; and mine have fought
Your battle; kiss her; take her hand, she weeps;
Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice o'er than see it."

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the ground,
And redoubling in the arrows of his chin,
And moved beyond his custom, Guna said:
"I've heard that there is iron in the blood,
And I believe it. Not one word? not one?
Whence drew you this steel temper? not from me,
Not from your mother now a salut with saluts.
She said you had a heart—I heard her say it—
'Our Ida has a heart—just ere she died—
'But see that some one with authority
Be near her still,' and I—sought for one—
All people said she had authority—
The Lady Blanche: much profit! Not one word; No! tho' your father scue: see how you stand
Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good knights malm'd,
I trust that there is no one hurt to death,
For you would whelm; and was it then this was?
Was it for this we gave our palace up,
Where we withdrew from summer heats and state,
And had our wine and chess beneath the planes,
And many a pleasant hour with her that's gone,
Ere you were born to vex us? Is it kind?
Speak to her I say: is this not she of whom,
When first she came, all flush'd you said to me
Now had you a friend of your own age,
Now could you share your thoughts; now should
You now see
Two women faster waked in one love
Than pairs of wedlock; she you walk'd with, she
You talk'd with, whole nights long, up in the tower,
Of skies and arc, spheroid and azimuth,
And right ascension, Heaven knows what; and now
A word, but one, one little kindly word,
Not one to spare her: out upon you, flint!
You love nor her, nor me, nor any; nay,
You shame your mother's judgment too. Not one!
You will not well—no heart have you, or such
As fancies like the vermin in a nut
Have fretted all to dust and bitterness."

So said the small king moved beyond his wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of her force
By many a varying influence and so long.
Down thro' her limbs a drooping langour wept:
Her head a little bent; and on her mouth
A dumb and smile dwelt—far as a clouded moon
In a still water: then broke out my sire
Lifting his grim head from my wounds. "O you,
Woman, whom we thought woman even now,
And were half fool'd to let you tend our son,
Because he might have wish'd it—but we see
The accomplice of your madness unforgiven,
And think that you might mix his draught with death,
When your skies change again: the rougher hand
Is safer: on to the tests; take up the Prince."

He rose, and while each ear was prick'd to attend
A tempest, thro' the cloud dimm'd her broke
A genial warmth and light once more, and shone
Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend.

"Come hither, O Psyche," she cried out, "embrace me, come,
Quick while I melt; make a reconcilement sure
With one that cannot keep her mind an hour:
Come to the hollow heart they slander saul:
Kiss and be friends, like children being chid!
I seem no more: I want forgiveness too:
I should have had to do with none but maid's,
That have no links with men. Ah false but dear,
Dear traitor, too much loved, why?—why? Yet see
Before these kings we embrace you yet once more
With all forgiveness, all oblivion,
And trust, not love, you less.

And now, O Sire, Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait upon him,
Like my own brother. For my debt to him
This nightmare weight of gratitude, I know it:
Tant me no more: yourself and yours shall have
Free adit; we will scatter all our maids,
Till happier times each to her proper heart:
What use to keep them here now? grant my prayer.
Help, father, brother, help; speak to the king:
Thaw this male nature to some touch of that
Which kills me with myself, and drags me down
From my first height to mob me up with all
The soft and milky rabble of womankind,
Poor wakening ev'n as they are."

Passionate tears
Follow'd: the king replied not: Cyril said:
"Your brother, Lady,—Florian,—ask for him
Of your great head—for he is wound too—
That you may tend upon him with the prince."
"Ay so," said Ida with a bitter smile,
"Our laws are broken: let him enter too."
Then Violet, she that sung the mournful song,
And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,
Petition'd too for him. "Ay so," she said,
"I stagger in the stream: I cannot keep
My heart an eddy from the babbling hour:
We break our laws with ease, but let it be."
"Ay so?" said Blanche: "Amazed am I to hear
Your Highness: but your Highness breaks with ease
The law your Highness did not make: 'twas I.
I had been wedded wife, I knew mankind,
And block'd them out; but these men came to woo
Your Highness—verily I think to win." So she, and turn'd as ancsone a winry eye:
But Ida with a voice, that like a bell
Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling tower,
Ring ruin, answer'd full of grief and scorn.

"Fling our doors wide! all, all, not one but all,
Not only he, but by my mother's soul,
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe,
Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit,
Till the storm die! but had you stood by us,
The roar that breaks the Pharses from his base
Had left us rock. She fain would sting us too,
But shall not. Pass, and mingle with your likes.
We brook no further insult but are gone."

She turn'd: the very nape of her white neck
Was rose'd with indignation: but the Prince
Her brother came; the king her father charm'd
Her wounded soul with words; nor did mine own
Before her proffer, lastly gave his hand.

Then they as lifted up, dead weights, and bare
Straight to the doors: to them the doors gave way
Grimon, and in the Vestal entry shrilk'd
The virgin marble under iron heels:
And on they moved and gain'd the hall, and there
Rested: but great the crash was, and each base,
To left and right, of those tall columns drown'd
In silken fluctuation and the swarm
Of female whisperers: at the further end
Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats
Close by her, like supporters on a shield,
Bow-back'd with fear: but in the centre stood
The common men with rolling eyes; amazed
They gazed upon the women, and aghast
The women stared at those, all silent, save
When armor clash'd or jingled, while the day,
Descending, struck athwart the hall, and shot
A flying splendor out of brass and steel,
That ov'er the statues leaped from head to head,
Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,
Now set a wrathful Diana's moon on flame,
And now and then an echo started up,
And shuddering fled from room to room, and died
Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice
Of Ida sound'd, issuing orlaniance:
And me they bore up the broad stairs, and thro'
The long-laid galleries past a hundred doors,
To one deep chamber shut from sound, and due
To languid limbs and sickness; left me in it;
And others otherwhere they laid; and all
That afternoon a sound arose of hoof
And charlot, many a maiden passing home
Till happier times; but some were left of those
Held sagest, and the great lords out and in,
From those two hosts that lay beside the walls,
Walk'd at their will, and everything was changed.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea:
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or fated eye;
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

VII.
So was their sanctuary violat
So their fair college turn'd to hospital;
At first with all confusion: by and by
Sweet order lived again with other laws:
A kindler influence reign'd; and everywhere
Low voices with the ministering hand
Hung round the sick: the maladies came, they talk'd,
They sang, they read: till she not fair, began
To gather light, and she that was, became
Her former beauty treble: and to and fro
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,
Like creatures native unto gracious acts,
And in their own clear element, they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,
And black sadness on her bosom, blent with shame.
Old studies fell'd; seldom she spoke; but oft
Clomb to the roofs, and gaz'd alone for hours
On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men
Darkening her female field: void was her use;
And as she as one that climbs a peak to gaze
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,
And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn
Expand the world: so far she gazed there;
So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank,
And waste it seem'd and vain: till down she came,
And found fair peace once more among the sick.

And twilight dawn'd; and morn by morn the lark
Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres, but I
Lay silent in the muffled cage of life:
And twilight gloom'd; and broader-grown the bower
Broke through itself, and Heaven, Star after star, arose and fell; but I,
Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay
Quite sadder'd from the moving Universe,
Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand
That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian: with her oft
Melissa came; for Blanche had gone, but left
Her child among us, willing she should keep
Court-favor: here and there the small bright head,
A light of healing glanced about the couch,
Or thro' the parted silks the tender face
Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man
With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves
To wide the length from languorous hours, and draw
The sting from pain; nor seem'd it strange that soon
He rose up whole, and those fair charities
Join'd at her side; nor stranger seem'd that hearts
So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,
Than when two dew-drops on the petal shake
To the same sweet air, and tumble deeper down,
And slip at once all-graftant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd
At first with Psyche. Not though Blanche had sworn
That there should light among those fields,
She needs must wed him for her own good name;
Not tho' he built upon the babe restored;
Nor tho' she lik'd him, yielded she, but fear'd
To increase the Head once more; till on a day
When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind
Seen but of Psyche: on her foot she hung
A moment, and she heard, at which her face
A little flush'd, and she past on; but each
Assumed from thence, a half-consent involved
In stillness, pill'd truth, and were at peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred halls
Held carnival at will, and flying strick
With showers of random sweet on maid and man.
Nor did her father cease to press my claim,
Nor did mine own now reconciled; nor yet
Did those twin brothers, risen again and whole;
Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she sat:
Then came a change; for sometimes I would catch
Her hand in wild delirium, grip it hard,
And fling it like a viper off, and shriek
"You are not Ida!" I flung it once again,
And call her Ida, when I knew her not,
And call her sweet, as if in irony,

And call her hard and cold which seem'd a truth:
And still she fear'd that I should lose my mind,
And often she believed that I should die:
Till out of long frustration of her care,
And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons,
And watches in the dead, the dark, when clocks
Throb'd their thunder thro' the palace floors, or call'd
On flying Time from all their silver tongues—
And out of memories of her kindlier days,
And sidelong glances at my father's grief,
And at the happy lovers heart in heart—
And out of hauntings of my spoken love,
And lonely listenings to my mutter'd dream,
And often feeling of the helpless hands,
And wordless broodings on the wasted cheek—
From all a closer interest flourish'd up,
Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to these,
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears
By some cold morning glacier; frail at first
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but wellnigh close to death
For weakness: it was evening; silent light
Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought
Two pure designs; for one what causes
The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd
At the Opplian law. Titanic shapes, they cromm'd
The forum, and half-cush'd among the rest
A dwarlike Cato cover'd. On the other side
Hortensia spoke against the tax; behind,
A train of dames: by axe and eagle sat,
With all their foreheads drawn in Roman scowlis,
And half the wolf's-milk carded in their veins,
The fierce trimvirs; and before them paused
Hortensia, pleading: angry was her face.

I saw the forms: I knew not where I was:
They did but seem as hollow shows; nor more
Sweet Ida: palm to palm she sat: the dew
Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape
And rounder showed: I moved: I sigh'd: a touch
Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand:
Then all for langnor and self-pity ran
Mine down my face, and with what life I had,
And like a flower that cannot all unfold,
So dropp'd it, when it is with tempest, to the sun,
Yet, as it may, turns toward him, on her
Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whisperingly:

"If you be, what I think you, some sweet dream,
I would but ask you to fulfill yourself:
But if you be that Ida whom I knew,
I ask you nothing: only, if a dream,
Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to-night.
Steep down and seem to kiss me ere I die."

I could no more, but lay like one in trance,
That hears his burial talk'd of by his friends,
And cannot speak, nor move, nor make one sign,
But lies and dreads his doom. She turn'd; she paused;
She stoop'd; and out of langnor leapt a cry;
Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death:
And I believed that in the living world
My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips;
Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose
Glowing all over noble shame; and all
Her falser self slip't from her like a robe,
And left her woman, lovelier in her mood
Than in her mould that other, when she came
From all too deeps to conquer all with love:
And down the streaming crystal dropt; and she
Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,
Naked, a double light in air and wave,
To meet her Graces, where they deck'd her out
For war's two-wrench'd end; nor end of mine,
Statellest, for thee! but mute she gild'd forth,
Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and slept,
Fell'd thro' and thro' with Love, a happy sleep.

Deep in the night I woke: she, near me, held
A volume of the Poets of her land:
There to herself, all in low tones, she read.

"Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry foot;
The fiery watkins: waken thou with me.

"Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

"Now lies the Earth all Danaé to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

"Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining arrow, as thy thoughts in me.

"Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me."

I heard her turn the page; she found a small
Sweet Iady, and once more, as low, she read:

"Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height,
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang). In height and cold, the splendor of the hills? But cease to move so near the Heaveness, and cease To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine, To sit a star upon the sparkling spire; And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down And find him: by the happy threshold, be, Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize, Or red with spirited purple of the vats, Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk With Death and Morning on the Silver Horses,
Nor will thou scarce him in the white ravine,
Nor find him drop upon the firths of ice,
That huddling shant in narrow-dov®ed falls To roll the torrent out of dusky doors: But follow: let the torrent dance thee down To find him in the valley; let the wild Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke, That like a broken purpose waste in air:
So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales Await thee; azure pillars of the heart Arise to thee; the children call, and I Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound, Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet; Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
The moon of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmurings of innumerable bees."

So she low-toned; while with shut eyes I lay Listening; then look'd. Pole was the perfect face;
The bosom with long sighs labord; and meek Seemed the full lips, and mild the luminous eyes, And the voice trembled and the hand. She said Brokily, that she knew it. she had fail'd
In sweet humility; had fail'd in all;
That all her labor was but as a block Left in the quarry; but she still were loath, She still were loath to yield herself to one. That wholly scorn'd to help their equal rights Against the sons of men, and barbarous laws. She pray'd me not to judge their cause from her That wrong'd if it, sought far less for truth than power
In knowledge: something wild within her breast,
A greater than all knowledges, beat her down.
And she had mura'd me there from week to week;
Much had she learnt in little time. In part It was ill counsel had misled the girl.
To vex true hearts: yet was she but a girl—"Ah fool, and made myself a Queen or so much? When comes another such? never, I think Till the Sun drop dead from the skies."

Her voice Choked, and her forehead sunk upon her hands, And her great heart through all the faithful Past Wept with a sort of sorrow in a pause I dared not break
Till notice of a change in the dark world Was lisp'd about the acacias, and a bird,
That early woke to feed her little ones, Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light.
She moved, and at her feet the volume fell.

"Blame not thyself too much," I said, "nor blame Too much the sons of men and barbarous laws;
These were the rough ways of the world till now. Henceforward thou hast a helper, me, that know
The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free: For she that out of Lothe scales with man The shining steps of Nature, shares with man His nights, his days, moves with him to one goal, Stays all the fair young planet in her hands— If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
How shall men grow? but work no more above!
Our place is much: as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in adding her— Will clear away the parasitical forms That seem to keep her up but drag her down— Will leave her space to burgeon out of all Within her—let her make herself her own To give or keep, to live or learn and be All that not harms distinctive womanhood.
For woman is not undeveloped man,
But diverse: could we make her as the man,
Sweet love were slain; his dearest bond is this,
Not like to like, but like in difference.
Yet in the long years liker must they grow:
The man be more of woman, she of man;
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
Nor lose the wrestling thaws that throw the world,
So mental breadth, nor fall in childish care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words; And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time, Sit side by side, full-sumra'd in all their powers, Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverence each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other ev'n as those who love. Then comes the statelier Eden back to men:
Then reign the world's great bridas, chaste and calm:
Then springs the crowning race of humankind.
May these things be!"

Sighing she spoke, "I fear
They will not."

"Dear, but let us type them now In our own lives, and this proud watchword rest Of equal; seeing either sex alone Is half itself, and to true marriage lies Nor equal, nor unequal: each fulfills
Defect in each, and always thought in thought, Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,
The single pure and perfect animal,
The ywo-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke, Life."

And again sighing she spoke: "A dream That once was mine! what woman taught you this?"

"Alone," I said, "from earlier than I know, Immersed in rich forshadowings of the world,
I loved the woman: he, that doth not, lives
A drowning life, besetted in self sweet.
Or plues in sad experience worse than death,
Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with crime:
Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one
Not learned, save in gracious household ways,
Nor perfect, nay, but full of tenet-beds.
No Angel, but a deerer being, all dipt
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the Gods and men,
Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
On topmost seem'd to touch upon a sphere
Too gross to tread, and all men minds perforce
Swav'd to her from their orbits as they moved,
And girded her with music. Happy he
With such a mother! faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
He shall not blind his soul with clay."

"But I,

Said Ida, tremulously, "so all unlike—
In thy love you close your lips: with words:
This mother is your model. I have heard
Of your strange doubts: they well might be: I seem
A mockery to my own self. Never, Prince;
You cannot love me."

"'Nay but thee," I said,
"From yearlong poring on thy pictured eyes,
Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen, and saw
Thee woman thro' the crust of iron moods
That mask'd thee from men's reverence up, and forced
Sweet love on pranks of saincy boyhood: now,
Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro' thee,
Indeed I love: the new day comes, the light
Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults
Lived over: lift thin eys; my doubts are dead,
My faltering sense of heaven shows: the change,
This truthful change in thee has kill'd it.Dear,
Look up, and let thy nature strike on mine,
Like yonder morning on the blind half-world;
Approach and fear not; breathe upon my brows;
In that fine air I tremble, all the past
Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this
Is born to more, and all the rich to-come
Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels
Awhart the smoke of nursing weeds. Forgive me,
I was but then, in my heart in signs: let be,
My life, my life, O we will walk this world,
Yoked in all exercise of noble end.
And so thro' those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows. Indeed I love thee: come,
Yield thyself up—my hopes and thine are one:
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself:
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me."

CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you all
The random scheme as wildly as it rose:
The words are mostly mine: for when we ceased
There came a minute's pause, and Walter said,
"I wish she had not yielded?" then to me,
"What, if you drest it up poetically?"

So pray'd the men, the women: I gave assent:
Yet how to bind the scattered seed of seven
Together in one sheaf? What style could suit?
The men required that I should give throughout
The sort of mock-heroic gigantescque,
With which we basted little Lilia first: the women—and perhaps they felt their power,
For something in the ballads which they sang,
Or in their silent influence as they sat,
Had ever seem'd to wrestle with burlesque,
And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close—
They hated banter, wish'd for something real,
A gallant fighting, noble princess—why
Not make her true-heroic—true-heroine?
Or all, they said, as earnest as the close?
Which yet with such a framework scarce could be
Then rose a little fend betwixt the two,
Betwixt the mockers and the realists;
And I betwixt them both, to please them both,
And yet to give the story as it rose,
I moved as in a strange diagonal,
And maybe neither pleased myself nor them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no part
In our dispute: the sequel of the tale
Had touch'd her; and she sat, she pluck'd the grass,
She flung it from her, thinking: last, she fixt
A showery glance upon her aunt, and said,
"You—tell us what we are" who might have told,
For she was cramm'd with theories out of books,
But that there rose a shout: the gates were closed
At sunset, and the crowd were swarming now,
To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these: we climb'd
The slope to Vivian-place, and turned
The happy valleys, half in light, and half
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of peace;
Gray hails alone among the massive groves;
Trim hamlets: here and there a rustic tower
Half-cloven in belts of hops and breadths of wheat;
The shimmering glimpses of a stream: the seas;
A red sail, or a white; and far beyond,
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of France.

"Look there, a garden!" said my college friend,
The Tory member's elder son, "and there!
God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off,
And keeps our Britain, whole within herself,
A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled—
Some sense of duty, something of a faith,
Some reverence for the laws ourselves have made,
Some patient force to change them when we will,
Some civic manhood firm against the crowd—
But yonder, whiff! there comes a sudden heat,
The grarvest citizen seems to lose his head,
The king is scared, the soldier will not fight,
The brave boys begin to shoot and stab,
A kingdom topples over with a shriek
Like an old woman, and down rolls the world
In mock heroes stranger than our own;
Revolts, republike, revolutions, most,
No greater than a schoolboys' barding out;
Too comic for the solemn things they are,
Too solemn for the comic touches in them,
Like our wild Princess with as wise a dream
As some of theirs—God bless the narrow seas!
I wish they were a whole Atlantic brood."

"Have patience," I replied, "ourselves are full
Of social wrong; and maybe wildst dreams
Are but the needful preludes of the truth:
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd.
The spirit half-science, fill me with a faith.
This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience: Give it time
To learn its limbs: there is a hand that guides."
IN MEMORIAM.

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

These are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith; we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music as before.

But waster. We are fools and slight:
We mock thee when we do not fear:
But help thy foolish ones to bear;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me;
What seem'd my worth since I began;
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair:
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worship to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth:
Forgive them where they fall in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1840.

But we went back to the Abbey, and sat on,
So much the gathering darkness charmed: we sat
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
Perchance upon the future man: the walls
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and owls whoop'd,
And gradually the powers of the night,
That range above the region of the wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight broke them up
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
Disrobed the glittering statue of Sir Ralph
From those rich silks, and home well-pleased we went.

IN MEMORIAM.

A. H. II.

OMIT MDCCCXXXIII.

I.

I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years,
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,
Let darkness keep her rav'n gloss:
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
The long result of love, and boast,
"Behold the man that loved and lost
But all he was is overworn."

II.

Old Yew, which graspeth at the stones
That name the underlying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
And bring the firstling to the flock;
And in the dust of thee, the clock
Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor brandishing summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom:

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
I seem to fail from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thee.

III.

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
O sweet and bitter in a breath,
What whispers from thy lying lip?
"The stars," she whispers, "blindinglyEu;  
A web is woven across the sky;  
From out waste places comes a cry,  
And murmurs from the dying sun:  

"And all the phantom, Nature, stands,—  
With all the music in her tone,  
A hollow echo of my own,—  
A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,  
Embrace her as my natural good;  
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,  
Upon the threshold of the mind?  

IV.  
To sleep I give my powers away;  
My will is bondman to the dark;  
I sit within a homeless bark,  
And with my heart I muse and say:  

O heart, how fares it with thee now,  
That thou shouldst fall from thy desire,  
Who scarcely darest to inquire:  
"What is it makes me beat so low?"

Something it is which thou hast lost,  
Some pleasure from thine early years.  
Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,  
That grief hath shaken into frost!  

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross  
All night below the darken'd eyes;  
With morning wakes the will, and cries,  
"Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

V.  
I sometimes hold it half a sin  
To put in words the grief I feel;  
For words, like Nature, half reveal  
And half conceal the Soul within.  

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,  
A use in measured language lies;  
The sad mechanic exercise,  
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.  

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,  
Like coarsest clothes against the cold;  
But that large grief which these enfold  
Is given in outline and no more.  

VI.  
One writes, that "Other friends remain,"  
That "Loss is common to the race,"—  
And common is the commonplace,  
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.  

That loss is common would not make  
My own less bitter, rather more:  
Too common! Never morning wore  
To evening, but some heart did break.  

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,  
Who pensive now thy gallant son;  
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,  
Hath stilled the life that beat from thee.  

O mother, praying God will save  
Thy sailor,—while thy head is bow'd,  
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud  
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.  

Ye know no more than I who wrought  
At that last hour to please him well;  
Who mused on all I had to tell,  
And something written, something thought:  

Expecting still his advent home;  
And ever met him on his way  
With wishes, thinking, here to-day,  
Or here to-morrow will he come.  

O somewhere, meek unconscious dove,  
That softest ranging golden hair;  
And guad to find thyself so fair,  
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!  

For now her father's chimney glows  
In expectation of a guest;  
And thinking "This will please him best,"  
She takes a riband or a rose.  

For he will see them on to-night;  
And with the thought her color burns;  
And, having left the glass, she turns  
Once more to set a ringlet right;  

And, ev'n when she turn'd, the curse  
Had fallen, and her future lord  
Was drown'd in passing thro' the ford,  
Or kill'd in falling from his horse.  

O what to her shall be the end?  
And what to me remains of good?  
To her, perpetual maidenhood,  
And unto me no second friend.  

VII.  
Dark house, by which once more I stand  
Here in the long unlovely street,  
Doors, where my heart was used to beat  
So quickly, waiting for a hand,  

A hand that can be claspt no more,—  
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,  
And like a guilty thing I creep  
At earliest morning to the door.  

He is not here; but far away  
The noise of life begins again,  
And ghostly thro' the drizzling rain  
On the broad street breaks the blank day.  

VIII.  
A happy lover who has come  
To look on her that loves him well,  
Who 'lights and rings the gateway bell,  
And learns her gone and far from home:  

He saddens, all the magic light  
Dies off at once from bower and hall,  
And all the place is dark, and all  
The chambers emptied of delight:  

So find I every pleasant spot  
In which we two were wont to meet,  
The field, the chamber, and the street,  
For all is dark where thou art not.  

Yet as that other, wandering there  
In those deserted walks, may find  
A flower beat with rain and wind,  
Which once she foster'd up with care:  

So seems it in my deep regret,  
O my forsaken heart, with thee  
And this poor flower of poesy  
Which little cared for fades not yet.  

But since it pleased a vanished eye,  
I go to plant it on his tomb,  
That if it can it there may bloom,  
Or dying, there at least may die.
IX.
Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
Sailed the placid ocean-plains
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
In vain; a favorable speed
Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
Thy sailing keel, till Phoebus, bright
As our pure love, thro' early light
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above;
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the prow;
Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now;
My friend, the brother of my love;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run;
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me.

X.
I hear the noise about thy keel;
I hear the bell struck in the night;
I see the cabin-window bright;
I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bringest the sailor to his wife,
And travel'd men from foreign lands;
And letters unto trembling hands;
And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him; we have idle dreams:
This look of quiet flatters thus
Our home-bred facades: 0 to us,
The folks of habit, sweeter seems
To rest beneath the clover sod,
That takes the sunshine and the rain,
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The charice of the grapes of God;

Than if with thee the roaring wells
Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine;
And hands so often clasped in mine
Should toss with tangle and with shells.

XI.
Calm is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a camper grief,
And only thro' the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground.

Calm and deep peace on this high world
And on these days that drench the furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold:

Calm and still light on you great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main:

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
These leaves that rotten to the fall;
And in my heart, if calm at all,
If any calm, a calm despair:

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
And waves that sway themselves in rest,
And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

XII.
Lo, as a dove when up she springs
To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe,
Some dolorous message knit below
The wild pulsation of her wings;

Like her I go; I cannot stay;
I leave this mortal ark behind,
A weight of nerves without a mind,
And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,
And reach the glow of southern skies,
And see the sails at distance rise,
And linger weeping on the marge;

And saying, "Comes he thus, my friend?
Is this the end of all my care?"
And circle moaning in the air:
"Is this the end? Is this the end?"

And forward dart again, and play
About the prow, and back return
To where the body sits, and learn,
That I have been an hour away.

XIII.
Tears of the widower, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms, and feers
Her place is empty, fall like these;

Which weep a loss forever new,
A void where heart on heart reposed;
And, where warm hands have prest and close'd,
Sience, till I be silent too.

Which weep the comrade of my choice,
An awful thought, a life removed,
The human-hearted man I loved,
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come Time, and teach me, many years,
I do not suffer in a dream:
For now so strange do these things seem,
Mine eyes have leisure for their tears;

My facades time to rise on wing,
And glance about the approaching sets,
As tho' they brought but merchants' bales,
And not the barren that they bring.

XIV.
If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touch'd the hand to-day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port;

And standing, muffled round with wee,
Should see thy passengers in rank
Come stepping lightly down the plank,
And beckoning unto those they know;

And if along with these should come
The man I held as half-divine:
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
And ask a thousand things of home;

And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had droopy'd of late,
And he should sorrow o'er my state
And marvel what possess'd my brain:

And I perceived no touch of change,
No hint of death in all his frame,
But found him all in all the same,
I should not feel it to be strange.
XV.

To-night the winds begin to rise
And roar from yonder dropping day:
The last red leaf is white'd away,
The rooks are blown about the skies;

The forest crack'd, the waters curd,
The cattle huddled on the lee;
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world:

And but for fancies, which aver
That all thy motions gently pass
Athwart a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches loud;
And but for fear it is not so,
The wild unrest that lives in woe
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,
And onward drags a laboring breast,
And topples round the dreary west,
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XVI.

What words are these have fall'n from me?
Can calm despair and wild unrest
Be tenants of a single breast,
Or sorrow such a changing be?

Or doth she only seem to take
The touch of change in calm or storm;
But knows no more of transient form
In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lar
Hung in the shadow of a heaven?
Or has the shock, so harshly given,
Confused me like the unhappy bark

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
And stagger'd blindly ere she sink?
And stunned me from my power to think
And all my knowledge of myself;

And made me that delirious man
Whose fancy fuses old and new,
And flashes into false and true,
And mingles all without a plan.

XVII.

'Tis come, much wept for; such a breeze
Compell'd thy canvas, and my prayer
Was as the whisper of an air
To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move
Thro' circles of the bounding sky,
Week after week: the days go by:
Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

Henceforth, wherever thou may'st roam,
My blessing, like a line of light,
Is on the waters day and night,
And like a beacon guards thee home.

So may whatever tempest mars
Mid-ocean spare thee, sacred bark;
And balmy drops in summer dark
Slide from the bosom of the stars.

So kind an office hath been done,
Such precios relics brought by thee;
The dust of him I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run.

XVIII.

'T is well; 't is something; we may stand
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violet of his native land.

'T is little: but it looks in truth
As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and hear the head
That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep,
And come, whatever loves to weep,
And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,
I, falling on his faithful heart,
Would breathing through his lips impart
The life that almost dies in me;

That dies not, but endures with pain,
And slowly forms the firmer mind,
Treasuring the look it cannot find,
The words that are not heard again.

XIX.

The Danube to the Severn gave
The dark'n'd heart that beat no more:
They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills;
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,
And hush'd my deepest grief of all,
When fill'd with tears that cannot fall,
I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again
Is vocal in its wooded walls;
My deeper anguish also falls,
And I can speak a little then.

XX.

The lesser griefs that may be said,
That breathe a thousand tender vows,
Are but as servants in a house
Where lies the master newly dead:

Who speak their feeling as it is,
And weep the fulness from the mind:
"It will be hard," they say, "to find
Another service such as this."

My lighter moods are like to these,
That out of words a comfort win;
But there are other griefs within,
And tears that at their fountain freeze.

For by the hearth the children sit
Cold in that atmosphere of Death,
And scarce endure to draw the breath,
Or like to noiseless phantoms sit:

But open converse is there none,
So much the vital spirits sink
To see the vacant chair, and think,
"How good! how kind! and he is gone."

XXI.

I sate to him that rests below,
And, since the grasses round me wave,
I take the grasses of the grave,
And make them pipes whereon to blow.
The traveller hears me now and then,  
And sometimes harshly will he speak:  
"This fellow would make weakness weak,  
And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers, "Let him be,  
He loves to make parade of pain,  
That with his piping he may gain  
The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth, "Is this an hour  
For private sorrow's barren song,  
When more and more the people throng  
The chairs and thrones of civil power?"

"A time to sicken and to swoon,  
When Science reaches forth her arms  
To feel from world to world, and charms  
Her secret from the latest moon!"

Behold, ye speak an idle thing:  
Ye never knew the sacred dust:  
I do but sing because I must,  
And pipe but as the linnets sing:
And one is glad; her note is gay,  
For now her little ones have ranged;  
And one is sad; her note is changed,  
Because her brood is stolen away.

XXII.

Tun path by which we twain did go,  
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,  
Thro' four sweet years aros and fell,  
From flower to flower, from snow to snow:
And we with singing cheer'd the way,  
And crown'd with all the season lent,  
From April on to April yent,  
And glad at heart from May to May:
But where the path we walk'd began  
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,  
As we descended, following Hope,  
There sat the Shadow fear'd of man:
Who broke our fair companionship,  
And spread his mantle dark and cold,  
And wrap thee formless in the fold,  
And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,  
And bore thee where I could not see  
Nor follow, tho' I walk'd in haste,  
And think that somewhere in the waste  
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,  
Or breaking into song by fits,  
Alone, alone, to where he sits,  
The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,  
Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,  
I wander, often falling lame,  
And looking back to whence I came,  
Or on to where the pathway leads:  
And crying, "How changed from where it ran  
Thro' lands where not a leaf was dumb;  
But all the lavish hills would hum  
The murmur of a happy Pan:
"When each by turns was guide to each,  
And Fancy light from Fancy caught,  
And Thought leapt out to wed with Thought  
Ere Thought could wed itself with Speech;  
"And all we met was fair and good,  
And all was good that Time could bring,  
"And all the secret of the Spring  
Moved in the chambers of the blood;  
"And many an old philosophy  
On Argive heights divinely sang;  
And round us all the thicket rang  
To many a dute of Arcady."

XXIV.

And was the day of my delight  
As sure and perfect as I say?  
The very source and font of Day  
Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.
If all was good and fair we met,  
This earth had been the Paradise  
It never look'd to human eyes  
Since Adam left his garden yet.  
And is it that the haze of grief  
Makes former gladness seem so great?  
The lowness of the present state,  
That sets the past in this relief?  
Or that the past will always win  
A glory from its being far;  
And orb into the perfect star  
We saw not, when we moved therein?

XXV.

I know that this was Life,—the track  
Whereon with equal feet we fared:  
And then, as now, the day prepared  
The daily burden for the back.  
But this it was that made me move  
As light as carrier-birds in air;  
I loved the weight I had to bear,  
Because it needed help of love;  
Nor could I weary, heart or limb,  
When mighty Love would cleave in twain  
The lading of a single pain,  
And part it, giving half to him.

XXVI.

Still onward winds the dreary way;  
I with it; for I long to prove  
No lapse of moons can canker Love,  
Whatever fickle tongues may say.
And if that eye which watches guilt  
And goodness, and hath power to see  
Within the green the monder'd tree,  
And towers fall'n as soon as built,—  
O, if indeed that eye foresee  
Or see (in Him is no before)  
In more of life true life no more,  
And Love the indifference to be,  
Then might I find, ere yet the morn  
Breaks hither over Indian seas,  
That Shadow waiting with the keys,  
To shroud me from my proper scorn.

XXVII.

I envy not in any moods  
The captive void of noble rage,  
The linnet born within the cage,  
That never knew the summer woods;  
I envy not the beast that takes  
His license in the field of time,  
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,  
To whom a conscience never wakes;
Nor, what may count itself as blest,
The heart that never slighted truth,
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate’er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most:
"Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

XXXVIII.
The time draws near the birth of Christ;
The moon is hid; the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four haunlets round,
From far and near, on meal and moor,
Swell out and fall, as if a door Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and good-will,—good-will and peace,
Peace and good-will, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
I almost wish’d no more to wake,
And that my hold on life would break
Before I heard those bells again:

But they my troubled spirit rule,
For they control’d me when a boy;
They bring me sorrow touch’d with joy,
The merry, merry bells of Yule.

XXXIX.
When such compelling cause to grieve,
As daily vexes household peace,
And chains regret to his decease,
How dare we keep our Christmas-eve:

Which brings no more a welcome guest
To curd out the threshold of the night
With shower’d largess of delight,
In dance and song and game and jest.

Yet go, and while the holly-houghs
Enwine the cold baptismal font,
Make one wreath more for Use and Wont
That guard the portals of the house;

Old sisters of a day gone by,
Gray nurses, loving nothing new;
Why should they miss their yearly due
Before their time? They too will die.

XXX.
Wear trembling fingers did we weave
The holly round the Christmas heart;
A rainy cloud possessed the earth,
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
We gambol’d, making vain pretence
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused: the winds were in the beech;
We heard them sweep the winter land;
And in a circle hand-in-hand
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;
We sang, tho’ every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year: impatiently we sang:

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept
Upon us: surely rest is meet;
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is sweet,
And silence follow’d, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;
Once more we sang: "They do not die
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
Nor change to us, although they change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail
With gather’d power, yet the same,
Fierce as the keciv seraphic flame
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
O Father, touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born.

XXXI.
Wines Lazarns left his channel-cave,
And home to Mary’s house return’d,
Was this demanded—If he yearn’d
To hear her weeping by his grave?

"Where went thou, brother, those four days?"
There lives no record of reply,
Which telling what it is to die
Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbors met,
The streets were fill’d with joyful sound,
A solemn gladness even crown’d
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!
The rest roundabout unresent’d;
He told it not; or something said
The lips of that Evangelist.

XXXII.
Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he lies,
And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Boves from the living brother’s face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Savion’s feet
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Three blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure;
What souls possess themselves so pure,
Or is there blessedness like theirs?

XXXIII.
O morn that after toil and storm
Mayest seem to have reach’d a purer air,
Whose faith has centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister, when she prays,
Her early Heaven, her happy views;
Nor thou with shadow’d hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro’ form is pure as thine,
Her hands are quicker unto good:
O, sacred be the flesh and blood
To which she links a truth divine!
IN MEMORIAM.

XXXIV.
My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live forevermore.
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and soles all that is;
This round of green, this orb of flame,
Fantastic beauty: such as lurks
In some wild Poet, when he works
Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I?
'T were hardly worth my while to choose
Of things all mortal, or to use
A little patience ere I die;
'T were best at once to sink to peace,
Like birds the charming serpent draws,
To drop head foremost in the jaws
Of vacant darkness, and to cease.

XXXV.
Yet if some voice that man could trust
Should murmur from the narrow house,
The checks drop in; the body bows,
Man dies: nor is there hope in dust.

Might I not say, "Yet even here,
But for one hour, O Love, I strive
To keep so sweet a thing alive?"
But I should turn mine ears and hear
The meanings of the homeless sea,
The sound of streams that swift or slow
Draw down Eolian hills, and sow
The dust of continuants to be;

And Love would answer with a sigh,
"The sound of that forgetful shore
Will change my sweetness more and more,
Half-dead to know that I shall die."

O me! what profits it to put
An idle case? If Death were seen
At first as Death, Love and not been,
Or been in narrowest working slot,
Mere fellowship of sluggish moons,
Or in his earnest Satyr-shape
Had bruised the herb and crush'd the grape,
And bask'd and battered in the woods.

XXXVI.
Two truths in manhood darkly join,
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
We yield all blessing to the name
Of Him that made them current coin;
For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
Where truth in closest words shall fall,
When truth embolden'd in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect stedfast;
More strong than all poetic thought;
Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or挖s the grave;
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roaring rounds the coral reef.

XXXVII.
Urania speaks with dark'nd bow:
"This field protest here where thou art least,
This field has many a purer priest,
And many an abler voice than thou.

"Go down beside thy native hill,
On thy Parunsins set thy feet,
And hear thy laurel whisper sweet
About the ledges of the hill."

And my Nymphomene replies,
A torch of shame upon her cheek:
"I am not worthy ev'n to speak
Of thy prevailing mysteries;"

"For I am but an earthy Muse,
And owning but a little art
To Walt with song and aching heart,
And render human love his dues;"

"But brooding on the dear one dead,
And all he said of things divine,
And bear thy laurel as sacred wine
To dying lips is all he said,"

"I murmur'd, as I came along,
Of comfort cheer'n'd in truth reveal'd;
And loiter'd in the Master's field,
And dark'nd sanctities with song."

XXXVIII.
With weary steps I loiter on,
Th' o'er always under alt'rd skies
The purple from the distance dies,
My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,
The herald melodies of spring,
But in the songs I love to sing
A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here
Survive in spirits render'd free,
Then are these songs I sing of thee
Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

XXXIX.
Could we forget the widow's tear,
And look on Spirit's breath'd away,
As on a maiden in the day
When first she wears her orange flower!

When crown'd with blessing she doth rise
To take her instest leave of home,
And hopes and light regrets that come
Make April of her tender eyes;

And doubtful Joys the father move,
And tears are on the mother's face,
As parting with a long embrace
She enters other realms of love;

Her office there to rear, to teach,
Becoming, as is meet and fit,
A link among the days to last
The generations each with each;

And, doub'tless, unto thee is given
A life that bears immortal fruit
In such great offices as suit
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern!
How often shall her old freindle
Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,
How often she herself return,
And tell them all they would have told,
And bring her bade, and make her boast,
Till even those that miss'd her most
Shall count new things as dear as old:
But thou and I have shaken hands,
Till growing winters lay me low;
My paths are in the fields I know,
And thine in undiscover'd lands.

XL.

The spirit ere our fatal loss
Did ever rise from high to higher:
As mounts the heavenward stair-fire,
As flies the lighter thro' thegross.
But thou art turn'd to something strange,
And I have lost the links that bound
Thy changes; here upon the ground,
No more partaker of thy change.

Deep folly! yet that this could be,—
That I could wing my will with might
To leap the grades of life and light,
And flash at once, my friend, to thee:
For tho' my nature rarely yields
To that vague fear implicd in death;
Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,
The bowings from forgotten fields:
Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor
An inner trouble I behold,
A spectral doubt which makes me cold,
That I shall be thy mate no more,
Tho' following with an upward mind
The wonders that have come to thee,
Thro' all the secular to-be,
But evermore a life amiss.

XLI.

I vex my heart with fancies dim:
He still outstript me in the race;
It was but nuliy of place
That made me dream I rank'd with him.
And so may Place retain us still,
And he the much-beloved again,
A lord of large experience, train
To riper growth the mind and will:
And what delights can equal those
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
When one that loves, but knows not, reaps
A truth from one that loves and knows?

XLII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,
And every spirit's folded bloom
Thro' all its interval bloom
In some long trance should slumber on;
Unconscious of the sliding hour,
Bare of the body, might it last,
And silent traces of the past
Be all the color of the flower:
So then were nothing lost to man;
So that still garden of the souls
In many a figured leaf enrols
The total world since life began;
And love will last as pure and whole
As when he loved me here in Time,
And at the spiritual prime
Broukken with the dawning soul.

XLIII.

How fares it with the happy dead?
For here the man is more and more;
But he forgets the days before
God shut the doorways of his head.
The days have vanished, tone and taut,
And yet perhaps the hoarding sense
Gives out at times (he knows not whence)
A little flash, a mystic hint;
And in the long harmonious years
(If Death so taste Lethean springs)
May some dim touch of earthly things
Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.
If such a dreamy touch should fall,
O turn thee round, resolve the doubt;
My guardian angel will speak out
In that high place, and tell thee all.

XLIV.

Tis baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is press
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "this is I;"
But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of "I," and "me;"
And finds "I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch;"
So round he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may begin,
As thro' the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined.
This use may lie in blood and breath,
Which else were fruitless of their due,
Had man to learn himself anew
Beyond the second birth of Death.

XLV.

We ranging down this lower track,
The path we came by, thorn and flower,
Is shadow'd by the growing hour,
Lost life should fail in looking back.
So be it; there no shade can last
In that deep dawn behind the tomb,
But clear from marge to marge shall bloom.
The eternal landscape of the past:
A lifelong tract of time remain'd;
The fruitful hours of still increase;
Days order'd in a wealthy peace,
And those five years its richest field.
O Love, thy province were not large,
A bounded field, nor stretching far;
Look also, Love, a brooding star,
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

XLVI.

That each, who seems a separate whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing all
The skirts of self again, should fall
Remerging in the general Soul,
Is faith as vague as all unsweet:
Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal soul from all beside;
And I shall know him when we meet:
And we shall sit at endless feast,
Enjoying each the other's good:
What vaster dream can hit the mood
Of Love on earth? He seeks at least...
IN MEMORIAM.

Upon the last and sharpest height,
Before the spirits fade away,
Some landing-place to clasp and say,
"Farewell! We lose ourselves in light."

XLVII.

If these brief lays of Sorrow born,
Were taken to be such as closed
Grave doubts and answers here proposed,
Then these were such as men might scorn:

Her care is not to part and prove;
She takes, when barbour moods remit,
What slender shade of doubt may fit,
And makes it vassal unto love:

And hence, indeed, she sports with words,
But better serves a wholesome law,
And holds it sin and shame to draw
The deepest measure from the chords:

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,
But rather loosen from the lip
Short swallow-flights of song, that dip
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

XLVIII.

From art, from nature, from the schools,
Let random influences glance,
Like light in many a shiver'd lance
That breaks about the dappled pools:

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,
The fancies tenderest eddy waft,
The slightest air of song shall breathe
To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,
But blame not thon the winds that make
The seeming-wanton ripple break,
The tender-shoulder'd shadow play:

Beneth all fancied hopes and fears,
Ay me! the sorrow deepens down,
Whose muffled motions blindly drown
The bases of my life in tears.

XLIX.

Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prickle
And tingle: and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer trust:
And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
And Life, a Fury singing flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,
And weave their petty cells and dote.

Be near me when I flake away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

L.

Do we indeed desire the dead
Should still be near us at our side?
Is there no baseness we would hide?
No inner vulgarity that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,
I had such reverence for his blame,
See with clear eye some hidden shame,
And I be lessend in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue;
Shall love be blamed for want of faith?
There must be wisdom with great Death;
The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall;
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours
With larger other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all.

LI.

I cannot love thee as I ought,
For love reflects the thing beloved;
My words are only words, and moved
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

"Yet blame not thou thy plaintive song,"
The Spirit of true love replied:
"Thou canst not move me from thy side,
Nor human frailty do me wrong.

"What keeps a spirit wholly true
To that ideal which he bears?"
What record? not the sinless years
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue:

"So fret not, like an idle girl,
That life is dash'd with flecks of sin.
Ah! thy wealth is gathered in
When Time hath sunder'd shell from pearl."

LII.

How many a father have I seen,
A sober man among his boys,
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,
Who wears his manhood hale and grov:

And dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild-oat not been sown,
The soft, left barren, scarce had grown
The grain by which a man may live?

O, if we held the doctrine sound
For life outliving heats of youth,
Yet who would preach it as a truth
To those that eddy round and round?

Hold thou the good: define it well:
For fear divine Philosophy
Should push beyond her mark, and be
Process to the Lords of Hell.

LIII.

O ver we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To panage of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood:

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with valu desire
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire, 
Or but surerves another's gain.

Behold we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?
An infant crying in the night;
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry.
LIV.

The wish, that of the living whole
No life may fall beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life;

That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

I filter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world’s altar-stairs
That slope thro’ darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

"So careful of the type!" but no.
From scarped cliff and quarried stone
She cries," A thousand types are gone:
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me:
I bring to life, I bring to death:
The spirit does but mean the breath:
I know no more." And he, shall be,

Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who roll’d the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed,
And love Creation’s final law,—
The’ Naire, red in tooth and claw
With ravin, shrick’d against his creed,—

Who loved, who suffer’d countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just,
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal’d within the iron hills?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons of the prime,
That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music match’d with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVI.

Peace; come away: the song of woe
Is after all an earthly song;
Peace; come away: we do him wrong
To sing so wildly: let us go.

Come; let as go; your cheeks are pale;
But half my life I leave behind;
Me thinks my friend is richly shined:
But I shall pass; my work will fall.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,
One set slow bell will seem to toll
The passing of the sweetest soul
That ever look’d with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o’er and o’er,
Eternal greetings to the dead;
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,
"Adieu, adieu," forevermore.

LVII.

Is there a word that I took farewell:
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,
As drop by drop the water falls
In vaults and catacombs, they fell;

And, falling, idly broke the peace
Of hearts that beat from day to day,
Half conscious of their dying clay,
And those cold crypts where they shall cease.

The high Muse answer’d: "Wherefore grieve
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?
Abide a little longer here,
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

LVIII.

O Sorrow, wilt thou live with me,
No casual mistress, but a wife,
My bosom-friend and half of life;
As I confess it needs must be;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,
Be sometimes lovely like a bride,
And put thy harsher moods aside,
If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My centre passion cannot move,
Nor wilt thou lessen from to-day;
But I’ll have leave at times to play
As with the creature of my love;

And set thee forth, for then art mine,
With so much hope for years to come,
That, howsoever I know thee, some
Could hardly tell what name were thine.

LIX.

He past; a soul of nobler tone:
My spirit loved and loves him yet,
Like some poor girl whose heart is set
On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,
She finds the baseness of her lot,
Half jealous of she knows not what,
And envying all that meet him there.

The little village looks forlorn;
She sighs amid her narrow days,
Moving about the household ways,
In that dark house where she was born.

The foolish neighbors come and go,
And tease her till the day draws by;
At night she weeps, "How vain am I!
How should he love a thing so low?"

LX.

Ir, in thy second state sublime,
Thy ransomed reason change replies
With all the circle of the wise,
The perfect flower of human time;

And if thou cast thine eyes below,
How dimly character’d and slight;
How dwarf’d a growth of cold and night,
How blanch’d with darkness must I grow!

Yet turn thee to the doubtful shore,
Where thy first form was made a man;
I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor can
The soul of Shakespeare love thee more.
LXIII.

Yet pity for a horse o'er-driven,
And love in which my bound has part,
Can hang no weight upon my heart
In its assumptions up to heaven;
And I am so much more than these,
As thou, perchance, art more than I,
And yet I spare them sympathy,
And I would set their pains at ease.

So mayst thou watch me where I weep,
As, unto vaster motions bound,
The circuits of thine orbit round
A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXII.

Do not thou look back on what hath been,
As some divinely gifted man,
Whose life in low estate began
And on a simple village green;
Who breaks his birth's invasions bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breast the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known,
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne;
And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
The pillar of a people's hope,
The centre of a world's desire;
Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,
When all his active powers are still,
A distant dearness in the hill,
A secret sweetness in the stream,
The limit of his narrower fate,
While yet beside its vocal springs
He play'd at counsellors and kings,
With one that was his earliest mate;
Who ploughs with pain his native lea
And reaps the labor of his hands,
Or in the furrow musing stands:
"Does my old friend remember me?"

LXIV.

Sweet soul, do with me as thou wilt;
I hail a fancy trouble-tost
With "Love's too precious to be lost,
A little grain shall not be split."

And in that solace can I sing,
Till out of painful phrases wrought
There flutters up a happy thought,
Self-balanced on a lightsome wing:

Since we deserved the name of friends,
And thine effect so lives in me,
A part of mine may live in thee,
And move thee on to noble ends.

LXV.

You thought my heart too far diseased;
You wonder when my fancies play
To find me gay among the gay,
Like one with any tribe pleased.

The shade by which my life was cast,
Which makes a desert in the mind,
Has made me kindly with my kind,
And like to him whose sight is lost;
Whose feet are guided thro' the land,
Whose jest among his friends is free,
Who takes the children on his knee,
And winds their curls about his hand:
He plays with threads, he beats his chair
For pastime, dreaming of the sky;
His inner day can never die,
"His night of loss is always there."

LXVI.

When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest,
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls:
Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory sways away:
From off my bed the moonlight dies;
And, closing caves of weared eyes,
I sleep till dusk is dpt in gray:
And then I know the mist is drawn
A held veil from coast to coast,
And in the dark church, like a ghost,
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

LXVII.

When in the down I sink my head,
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times my breath;
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows not Death,
Nor can I dream of thee as dead:
I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,
When all our path was fresh with dew,
And all the buple breezes blew
Revellicle to the breaking morn.
But what is this? I turn about,
I find a trouble in thine eye,
Which makes me sad, I know not why,
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt:
But ere the lark hath left the lea
I wake, and I discern the truth;
It is the trouble of my youth
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

LXVIII.

I dream'd there would be Spring no more,
That Nature's ancient power was lost:
The streets were black with smoke and frost,
They chatter'd trifles at the door:
I wander'd from the noisy town,
I found a wood with thorny boughs:
I took the thorns to bind my brows,
I wore them like a civic crown:

IN MEMORIAM.
I met with scoffs, I met with scorns
From youth and age, and every hair:
They call'd me in the public squares
The fool that wears a crown of thorns:
They call'd me fool, they call'd me child;
I found an angel of the night;
The voice was low, the look was bright;
He look'd upon my crown and smiled:
He reach'd the glory of a hand,
That seemed to touch it into leaf;
The voice was not the voice of grief;
The words were hard to understand.

LXIX.
I cannot see the features right,
When on the gloom I strive to paint
The face I know; the hues are faint
And mix with hollow masks of night;
Clown-towers by ghostly masons wrought,
A gulf that ever shuts and gaps,
A hand that points, and pall'd shapes
In shadowy thoroughfares of thought;
And crowds that stream from yawning doors,
And shades of packer'd faces drive;
Dark bulks that tumble half alive,
And lazy lengths on boundless shores:
Till all at once beyond the will
I hear a wizard music roll,
And thro' a lattice on the soul
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

LXX.
Saxer, krusman thou to death and trance
And madness, thou hast forged at last
A night-long Present of the Past
In which we went thro' summer France.
Hadst thou such credit with the soul?
Then bring an opiate trebly strong,
Drug down the blindfold sense of wrong
That so my pleasure may be whole;
While now we talk as once we talk'd
Of men and minds, the dust of change,
The days that grow to something strange,
In walking as of old we walk'd
Beside the river's wooded reach,
The fortress, and the mountain ridge,
The cataract flashing from the bridge,
The breaker breaking on the beach.

LXXI.
Rusher thou thus, dim dawn, again,
And howlest, issuing out of night,
With blasts that blow the poplar white,
And lash with storm the streaming pane?
Day, when my crown'd estate begun
To pine in that reverse of doom,
Which sicken'd every living bloom,
And blur'd the splendor of the sun;
Who usherest in the dolorous hour
With thy quick tears that make the rose
Pull sideways, and the daisy close
Her crimson fringes to the shower;
Who might'st have heaved a wheel'd flame
Up the deep East, or, whispering, play'd
A chequer-work of beam and shade
Along the hills, yet look'd the same.

As wan, as chill, as wild as now;
Day, mark'd as with some hideous crime
When the dark hand struck down thro' time,
And cancel'd nature's best; but thou,
Lift as thou mayest thy burthen'd brows
Thro' clouds that drench the morning star,
And whirr the ungarner'd sheaf afar,
And sow the sky with dying boughs,
And up thy vault with roaring sound
Climb thy thick noon, disastrous day;
Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,
And hide thy shame beneath the ground.

LXXII.
So many words, so much to do,
So little done, such things to be,
How know I what had need of thee,
For thou wert strong as thou wert true?
The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,
The head hath miss'd an earthly wreath:
I curse not nature, no, nor death;
For nothing is that errs from law.
We pass; the path that each man trod
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds;
What fame is left for human deeds
In endless age? It rests with God.
O hollow wreath of dying fame,
Fade wholly, while the soul exults,
And self-infolds the large results
Of force that would have forged a name.

LXXIII.
As sometimes in a dead man's face,
To those that watch it more and more,
A likeness, hardly seen before,
Comes out—to some one of his race;
So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
I see thee what thou art, and know
Thy likeness to the wise below,
Thy kindred with the great of old.
But there is more than I can see,
And what I see I leave unsaid,
Nor speak it, knowing Death has made
His darkness beautiful with thee.

LXXIV.
I leave thy praises unexpress'd
In verse that brings myself relief,
And by the measure of my grief
I leave thy greatness to be guessed;
What practice howse'er expert
In fitting aptest words to things,
Or voice the richest-toned that sings
Hath power to give thee as thou wert?
I care not in these failing days
To raise a cry that lasts not long,
And round thee with the breeze of song
To stir a little dust of praise.
Thy leaf hath perish'd in the green,
And, while we breathe beneath the sun,
The world which credits what is done
Is cold to all that might have been.
So here shall silence guard thy fame;
But somewhere, out of human view,
Whate'er thy hands are set to do
Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.
IN MEMORIAM

LXXV.

Take wings of fancy, and ascend,
And in a moment set thy face
Where all the starry heavens of space
Are sharpen'd to a needle's end;
Take wings of foresight; lighten thro'
The secular abyss to come,
And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb
Before the mockering of a yew;
And if the matin songs, that woke
The darkness of our planet, last,
Thine own shall witter in the vast,
Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy boughers
With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain;
And what are they when these remain
The ruin'd shells of hollow towers?

LXXVI.

What hope is here for modern rhyme
To him who turns a musing eye
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that lie
Foreshorten'd in the tract of time?

These mortal illabites of pain
May bind a book, may line a box,
May serve to curl a maiden's locks;
Or when a thousand moons shall wane
A man upon a stall may find,
And, passing, turn the page that tells
A grief, then changed to something else,
Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

But what of that? My darken'd ways
Shall ring with music all the same;
To breathe my loss is more than fame,
To utter love more sweet than praise.

LXXVII.

Again at Christmas did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
The silent snow possess'd the earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve:
The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
No wing of wind the region swept,
But over all things brooding slept
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
Again our ancient games had place,
The mimic picture's breathing grace,
And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who show'd a token of distress?
No single tear, no mark of pain;
O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
O grief, can grief be changed to less?
O last regret, regret can die!
No,—mixt with all this mystic frame,
Her deep relations are the same,
But with long use her tears are dry.

LXXVIII.

"More than my brothers are to me."
Let this not vex thee, noble heart!
I know thee of what force thou art
To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,
As moulded like in nature's mint;
And hill and wood and field did print
The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curl'd
Thro' all his ebbing coves; the same
All winds that rosem the twilight came
In whispers of the beauteous world.

At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,
One lesson from one book we learn'd,
Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turn'd
To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,
But he was rich where I was poor,
And he supplied my want the more
As his unlikelihood fitted mine.

LXXIX.

If any vague desire should rise,
That holy Death ere Arthur died
Had mov'd me kindly from his side,
And dropt the dust on tearless eyes;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,
The grief my loss in him had wrought,
A grief as deep as life or thought,
But stay'd in peace with God and man.

I make a picture in the brain:
I hear the sentence that he speaks;
He bears the brathen of the weeks;
But turns his burthen into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free;
And, influence-rich to soothe and save,
Unased example from the grave
Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

LXXX.

Could I have said while he was here,
"My love shall now no furthe range;
There cannot come a mellower change,
For now is love mature in ear."

Love, then, had hope of richer store:
What end is here to my complaint?
This haunting whisper makes me faint,
"More years had made me love thee more."

But Death returns an answer sweet:
"My sudden frost was sudden gain,
And gave all ripeness to the grain
It might have drawn from after-heat."

LXXXI.

I wage not any feud with Death
For changes wrought on form and face;
No lower life that earth's embrace
May breed with him can fright my faith.

Eternal process moving on,
From state to state the spirit walks;
And these are but the shatter'd stalks,
Or ruin'd chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare
The use of virtue out of earth:
I know transplanted human worth
Will bloom to profit, otherwhere.

For this alone on Death I weep
The wrath that garners in my heart;
He put our lives so far apart
We cannot hear each other speak.

LXXXII.

Driv down upon the northern shore,
O sweet new-year, delaying long:
Thou dost expectant nature wrong;
Delaying long, delay no more.
What stays thee from the clouded noons,
Thy sweetness from its proper place?
Can trouble live with April days,
Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,
The little speedwell's darling blue,
Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
That longs to burst a frozen bud,
And flood a frether throat with song.

LXXIII.
When I contemplate all alone
The life that had been thine below,
And fix my thoughts on all the glow
To which thy crecent would have grown;

I see thee sitting croun'd with good,
A central warmth diffusing bliss
In glance and smile, and clasp and kiss,
On all the branches of thy blood;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine;
For now the day was drawing on
When thou shouldst link thy life with one
Of mine own house, and boys of thine

Had babbled "Uncle" on my knee;
But that remorseless iron hour
Made cypress of her orange-flower,
Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,
To clap their cheeks, to call them mine.
I see their unborn faces shine
Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honor'd guest,
Thy partner in the flowery walk
Of letters, genial table-talk,
Or deep dispute, and graceful jest;

While now thy prosperous labor flies
The lips of men with honest praise,
And sun by sun the happy days
Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair;
And all the train of bounteous hours
Conduct by paths of growing powers
To reverence and the silver hair;

Till slowly worn her earthy robe,
Her lavish mission richly wrought,
Leaving great legacies of thought,
Thy spirit should fall from off the globe;

What time mine own might also see,
As link'd with thine in love and fate,
And, hovering o'er the dolorous strait
To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,
And He that died in Holy Land
Would reach us out the shining hand,
And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant?
Ah, backward fancy, wherefore wake
The old bitterness again, and break
The low beginnings of content?

LXXXIV.
Thus truth came borne with bier and pall,
I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,
"It is better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all——"

O true in word, and tried in deed,
Demanding so to bring relief
To this which is our common grief,
What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether truant in things above
Be dimm'd of sorrow or sustal'd;
And whether love for him have drain'd
My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as draws
A faithful answer from the breast,
Thro' light reproaches, half express;
And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,
Till on mine ear this message falls,
That in Vienna's fatal walls
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal state,
In circle round the blessed gate,
Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,
And show'd him in the fountain fresh
All knowledge that the sons of flesh
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were dim,
Whose life, whose thoughts were little worth,
To wander on a darken'd earth,
Where all things round me breathed of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,
O heart, with kindliest motion warm,
O sacred essence, other form,
O solemn ghost, O crowned soul!

Yet none could better know than I,
How much of act at human hands
The sense of human will demands,
By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,
I felt and feel, tho' left alone,
His being working in mine own,
The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses deck'd
With gifts of grace, that might express
All-comprensive tenderness,
All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved
To works of weakness, but I find
An image comforting the mind,
And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,
That loved to handle spiritual strife,
Diffused the shock thro' all my life,
But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again
For other friends that once I met;
Nor can it suit me to forget
The mighty hopes that make us men.
The round of space, and rapt below
Thro' all the dewy-tasseled wood,
And shadowing down the horned flood
In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh
The full new life that feeds thy breath
Throughout my frame, till Doubt and Death.
Ill brethren let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas
On leagues of odor streaming far,
To where in yonder orient star
A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

I passed beside the reverend walls
In which of old I wore the gown;
I roved at random thro' the town,
And saw the tumult of the halls;

And heard once more in college fanes
The storm their high-built organs make,
And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophets blazon'd on the panes;

And caught once more the distant shout,
The measured pulse of racing oars
Among the willows; paced the shores
And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt
The same, but not the same; and last
Up that long walk of times I past
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door:
I linger'd; all within was noise
Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys
That crack'd the glass and beat the floor;

Where once we held debate, a band
Of youthful friends, on mind and art,
And labor, and the changing mart,
And all the framework of the land;

When one would aim an arrow fair,
But send it slackly from the string:
And one would pierce an outer ring,
And one an inner, here and there;

And last the master-bowman, he
Would cleave the mark. A willing ear
We lent him. Who, but bung to hear
The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and grace
And music in the bounds of law,
To those conclusions when we saw
The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly-wise;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
Rings Eden thro' the budded quicks,
O tell me where the senses mix,
O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate; fierce extremes employ
Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
And in the midmost heart of grief
Thy passion clasps a secret joy:

LXCVI.

Wild, howling, and with a voice fierce
Rings Michael Angelo: the bodel quicks,
Tell me where the senses mix,
Tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate; fierce extremes employ
Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
And in the midmost heart of grief
Thy passion clasps a secret joy:

LXCVII.

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
Rings Eden thro' the buded quicks,
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LXCVIII.

From point to point, with power and grace
And music in the bounds of law,
To those conclusions when we saw
The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly-wise;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

LXCV.

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,
That rollest from the gorgeous gloom,
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

LXCVI.

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Rings Michael Angelo: the bodel quicks,
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O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate; fierce extremes employ
Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
And in the midmost heart of grief
Thy passion clasps a secret joy:

LXCVIII.
IN MEMORIAM.

And I—my harp would prelude woe—
I cannot all command the strings;
The glory of the sum of things
Will flash along the chords and go.

LXXXVIII.
WITCH-ELMS that counterchange the floor
Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright:
And then, with all thy breadth and height
Of foliage, towering eucamore;

How often, bither wandering down,
My Arthur found your shadows fair,
And shook to all the liberal air
The dust and din and steam of town:

He brought an eye for all be saw;
He mixt in all our simple sports
And dusty parleus of the law.

O joy to him in this retreat,
Immantled in ambrosial dark,
To drink the cooler air, and mark
The landscape winking thro' the heat:

O sound to rout the brood of cares,
The sweep of scythe in morning dew,
The gust that round the garden flew,
And tumbled half the mellowing pears!

O bliss, when all in circle drawn
About him, heart and ear were fed
To hear him, as he lay and read
The Tuscan poet on the lawn:

Or in the all-golden afternoon
A guest, or happy sister, sung,
Or here she brought the harp and flung
A ballad to the brightening moon:

Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,
Beyond the bounding hill to stray,
And break the livelong summer day
With banquet in the distant woods:

Whereat we glanced from theme to theme,
Discuss'd the books to love or hate,
Or touch'd the changes of the state,
Or threaded some Socratic dream;

But if I praised the busy town,
He loved to rail against it still,
For "ground in yonder social mill,
We rub each other's angles down,

"And merge," he said, "in form and gloss
The picturesque of man and man."
We talk'd the stream beneath us ran,
The wine-flask lying conch'd in moss,

Or could within the glooming wave;
And last, returning from afar,
Before the crimson-circled star
Had fallen into her father's grave,

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
We heard behind the woodblue veil
The milk that babbled in the pail,
And buzzings of the honeyed hours.

LXXXIX.
He tasted love with half his mind,
Nor ever drank the inviolate spring
Where highest heaven, who first could fling
This bitter seed among mankind:

That could the dead, whose dying eyes
Were closed with weal, resume their life,
They would but find in child and wife
An iron welcome when they rise:

'T was well, indeed, when warm with wine,
To pledge them with a kindly tear,
To talk them o'er, to wish them here,
To count their memories half divine;

But if they came who passed away,
Behold their brides in other hands;
The hard heir strides about their lands,
And will not yield them for a day.

Yes, tho' their sons were none of these,
Not less the yet-loved sire would make
Confusion worse than death, and shake
The pillars of domestic peace.

Ah dear, but come thou back to me:
Whatever change the years have wrought,
I find not yet one lonely thought
That cries against my wish for thee.

XC.
Waxx rose scytheasts the larch,
And rarely pipes the mounted thrush;
Or underneath the barren bush
Flits by the sea-blue bird of March:

Come, wear the form by which I know
Thy spirit in time among thy peers;
The hope of unaccomplish'd years
Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When summer's hourly-mellowing change
May breathe, with many roses sweet,
Upon the thousand waves of wheat,
That ripple round the lovely grange;

Come: not in watches of the night,
But where the sunbeam broodeth warm,
Come, beantous in thine after form,
And like a finer light in light.

XCI.
If any vision should reveal
Thy likeness, I might count it vain,
As but the canker of the brain;
Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal
To chances where our lots were cast
Together in the days behind,
I might but say, I hear a wind
Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view
A fact within the coming year;
And tho' the months, revolving near,
Should prove the phantom-warning true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,
But spiritual presentiments,
And such refraction of events
As often rises ere they rise.

XCII.
I shall not see thee. Dare I say
No spirit ever brake the band
That stays him from the native land,
Where first he walk'd when clasped in clay?

No visual shade of some one lost,
But he, the Spirit himself, may come
Where all the nerve of sense is numb;
Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.
O, therefore from thy sightless range
With gods in un conjectured piles,
O, from the distance of the abyss
Of tenfold-complicated change,
Descend, and touch, and enter; hear
The wish too strong for words to name;
That in this blindness of the frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

XCVII.
How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.
In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say,
My spirit is at peace with all.
They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imagination's calm and fair;
The memory like a cloudless air
The conscience as a sea at rest:
But when the heart is full of sin,
And doubt beside the portal waits,
They can but listen at the gates,
And bear the household jar within.

XCVIII.
By night we linger'd on the lawn,
For underfoot the herb was dry;
And genial warmth; and o'er the sky
The silver haze of summer drawn;
And calm that let the tapers burn
Unwavering: not a cricket chirr'd;
The brook alone far-off was heard,
And on the board the flattering urn:
And bats went round in fragrant skies,
And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes
That haunt the dusk, with cerulean capes
And woolly breasts and beaded eyes;
While now we sang old songs that peal'd
From knoll to knoll, where, couch'd at ease,
The white lilies glimmer'd, and the trees
Laid their dark arms about the field.
But when those others, one by one,
Withdraw'd themselves from me and night,
And in the house light after light
Went out, and I was all alone,
A hunger seized my heart; I read
Of that glad year that once had been,
In those fall'n leaves which kept their green,
The noble letters of the dead:
And strangely on the silence broke
The silent-speaking words, and strange
Was love's dumb cry defying change
To test his worth; and strangely spoke
The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell
On doubts that drive the coward back,
And keen thro' wordly snares to track
Suggestion to her inmost cell.

And mine in his was wound, and whirl'd
About enypreal heights of thought,
And came on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world,
Æonian music measuring out
The steps of Time, the shocks of Chance,
The blows of Death. At length my trance
Was cancel'd, striken thro' with doubt.

Vague words! but ah, how hard to frame
In matter-moulded forms of speech,
Or ev'n for intellect to reach
Tho' memory that which I became:
Till now the doubtful task reveal'd
The knoll once more where, couch'd at ease,
The white lilies glimmer'd, and the trees
Laid their dark arms about the field:
And, suck'd from out the distant gloom,
A breeze began to tremble o'er
The large leaves of the sycamore,
And fluctuate all the still perfume,
And gathering freshness overhead,
Rock'd the fall-foliaged elms, and swung
The heavy-folded rose, and shung
The lilies to and fro, and said,
"The dawn, the dawn," and died away;
And East and West, without a breath,
Mix'd their dim lights, like life and death,
To broaden into boundless day.

XCVIII.
You say, but with no touch of scorn,
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes
Are tender over drowning flies,
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew
In many a subtle question versed,
Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true:
Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them: thus he came at length
To find a stronger faith his own;
And Power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone,
But in the darkness and the cloud,
As over Sinai's peaks of old,
While Israel made their gods of gold,
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

XCVIII.
My love has talk'd with rocks and trees;
He finds on misty mountain-ground
His own vast shadow glory-crown'd;
He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life,—
I look'd on these, and thought of thee
In vastness and in mystery,
And of my spirit as of a wife.
These two—they dwelt with eye on eye,
Their hearts of old have beat in tune,
Their meetings made December June,
Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away;
The days she never can forget
Are earnest that he loves her yet,
Whatever the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart,
He loves her yet, she will not weep,
Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep
He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrides the labyrinth of the mind,
He reads the secret of the star,
He seems so near and yet so far,
He looks so cold: she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,
A wither'd violet is her bliss:
She knows not what his greatness is:
For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings
Of early faith and plighted vows:
She knows but matters of the house,
And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fxt and cannot move,
She darkly feels him great and wise,
She dwells on him with faithful eyes,
"I cannot understand: I love."

XCVII.

You leave us: you will see the Rhine,
And those fair hills I sail'd below,
When I was there with him; and go
By summer belts of wheat and vine
To where he breathed his latest breath,
That City. All her splendor seems
No livelier than the wisp that gleams
On Letho in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair
Enwind her isles, unmark'd of me:
I have not seen, I will not see
Vienna; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts
The birth, the bridal; friend from friend
Is ofter parted, fathers bend
Above more graves, a thousand wants

Guarr at the heels of men, and prey
By each cold hearth, and sadness flings
Her shadow on the blaze of kings;
And yet myself have heard him say,

That not in any mother town
With statelier progress to and fro
The double tides of chariots flow
By park and suburb under brown

Of lustier leaves; nor more content,
He told me, lives in any crowd,
When all is gay with lamps, and loud
With sport and song, in booth and tent,

Imperial halls, or open plain;
And wheels the circled dance, and breaks
The rocket molten into flakes
Of crimson or in emerald rain.

XCVIII.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
So loud with voices of the birds,
So thick with lowings of the hoarse,
Day, when I lost the flower of men;

Who tremblest thro' thy darkling red
On you swell'd brook that bubbles fast
By meadows breathing of the past,
And woodlands holy to the dead;

Who murmur'st in the foliaged coves
A song that slights the coming care,
And Autumn laying here and there
A fiery finger on the leaves;

Who wakonest with thy balmy breath,
To myriads on the genial earth,
Memories of bridal, or of birth,
And unto myriads more, of death.

O, wheresoe'er those may be,
Betwixt the slumber of the poles,
To-day they count as kindred souls;
They know me not, but mourn with me.

XCIX.

I climb the hill: from end to end
Of all the landscape underneath,
I find no place that does not breathe
Some gracious memory of my friend;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
Or low morass and whispering reed,
Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold;

No hoary knoll of ash and haw
That hears the latest linnet trill,
Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,
And haunted by the wrangling daw;

Nor rumlet tinkling from the rock:
Nor pastoral rivulet that swims
To left and right thro' meadowy curves,
That feed the mothers of the flock;

But each has pleased a kindred eye,
And each reflects a kindler day;
And, leaving these, to pass away,
I think once more he seems to die.

C.

Unwatch'd, the garden bough shall sway,
The tender blossom flutter down,
Unloved, that beech will gather brown,
This maple burn itself away;

Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,
Ray round with flames her disk of seed,
And many a rose-carnation feed
With summer spice the humming air;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,
The brook shall babble down the plain,
At noon, or when the lesser with
Is twisting round the polar star;

Uncared for, girl the windy grove,
And flood the haunts of horn and crake;
Or into silver arrows break
The sailing moon in creek and cove;

Till from the garden and the wild
A fresh association blow,
And year by year the landscape grow
Familiar to the stranger's child;
As year by year the laborer tills
His wonted glebe, or lops the glades;
And year by year our memory fades
From all the circle of the hills.

Cl.
We leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky;
The roofs, that heard our earliest cry,
Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,
As down the garden-walks I move,
Two spirits of a diverse love
Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, here thy boyhood sung
Long since its matin song, and heard
The low love-language of the bird
In native hazels tassel-hung.

The other answers, "Yes, but here
Thy feet have strayed in after hours
With thy lost friend among the bowers,
And this hath made them trebly dear."

These two have striven half the day,
And each prefers his separate claim,
Poor rivals in a losing game,
That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go; my feet are set
To leave the pleasant fields and farms;
They mix in one another's arms
To one pure image of regret.

Cl.
On that last night before we went
From out the doors where I was bred,
I dream'd a vision of the dead,
Which left my after-morn content.

I methought I dwelt within a hall,
And maidens with me distant hills
From hidden summits fed with rills
A river sliding by the wall.

The hall with harp and carol rang;
They sang of what is wise and good
And graceful. In the centre stood
A statue veild, to which they sang;

And which, tho' veild, was known to me,
The shape of him I loved, and love
Forever; then flew in a dove
And brought a summons from the sea:

And when they learnt that I must go,
They wept and wail'd, but led the way
To where a little shallup lay
At anchor in the flood below;

And on by many a level meand,
And shadowing bough that made the banks,
We gilded winding under ranks
Of iris, and the golden reed;

And still as vaster grew the shore,
And roll'd the floods in grander space,
The maidens gather'd strength and grace
And presence, lordlier than before;

And I myself, who sat apart
And watch'd them, wax'd in every limb;
I felt the thows of Anakim,
The pulses of a Titan's heart;

As one would sing the death of war,
And one would chant the history
Of that great race, which is to be,
And one the shaping of a star:

Until the forward-creeping tides
Began to foam, and we to draw,
From deep to deep, to where we saw
A great ship lift her shining sides.

The man we loved was there on deck,
But thrice as large as man he bent
To greet us. Up the side I went,
And fell in silence on his neck:

Whereat those maidens with one mind
Bewail'd their lot; I did them wrong:
"We served thee here," they said, "so long,
And wilt thou leave us now behind?"

So rapt I was, they could not win
An answer from my lips, but he
Replying, "Enter likewise ye
And go with us:" they enter'd in.

And while the wind began to sweep
A music out of sheet and shroud,
We steer'd her toward a crimson cloud
That landlike slept along the deep.

CII.
The time draws near the birth of Christ:
The moon is hid, the night is still;
A single church below the hill
Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,
That wakens at this hour of rest
A single murmur in the breast,
That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,
In lands where not a memory strays,
Nor landmark breathes of other days,
But all is new unballow'd ground.

CIV.
Tune holly by the cottage-eave,
To-night, ungather'd, shall it stand:
We live within the stranger's land,
And strangely falls our Christmas-eve.

Our father's dust is left alone
And silent under other snows;
When whitecaps, with the wind's blows,
The violet comes, but we are gone.

No more shall wayward grief abuse
The genial hour with mask and mime;
For change of place, like growth of time,
Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast,
By which our lives are chiefly proved,
A little spare the night I loved,
And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the floor,
Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm;
For who would keep an ancient form
Thro' which the spirit breathes no more?

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast;
Nor harp be touched, nor flute be blown;
No dance, no motion, save alone
What lightens in the lucid cast
Of rising words by yonder wood,
Long sleeps the summer in the seed;
Run out your measured air, and lead
The closing cycle rich in good.

CV.
Rise out wild bells to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

CVII.
It is the day when he was born,
A bitter day that early sank
Behind a purple-frosty bank
Of vapor, leaving night idolorn.

The time admits no flowers or leaves
To deck the banquet. Fiercely flies
The blast of North and East, and ice
Makes daggers at the sharpest caves,
And bristles all the brakes and thorns
To yon hard creast, as she hangs
Above the wood which grides and clungs
Its leafless ribs and iron horns
Together, in the drifts that pass
To darken on the rolling brine
That breaks the coast. But fetch the wise,
Arrange the board and trim the glass;

Bring in great logs and let them lie,
To make a solid core of heat;
Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat
Of all things ev'n as he were by;

We keep the day. With festal cheer,
With books and music, surely we
Will drink to him whate'er he be,
And sing the songs he loved to hear.

CIV.
I will not shut me from my kind,
And let I stiffen into stone,
I will not cut my heart alone,
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind:

What profit lies in barren faith,
And vacant yearning, tho' with might
To scale the heaven's highest height,
Or dive below the wells of Death?

What find I in the highest place,
But mine own phantom chanting hymns?
And on the depths of death there swims
The reflex of a human face.

I 'll rather take what fruit may be
Of sorrow under human skies:
"t is held that sorrow makes us wise,
Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CVI.
HEART-AFFLUENCE in discursive talk
From household fountains never dry;
The critic clearness of an eye,
That saw thro' all the Muses' walk;

Seraphic intellect and force
To seize and throw the doubts of man;
Impassion'd logic, which outran
The hearer in its fiery course;

High nature amorous of the good,
But touch'd with no ascetic gloom;
And passion pure in snowy bloom
Thro' all the years of April blood;

A love of freedom rarely felt,
Of freedom in her regal seat
Of England; not the school-boy heat,
The blind hysterics of the Celt;

And manhood fused with female grace
In such a sort, the child would twine
A trustful hand, mask'd, in thine,
And find his comfort in thy face;

All these have been, and thee mine eyes
Have look'd on: if they look'd in vain,
My shame is greater who remain,
Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

CIX.
True converse drew us with delight,
The men of rate and riper years;
The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,
Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung,
The proud was half disarm'd of pride,
Nor cared the serpent at thy side
To flicker with his double tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert by,
The flippant put himself to school
And heard thee, and the brazen fool
Was soften'd, and he knew not why:

While I, thy dearest, sat apart,
And felt thy triumph was as mine;
And loved them more, that they were thine,
The graceful tact, the Christian art;

Not mine the sweetness or the skill
But mine the love that will not tire,
And, born of love, the vague desire
That spurs an imitative will.
CX.
The chart in spirit, up or down
Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,
To men and prosper! Who shall fix
By blood a king, at heart a clown?
The chart in spirit, however he veil
His want in forms for fashion's sake,
Will let his coltish nature break
At seasons thro' the gilded pale:

For who can always act but he,
To whom a thousand memories call,
Not being less but more than all
The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and Join'd
Each office of the social hour
To noble manners, as the flower
And native growth of noble mind:

Nor ever narrowness or spite,
Or villain fancy begetting by
Drew in the expression of an eye,
Where God and Nature met in light;

And thus he hope without abase
The grand old name of gentleman,
Defamed by every charlatan,
And solld with all ignoble use.

CXI.
Hour wisdom holds my wisdomless,
That I, who gaze with temperate eyes
On glorious insufficiencies,
Set light by narrower perfection.

But thou, that fittest all the room
Of all my love, art reason why
I seem to cast a careless eye
On souls, the lesser lords of doom.

For what wert thou? some novel power
Sprang up forever at a touch,
And hope could never hope too much,
In watching thee from hour to hour,

Large elements in order brought,
And tracts of calm from tempest made,
And world-wide fluctuation sway'd
In vassal tides that follow'd thought.

CXII.
'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise;
Yet how much wisdom sleeps with thee
Which not alone had guided me,
But served the seasons that may rise:

For can I doubt who knew thee keen
In intellect, with force and skill
To strive, to fashion, to fulfil
I doubt not what thou wouldst have been:

A life in civic action warm,
A soul on highest mission sent,
A potent voice of Parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,
Becoming; when the time has birth,
A lever to uplift the earth
And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and go,
With agenies, with energies,
With overthrowings, and with cries,
And undulations to and fro.

CXIII.
Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall fail
Against her beauty? May she mix
With men and prosper! Who shall fix
Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire:
She sets her forward countenance
And leaps into the future chance,
Sublimating all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain,
She cannot fight the fear of death.
What is she, cut from love and faith,
But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of Demons? fiery-hot to burst
All barriers in her onward race
For power. Let her know her place;
She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,
If all be not in vain; and guide
Her footsteps, moving side by side
With wisdom, like the younger child:

For she is earthly of the mind,
But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.
O friend, who ransack to thy goal
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grow like thee,
Who grewest not alone in power
And knowledge, but by year and hour
In reverence and in charity.

CXIV.
Now fades the last long streak of snow,
Now bourgeois every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and thick
By ashen roots the violet blow.

Now rings the woodland lond and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drown'd in yonder living bine
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milker every milky stall
On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the sewam pipes, or dives
In yonder gleaming green, and fly
The happy birds, that change their sky
To build and brood; that live their lives

From land to land; and in my breast
Spring wakens too; and my regret
Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

CXV.
Is it, then, regret for buried time
That keel the sweet April waves,
And meets the year, and gives and takes
The colors of the cresent prime?

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,
The life re-orient out of dust,
Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret; the face will shine
Upon me, while I muse alone:
And that dear voice I once have known
Still speak to me of me and mine.
Yet less of sorrow lives in me
For days of happy commune dead;
Less yearning for the friendship fled,
Than some strong bond which is to be.

CXVI.
O days and hours, your work is this,
To hold me from my proper place,
A little while from his embrace,
For fuller gain of after bliss;
That out of distance might ensue
Desire of nearness doubly sweet;
And auto meeting when we meet,
Delight a hundred-fold accrue,
For every grain of sand that runs,
And every span of shade that steals,
And every kiss of thoughted wheels,
And all the courses of the suns.

CXVII.
Contemplate all this work of Time,
The giant laboring in his youth:
Nor dream of human love and truth,
As dying Nature's earth and time;
But trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an amplier day,
Forever nobler ends. They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread
In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to seeming-random forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
Till at the last arose the man;
Who throw and branch'd from clime to clime
The herald of a higher race,
And of himself in higher place
If so he type this work of time.

Within himself, from more to more;
Or, crown'd with attributes of woe
Like glories, move his course, and show
That life is not as idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning tears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And batter'd with the shocks of doom
To shape and use. Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

CXVIII.
Doors, where my heart was used to beat
So quickly, not as one that weeps
I come once more: the city sleeps;
I smell the meadow in the street;
I hear a chirp of birds; I see
Betwixt the black fronts long-withdrawn
A light-blue lane of early dawn,
And think of early days and thee,
And bless thee, for thy lips are bland,
And bright the friendship of thine eye:
And in my thoughts with scarce a sigh
I take the pressure of thine hand.

CXIX.
I pray I have not wasted breath;
I think we are not wholly brain,
Magnetic mockeries; not in vain,
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with Death;
Not only cunning casts in clay;
Let Science prove we are, and then
What matters Science unto men,
At least to me? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man who springs
Hereafter, up from childhood shape
His action, like the greater ape,
But I was born to other things.

CXX.
Saw Hesper o'er the buried sun,
And ready, lion, to die with him,
Thou watchest all things ever dim
And dimmer, and a glory done:
The team is loosed'd from the wain,
The beat is drawn upon the shore;
Thou listest to the closing door,
And life is darken'd in the brain.

Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,
By thee the world's great work is heard
Beginning, and the wakeful bird:
Behind thee comes the greater light:
The market boat is on the stream,
And voices hail it from the brink;
Thou heaven'd the village hammer clink,
And see'st the moving of the team.

Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name
For what is one, the first, the last,
Thou, like my present and my past,
Thy place is changed; thou art the same.

CXXI.
O, wast thou with me, dearest, then,
While I rose up against my dooms,
And yearned to burst the folded gloom,
To bare the eternal Heavens agai
To feel once more, in placid awe,
The strong imagination roll
A sphere of stars about my soul,
In all her motion one with law.

If thou wert with me, and the grave
Divide us not, be with me now,
And enter in at breast and brow,
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,
Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,
And like an inconsiderate boy,
As in the former flash of joy,
I slip the thoughts of life and death:
And all the breeze of Fancy blows,
And every dew-drop paints a bow,
The wizard lightnings deeply glow,
And every thought breaks out a rose.

CX XII.
Turn rolls the deep where grew the tree.
O earth, what changes thou hast seen!
There where the long street roars, hath been
The stillness of the central sea.
The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands;
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go.
But in my spirit will I dwell,
And dream my dream, and hold it true;
For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
I cannot think the thing farewell.
CXXIII.

That which we dare invoke to bless;
Our dearest faith; our ghastliest doubt;
Ho, They, One, All; within, without;
The Power in darkness whom we guess;

I found Him not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye;
Nor thro' the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun.

If e'er, when faith had fallen asleep,
I heard a voice, "Believe no more;
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep;

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answer'd, "I have felt."

No, like a child in doubt and fear:
But that blind clamor made me wise;
Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I am beheld again
What is, and no man understands;
And out of darkness came the hands
That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

CXXIV.

Whatever I have said or sung,
Some bitter notes my harp would give,
Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live
A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet Hope had never lost her youth;
She did but look thro' dimmer eyes;
Or Love but play'd with gracious lies
Because he felt so first in truth:

And if the song were full of care,
He breathed the spirit of the song;
And if the words were sweet and strong,
He set his royal signet there;

Abiding with me till I sail
To seek thee on the mystic deeps,
And this electric force, that keeps
A thousand pulses dancing, fall.

CXXV.

Love is and was my Lord and King,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend,
Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my King and Lord,
And will be, tho' as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and sleep
Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
Who moves from place to place to place,
And whispers to the worlds of space,
In the deep night, that all is well.

CXXVI.

And all is well, tho' faith and form
Be Sunder'd in the night of fear;
Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm.

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice, ev'ru tho' thrice again
The red fool-fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
And him, the lazar, in his rags;
They tremble, the sustaining crags;
The spires of ice are toppled down,

And motten up, and roar in flood;
The fortress crashes from on high,
The brute earth lightens to the sky;
And the great Aeon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of Hell;
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
O'ertook'st the tumult from afar,
And smiling, knowing all is well.

CXXVII.

Tus love that rose on stronger wings,
Unpaled when we met with Death,
Is comrade of the lesser faith
That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood
Of onward time shall yet be made,
And throned races may degrade;
Yet, O ye mysteries of good,

Wild Hours that fly with Hope and Fear,
If all your office had to do
With old results that look like new;
If this were all your mission here,

To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,
To foal the crowd with glorious lies,
To cleave a creed in sects and cries,
To change the bearing of a word,

To shift an arbitrary power,
To cramp the student at his desk,
To make old bareness picturesque And taunt with grass a feudal tower;

Why then my scorn might well descend
On you and yours. I see in part
That all, as in some piece of art,
Is toil coöperant to an end.

CXXVIII.

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
So far, so near in woe and weal;
O loved the most, when most I feel
There is a lower and a higher;

Known and unknown; human, divine;
Sweet human hand and lips and eye;
Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,
Mine, mine, forever, ever mine;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be;
Love deeper, darker understood;
Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee.

CXXIX.

Tus voice is on the rolling air;
I hear thee where the waters run;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then? I cannot guess;
But tho' I seem'd in star and flower
To feel thee in some diffuse power,
I do not therefore love thee less:

My love involves the love before;
My love is vaster passion now;
Tho' mix'd with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.
IN MEMORIAM.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
I have thee still, and I rejoice;
I prosper, circled with thy voice;
I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

CXXX.

O living will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow thro' our deeds and make them pure,
That we may lift from out of dust
A voice as unto him that hears,
A cry above the conquer'd years
To one that with us works, and trusts,
With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O tree and tried, so well and long,
Demand not then a marriage lay;
In that it is thy marriage day
Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss
Since first he told me that he loved
A daughter of our house; nor proved
Since that dark day a day like this;
Tho' I since then have number'd o'er
Some thrice three years: they went and came,
Remade the blood and changed the frame,
And yet is love not less, but more;
No longer caring to embalm
In dying songs a dead regret,
But like a statue solid-set,
And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more
Than in the summers that are flown,
For I myself with these have grown
To something greater than before;
Which makes appear the songs I made
As echoes out of weaker times,
As half but idle braving rhymes,
The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridial flower,
That must be made a wife ere noon?
She enters, glowing like the moon
Of Eden on its bridial bower:
On me she bends her blissful eyes,
And then on thee; they meet thy look
And brighten like the star that shook
Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,
He too foretold the perfect rose.
For thee she grew, for thee she grows
Forever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy; full of power;
As gentle; liberal-minded, great,
Consistent; wearing all that weight
Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out: the moon is near,
And I must give away the bride;
She fears not, or with thee beside
And me behind her, will not fear:

For I that danced her on my knee,
That watch'd her on her nurse's arm,
That shielded all her life from harm,
At last must part with her to thee:

Now waiting to be made a wife,
Her feet, my darling, on the dead;
Their pensive table's round her head,
And the most living words of life
Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,
The "wilt thou," answer'd, and again
The "wilt thou" ask'd till out of twain
Her sweet "I will " has made ye one.

Now sign your names, which shall be read,
Mute symbols of a joyful morn,
By village eyes as yet unborn;
The names are sign'd, and overhead
Begins the clash and clang that tells
The joy to every wandering breeze;
The blind wall rocks, and on the trees
The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours
Await them. Many a merry face
Salutes them—madness of the place,
That put us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride
With him to whom her hand I gave.
They leave the porch, they pass the grave
That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,
For them the light of life increased,
Who stay to share the morning feast,
Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all the genial spirits advance
To meet and greet a whiter sun;
My dropping memory will not shun
The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,
And hearts are warm'd, and faces bloom,
As drinking health to bride and groom
We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I
Conjecture of a stiller guest,
Penchance, perchance, among the rest,
And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,
And those white-favor'd horses wait;
They rise, but linger; it is late;
Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark
From little cloudlets on the grass,
But sweeps away as out we pass
To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,
And talk of others that are wed,
And how she look'd, and what he said,
And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,
The shade of passing thought, the wealth
Of words and wit, the double health,
The crowning cup, the three-times-three,
MAUD.

1.

I have the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,
The red-ribbed ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,
And Echo there, whatever is asked her, answers "Death."

2.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,
His who had given me life—O father! O God! was it well?—
Mangled, and flattened, and crush'd, and dinted into the ground;
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

3.

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast speculation had fall'n,
And ever he muttered and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken world-dling wall'd,
And the flying gold of the rush'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

4.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd
By a shafted step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd fright,
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

5.

Villany somewhere! whose? One says, we are villains all,
Not he: his honest fame should at least by me be maintain'd:
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us faceless and drain'd.

6.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we have made them a curse,
Pickpockets, each hand lasting for all that is not its own;
And last of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearstone?
MAUD.

7. But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of mind,
When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's war or his word?
Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

8. Sooner or later I too may passively take the print
Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope nor trust;
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a slit,
Cheat and be cheated, and die: who knows? we are ashes and dust.

9. Peace sitting under her olive, and sharring the days gone by,
When the poor are hovel'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie;
Peace in her vineyard—yes!—but a company forges the wine.

10. And the vitriol madness flashes up in the ruffian's head,
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife,
While chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life.

11. And Sleep must lie down armed, for the villanous centre-bits
Grind in the wakeful ear in the blush of the moonless nights,
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as he sits
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

12. When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

13. For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,
That the smooth-faced snub-nosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardarm, home.—

14. What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood?
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and die
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie?

15. Would there be sorrow for me? there was love in the passionate shriek,
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the grave—
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise and speak
And rave at the lie and the Har, ah God, as he used to rave.

16. I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor and the main,
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance ever come to me here?
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of pain,
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and the fear?

17. There are workmen up at the Hall; they are coming back from abroad;
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire:
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of Maud;
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised then to be fair.

18. Maud with her venturesous climbings and tumbles and childish escapes,
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled the grapes,
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling of all,—
19.

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may bring me a curse.
No, there is fatter game on the moor; she will let me alone.
Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.
I will bury myself in my books, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

II.

Long have I sigh'd for a calm: God grant I may find it at last!
It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither sorrow nor salt,
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,
Perfectly beautiful: let it be granted her: where is the fault?
All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)
Faultily faultless, icy regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not been
For a chance of travel, a pauceness, an hour's defect of the rose,
Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,
Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,
From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little touch of spleen.

III.

Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drowned,
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound;
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as before
Growing and fading and growing upon me without a sound,
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no more,
But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,
Listening now to the tide in its broad-slung shipwrecking roar,
Now to the scream of a maddened beach dragged down by the wave,
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

IV.

1.

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded line
In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot I be
Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland,
When the fit-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,
Halflost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent sea,
The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land?

2.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small!
And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite;
And Jack on his alehouse bench has as many lies as a Czar;
And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glistens the Hall;
And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light:
But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star!

3.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of the race?
I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother I bow'd;
I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor;
But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful face.
O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so proud:
Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless and poor.

4.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander and steal;
I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stile, or like
A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way:
For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal;
The Maryly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow speard by the shrike,
And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

5.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in her flower;
Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game
That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed?
Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour;
We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's shame;
However we brave 't out, we men are a little breed.
6.
A monstrous oft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing run,
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.
As nine mouths go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,
So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:
He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?

7.
The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,
An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor;
The passionate heart of the poet is whirld into folly and vice.
I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain;
For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were more
Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden of spice.

8.
For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil.
Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring them about?
Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.
Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a Hungary fall?
Or an infant civilization be ruled with rod or with knout?
I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

9.
Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,
Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my lot,
Far-off from the clamor of liars belled in the hubbub of lies;
From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever hissing dispraise,
Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed it or not,
Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous flies.

10.
And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love,
The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.
All sweet, you milk-white fawn, you are all unmeet for a wife.
Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble above;
Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your will;
You have but fed on the roses, and lain in the lilies of life.

V.

1.
A voice by the cedar-tree,
In the meadow under the Hall:
She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay.
A martial song like a trumpet's call!
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and file
To the death, for their native land.

2.
Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honor that cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean,
And myself so languid and base.

3.
Silence, beautiful voice!
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtely nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.

1.
Morning arises stormy and pale,
No sun, but a wanshing glare
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,
And the baddled peaks of the wood are bow'd
Caught and cuff'd by the gale:
I had fancied it would be fair.

2.
Whom but Maud should I meet
Last night, when the sunnest burn'd
On the blossom'd gable-ends
At the head of the village street,
Whom but Maud should I meet?
And she touch'd my hand with a smile so sweet
She made me divine amends
For a courtesy not return'd.

3.
And thus a delicate spark
Of glowing and growing light
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark
Kept itself warm in the heart of my dreams,
Ready to burst in a color'd flame;
Till at last, when the morning came
In a cloud, it faded, and seems
But an ashen-gray delight.

4.
What if with her sunny hair,
And smile as sunny as cold,
She meant to weave me a sea
Of some coquettish deceit,
Cleopatra-like as of old
To entangle me when we met,
To have her lion roll in a silken net,
And fawn at a victor's feet.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty
Should Nature keep me alive,
If I find the world so bitter
When I am but twenty-five?
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile were all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full
Of a kind intent to me,
What if that dandy despot, he,
That jewel'd maze of millinery,
That oil'd and curi'd Assyrian Bull
Smelling of musk and of insolence,
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,
Who wants the finer politic sense
To mask, tho' but in his own behalf,
With a glassy smile his brutish scorn,—
What if he had told her yesternight
How pretty for his own sweet sake
A face of tenderness might be fleg'd,
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,
That so, when the rotten hustings shake
In another month to his brazen lies,
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,
Keep watch and ward, keep watch and ward,
Or thou wilt prove their tool.
Yea, too, myself from myself I guard,
For often a man's own angry pride
Is cap and bells for a fool.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone
Came out of her pitying womanhood,
For am I not, am I not, here alone
So many a summer since she died,
My mother, who was so gentle and good?
Living alone in an empty house,
Here half-laid in the gleaming wood,
Where I hear the dead at midday moon,
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot mouse,
And my own sad name in corners cried,
When the shiver of dancing leaves is thrown
About its echoing chambers wide,
Till a morbid hate and horror have grown
Of a world in which I have hardly mix'd,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and caught
By that you swore to withstand?
For what was it else within me wrought
But, I fear, the new strong wine of love,
That made my tongue a stammer and trip
When I saw the treasured splendor, her hand,
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,
And the sunlight broke from her lip?

I have play'd with her when a child;
She remembers it now we meet.
Ah well, well, well, I may be beguiled
By some coquettish deceit.
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile had all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

She came to the village church,
And sat by a pillar alone:
An angel watching an urn
Wept over her, carved in stone;
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely lin'd
To find they were met by my own:
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat stronger
And thicker, until I heard no longer
The snowy-handed, dilettante,
Delicate-handed priest intone;
And thought, is it pride, and musèd and sigh'd
"No surely, now it cannot be pride."

I was walking a mile,
More than a mile from the shore,
The sun look'd out with a smile
Betwixt the cloud and the morr,
And riding at set of day
Over the dark moor land,
Rapidly roiling far away,
She waved to me with her hand.
There were two at her side.
Something flash'd in the sun,
Down by the hill I saw them ride,
In a moment they were gone:
Like a sudden spark
Struck vainly in the night,
And back returns the dark
With no more hope of light.

Sack, am I sick of a jealous dread?
Was not one of the two at her side
This new-made lord, whose splendor plucks
The songs of the villager's head?
Whose old grandfather has lately died,
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom
Grimsy nakedness dragging his trucks
And laying his trans in a poison'd gloom
Wrought, till he crept from a gatted maze
Master of half a servile shire,
And left his coal all turn’d into gold
To a grandson, first of his noble line,
Rich in the grace all women desire,
Strong in the power that all men adore,
And simper and set their voices lower,
And soften as if to a girl, and hold
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,
Seeing his gawgaw castle shine,
New as his title, built last year,
There amid perky larches and pine,
And over the silken-purple moor
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

2.
What, has he found my jewel out?
For one of the two that rode at her side
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a bride.
Blimbe would her brother’s acceptance be.
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt,
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,
A bought commission, a waxen face,
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?
And therefore splanetic, personal, base,
A wounded thing with a rancorons cry,
At war with myself and a wretched race,
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

3.
Last week came one to the county town,
To preach our poor little army down,
And play the game of the despots kings,
Tho’ the state has done it and thrice as well:
This broad-brim’d hawker of holy things,
Whose ear is stuffed with his cotton, and rings
Even in dreams to the chink of his pence,
This buckster put down war; can he tell
Whether war be a cause or a consequence?
Put down the passions that make earth hell!
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and fear;
Down too, down at your own fireside,
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,
For each is at war with mankind.

4.
I wish I could hear again
The chivalrous battle-song
That she warbled alone in her joy!
I might persuade myself then
She would not do herself this great wrong
To take a wanton, dissolute boy
For a man and leader of men.

5.
Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple great ones gone
For ever and ever by,
One still strong man in a blantant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I,
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat,—one
Who can rule and dare not lie.

6.
And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cense to be!

XI.

1.
O let the solid ground
Not fall beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet;

Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

2.
Let the sweet heavens endure,
Not close and darken above me
Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me;
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

XII.

1.

Buns in the high Hall-garden
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

2.
Where was Maud? in our wood;
And I, who else, was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

3.

Birds in our woods sang
Ringing thro’ the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

4.
I kiss’d her slender hand,
She took the kiss sedately;
Maud is not seventeen,
But she is tall and stately.

5.
I to cry out on pride
Who have won her favor?
O Maud were sure of Heaven
If lowliness could save her.

6.
I know the way she went
Home with her maiden posy,
For her feet have touch’d the meadows
And left the daisies rosy.

7.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
Were crying and calling to her,
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud,
One is come to woo her.

8.

Look, a horse at the door,
And little King Charles is snarling,
Go back, my lord, across the moor,
You are not her darling.

XIII.

1.

Scorn’d, to be scorn’d by one that I scorn,
Is that a matter to make me feel?
That a calamity hard to be borne?
Well, he may live to hate me yet.
Proud that I am to vext with his pride!
I past him, I was crossing his lands;
He stood on the path a little aside:
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,
Has a broad-blow’d comeliness, red and white,
And six feet two, as I think, he stands;
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,
And barbarous opulence Jewel-thick
Saw'd itself on his breast and his hands.

2.
Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,
I long'd so heartily then and there
To give him the grasp of fellowship;
But while I past he was humming an air,
Stops, and then with a riding whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonzola'd me from head to foot
With a sullen British stare.

3.
Why sits he here in his father's chair?
That old man never comes to his place:
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen?
For only once, in the village street,
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his face,
A gray old wolf and a lean.
Scarcely, now, would I call him a cheat;
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,
She might by a true descent be untrue;
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet.
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due
To the sweeter blood by the other side;
Her mother has been a thing complete,
However she came to be so allied.
And fair without, faithful within,
Maud to him is nothing akin:
Some peculiar mystic grace
Made her only the child of her mother,
And heap'd the whole inherited sin
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

4.
Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!
Has not his elder smiled on me?

XIV.

1.
Maud has a garden of roses
And lilies fair on a lawn;
There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower
And thin' I climb'd at dawn
And stood by her garden gate;
A lion ramps at the top,
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

2.
Maud's own little oak-room
(Which Maud, like a precious stone
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,
Lights with herself, when alone)
She sits by her music and books,
And her brother lingers late
With a roystering company looks
Upon Maud's own garden gate:
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as white
As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid
On the heap of the window, and my Delight
Had a sudden desire, like, a glorious ghost, to glide,
Like a beam of the seventh Heaven, down to my side,
There were but a step to be made.

3.
The fancy flatter'd my mind,
And again seemed overbold;
Now I thought that she cared for me,
Now I thought she was kind
Only because she was cold.

4.
I heard no sound where I stood
But the rivulet on from the lawn
Running down to my own dark wood;
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it swell'd
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;
But I look'd, and round, nil round the house I be-

The death-white curtain drawn;
Felt a horror over me creep,
Prickled my skin and catch my breath,
Knew that the death-white cortina meant but sleep,
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool of the sleep
Of death.

XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,
And I make myself such evil cheer,
That if I be dear to some one else,
Then some one else may have much to fear;
But if I be dear to some one else,
Then I should be to myself more dear.
Shall I not take care of all that I think,
Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,
If I be dear,
If I be dear to some one else?

XVI.

1.
The sun lump of earth has left his estate
The lighter by the loss of his weight;
And so he find what he went to seek,
And falsome Pleasure clog him, and drown
His heart in the gross mud-honey of town,
He may stay for a year who has gone for a week
But this is the day when I must speak,
And I see my Oread coming down,
O this is the day!
O beautiful creature, what am I
That I dare to look her way;
Think I may hold dominion sweet,
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her breast,
And dream of her beauty with tender dread,
From the delicate Arab arch of her feet
To the grace that, bright and light as the crest
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,
And she knows it not: O, if she knew it,
To know her beauty might half undo it
I know it the one bright thing to save
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from crime
Perhaps from a redshift grave.

2.
What, if she were fasten'd to this fool lord,
Dare I bid her abide by her word?
Should I love her so well if she
Had given her word to a thing so low?
Shall I love her as well if she
Can break her word were it even for me?
I trust that it is not so.

3.
Catch not my breath, O clamorous heart,
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my eye,
For I must tell her before we part,
I must tell her, or die.

XVII.

Go not, happy day,
From the shining fields,
Go not, happy day,
Till the maiden yields.
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.
When the happy Yes
Falters from her lips,
Pass and blush the news
Over the blowing ships,
Over blowing seas,
Over seas at rest.
Pass the happy news.
Blush it thro' the West,
Till the red man dance
By his red cedar-tree,
And the red man's babe
Leap, beyond the sea.
Blush from West to East,
Blush from East to West,
Till the West is East.

5.
But now shine on, and what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
The countercharm of space and hollow sky,
And do accept my madness and would die
To save from some slight shame one simple girl.

6.
Would die; for sullen-seeming Death may give
More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 't is sweet to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to pass;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

7.
Not die; but live a life of truest breath,
And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.
O, why should Love, like men in drinking-songs,
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of death?
Make answer, Maud my bliss.
Maud made my Maud by that long lover's kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this?
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself more dear."

8.
Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay?
And hark the clock within, the silver knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white,
And died to live, long as my pulses play:
But now by this my love has closed her sight
And given false death her hand, and stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell
Among the fancies of the golden day
May nothing there her maiden grace affright!
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart and ownest own farewell;
It is but for a little space I go
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night!
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow
Of your soft splendors that you look so bright?
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent too
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so:
Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

1.
Him brother is coming back to-night,
Breaking up my dream of delight.

2.
My dream! do I dream of bliss?
I have walk'd awake with Truth.
O when did a morning shine
So rich in atonement as this
For my dark Dawning youth.
Darken'd watching a mother decline
And that dead man at her heart and mine:
For who was left to watch her but I?
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

3.
I trust that I did not talk
To gentle Maud in our walk
(For often in lonely wanderings
I have carried him to lifeless things)
But I trust that I did not talk,
Not touch on her father's sin:
I am sure I did but speak
Of my mother's faded cheek
When it slowly grew so thin,
That I felt she was slowly dying
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with debt:
For how often I caught her with eyes all wet,
Shaking her head at her son and sighing.

A world of trouble within!

And Maud too, Maud was moved
To speak of the mother she loved
As one scarce less forlorn,
Dying abroad and it seems apart
From him who had ceased to share her heart,
And ever mortning over the feud,
The household Fury sprinkled with blood
By which our houses are torn;
How strange was what she said,
When only Maud and the brother
Hung over her dying bed,—
That Maud's dark father and mine
Had bound us one to the other,
Betrothed us over their wine
On the day when Maud was born;
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet breath.
Mine, mine by a right, from birth till death,
Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

But the true blood spilt had in it a heat
To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,
That, if left uncancel'd, had been so sweet:
And none of us thought of a something beyond,
A desire that awoke in the heart of the child,
As it were a duty done to the tomb,
To be friends for her sake, to be reconcil'd;
And I was cursing them and my doom,
And letting a dangerous thought run wild
While often abroad in the fragrant gloom
Of foreign churches,—I see her there,
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer.
To be friends, to be reconcil'd!

But then what a stint is he!
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,
I find whenever she touch'd on me
This brother had laugh'd her down,
And at last, when each came home,
He had darken'd into a frown,
Chill her, and forbid her to speak
To me, her friend of the years before;
And this was what had redden'd her cheek,
When I bow'd to her on the moor.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind
To the faults of his heart and mind,
I see she cannot but love him,
And says he is rough but kind,
And wishes me to approve him,
And tells me, when she lay
Sick once, with a fear of worse,
That he left his wine and horses and play,
Sat with her, read to her, night and day,
And tended her like a nurse.

Kind? but the death-bed desire
Spur'd by this heir of the lair—
Rough but kind? yet I know
It has lotted against me in this,

That he plots against me still,
Kind to Maud? that were not amis.
Well, rough but kind? why, let it be so:
For shall not Maud have her will?

For, Maud, so tender and true,
As long as my life endures
I feel I shall owe you a debt,
That I never can hope to pay;
And if ever I should forget
That I owe this debt to you
And for your sweet sake to yours;
O then, what then shall I say—
If ever I should forget,
May God make me more wretched
Than ever I have been yet!

So now I have sworn to bury
All this dead body of hate,
I feel so free and so clear
By the loss of that dead weight.
That I should grow light-headed, I fear,
Fantastically merry;
But that her brother comes, like a blight
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

Strange, that I felt so gay,
Strange that I tried to-day
To beguile her melancholy;
The Sultan, as we name him,—
She did not wish to blame him—
But he vex't her and perplex'd her
With his worldly talk and folly:
Was it gentle to reprove her
For stealing out of view
From a little lazy lover
Who but claims her as his dea?
Or for chilling his caresses
By the coldness of her manners,
Nay, the planneness of her dresses?
Now I know her but in two,
Nor can pronounce upon it
If one should ask me whether:
The habit, hat, and feather,
Or the frock and gypsy bonnet
Be the neater and completer;
For nothing can be sweeter
Than maiden Maud in either.

But to-morrow, if we live,
Our ponderous squire will give
A grand political dinner
To half the squirlings near;
And Maud will wear her jewels,
And the bird o' prey will hover,
And the timorous hope to win her
With his chirrup at her ear.

A grand political dinner
To the men of many acres,
A gathering of the Tory,
A dinner and then a dance
For the maids and marriage-makers,
And every eye but mine will glance
At Maud in all her glory.

For I am not invited,
But, with the Sultan's pardo
I am all as well delighted,
For I know her own rose-garden,
And mean to linger in it
Till the dancing will be over;
And then, O then, come out to me
For a minute, but for a minute,
Come out to your own true lover,
That your true lover may see
Your glory also, and render
All homage to his own darling,
Queen Maud in all her splendor.

XXI.
Rivulet crossing my ground,
And bringing me down from the Hill
This garden-rose that I found,
Forgetful of Maud and me,
And lost in trouble and moving round.
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
And trying to pass to the sea;
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,
My Maud has sent it by thee
(If I read her sweet will right)
On a blushning mission to me,
Saying in odor and color, "Ah, be
Among the roses to-night."

XXII.
1.
Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black hat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown.

2.
For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun that she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

3.
All night have the roses heard
The flute, violan, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine sturr'd
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

4.
I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and lond on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

5.
I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I swear to the rose,
"For ever and ever, mine."

6.
And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the musle clash'd in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

7.
From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet,
In ivories blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

8.
The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake,
As the pimpernel dozed on the lee;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The hills and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

9.
Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine, out, little head, sunning over with cure,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

10.
There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

11.
She is coming, my own, my sweet,
Were it ever so nary a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

XXIII.
1.
"The fault was mine, the fault was mine,"
Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and still,
Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the hill?
It is this guilty hand:
And there rises ever a passionate cry
From underneath in the darkening land—
What is it, that has been done?
O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,
The fires of Hell broke out of thy rising sun,
The fires of Hell and of Hate:
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a word,
When her brother ran in his rage to the gate,
He came with the baby-faced lord;
Heard'd on her terms of disgrace,
And while she wept, and I strove to be cool,
He fiercely gave me the lie,
Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,
And he struck me, madman, over the face,
Struck me before the languid fool,
Who was gaping and grinning by:
Struck for himself an evil stroke:
Wrought for his house an irredeemable woe:
For front to front in an hour we stood,
And a million horrid bellowing echoes broke
From the red-ribald hollow behind the wood,
And thunder'd up into Heaven the Christless code,
That must have life for a blow.
MAUD.

Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.
Was it he lay there with a fading eye?
"The fault was mine," he whisper'd, "fly!"
Then glided out of the joyous wood.

The ghastly Wraith of one that I know;
And there rang on a sudden a passionate cry,
A cry for a brother's blood:
It will ring in my heart and my ears, till I die, till I die.

2.
Is it gone? my pulses beat—
What was it? a lying trick of the brain?
Yet I thought I saw her stand,
A shadow there at my feet,
High over the shadowy land.
It is gone; and the heavens fall in a gentle rain,
When they should burst and drown with deluging storms.
The feeble vassals of wine and anger last,
The little hearts that know not how to forgive:
Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold Thee just,
Strike dead the whole weak race of venomous worms,
That sting each other here in the dust;
We are not worthy to live.

XXIV.

1.
See what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairly well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely memine,
A miracle of design!

2.
What is it? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

3.
The clay cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rain bow frill?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world?

4.
Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
Of my finger-nail on the sand,
Small, but a work divine,
Frail, but of force to withstand,
Year upon year, the shock
Of catarract seas that snap
The three-decker's oaken spine
A thwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand!

5.
Breton, not Briton; here
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
Of ancient fable and fear,—
Plagued with a flying to and fro,
A disease, a hard mechanic ghoast
That never came from on high
Nor ever arose from below,
But only moves with the moving eye,
Flying along the land and the main,—

Why should it look like Maud?
Am I to be overawed
By what I cannot but know
Is a juggle born of the brain?

6.
Back from the Breton coast,
Sick of a nameless fear,
Back to the dark sea-line
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;
An old song vexes my ear;
But that of Lamech is mine.

7.
For years, a measureless ill,
For years, forever, to part,—
But she, she would love me still,
And as long, O God, as she
Have a grain of love for me,
So long, no doubt, no doubt,
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
However weary, a spark of will
Not to be trampled out.

8.
Strange, that the mud, when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye,—
That it should, by being so overwrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by!
And now I remember, I,
When he lay dying there,
I noticed one of his many rings
(For he had many, poor worm) and though
It is his mother's hair.

9.
Who knows if he be dead?
Whether I need have fled?
Am I guilty of blood?
However this may be,
Comfort her, comfort her, all things good,
While I am over the sea!
Let me and my passionate love go by,
But speak to her all things holy and high,
Whatever happen to me!
Me and my harmful love go by:
But come to her walking, find her asleep,
Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,
And comfort her thou I die.

XXV.

Courage, poor heart of stone!
I will not ask thee why
Thou canst not understand
That thou art left forever alone:
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—
Or if I ask thee why,
Care not thou to reply:
She is but dead, and the time is at hand
When thou shalt more than die.

XXVI.

1.
O that 't were possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again!

2.
When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mist with kisses sweeter sweeter
Than anything on earth.

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2.  
Saw, there is one of us sobbing,  
No limit to his distress;  
And another, a lord of all things, praying  
To his own great self, as I guess;  
And another, a statesman there, betraying  
His party-secret, fool, to the press;  
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing  
The case of his patient,—all for what?  
To tickle the maggot born in an empty head,  
And wheedle a world that loves him not,  
For it is but a world of the dead.

4.  
Nothing but idiot gabble!  
For the prophecy given of old  
And then not understood,  
Has come to pass as foretold:  
Not let any man think for the public good,  
But babble, merely for babble.  
For I never whisper'd a private affair  
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,  
No, not to myself in the closet alone,  
But I heard it shouted at once from the top of the house:  
Everything came to be known:  
Who told him we were there?

5.  
Not that gray old wolf, for he came not back  
From the wilderness, full of wolves, where he used to lie;  
He has gather'd the bones for his o'ergrown whelp  
To crack;  
Crack them now for yourself, and howl, and die.

6.  
Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,  
And curse me the British vermin, the rat;  
I know not whether he came in the Hanover ship,  
But I know that he lies and listens mute  
In an ancient mansion's crannies and holes:  
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,  
Except that now we poison our babies, poor souls?  
It is all used up for that.

7.  
Tell him now: she is standing here at my head;  
Not beautiful now, not even kind;  
He may take her now; for she never speaks her mind,  
But is ever the one thing silent here.  
She is not of us, as I divine;  
She comes from another stiller world of the dead,  
Suffer, not fairer than mine.

8.  
But I know where a garden grows,  
Fairer than aught in the world beside,  
All made up of the lily and rose  
That blow by night, when the season is good,  
To the sound of dancing music and fiddles:  
It is only flowers, they had no fruit;  
And I almost fear they are not roses, but blood;  
For the keeper was one, all full of pride,  
He licks a dead man there to a spectral bride;  
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of brutes,  
Would he have that hole in his side?

9.  
But what will the old man say?  
He held a cruel snare in a pit  
To catch a friend of mine one stormy day;  
Yet now I could even weep to think of it;  
For what will the old man say  
When he comes to the second corpse in the pit?

10.  
Friend, to be struck by the public foe,  
Then to strike him and lay him low,  
That were a public merit, far,  
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin;  
But the red life split for a private blow—  
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war*  
Are scarcely even akin.

11.  
O me, why have they not buried me deep enough?  
Is it kind to have made me a grave so rough,  
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper?  
Maybe still I am but half-dead;  
Then I cannot be wholly dumb;  
I will cry to the steps above my head,  
And somebody, surely, some kind heart will come  
To bury me, bury me Deeper, ever so little deeper.

XXVIII.

1.  
My life has crept so long on a broken wing  
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,  
That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing:  
My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year  
When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,  
And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer  
And stary Gemini hang like glorious crowns  
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,  
That like a silent lightning under the stars  
She seemed to divide in a dream from a band of the best,  
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars—  
"And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,  
Knowing I tarry for thee," and pointed to Mars  
As he grow'd like a Rudy shield on the Lion's breast.

2.  
And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight  
To have lock'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair  
That had been in a weary world my one thing bright;  
And it was but a dream, yet it light'en'd my despair  
When I thought that a war would arise in defence of the right,  
That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease,  
The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,  
Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire;  
No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace  
Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languard note,  
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,  
Nor the cannon-bullet roll on a slattern shore,  
And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat  
Shall shake its thready tears in the wind no more.

3.  
And as mouths ran on and rumor of battle grew,  
"It is time, it is time, O passionate heart," said I  
(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and true),  
"It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,  
That old hysterical mock-disease should die."  
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath  
With a loyal people shouting a battle cry,  
Till I saw the dreamy phantom arise and fly  
Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

4.  
Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims  
Of a land that has lost for a little her last of gold,  
And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shame,
THE BROOK.

AN IDYL.

'Hence, by this brook, we parted; I to the East
And he for Italy—too late—too late:
One whom the strong sons of the world despise;
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,
And mellow metres more than cent for cent:
Nor could he understand how money breeds,
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself could make
The thing that is not as the thing that is.
O had he lived! In our school-books we say,
Of those that held their heads above the crowd,
They flourish'd then or then; but life in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
And nothing perfect; yet the brook he loved,
For which, in brandling summers of Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Nellgherry air,
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose favours of the boy,
To me that loved him; for 'O brook,' he says,
'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in his rhyme,
'Whence come you?' and the brook, why not replies.

I come from haunts of coy and herd,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorp's, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
It has more ivy there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharp and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and hollow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

'But Philip chatter'd more than brook or bird;
Old Philip; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,
And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

'O darling Katie Willows, his one child!
A maiden of our century, yet most meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse;
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

'Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
Her and her far-off cousins and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart with her.
For here I came, twenty years back,—the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund; crost
By that old bridge which, half in ruts then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry—crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and sizzling hinge,
Stuck; and he clamor'd from a casement, 'run!'—To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
'Run, Katie.' Katie never ran; she moved
To meet me, wading under woodland bowers,
A little flutter'd with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushings for a boon.

'What was it? less of sentiment than sense
Had Katie; not illiterate; neither one
Who babbling in the fount of fictive tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouthed philanthropies
Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

'She told me. She and James had quarrel'd
Why?
What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;
James had no cause: but when I press the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering jealousies
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James? I said,
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from mine,
And sketching with her slender-pointed foot
Some figure like a wizard's pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd.
If James were coming. 'Coming every day,' she answered, 'ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke him short;
And James departed vex with him and her.'
How could I help her? 'Would I—was it wrong?'
Cheap hands, and that pell-mell grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke
'O would I take her father for one hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to me!' And even while she spoke, I saw where James
Made towards us, as like a wave in the surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

"O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!
For in I went and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm; full willingly he rose:
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes
Of his wheat suburb, babbling as he went.
He praised his land, his horses, his machines;
He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his dogs;
He praised his beasts, his geese, his ginea-hens;
His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
Approved him, bowing at their own deserts:
Then from the plaintive mother's teat, he took
Her billy and shuddering puppies, naming each,
And naming those, his friends, for whom they were:
Then cross the common into Darnley chase
To show Sir Arthur's deer. In cope and fern
Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail,
Then, seated on a bench and looking on,
He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said:
'That was the four-year-old I sold the squire.
And there he told a long, long-winded tale
Of how the squire had seen the colt at grass,
And how It was the thing his daughter wish'd,
And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
To learn the price, and what the price he ask'd,
And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He gave him line; and five days after that
He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece.
Who then and there had offer'd something more,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He knew the man; the colt would fetch its price;
He gave them line; and how by chance at last
(If might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)
He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him in,
And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,
Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

"Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,
Poor fellow, could he help it? recommended,
And ran thro' all the colitive chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantrivy, Tallyho,
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt,
Archaes and Phenomenon, and the rest,
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
And with me Philip, talking still; and so
We turn'd our foreheads from the falling sun,
And following our own shadows thrice as long
As when they follow'd us from Philip's door,
Arrived, and found the son of sweet content
Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things well.

I steal by lanes and grassy spots,
I slip by hazel copses;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.
I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallow;
I make the nettled sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.
I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;
And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming brook,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

Yes, men may come and go; and these are gone,
All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps,
Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi; sleeps in peace, and he,
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:
I scraped the lichen from it: Katie walks
By the long wash of Australasian seas
Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
And breathes in converse seasons. All are gone.'

So Lawrence Aymer, seated on a stile
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook
A tusked head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low breath
Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings:
And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,
Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared
On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within:
Then, wondering, ask'd her, "Are you from the farm?"
"Yes," answer'd she. "Pray stay a little: pardon me;
What do they call you?" "Katie." "That were strange.
What surname?" "Willows." "No!" "That is my name.
"Indeed?" and here he look'd so self-perplexed,
That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he
Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a glistening strangeness in his dream.
Then looking at her; "Too happy, fresh and fair,
Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,
To be the ghost of one who bore your name
About these meadows, twenty years ago."

"Have you not heard?" said Katie, "we came back.
We bought the farm we tentated before.
Am I so like her? so they said on board.
Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
My mother, as It seems you did, the days
That most she loves to talk of, come with me.
My brother James is in the harvest-field:
But she—you will be welcome—O, come in!"

THE LETTERS.

1.
Striv on the tower stood the vane,
A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,
I peer'd athwart the channel pale
And saw the altar cold and bare.
A clog of lead was round my feet,
A band of pain across my brow:
"Cold altar, Hearen and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow."

2.
I turn'd and humm'd a bitten song,
That mock'd the wholesome human heart,
And then we met in wrath and wrong,
We met, but only meant to part.
ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

1. Ditty the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leader falls,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

2. Where shall we lay the man we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those who wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his boxes forevermore.

3. Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

4. Mourn, for to us he seems the last.
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is dead:
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood foursquare to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victory will be seen no more.

5. All is over and done:
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be tol'd:
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest forever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be tol'd:
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds:
Bright let it be with his blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be tol'd:
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a thine in many a clime
His captain's ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom:
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame:
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemp'ted frame.
O civic name, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-ringing avenues of song.

6. Who is he that cometh, like an honor'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?
Mighty seaward, this is he
Who was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of martial drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes:
For this is he.
ODA ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

Was great by land as thou by sea; His foes were thine; he kept us free O give him welcome, this is he, Worthy of our greetings, And worthy to be laid by thee; For this is England's greatest son, He that gained a hundred fights, Nor ever lost an English gun; This is he that far away Against the myriads of Assaye Clash'd with his fiery few and won; And underneath another sun, Warring on a later day, Hound affrighted Truth to drew The treble works, the vast designs Of his labor'd rampart-lines, Where he greatly stood at bay, Whence he issued forth snow, And ever great and greater grew, Beating from the wasted vines Back to France her banded swarms, Back to France with countless blows, Till o'er the hills her eagles flew Past the Pyrenean hoar. Follow'd up in valley and glen With blare of bugle, clamor of men, Roll of cannon and clash of arms, And England pouring on her foes. Such a war had such a close, Again their ravening eagle rose In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings, And barking for the thrones of kings; Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown On that loud salubrity shone the spoiler down; A day of onsets of despair! Dush'd on every rocky square Their surging charges foam'd them away; East, the Prussian trumpet blow; Thro' the long-tormented air, Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray. And down we swept and charged and overthrew. So great a soldier taught us there, What long-enduring hearts could do In that world's-earthquake, Watercowl! Mighty sea-man, tender and true, And pure as he from talk't of craven guile, O saviour of the silver-coasted isle, O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile, If aught of things that be belial, Touch a spirit among things divine, If love of country move thee there at all, Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine! And thro' the centuries let a people's voice In full acclaim, A people's voice, The proof and echo of all human fame, A people's voice, when they rejoice At civil revel and pomp and game, Attest their great commander's claim With honor, honor, honor to him, Eternal honor to his name.

7. A people's voice! we are a people yet. Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers; Thank Him who idled us here, and roughly set His Saxon in blown seas and storming showers, We have a voice, with which to pay the debt Of boundless love and reverence and regret To those great men who fought, and kept it ours. And keep it ours, O God, from brute control; O Statesmen, guard as, guard the eye, the soul Of Europe, keep the England whole, And save the one true seed of freedom sown Between a people and their ancient throne, That sober freedom out of which there springs Our loyal passion for our temperate kings;

For, saving that, ye help to save mankind Till public wrong be crammed into dust, And drill the raw world for the march of mind, Till custom's length be England's crowns be just. But wink no more in slothful overtrust. Remember him who led your hosts; He bade you guard the sacred coasts. Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall; His voice is silent in your council-hall Forever, and whatever tempests lower Forever silent; even if they broke In thunder, silent; yet remember all He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke; Who never sold the truth to serve the hour, Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power; Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow Thro' either babbling world of high and low; Whose life was work, whose language rife With rugged maxims hewn from life; Who never spoke against a foe; Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke All great self-seekers trampling on the right; Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named; Truth-lover was our English Wolfe, Whatever record leap to light He never shall be shamed.

8. Lo, the leader in these glorious wars Now to glorious burial slowly borne, Follow'd by the brave of other lands. He, on whom from both her open hands Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars, And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn. Yes, let all good things await Him who cares not to be great, But as he saves or serves the state. Not once or twice in our rough island-story, The path of duty was the way to glory: He that walks it, only thirsting For the right, and learns to deaden Love of self, before his journey closes, He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting Into glossy purples, which outredden All voluptuous garden-roses. Not once or twice in our fair island-story, The path of duty was the way to glory: He, that ever following her commands, On with toil of heart and knees and hands, Thro' the long gorgo to the far light has won His path upward, and protects'd, Shall find the topping crags of Duty sealed Are close upon the shining table-lands To which our God Himself is moon and sun. Such was he; his work is done. But while the races of mankind endure, Let his great example stand Colossal, seen of every land, And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure; Till in all lands and thro' all human story The path of duty be the way to glory: And let the land whose hearts he saved from shame For many and many an age proclaim At civil revel and pomp and game, And when the long-illumined cities flame, Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame, With honor, honor, honor to him, Eternal honor to his name.

9. Peace, his triumph will be sung By some yet unsmouldered tongue For in summers that we shall not see Peace, it is a day of pain For one about whose patriarchal knee Late the little children sung: O peace, it is a day of pain
For one upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung,
Ours the pain, be his the gain!
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere.
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn scene:
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round as, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hash, the Dead March walks in the people's ears:
The dark crowd moves, and there are sob and tears:
The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust:
He is gone who seemed so great.—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in state,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can wear him.
But speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.
1852.

THE DAISY.
WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O Love, what hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern pine;
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road;
How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campani grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue;
Where, here and there, on sandy beaches
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
Yet present in his Natal grove,
Now watching high on mountain cornice,
And steering, now, from apurple cove,
Now pacing mute by ocean's rim;
Till, in a narrow street and dim,
I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyalty drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
Not the elipt palm of which they boast;
But distant color, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,
Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green;
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,
Where oleanders finish'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread;
And, crossing, oft we saw the glimpse
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and cold,
Those nicked shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours;
What drives about the fresh Cassine,
Or walks in Boboll's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or domo, sunny-sweet,
Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Tiro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we owest the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain:
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma;
At Lodi, rain, Pievezua, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles;
Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazing fires,
The height, the space, the gloom, the glory:
A mount of marble, a hundred spires!

I climb'd the roofs at break of day;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.
I trod among the silent statues,
And statued pinacles, mute as they.

How faintly-dusky'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como; shower and storm and blast
Had driven the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flood'd; and how we past.

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-barthue music, kept,
As on the Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shade,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agave above the lake.

What more? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splugen drew,
But ere we reach'd the highest summit
I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.
TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.—THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE. 

It told of England then to me,  
And now it tells of Italy.  
O love, we two shall go no longer  
To lands of summer across the sea;  
So dear a life your arms enfold  
Whose crying is a cry for gold:  
Yet here to-night in this dark city,  
When lil and weary, alone and cold,  
I found, tho’ crush’d to hard and dry,  
This nurling of another sky —  
Still in the little book you lent me,  
And where you tenderly laid it by:  
And I forgot the clouded Fort,  
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth,  
The bitter east, the misty summer  
And gray metropolis of the North.  
Perchance, to dull the throbs of pain,  
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,  
Perchance, to dream you still beside me,  
My fancy fled to the South again.  

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.  
Come, when no graver cares employ,  
God-father, come and see your boy:  
Your presence will be sun in winter,  
Making the little one leap for joy.  
For, being of that honest few,  
Who give the Fiend himself his due,  
Should eighty thousand college councils  
Thunder “Anathema,” friend, at you:  
Should all our churchmen foam in spite  
At you, so careful of the right,  
Yet one lay-hearth would give you welcome  
(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight:  
Where, far from noise and smoke of town,  
I watch the twilight falling brown  
All round a careless-order’d garden  
Close to the ridge of a noble down.  
You’ll have no espadril while you dice,  
But honest talk and wholesome wine,  
And only hear the mangle gossip  
Garrulons under a roof of pine:  
For groves of pine on either hand,  
To break the blast of winter, stand;  
And a little further on, the hoary Channel  
Tumbles a breaker on chalk and sand;  
Where, if below the milky steep  
Some ship of battle slowly creep,  
And on thro’ zones of light and shadow  
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,  
We might discuss the Northern sin  
Which made a selfish war begin;  
Dispute the claims, arrange the chances;  
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win:  
Or whether war’s avenging rod  
Shall lash all Europe into blood;  
Till you should turn to dearer matters,  
Dear to the man that is dear to God;  
How best to help the slender store,  
How mend the dwellings, of the poor;  
How gain in life, as life advances,  
Valor and charity more and more.  

Come, Maurice, come: the lawn as yet  
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet;  
But when the wreath of March has blossom’d,  
Crocus, anemone, violet,  
Or later, pay one visit here,  
For these are few we hold as dear;  
Nor pay but one, but come for many,  
Many and many a happy year.  

January, 1854.  

WILL.  

1.  
O well for him whose will is strong!  
He suffers, but he will not suffer long;  
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong:  
For him nor moves the loud world’s random mock,  
Nor all Calamity’s longest waves confound,  
Who seems a promontory of rock,  
That, compass’d round with turbulent sound,  
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,  
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown’d.  

2.  
But ill for him who, bettering not with time,  
Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended Will,  
And ever weaker grows thro’ acted crime,  
Or seeming-genial venial fault,  
Recurring and suggesting still!  
He seems as one whose footsteps  
Toiling in immeasurable sand,  
And o’er a weary, sultry land,  
Far beneath a blazing vault,  
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,  
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.  

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.  

1.  
Half a league, half a league,  
Half a league onward,  
All in the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.  
"Forward, the Light Brigade!"  
"Charge for the guns!" he said;  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.  

2.  
"Forward, the Light Brigade!"  
Was there a man dismay’d?  
Not tho’ the soldier knew  
Some one had blunder’d:  
Theirs not to make reply,  
Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do and die,  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.  

3.  
Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon in front of them  
Volley’d and thunder’d,  
Storm’d at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well,  
Into the jaws of Death,  
Into the mouth of Hell  
Rode the six hundred.
DEDICATION.—THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

4. Flash'd all their sabres bare, 
Flash'd as they turn'd in air, 
Sabring the gunners there, 
Charging an army, while 
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke, 
Right thro' the line they broke; 
Cossack and Russian 
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke 
Shatter'd and sons'der. 
Then they rode back, but not, 
Not the six hundred.

5. Cannon to right of them, 
Cannon to left of them, 
Cannon behind them 
Volley'd and thunder'd; 
Storm'd at with shot and shell, 
While horse and hero fell. 
They that had fought so well 
Came thro' the jaws of Death, 
Back from the mouth of Hell, 
All that was left of them, 
Left of six hundred.

6. When can their glory fade? 
O wild charge they made! 
All the world wonder'd. 
Honor the charge they made! 
Honor the Light Brigades! 
Noble six hundred!

IDYLS OF THE KING.

"Fla Regem Arthurem." 
JOSEPH OF EXETER.

DEDICATION.
These to His Memory—since he held them dear, 
Perhaps as finding there unconsciously 
Some image of himself—I dedicate, 
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears— 
These Idyls.

And indeed He seems to me 
Scarce other than my own ideal knight, 
"Who reverence his conscience as his king; 
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong; 
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd to it. 
Who knowing all who clave to her—" 
Her—over all whose realms to their last isle, 
Commingled with the gloom of imminent war, 
The shadow of His loss moved like eclipse, 
Darkening the world. We have lost him: he is gone: 
We know him now: all narrow jealousies 
Are silent: and we see him as he moved, 
How modest, kindly, all accomplish'd, wise, 
With what sublime repression of himself, 
And in what limits, and how tenderly; 
Not swaying to this faction or that; 
Not making his high place the lawless perch 
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-ground 
For pleasure: but thro' all this tract of years 
Wearing the white flower of a blameless life, 
Before a thousand peering littlenesses, 
In that fierce light which beats upon a throne, 
And blackens every blot; for where is he, 
Who dares foreshadow for an only son 
A loverlike life, a more unstain'd, than his? 
Or how should England dreaming of his sons 
Hope more for these than some inheritance 
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine, 
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be, 
Laborious for her people and her poor— 
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day— 
Far-sighted summower of War and Waste 
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace— 
Sweet nature gilded by the gracions gleam 
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Arts, 
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince indeed, 
Beyond all titles, and a household name, 
Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure; 
Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure, 
Remembering all the beauty of that star 
Which shone so close beside Thee, that ye made 
One light together, but has past and left 
The Crown of lonely splendor.

May our love, 
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee, 
The love of all Thy sons encompass Thee, 
The love of all Thy daughters cherish Thee, 
The love of all Thy people comfort Thee, 
Till God's love set Thee at his side again.

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.
LEODGAN, the King of Camelward, 
Had one fair daughter, and none other child; 
And she was fairest of all flesh on earth: 
Guinevere, and in her he one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur came 
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war 
Each upon other, wasted all the land; 
And still from time to time the heathen host 
Swarm'd overseas, and harried what was left. 
And so there grew great tracts of wilderness, 
Wherein the beast was ever more and more, 
But man was less and less, till Arthur came. 
For first Aurelius lived and fought and died, 
And after him King Uther fought and died, 
But either fain'd to make the kingdom one. 
And after these King Arthur for a space, 
And thro' the prowess of his Table Round, 
Drew all their petty princes under him, 
Their king and head, and made a realm, and reign'd.

And thus the land of Camelward was waste, 
Thick with wild wolves, and many a beast therein, 
And none or few to scare or chase the beast; 
So that wild dog and wolf and boar and bear 
Came night and day, and rooted in the fields, 
And wallow'd in the gardens of the king. 
And ever and anon the wolf would steal 
The children and devour, but now and then, 
Her own brood lost or dead, lent her fierce test 
To human sucklings: and the children, housed 
In her foul den, there at their meat would growl 
And mock their foster-mother on four feet, 
Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-like men, 
Worse than the wolves: and King Leodegran 
Groun'd for the Roman legions here again, 
And Caesar's eagle: then his brother king, 
Bience, assay'd him: last a heathen horde, 
Reddening the sun with smoke and earth with blood, 
And on the spike that split the mother's heart 
Spitting the child, brake on him, till, amazed, 
He knew not whither he should turn for aid.
THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

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But—for he heard of Arthur newly crowned, Tho' not without an uproar made by those Who cried, "He is not Uther's son"—the king Sent to him, saying, "Arise, and help us thou! For here between the man and beast we die." And Arthur yet had done no deed of arms, But heard the call, and came: and Guinevere Stood by the castle walls to watch him pass; But since she neither wore on helm or shield The golden symbol of his kingliness, But rode a simple knight among his knights, And many of these in riper arms than he, She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she saw, One of them many, tho' his face was bare. But Arthur, looking downward as he pass, Felt the light of her eyes into his life Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and pitch'd His tent beside the forest: and he drave The heathen, and he slew the beast, and fell'd The forest, and let in the sun, and made Broad pathways for the hunter and the knight, And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there, A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the hearts Of those great Lords and Barons of his realm Flash'd forth and into war: for most of these Made head against him, crying, "Who is he That shall ride upon this boar that battl'd him King Uther's son? for lo! we look at him. And find nor face nor bearing, limbs nor voice, Are like to those of Uther whom we knew. This is the son of Gorlois, not the king. Tis the son of Anton, not the king."

And Arthur, passing thence to battle, felt Travail, and threes and agencies of the life, Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere; And thinking as he rode, "Her father said That there between the man and beast they die. Shall I not lift her from this land of beasts Up to my throne, and side by side with me? What happiness to reign a lonely king, Vext—O ye stars that shoulder over me, 0 earth, that soundest hollow under me, Vext with waste dreams! for saving I be join'd To her that is the fairest under heaven, I seem as nothing in the mighty world, And cannot will my work nor work my will. Wholly, nor make myself in mine own realm Victor and lord; but were I join'd with her, Then might we live together as one life, And reigning with one will in everything Have power on this dark land to lighten it, And power on this dead world to make it live."

And Arthur from the field of battle sent Ulius, and Brastias, and Bedivere, His new-made knights, to King Legodrogan, Saying, "If in slight have served thee well, Give me thy daughter Guinevere to wife." Whom when he heard, Legodrogan in heart Debating—"How should I that am a king, However much he help me at my need, Give my one daughter saving to a king, And a king's son—lifted his voice, and call'd A hoary man, his chamberlain, to whom He trusted all things, and of him required His counsel: "Knowest thou anight of Arthur's birth?"

Then spake the hoary chamberlain and said, "Sir King, there be but two old men that know: And each is twice as old as I; and one Is Merlin, the wise man that ever serv'd King Uther thro' his magic art; and one Is Merlin's master (so they call him) Bleys, Who taught him magic; but the scholar ran Before the master, and so far, that Bleys Laid magic by, and sat him down, and wrote All things and whatsoever Merlin did In one great annal-book, were almost years Will learn the secret of our Arthur's birth."

To whom the king Legodrogan reply'd, 
"O friend, had I been holpen half as well By this King Arthur as by thee to-day, Then beast and man had had their share of me: But summon here before us yet once more Ulius, and Brastias, and Bedivere."

Then, when they came before him, the king said, "I have seen the cuckoo chased by lesser fowl, And reason in the chase: but wherefore now Do these your lords stir up the heat of war, Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois', Others of Anton? Tell me, ye yourselves, Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's son?"

And Ulius and Brastias answer'd, "Ay,"

Then Bedivere, the first of all his knights, Knighted by Arthur at his crowning, spake,— For bold in heart and act and word he was, Whenever slander breathed against the king,— "Sir, there be many rumors on this head: For there be those who hate him in their hearts, Call him baseborn, and since his ways are sweet, And theirs be bestial, hold him less than man: And there be those who deem him more than man, And dream he drop from heaven: but my belief In this matter—so ye care to learn— Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's time The prince and warrior Gorlois, he that held Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea, Was wedded with a winsome wife, Ygerna: And daughters had she borne him,—one whereof Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bellicent, Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved To Arthur,—but a son she had not borne. And Uther cast upon her eyes of love: But she, a stainless wife to Gorlois, So loathed the bright dishonor of his love That Gorlois and King Uther went to war: And overthrown was Gorlois and slain. Then Uther in his wrath and head besieg'd Ygerna at Tintagil, where her home was seen The mighty swarm about their walls, Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd in, And there was none to call to but himself So, compass'd by the power of the king, Enforced she was to wed him in her tears, And with a shameful swiftness; afterward, Not many moons, King Uther died himself, Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule After him, lest the realm should go to wrack. And that same night, the night of the new year, By reason of the bitterness and grief That vext his mother, all before his time Was Arthur born, and all as soon as born Deliver'd at a secret postern-gate To Merlin, to be holden far apart. Until his hour should come; because the lords Of that fierce day were as the lords of this, Wild beasts, and surely would have torn the child Piecemeal among them, had they known; for each But sought to rule for his own self and hand, And many hated Uther for the sake Of Gorlois: wherefore Merlin took the child, And gave him to Sir Anton, an old knight And ancient friend of Uther; and his wife Married the young prince, and reas'd him with her own: And no man knew: and ever since the lords Have foughten like wild beasts among themselves,
So that the realm has gone to wrack: but now, This year, when Merlin (for his hour had come) Brought Arthur forth, and set him in the hall, Proclaiming: 'Here is the true lord of the ring, A hundred voices cried, 'Away with him!' No king of ours! a son of Gorlois he: Or else the child of Antion and no king, Or else baseborn.' Yet Merlin thro' his craft And while the people clamor'd for a king Had Arthur crown'd; but after, the great lords Banded, and so brake out in open war."

Then while the king debated with himself If Arthur were the child of shamefulness, Or born the son of Gorlois, after death, Or Uther's son, and born before his time, Or whether there were truth in anything Said by these three, there came to Camelard, With Gawain and young Mordred, her two sons, Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bellicom; Whom as he could, not as he would, the king Made fast for, saying, as they sat at meat, "A doubtful throne is ice on summer seas— Ye come from Arthur's court: think ye this king— So few his knights, however brave they be— Hath body now to bow his foemen down?"

"O king," she cried, "and I will tell thee: few, Few, but all brave, all of one mind with him; For I was near him when the savage yells Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur sat Crowned on the dais, and his warriors cried, 'Be thou the king, and we will work thy will Who love thee.' Then the king in low deep tones, And simple words of great authority, Bound them by so strait vows to his own self, That when they rose, knighted from kneeling, some Were pale as at the passing of a ghost, Some their'd, and others dazed, as one who wakes Half-blind in the coming of a light.

"But when he spake and cheered his Table Round With large, divine, and comfortable words Beyond my tongue to tell thee—if beheld From eye to eye thro' all their Order flash A momentary likeness of the king: And ere it left their faces, thro' the cross And those around it and the crucifix, Down from the casement over Arthur, smote Flame-color, vert, and azure, in three rays, One falling upon each of three fair queens, Who stood in silence near his throne, the friends Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright, Sweet faces, who will help him at his need."

"And there I saw mage Merlin, whose vast wit And hundred winters are but as the hands Of loyal vassals tolling for their lige."

"And near him stood the Lady of the lake,— Who knows a subtler magic than his own,— Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful. She gave the king his huge cross-hilted sword, Whereby to drive the heathen out: a mist Of incense curl'd about her, and her face Wellnigh was hidden in the minister gloom, But there was heard among the holy hymns A voice as of the waters, for she dwells Down in a deep, calm, whatsoever storms May shake the world, and, when the surface rolls, Hath power to walk the waters like our Lord."

"There likewise I beheld Excalibur Before him at his crowning hours, the sword That rose from out the bosom of the lake, And Arthur row'd across and took it,—Rich With jewels, elin Urim, on the hilt, Bewildering heart and eye,—the blade so bright That men are blinded by it,—on one side, Grave in the oldest tongue of all this world, Take thou turn the blade on shall see, And written in the speech ye speak yourself, 'Cast me away!' and sad was Arthur's face Taking it, but old Merlin counsel'd him, 'Take thou and strike! the time to cast away Is yet far off;' so this great brand the king Took, and by this will beat his foemen down."

Thercet Leodogran rejoiced, but thought To silt his doubts to the last, and ask'd, Fixing full eyes of question on her head. "The arrow bow and the swift are near akin, But thou art closer to this noble prince, Being his own dear sister;' and she said, "Daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne am I; And therefore Arthur's sister," asked the King. She answer'd, "These be secret things," and sign'd To those two sons to pass and let them be. And Gawain went, and breaking into song Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying hair Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw! But Mervael laid his ear beside the spires, And there half heard; the same that afterward Struck for the throne, and, striking, found his doom."

And then the Queen made answer, "What know I? For dark my mother was in eyes and hair, And dark in hair and eyes am I; and dark was Gorlois, yea, and dark was Uther too. Wellnigh to blackness, but this king is fair Beyond the race of Britons and of men. Moreover always in my mind I heard A cry from out the dawning of my life, A mother weeping, and I hear her say, 'Oh that ye had some brother, pretty one, To guard thee on the rough ways of the world.'"

"Ay," said the King, "and hear ye such a cry? But when did Arthur chance upon thee first?"

"O king," she cried, "and I will tell thee true: He found me first when yet a little maid— Beaten I had been for a little fault Whereof I was not guilty; and out I ran And hung myself down on a bank of heath, And hated this fair world and all thereon, And wept, and wish'd that I were dead; and he— I know not whether of himself he came, Or brought by Merlin, who, they say, can walk Unseen, at pleasure—he was at my side, And speake sweet words, and comforted my heart, And dried my tears, being a child with me. And many a time he came, and evermore, As I grew, greater grew with me; and sad At times he seemed, and sad with him was I, Stern too at times, and then I loved him not, But sweet again, and then I loved him well. And now of late I see him less and less, But those first days had golden hours for me, For then I surely thought he would be king."

"But let me tell thee now another tale: For Bley, our Merlin's master, as they say, Died but of late, and sent his cry to me. To hear him speak before he left his life. Shrank like a fairy changeling lay the mage, And when I enter'd, told me that himself And Merlin ever serv'd about the king. Uther, before he died, and on the night When Uther in Tintagel past away Moaning and wailing for an heir, the two Left (the still king, and passing forth to breathe), Then to the castle gateway by the cham Descending thro' the dismal night—a night In which the bounds of heaven and earth were lost-
Behold, so high upon the dreary deeps
It seem'd in heaven—a ship, the shape thereof
A dragon wing'd, and all from stem to stern
Bright with a shining people on the decks,
And gave as soon as the breeze flew
Dropt to the cove and watch'd the great sea fall,
Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
Till, last, a nigh one, gathering half the deep
And full of voices, slowly rose and plumped
Roaring, and all the wave was in a dame:
And down the wave and in the flame was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merline's feet,
Who stoop'd and caught the babe, and cried, "The King!"
Here is an heir for Uther! and the fringe
Of that great breaker, sweeping up the strand,
Lash'd at the wizard as he spake the word,
And all at once all round him rose in fire,
So that the child and he were clothed in fire.
And presently thereafter follow'd calm,
Free sky and stars: 'And this same child,' he said,
'Is he who reigns; nor could I part in peace
Till this were told.' And saying this the seer
Went thro' the strait and dreadful pass of death,
Never to be quitted by mortal eye.
Save on the further side; but when I met
Merlin, and ask'd him if these things were truth,—
The shining dragon and the naked child
Descending in the glory of the seas,
He dress'd as his- and answer'd me in
Riddling triplets of old time, and said:
"'Rain, rain, rain! a rainbow in the sky!
A young man will be wiser by and by:
An old man's wit may wander ere he die.
Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the lea!
And truth is this to me, and that to thee;
And truth or clothed or naked let it be.
Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows:
Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows?
From the great deep to the great deep he goes.'

"So Merlin, riddling, anger'd me; but then
Fear not to give this king thine only child,
Geliwaver: so great hard's of him will sing
Hereafter, and dark sayings from of old
Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of men,
And echo'd by old folks beside their fires
For comfort after their wage-work is done,
So spoke the king; me with his voice:
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn,
That no man may wound him, that he will not die,
But pass, again to come; and then or now
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
Till these and all men hall him for their king.'
She spake and King Leodogran rejoiced,
But musing: "Shall I answer yea or nay?"
Doubt and drowsed, nodded and slept, and saw,
Dreaming, a slope of land that never grew,
*Field after field, up to a height, the peak
Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom king,
Now looming, and now lost; and on the slope
The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd was driven,
Fire glimpsed; and all the land from roof and rich
In drifts of smoke before a rolling wind
Stream'd to the peak, and mingled with the haze
And made it thicker; while the phantom king
Sent out at times a voice; and here or there
Saw'd he who pointed toward the voices, the rest
Slew on and burnt, crying, "No king of ours,
No son of Uther, and no king of ours!"
Till with a wink his dream was changed, the haze
Descended, and the solid earth became
As nothing, and the full moon rose in heaven,
Crow'n'd; and Leodogran awoke, and sent
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere
Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.

Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved
And honor'd most, Sir Lancelot, to ride forth
And bring the Queen;—and watch'd him from the gates.
And Lancelot past away among the flowers,
(For then was later April) and return'd
Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere.
To whom arrived, by Dubric the high saint,
Chief of the church in Britain, and before
The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the king
That morn was married, while in staisness whit,
The fair beginners of a nobler time,
And glorying in their vows and him, his knights
Stood round him, and rejoicing in his joy.
And holy Dubric spread his hands and spake
"Regin ye, and live and love, and make the world
Other, and may thy Queen be one with thee,
And all this Order of thy Table Round
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their king."

Then at the marriage feast came in from Rome,
The slowly-fadling mistress of the world,
Great lords, who claim'd the tribute as of yore.
But Arthur spake, "Behold, for these have sworn
To fight my wars, and worship me their king;
The old order changeth, yielding place to new;
And we that fight for our fair father Christ,
Seeing that ye be grown too weak and old
To drive the heathen from your Roman wall,
No tribute will we pay:"
so those great lords
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove with Rome.

And Arthur and his knighthood for a space
Were all one will, and thro' that strength the king
Drew in the petty princes under him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm and reign'd.

ENID.

The brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court,
A tributary prince of Devon, one
Of that great order of the Table Round,
Had wedded Enid, Yniol's only child,
And loved her, as he loved the light of Heaven.
And as the light of Heaven varies, now
At noonday, and noon, newborn and bright
With moon and trembling stars, so loved Geraint
To make her beauty vary day by day,
In crimson and in purples and in gems.
And Enid, but to please her husband's eye,
Who first had found and loved her in a state
Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him
In some fresh splendor; and the Queen herself,
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service done.
Loved her, and often with her own white hands
Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveliest,
Next after her own self, in all the court.
And Enid loved the Queen, and with true heart
Adored her, as the stateliest and the best
And loveliest of all women upon earth.
And seeing them so tender and so close,
Long in their common love rejoiced Geraint.
But when a rumor rose about the Queen,
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,
Though yet there lived no proof, nor yet was heard
The word whisper'd, breaking in the storm.
Not less Geraint believed it; and there fell
A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,
Thro' that great tenderness to Guinevere,
Had suffered or should suffer any taint
In nature or in name, under his power.
He made this pretext, that his principum lay
Close on the borders of a territory,
Wherein were bandit ears, and catiffl knights,
Assassins, and all flyers from the hand
Of Justice, and whatever loathes a law:
And therefore, till the king himself should please
To cleanse this common sewer of all his realm,
He craved a fair permission to depart,
And there defend his marches; and the king
Mus'd for a little on his plea, but, last, last,
Allowing it, the prince and Enid rode,
And fifty knights rode with them, to the shores
Of Severn, and they past to their own land;
Where, thinking, that if ever yet was wife
True to her lord, mine shall be so to me,
He compassed her with sweet observances
And worship, never waning her, and grew
Forgetful of his promise to the king,
Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,
Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,
Forgetful of his glory and his name,
Forgetful of his præstesdom and its cares.
And this forgetfulness was hateful to her,
And by and by the people, when they met
In two and three, or fuller companies,
Began to scoff and jeer and babble of him
As a prince whose manhood was all gone,
And molten down in mere uxoriousness.
And this she gather'd from the people's eyes:
This too the women who atti class her head,
To please her, dwelling on his boundless love,
To make Enid, and them, and the money'd herd ofBed,
And day by day she thought to tell Geraint,
But could not out of bashful delicacy;
While he that watch'd her sadder, was the more
Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last, it chac'd that on a summer morn
(They sleeping each by other) the new sun
Beat through the blindless casement of the room,
And heated the strong warrior in his dreams;
Who, moving, cast the coverted arms
And bowed the knotted column of his throat,
The massive square of his heroic breast,
And arms on which the standing muscle sloped,
As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
Running too vehemently to break upon it.
And Enid woke and sat beside the couch,
Admiring him, and thought within herself,
Was ever man so grandly made as he?
Then, like a shadow, past the people's talk
And accusation of uxoriousness
Across her mind, and bowing over him,
Low to her own heart pitiously, she said:

"O noble breast and all-puissant arms,
Am I the cause, I the poor cause that men
Reproach you, saying all your force is gone?
I am the cause because I dare not speak
And tell him what I think and what they say.
And yet I hate that he should linger here;
I cannot love my lord and not his name.
Far better had I gird my harquebus on him,
And ride with him to battle and stand by,
And watch his mightfull hand striking great blows
At calidrs and at wrongers of the world.
Far better were I laid in the dark earth,
Not hearing any more my noble voice,
Not to be folded any more in these dear arms,
And darken'd from the high light in his eyes,
Than that my lord through me should suffer shame.
Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,
And see my dear lord, his loaded lance stiff,
Or may be pierced to death before mine eyes,
And yet not dare to tell him what I think,
And how men slur him, saying all his force
Is melted into mere effeminacy?
O me, I fear that I am no true wife."

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,
And the strong passion in her made her weep
'True tears upon his broad and naked breast,
And these awoke him, and by great mischance
He heard but fragments of her later words,
And that she feared she was not a true wife.
And then he thought, "In spite of all my care,
For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,
She is not faithful to me, and I see her
Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall."
Then that he loved and reverence too much
To dream she could be guilty of foul act,
Righth thro' his manifold breast darted the pang
That makes a man in the sweet face of her
Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.
At this her heart's his toughser limber, out of bed,
And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,
"My charger and her palfrey," then to her,
"I will ride forth into the wilderness;
For tho' it seems my sports are yet to win,
I have not fall'n so low as some would wish.
And you, put on your worst and meanest dress
And ride with me." And Enid ask'd amazed,
"If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault."
But he, "I charge you, ask not, but obey."
Then she being bow'd of her of a faded silk,
A faded mantle and a faded veil,
And moving toward a cedars cabinet,
Wherein she kept them folded reverently
With sprig of summer laid between the folds,
She took them, and the moment's breathless time
Remembers when first he came on her
Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey to her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the court.

For Arthur on the Whitianside before
Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.
There on a day, he sitting high in hall,
Before him came a forester of Dean,
Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart
Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,
First seen that day: these things he told the King
Then the good king gave order to let blow
His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.
And when the Queen petition'd for his leave
To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.
So with the morning all the court were gone.
But Guinevere lay late into the morn,
Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love
For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt;
But rose at last, a single maiden with her,
Took horse, and forced Usk, and gain'd the wood;
There, on a little knoll beside it, stay'd
Waiting to hear the hounds; but heard instead
A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince Geraint,
Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress
Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,
Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow ford
Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.
A purple scarf, at either end whereof
There swung an apple of the purest gold,
Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up
To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly
In summer suit and silks of holiday.
Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and she,
Sweetly and stentilly, and with all grace
Of womanhood and queenhood, answer'd him:
"Late, late, Sir Prince," she said, "later than we!"
"Yes, noble Queen," he answer'd, "and so late
That I have thought like you to see the hunt,
Not join it." "Therefore wait with me," she said.
"For on this little knoll, if anywhere,
There is good chance that we shall hear the hounds;
Here often they break covert at our feet."

And while they listen'd for the distant hunt,
And chiedy for the stinging of Cavall,
King Arthur's bound of deepest mouth, there rode
Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf;
Whereof the dwarf lagged latest, and the knight
Had visor up, and show'd a youthful face,
Imperious, and of haughtiest demeanour.
And Guinevere, not mindful of his face
In the king's hall, desired his name, and sent
Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf;
Who being vicious, old, and irritable,
And doubling all his master's vice of pride,
Made an answer sharply that she should not know.
"Then will I ask it of himself," she said.
"Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not," cried the dwarf:
"Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak of him;"
And when she put her horse toward the knight,
Sigh'd, and cried, and wept, and the return'd
Indignant to the Queen; at which Geraint
Exclaiming, "Surely I will learn the name,
Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd it of him,
Who answer'd as before; and when the Prince
Had put his horse in motion toward the knight,
Struck at him with his whip, and cut his cheek.
The Prince's blood sprirted upon the scarf,
Dyeing it; and his quick, instinctive hand
Cought at the bit, as to abolish him:
But he, from his haughty worthless
And pure nobility of temperament,
Wroth to be worth at such a wound, refrain'd
From ev'n a word, and so returning,
said:
"I will avenge this insult, noble Queen,
Done in your maiden's person to yourself:
And I will track this vermin to their earths:
For tho' I ride unarmed, I do not doubt
To find, at some place I shall come upon,
On loan, or else for pledge; and, being found,
Then will I fight him, and will break his pride,
And on the third day will again be here,
So that I be not fall'n in fight. Farewell."

"Farewell, fair Prince," answer'd the stately Queen.
"Be prosperous in this journey, as in all;
And may you light on all things that you love,
And live to wed with whom first you love:
But ere you wed with any, bring your bride,
And I, were she the daughter of a king,
Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the hedge,
Will clothe her for her bridals like the sun."

And Prince Geraint, now thinking that he heard
The noble horse at the far horn, a little
Vext at losing of the hunt, a little
At the vile occasion, rode,
By up's and downs, thro' many a grassy glade
And valley, with fixt eye, following the three.
At last they issued from the world of wood,
And climb'd upon a fair and even ridge,
And show'd themselves against the sky, and sunk.
And thither came Geraint, and underneath
Beheld the long street of a little town
In a long valley, on one side of which,
White from the mason's hand, a fortress rose:
And on one side a castle in decay,
Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry ravine:
And out of town and valley came a noise
As of a broad brook o'er a slyning bed
Brawling, or like a clamor of the rocks
At distance, ere they settle for the night.

And onward to the fortress rode the three,
And entered, and were lost behind the walls.
"So," thought Geraint, "I have ask'd him to his earth."
And down the long street, riding waryly,
Found every hostel full, and everywhere
With hammer laid and the hot hiss
And bustiling whyle of the youth who scor'd
His master's armor; and of each a one
He ask'd, "What means the tumult in the town?"

Who told him, scouring still, "The sparrow-hawk's!"
Then riding close behind an ancient church,
Who, smitten by the dusty sloping beam,
Went swelling underneath a sack of corn,
Ask'd yet once more what meant the hubbub here?
Who answer'd gruffly, "Ugh! the sparrow-hawk."
Then, riding further past an armorer's,
Who, with back turned, and bow'd above his work,
Sat riveting a helmet on his knapsack.
He put the selfsame query, but the man
Not turning round, nor looking at him, said:
"Friend, he that labors for the sparrow-hawk
Has little time for idle questioners."

Whereat Geraint flash'd so into sudden spleen:
"A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-hawk!
Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings peck him dead!
You think the rustic cackle of your borgs
The murmur of the world! What is it to me?
O wretched set of sparrows, one and all,
Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-hawks!
Speak, and if you be not like the rest, hawk-mad,
Where can I get me harborage for the night?

And, arms, arms, arms to fight my enemy? Speak?"

At this the armorer cursing all amazed
And setting one so gay in spirit all ariel
Came forward with the helmet yet in hand
And answer'd, "Pardon me, O stranger knight;
We hold a journey here to-morrow morn,
And there is scanty time for half the work.
Arms! truth! I know not! all are wanted here,
Harborage? truth, good truth, I know not, save,
It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the bridge
Yonder."

He spoke and fell to work again."

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful yet,
Across the bridge that spann'd the dry ravine.
There musing sat the hoary-headed Earl,
(He his dress a suit of fray'd magnificence,
Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and said:
"Whither, fair son?" to whom Geraint reply'd,
"O friend, I seek a harborage for the night."
Then Yniol, "Enter therefore and partake
The slender entertainment of a house
Once rich, now poor, but ever open-door'd."

"Thanks, venerable friend," reply'd Geraint;
"So that you do not serve me sparrow-hawks
For supper, I will enter, I will eat
With all the passion of a twelve hours' fast."
Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-headed Earl, And answer'd, "Grevor came than yours is wise
To curse this hedgerow thief, the sparrow-hawk:
But in, go in; for, save yourself desire it,
We will not touch upon him ev'n in jest."

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,
His charger trampling many a prickly star
Of sprouted thistle on the broken stones.
He look'd and saw that all was ruins.
Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed with fern;
And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,
Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the cliff,
And like a crag was gay with wiliding flowers;
And high above a piece of turret stair,
Worn by the feet that now were silent, wound
Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems
Clap the gray walls with hairy-fibred arms,
And suck'd the joining of the stones, and look'd
A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,
The voice of Euid, Yniol's daughter, rang.
Clear thro' the open casement of the Hall,
Singing: and as the sweet voice of a bird,
Heard by the linder in a lonely isle,
Moves him to think what kind of voice it is
That sings so delicately clear, and make
Conjecture of the plumage and the form;
So the sweet voice of Euid mov'd Geraint;
And made him like a man abroad at morn
When first the liquid note beloved of men
Comes flying over many a windless wave
To Dulcin, and in April sunny:
Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with green and red,
And he suspends his converse with a friend,
Or it may be the labor of his hands,
To think or say, "there is the nightingale!"
So far'd it with Geraint, who thought and said,
"Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me."

It chanced the song that Enid sang was one
Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid sang:
"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud;
Turn thy wheel and thou art shadows in the cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate."

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown;
With that wild wheel we go not up or down;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great."

"Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands;
Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands;
For man is man and master of his fate.

"Turn, turn thy wheel above the starving crowd;
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate."

"Hark, by the bird's song you may learn the nest,"
Said Yniol, "Enter quickly," Entering then,
lit a match out of a mound of newly-fallen stones,
Theusty-ratherdmany-cobweb'd Hall,
He found an ancient dame in dim brocade:
And near her, like a blossom vermeil-white,
That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath,
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,
Her daughter. In a moment thought Geraint,
"Here by God's rood is the one maid for me."
But none spake word except the hoary Earl:
"Enid, the good knight's horse stands in the court;
Take him to stall, and give him corn, and then
Go to the town and buy us ale and wine:
And we will make us merry as we may,
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great."

He spake: the Prince, as Enid past him, said:
To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol caught
His purple scarf, and held, and said "Forbear!
Rest: the good house, thou'ruin'd, O my Son,
Endures not that her guest should serve himself."
And reverencing the custom of the house
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall:
And after went her way across the bridge,
And reach'd the town, and while the Prince and Earl
Yet spoke together, came again with one,
A youth, that following with a costrel bare
The means of goodly welcome, flesh and wine.
And Enid brought sweet cakes to make them cheer,
And in her veil enfolded, manchet bread.
And then, because their hall must also serve
For kitchen, boil'd the flesh, and spread the board,
And stood behind, and waited on the three.
And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
Geraint had longing in him everywhere.
To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
That crost the translator as she laid it down: But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
For now the wine made summer in his veins,
Let his eye rove in following, or rest.
On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,
Now here, now there, about the dusky hall:
Then suddenly address the hoary Earl.

"Fair Host and Earl, I pray your courtesy.
This sparrow-hawk, what is he, tell me of him. His name? but no, good faith, I will not have it: nor if be the knight whom late I saw
Ride into that new fortress by your town,
White from the mason's hand, then have I sworn
From his own lips to have it—I am Geraint Of Devon—for this morning when the Queen
Sent her own maiden to demand the same,
His dwarf, a vicious under-shapeu thing,
Struck at her with his whip, and she return'd
Indignant to the Queen; and then I swore
That I would track this villain to his hold,
And I will break his pride, and strike off it of him. And all unarm'd I rode, and thought to find
Arms in your town, where all the men are mad;
They take the rustic murmur of their bawd
For the great wave that echoes round the world.
They would not hear me speak: but if you know
Where I can light on arms, or if yourself
Should have them, tell me, seeing I have sworn
That I will break his pride and learn his name,
Avenging this great insult done the Queen."

Then cried Yniol: "Art thou he indeed,
Geraint, a name far-sounded among men
For noble deeds? and truly I, when first
I saw you moving by me on the bridge,
Felt you were somewhat, yea and by your state
And presence might have guessed you one of those
That eat in Arthur's hall at Camelot.
Nor speak I now from foolish flattery:
For this dear child hath often heard me praise
Your feats of arms, and often when I paused
Hath ask'd again, and ever loved to hear;
So grateful is the noise of noble deeds
To noble hearts who see but acts of wrong:
O never yet had woman such a pair
Of suitors as this maid: first Limours,
A creature wholly given to brawls and wiles,
Drunk even when he waked; and be he dead
I know not, but he passed to the wild land.
The second was your foe, the sparrow-hawk,
My curse, my nephew,—I will not let his name
Sip from my lips if I can help it,—he,
When I that knew him fierce and turbulent
Refused to render to him, then his pride was over:
And since the proud man often is the mean.
He sowed a slander in the common ear,
Affirming that his father left him gold,
And in my charge, which was not render'd to him;
Ubuntu-shapeu, he kept the men who served
About my person, the more easily
Because my means were somewhat broken into
Thro' open doors and hospitality;
Raised my own town against me in the night
Before my Enid's birthday, sack'd my house.
From mine own earldom stoutly onseted me;
Built that new fort to overawe my friends,
For truly there are those who love me yet;
And keeps me in this ruinous castle here;
Who doubtsless he would put me soon to death,
But that his pride too much despises me:
And I myself sometimes despises myself:
For I have let men be, and have their way:
And much too gentle, have not used my power,
Nor know I whether I be very base,
Or very manful, whether very wise
Or very foolish; only this I know,
That whatsoever evil happen to me,
I seem to suffer nothing heart or limb,
But can endure it all most patiently."

"Well said, true heart," replied Geraint, "but arms:
That if, as I suppose, your nephew fights
In next day's tourney I may break his pride."
And Yniol answer'd: "Arms, indeed, but old
And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Geraint,
Are mine, and therefore at your asking, yours,
But in this tournament can no man till,
Except you, lady, be the victor.
Two forks are fixt into the meadow ground,
And over these is laid a silver wand,
And over that is placed the sparrow-hawk,
The prize of beauty for the fairest there.
And this, what knight soever he in field
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
And tilts with my good nephew thereupon,
Who being apt at arms and big of bone
Has ever won it for the lady with him,
And topping over all antagonism
Has earned himself the name of sparrow-hawk,
But you, that have no lady, cannot fight."

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright replied,
Leaning a little toward him, "Your leave!
Let me lay lance in rest, O noble host,
For this dear child, because I never saw,
Thou' hast ever seen all beauties of our time,
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so fair.
And if I fall her and be to her
Untarnish'd as before; but if I live,
So aid me Heaven when at mine uttermost,
As I will make her truly my true wife."

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's heart
Danced in his bosom, seeing better days,
And looking round he saw not Enid there,
(Who hearing her own name had slept away)
But that old dame, to whom fall tenderly
And fondling all her hand in his he said,
"Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,
And best by her that bore her understood.
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest
Tell her, and prove her heart toward the Prince."

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl, and she
With frequent smile and nod departing found,
Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl;
Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek, and then
On either shining shoulder laid a hand,
And kept her off and gazed upon her face,
And told her all their converse in the hall,
Proving her heart; but never light and shade
Course one another more on open ground
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red and pale
Across the face of Enid beholding her;
Whilst slowly falling as a scale that falls,
When weight is added only grain by grain,
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle breast;
Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a word,
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of it;
So moving without answer to her rest
She found no rest, and ever fail'd to draw
The quiet night into her blood, but lay
Contemplating her own unworthiness;
And when the pale and bloodless east began
To quicken to the sun, arose, and raised
Her mother too, and hand in hand they moved
Down to the meadow where the jousts were held,
And waited there for Yniol and Geraint.

And thither came the twain, and when Geraint
Reheld her first in field, awaiting him,
He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,
Himself beyond the rest pushing could move
The chair of Idris. Yniol'sirst cast arms
Were on his princely person, but thro' these
Princelike his bearing shone; and errant knights
And ladies came, and by and by the town
Flocked in, and settlizg here all the lists.
And there they fixt the forks into theground,
And over these they placed a silver wand,
And over that a golden sparrow-hawk.

Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet blown,
Spake to the lady with him and proclaim'd,
"Advance and take as fairest of the fair,
For these two years past have won it for thee,
The prize of beauty by the hand's of Prince
Forbear: there is a worthier," and the knight
With some surprise and thence as much disdain,
Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all his face
Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at Yule,
So burn't he was with passion, crying out,
"Do battle for it then," no more; and thence
They clash'd together, and thence they brake their spears.
Then each, discharged and drawing, lash'd at each
So often, and with such blows, that all the crowd
Wonder'd, and now and then from distant walls
There came a clapping as of phantom hands.
So twice they fought, and twice they breathed, and still
The dew of their great labor, and the blood
Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd their force.
But either's force was match'd till Yniol's cry,
"Remember that great insult done the Queen,"
Increased Geraint's, who heaved his bladed ait,
And crack'd the helmet thro' and hit the bone,
And fell'd him, and set foot upon his breast,
And said, "Thy name?" To whom the fallen man
Made answer, gumming, "Edryn, son of Nudd!
Ashamed am I that I should tell it thee.
My pride is broken: men have seen my fall."

"Then, Edryn, son of Nudd," reply'd Geraint,
"These two things shalt thou do, or else thou diest.
First, thou thyself, thy lady and thy dwarf,
Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and being there,
Craze pardon for that insult done the Queen,
And shalt abide her judgment on it; next,
Thou shalt give back their carlood to thy kin.
These two things shalt thou do, or thou shalt die."
And Edryn answer'd, "These things will I do,
For I have never yet been overthrown,
And thou hast overthrown me, and my pride
Is broken down, for Enid sees my fall!"
And rising up, he rode to Arthur's court,
And there the Queen forgave him easily.
And being young, he changed himself, and grew
To hate the sin that seem'd so like his own.
Of Modred, Arthur's nephew, and fell at last
In the great battle fighting for the king.

But when the third day from the hunting-morn
Made a low splendor in the world, and wings
Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay
With her fair head in the dim-yellow light,
Among the dancing shadows of the birds,
Woke and bethought her of her promise given
No later than last eve to Prince Geraint—
So bent he seem'd on going the third day,
He would not leave her, till her promise given—
To ride with him this morning to the court,
And there be made known to the stately Queen,
And there be wedded with all ceremony.
At this she cast her eyes upon her dress,
And thought it never yet had look'd so mean.
For as a leaf in mid-November is
To what it was in mid-October, seem'd
The dress that now she look'd on to the dress
She look'd on ere the coming of Gemini.
And still she look'd, and still the terror grew
Of that strange bright and dreadful thing, a court,
All staring at her in her faded silk—
And softly to her own sweet heart she said:
"This noble Prince who won our carlood back
So splendid in his acts and his attire,
So well dressed as to how much I shall all extoll him!
Would be could tarry with me here awhile!
But being so beholden to the Prince
It were but little grace in any of us,
Bent as he seem'd on going this third day,
To seek a second favor at his hands.
Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,
Myself would work eye dim, and finger lame,
Far sooner than so much discredit him."

And Enid fell in longing for a dress
All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a costly gift
Of her good mother, given her on the night
Before her birthday, three and six years ago,
That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd their house,
And scatter'd all they had to all the winds:
For while the mother show'd it, and the two,
Were turning and admiring it, the work
To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry:
The Edyrn's men were on them, and they fled
With little save the jewels they had on,
Which being sold and sold had bought them bread:
And Edyrn's men had caught them in their flight,
And placed them in this ruin: and she wish'd
The Prince had found her in her ancient house;
Then let her fancy flit across the past,
And roam the goodly places that she knew;
And lastbethought how she used to watch,
Near that old home, a pool of golden carp;
And those were pack'd and blure'd and bloodless
Among his burnish'd brethren of the pool;
And half asleep she made comparison
Of that and these to her own fabled self
And the gay court, and fell asleep again;
And dreamt herself was such a fair form
Among her burnish'd sisters of the pool;
But this was in the garden of a king;
And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she knew
That all was bright; that all about were birds
Of every daintiness in gilded trellis-work;
That all the turf was rich in plots that look'd
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it;
And lords and ladies of the high court went
In silver tissu talking things of state;
And children of the king in cloth of gold
Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down the walks;
And while she thought "they will not see me," came
A stately queen whose name was Guinevere,
And all the children in their cloth of gold
Ran to her, crying, "If we have fish at all
Let them be gold; and charge the bakers now
To pick the faded creature from the pool,
And cast it on the mien that it did."
And therewithal one came and seized on her,
And Enid started waking, with her heart
All shudhro'd with the foolish dream
And lo! it was her mother grasping her
To get her well awake; and in her hand
A suit of bright apparel, which she said
Flat on the couch, and spoke exultingly:

"See here, my child, how fresh the colors look,
How fast they hold, like colors of a shell
That keeps the wear and polish of the wave.
Why not? It never yet was worn, I strove;
Look on it, child, and tell me if you know it."

And Enid look'd, but all confused at first,
Could scarce divide it from her foolish dream,
Then suddenly she knew it and rejoiced,
And answer'd, "O, Yea, I know it; your good gift
So carefully lost on that unhappy night;
Year own good gift!"
"Yea, surely," said the dame,
"And gladly given again this happy morn.
For when the Jonits were ended yesterday,
Went Yniol thine, to this town, and everywhere
He found the sack and plunder of our house
All scatter'd thro' the houses of the town;
And gave command that all which once was ours,
Should now be ours again: and yester-eve,
While you were talking sweetly with your Prince,
Came one with this and laid it in my hand,
For love or fear, or seeking favor of us,
Because we have our earldom back again.
And yester-eve I would not tell you of it,
But kept it for a sweet surprise at morn.
Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise?
For I myself unwillingly have worn
My falded suit, as you, my child, have yours,
And howsoever patient, Yniol his.
Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly house,
With store of rich apparel, sumptuous fare,
And page, and maid, and square, and seneschal,
And pastime, both of hawk and hound, and all
That appertaineth to noble maintenance.
Yea, and he brought me to a goodly house;
But since our fortune slipt from us to shade,
And all thro' that young traitor, cruel need
Constrain'd us, but a better time has come;
So clothed yourself in this, that better fits
Our mended fortunes and a Prince's bride:
For tho' you won the prize of fairest fair,
And tho' I heard him call you fairest fair,
Let never maiden think, however fair,
She is not fairer in new clothes than old.
And should some great court-lady say, the Prince
Hath wed a ragged-robin from the edge,
And like a madam brought her to the court,
Then were you shamed, and worse, might shame the Prince
To whom we are beholden; but I know
When dear child is set forth at her best,
That neither court nor country, tho' they sought
Thr'o' all the provinces like those of old
That lighted on Queen Esther, has her match."

Here ceased the kindly mother out of breath;
And Enid listen'd brightening as she lay:
Then, as the white and glistening star of morn
Parts from a bank of snow, and by and by
Slips into golden cloud, the maiden rose,
And left her maiden couch, and robed herself,
Help'd by the mother's careful hand and eye,
Without a mirror, in the gorgeous gown:
Who, after, turn'd her daughter round, and said,
She never yet had seen her half so fair;
And call'd her like that maiden in the tale,
Whom Gwydion made by glamour out of flowers,
And sweeter than the bride of Cassileuan,
Flair, for whose love the Roman Caesar first
Invaded Britain, "but we beat him back,
As this great Prince invaded us, and we,
Not him but him, but welcomed him with joy.
And I can scarcely ride with you to court,
For old am I, and rough the ways and wild:
But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall dream
I see my princess as I see her now,
Cloth'd with my gift, and gay among the gay."

But while the women thus rejoiced, Geraint
Woke where he slept in the high hall,
And call'd For Enid, and when Yniol made report
Of that good mother making Enid gay
In such apparel as might well become
Her princess, or indeed the stately queen,
He answer'd, "Earl, entract her by my love,
Albeit I give no reason but my wish,
That she ride with me in her falded silk."
Yniol with that hard message went: it fell,
Like flaws in summer laying lacy corn:
For Enid, all abash'd, she knew not why,
Dared not to glance at her good mother's face,
But silently, in all obedience,
Her falsehood to ask, nor helping her,
Laid from her limbs the costly-broider'd gift,
And robed them in her ancient suit again,
And so descended. Never man rejoiced
More than Geraint to greet her thus attired:
And glancing all at once as keenly at her,
As careful robin's eye the deliver's toll,
Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall; 
But rested with her sweet face satisfied; 
Then seeing cloud upon her mother's brow, 
Her by her hand she caught, and sweetly said:

"O my new mother, be not wrath or grieved
At your new son, for my petition to her."

When late I left Caerleon, our great Queen,
In words whose echo lasted, they were so sweet,
Made promise that whatever bride I brought,
Herself would clothe her like the sun in heaven.
Thereafter, when I reach'd this land hold,
Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
I vow'd that could I gain her, our kind Queen,
No hand but hers, should make your Eunid burst
Smilkite from cloud—and likewise thought perhaps,
That service done so graciously would bind
The two together; for I wish the two
To love each other: how should Enid find
A nobler friend? Another thought I had;
I came among you here so suddenly,
That tho' her gentle presence at the lists
Might well have served for proof that I was loved,
I doubted whether filial tenderness,
Or easy nature, did not let itself
Be moulded by your wishes for her well;
Or whether some false sense in her own self
Of my contrasting brightness, over bore
Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall;
And such a sense might make her long for court
And all its dangerous glories: and I thought,
That could I somewho prove such force in her
Link'd with such love for me, at that a word
(No reason given her) she could cast aside
A splendid dear to women, new to her,
And therefore dearer; or if not so new,
Yet, therefore tenfold dearer by the power
Of intermitted custom; then I felt
That I could rest, a rock in ebb's and flow's,
Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I do rest,
A prophet certain of my prophecy,
That never shadow of mistrust can cross
Between us. Grant me pardon for my thoughts:
And for my strange petition I will make
Amends hereafter by some gay day-
When your fair child shall wear your costly gift
Bedeck'd with her own warm hearths, with, on her knees,
Who knows? another gift of the high God,
Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to lip you thanks."

He spoke: the mother smiled, but half in tears,
Then brought a mantle down and wrapt her in it,
And clasp'd and kiss'd her, and they rode away.

Now think that morning Guislevere had climb'd
The giant tower, from whose high crest, they say,
Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
And white sails flying on the yellow sea;
But not to goodly hill or yellow sea
Look'd the fair Queen, but up the vale of Usk,
By the flat meadow, till she saw them come;
And then descending met them at the gates,
Embraced her with all welcome as a friend,
And did her honor as the loved of pride,
And clothed her for her bridals like the sun;
And all that week was old Caerleon gay,
For by the hands of Dubrice, the high salt,
They twain were wedded with all ceremony.

And this was on the last year's Whitsuntide.
But Enid ever kept the faded silk,
Remembering how first he came on her,
Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey toward her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the court.

And now this morning when he said to her,
"Put on your worst and meaneast dress," she found
And look it, and array'd herself therein.

O purblind race of miserable men,
How many among us at this very hour
Do for a life-long trouble for ourselves,
By taking it true for false, or false for true;
Here, thro' the feeble twilight of this world
Groping, how many, until we pass and reach
That other, where we see as we are seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing forth
That morning, when they both had got to horse,
Perhaps because he loved her passionately,
And felt that tempest brooding round his heart,
Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce
Upon a head so dear in thunder, said:
"Not at my side! I charge you ride before,
Ever a good way on before; and this
I charge you, on your duty as a wife,
Whatever happens, not to speak to men,
No, not a word!" and Enid was aghast;
And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on,
When crying out, "Effeminate as I am,
I will not fight my way with gilded arms,
All shall be aught of a sightly pure,
Hung at his belt, and hold it toward the squire.
So the last sight that Enid had of home
Was all the marble threshold flashing, shown
With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the squire
Climbing his shoulder; then he cried again:
"To the wilds: and Enid leading down the tracks
Thro' which he bade her lead him on, they past
The marches, and by bandit-haunted hoids,
Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the earth,
And wilderness, perhaps, they rode:
Round was their pace at first, but slacken'd soon:
A stranger meeting them had surely thought,
They rode so slowly and they look'd so pale,
That each had suffer'd some exceeding wrong.
For he was ever saying to himself,
"O that wastest time to tend upon her,
To compass her with sweet observances,
To dress her, beautifully and keep her true"—
And there he broke the sentence in his heart
Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue
May break it, when his passion masters him.
And she was ever praying the sweet heavens
To save her dear lord whole from any wound.
And ever in her mind she cast about
For that unnoticed failure in herself,
Which made him look so cloudy and so cold;
 Till the great rover's human whistle amazed
Her heart, and glancing round the waste she fear'd
In every wavering brake an ambush.
Then thought again: "If he be such as me,
I might amend it by the grace of heaven,
If he would only speak and tell me of it."

But when the fourth part of the day was gone,
Then Enid was aware of three tall knights
On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a rock
In shadow, waiting for them, cutthifs all;
And heard one crying to his fellow, "Look,
Here comes a laggard hanging down his head,
Who seems no bolder than a beaten bound;
Come, we will slay him, and will have his horse
And armor, and his damsels shall he ours."

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart, and said:
"I will go back a little to my lord,
And I will tell him all their cutthi talk;
For, by he wrought even to slaying me,
For love by his dear hand had I die,
That my lord should suffer loss or shame."

Then she went back some paces of return,
Met his fair brown timpery tint, and said:
"My lord, I saw three bandits by the rock
Waiting to fall on you, and heard them boast
That they would slay you, and possess your horse
And armor, and your damsels should be theirs."
He made a wrathful answer. "Did I wish
Your warning or your silence? one command
I laid upon you, not to ruffle me so long
And thus you keep it! Well then, look—for now,
Whether you wish me victory or defeat,
Long for my life, or hunger for my death,
Yourself shall see my vigor is not lost."

Then Enid waited, pale and sorrowful,
And down upon him bare the bandit three,
And at the midmost charging, Prince Geraint
Drave the long spear a cubit thro' his breast
And out beyond; and then against his brace
Of comrades, each of whom had broken on him
A lance that splinter'd like an icle,
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunn'd the twain
Or slew them, and dismounting like a man
That skims the wild beast after slaying him,
Stript from the three dead wolves of woman born
The three gay suits of armor which they wore,
And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits
Of armor on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, "Drive them on
Before you!" and she drove them thro' the waste.

He follow'd nearer: ruth began to work
Against his anger in him, while he watch'd
The being he loved best in all the world,
With difficulty in mild obedience
Driving them on: he felt had spoken to her,
And in the words of sudden fire for wrath
And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him all within;
But evermore it seem'd an easier thing
At once without remorse to strike her dead,
Than to cry "Halt," and to her own bright face
Accuse her of the least immode:
And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth the more
That she could speak whom his own ear had heard
Call herself false: and suffering thus he made
Minutes an age; but in scarce longer time
Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
Before he turn to fall seaward again,
Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold
In the first shallow shade of a deep wood,
Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,
Three other horse-men waiting, wholly arm'd,
Where one for larger than the lord,
And shook her pulses, crying, "Look, a prize!
Three horses and three goodly suits of arms,
And all in charge of whom? a girl: set on."
"Nay," said the second, "yonder comes a knight."
The third, "A craven! how he hangs his head."
The giant answer'd mildly, "Yea, but one?
Wait here, and when he passes fall upon him."

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and said,
"I will abide the coming of my lord,
And I will tell him all their villany.
My lord is weary with the fight before,
And they will fall upon him unawares.
I needs must disobey him for his good:
How should I dare, obey him to his harm?
Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill me for it,
I save a life dearer to me than mine."

And she abode his coming, and said to him
With timid firmness, "Have I leave to speak?"
He said, "You take it, speaking," and she spoke.

"There lurk three villains yonder in the wood,
And each of them is wholly arm'd, and one
Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they say
That they will fall upon you while you pass."
To which he flung a wrathful answer back:
"And if there were an hundred in the wood,
And every man were larger-limb'd than I,
And all at once should rally out upon me,
I should not fly, nor let them ruffle me so long
As you that not obey me. Stand aside,
And if I fall, cleave to the better man."

And Enid stood aside to wait the event,
Not dare to watch the combat, only breathe
Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a breath.
And he, she dreamed most, bare down upon him.
Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd; but Geraint's,
A little in the late encounter straing'd,
Struck him to the bone by bandit's combot. home,
And then brake short, and down his enemy roll'd
And there lay still; as he that tells the tale,
Saw once a great piece of a promontory,
That had a sapping growing on it, slip
From the long shore-cliff's wonky wall to the beach,
And there lie still, and yet the sapling grew:
So lay the man transfist. His craven pair
Of comrades, making slowler at the Prince,
When now they saw their bulwark fallen, stood;
On whom the victor, to confound them more,
Spurr'd with his terrible war-cry; for as one,
That listens near a torrent mountain-brook,
All thro' the crash of the near cataract hears
The drumming thunder of the haggen fall.
At distance, were the three soldiers wonky
His voice in battle, and be kindled by it,
And soenmen scaredd, like that false pair who turn'd
Flying, but, overtaken, dled the death
Themselves had wrought on many an innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting, pick'd the lance
That pleased him best, and drew from those dead
wolves
Their three gay suits of armor, each from each,
And array and arm'd them on their horses each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, "Drive them on
Before you," and she drove them thro' the wood.

He follow'd nearer still: the pain she had
To keep them in the wild ways of the wood,
Two sets of three laden with jingling arms,
Together, served a little to disedge
The sharpness of that pain about her heart;
And they themselves, like creatures gently born
But pricked with hands fasten'd, and now and then
By bandit's gown'd, prick'd their light ears, and felt
Her low firm voice and tender government.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood they past,
And issuing under open heavens beheld
A little town with towers, upon a rock,
And close beneath, a meadow gemlike chased
In the brown wild, and mowers moving in it:
And down a rocky pathway from the place
There came a fair-haired youth, that in his hand
Hare victual for the mowers: and Geraint
Had ruth again on Enid looking pale:
Then, moving downward to the meadow ground,
He, when the fair-hair'd youth came by him, said,
"Friend, let her eat; the damsel is so faint."
"Yea, willingly," reply'd the youth: "and you,
My lord, eat also, 'tho' the fare is coarse,
And only meet for mowers:" then set down
His basket, and dismounting on the sward
They let the horses grace and ate themselves.
And Enid took a little delicately,
Less having stomach for it than desire
To close with her lord's pleasure: but Geraint
Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,
And when he found, all empty, was amazed:
And "Boy," said he, "I have eaten all, but take
A horse and arms for guerdon; choose the best."
He, reddening in extremity of delight,
"My lord, you overpay me fifty fold."
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"You will be all the wealthier," cried the Prince.

"I take it as free gift, then," said the boy,

"Not ever and his comrades to among us.

While your good damsel rests, return, and fetch

Fresh victual for these mowers of our Earl;

For these are his, and all the field is his,

And I myself am his; and I will tell him

How great a man you are; he loves to know

When men of mark are in his territory—

And he will have you to his palace here,

And serve you coslier than with mowers' fare."

Then said Geraint, "I wish no better fare:

I never ate with angerd appetite

Than when I left your mowers dinnerless.

And into no Earl's palace will I go.

I know, God knows, too much of palaces!

And if he want me, let him come to me.

But hire us some fair chamber for the night,

And stalling for the horses, and return

With victual for these men, and let us know."

"Yea, my lord, said," the glad youth, and went,

Held his head high, and thought himself a knight,

And up the rocky pathway disappeared,

Leading the horse, and they were left alone.

But when the Prince had brought his errant eyes

Home from the road, sideways he let them glance

At Enid, where she dropt: his own false doom,

That shadow of mistrust should never cross

Betwixt them, came upon him, and he sigh'd;

Then with the wind-laden of the days

About her hollow turret,peak'd the grass

There growing longest by the meadow's edge,

And into many a listless amulet,

Now over, now beneath her marriage ring,

Wove and unwove it, till the boy return'd

And told them of a chamber, and they went;

Where, after saying to her, "If you will,

Call for the woman of the house," to which

She answer'd, "Thanks, my lord; the two remain'd

And by all the other, I am able to endure

As creatures voiceless thro' the fault of birth;

Or two wild men supporters of a shield,

Painted, who stare at open space, nor glance

The one at other, parted by the shield.

On a sudden, many a voice along the street,

And heel against the pavement echoing, burst

Their drowse; and either started while the door,

Push'd from without, drove backward to the wall,

And midstmost of a rout of rockerst.

Femininely fair and dissolvedately pale,

Her sitor in old years before Geraint,

Enter'd, the wild lord of the place, Limours.

He moving up with plant courtliness,

Greeted Geraint full face, but stealthily.

In the mid-warmth of welcome and graspst hand,

Found Enid with the corner of his eye,

And knew her sitting sad and solitary.

Then cried Geraint for wine and goodly cheer

To feel the sudden guest, and expectantly

According to his fashion, bade the host

Call in what men sober were his friends,

And feast with these in honor of their earl;

"And care not for the cost: the cost is mine."

And wine and food were brought, and Earl Limours

Drank till he jested with all ease, and told

Free tales, and took the word and play'd upon it,

And made it of two colors; for his talk,

When wine and free companions kindled him,

Was wont to glance and sparkle like a gem

Of fifty facets; thus he moved the Prince

To laughter and his comrades to among us.

Then, when the Prince was merry, ask'd Limours,

"Your leave, my lord, to cross the room, and speak

To your good damsel there who sits apart

And seems so lonely?" "My free leave," he said;

"Get her to speak: she does not speak to me."

Then rose Limours and looking at his feet,

Like him who tries the bridge he fears may fall,

Crest and came near, lifted adoring eyes,

Bowed at her side and uttered whisperingly:

"Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,

Enid my early and my only love,

Enid the loss of whom has turn'd me wild—

What chance is this? how is it you see here?

You are in my power at last, are in my power.

Yet fear me not: I call mine own self wild,

But keep a touch of sweet civility

Here in the heart of waste and wilderness.

I thought, but that your father came between,

In former days you saw me favorably.

And if it were so do not keep it back:

Make me a little happier: let me know it:

Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost?

Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all you are.

And, Enid, you and she, I see in joy—

You sit apart, you do not speak to him,

You come with no attendance, page or maid,

To serve you—does he love you as of old?

For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know

They men may not wither with the things they love,

They would not make them laughable in all eyes,

Not while they loved them; and your wretched dress,

A wretched insult on you, dumbly speaks

Your story, that this man loves you no more.

Your beauty is no beauty to him now:

A common chance—right well I know it—pall'd—

For I know men: nor will you win him back,

For the man's love once gone never returns.

But here is one who loves you as of old,

With more exceeding passion than of old;

Good, speak the word: my followers ring him round:

He sits unmurm'd: I hold a finger up;

They understand: no! I do not mean blood:

Nor need you look so scared at what I say:

My malice is no deeper than a cut in flesh,

No stronger than a wall: there is the keep;

He shall not cross us more; speak but the word:

Or speak it not; but then by Him that made me

The true one lover which you ever had,

I will make use of all the power I have

O pardon me! the madness of that hour,

When first I parted from you, moves me yet."
And that she now perforce must violate it, 
 Held out her hand, and Enid had no heart
 To make him, but hung o'er him, wholly pleased
 To find him yet unwounded after fight,
 And hear him breathing low and equally.
 Anon she rose, and stepping lightly, hasted the pieces of his armor in one place.
 All to be there against a sudden need;
 Then dozed awhile herself, but overtold
 By that day's grief and travel, evermore
 Seen'd catching at a rootless thorn, and then
 When slipping down horrible precipices,
 And strongly striking out her limbs awoke;
 Then thought she the wild Earl at the door,
 With all his rout of random followers,
 Sound on a dreadful trumpet, summoning her;
 Which was the red cock shouting to the light,
 As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy world,
 And glimmer'd on his armor in the room.
 And once again she rose to look at it,
 But touch'd it answer'd: jangling, the casque fell,
 And staring round like all the world.
 Then breaking his command of silence given,
 She told him all that Earl Limours had said,
 Except the passage that he loved not;
 Nor left untold the craft herself had used;
 But told it so sweet, Low-spoken, and of so few words, and seem'd
 So justified by that necessity,
 That tho' he thought "was it for him she swept
 In Devor?" but he gave a wrathful groan.
 Saying, "your sweet eyes make me fellows fools
 And traitors. Call the host and bid him bring
 Charge and palfrey." So she glided out
 Among the heavy breathing of the house,
 And like a household Spirit at the walls
 Bolt till she woke the sleepers, and return'd;
 Then tending her rough lord, tho' all unsk'd,
 In silence, did him service as a squire;
 Tilt issuing arm'd he found the host and cried,
 "Thy reckoning, friend!" and ere he learnt it, "Take
 Five horses and their armors;" and the host,
 Saddest honest, answer'd in amaze,
 'My lord, I scarce have spent the worth of one!'
 "You will be all the wealthier," said the Prince,
 And then to Enid, "Forward! and to-day
 I charge you, Enid, more especially,
 When thou seest the sun and stars to see,
 Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use
 To charge you), that you speak not but obey,
" And Enid answer'd, "Yes, my lord, I know
 Your wish, and would obey: but riding first,
 I hear the violent threats you do not hear,
 I see the danger which you cannot see;
 Then not to give you warning, that seems hard:
 Almost beyond me: yet I would obey."

"Tea so," said he, "do it: be not too wise:
Seeing that you are wedded to a man,
Not quite mistrust'd with a yarning down,
But one with arms to guard his head and yours,
With eyes to find you out however far,
And ears to hear you even in his dreams."

With that he turned and looked as keenly at her
As careful robins eye the delver's toil:
And that within her which a wanton fool,
Or hasty judge, would have called her gait,
Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall.
And Geralt look'd and was not satisfied.

Then forward by a way which, beaten broad,
Lost to the territory of false Limours.
To the waste earldom of another earl,
Doorn, whom his shaking vassals call'd the Bull,
Went Enid with her sullen follower on.
Once she look'd back, and when she saw him ride
More near by many a rood than yesternight,
It was which made with her cheerful: till
Waving an angry hand as who should say
"You watch me," saddened all her heart again.
But while the sun yet beat a dewy blade,
The sound of many a heavily-galloping hoof
Sounded o'er her, and turning round she saw
Dust, and the points of lances flicker'd in it.
Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
And yet to give him warning, for he rode
As if he heard not, moving back she held
Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.
At which the warrior in his obedience
Because she kept the letter of his word
Was in a manner pleased, and turning, stood
And in the moment after, wild Limours,
Borne on a black horse, like a thunder-cloud
Whose skirts are loose'd by the breaking storm,
Half ridden off with by the thing he rode,
And all in passion uttering a dry shriek,
Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with him and bore
Down by the length of lance and arm beyond
The crupper, and so left him stunned or dead,
And overthrew the next that follow'd him,
And blinding rush'd on all the rout behind.
But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a shoal
Of struggling fish, that upon a summer corn
Adown the crystal dikes at Camelot.
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the sea, the waters wild,
Beleag'ring the creezy lefts white in flower;
So, scared but at the motion of the man,
Fled all the boon companions of the Earl,
And left him lying in the public way:
So vanish friendships only made in wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled Geraint,
Who saw the chargers of the two that fell
Start from their fallen lords, and wildly dy,
With mixt with the flyers. "Horsem and man," he said,
"All of one mind and all right-honest friends!
Not a hoof left; and I methinks till now
Was honest—paid with horses and with arms;
I cannot steal or plunder, no nor beg:
And so what say you, shall we strip him there
Your lord, or has your palfrey hunger'd
To bear his armor? shall we fast or dine?
Or—then do you, being right honest, pray
That we may meet the horsemen of Earl Doorm,
I too would still be honest." Thus he said:
And easily gaining on her bridle-reins,
And answering not one word, she led the way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful loss
Falls in a far land and he knows it not,
But coming back he learns it, and the loss
So pains him that he sickens nigh to death;
So fared it with Geraint, who being prick'd
In combat with the follower of Limours,
Blew underneath his armor secretly,
And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife
What ailed him, hardly knowing it himself,
Till his eye darken'd and his helmet wag'd;
And at a sudden swerving of the road,
Tho' happily down on a bank of grass,
The Prince, without a word, from his horse fell.

And Enid heard the clashing of his fall,
Suddenly came, and at his side all pale
Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of his arms,
Nor let his true hand falter, nor blue eye
Molsten, till she had lighted on his wound,
And tearing off her veil of faded silk
Had bared her forehead to the blistering sun,
And swathed the hurt that drain'd her lord's life.
Then after all was done that hand could do,
She rested, and her desolation came
Upon her, and she wept beside the way.

And many past, but none regarded her,
For in that realm of lawless turbulence,
A woman weeping for her murdered mate
Was cared as much for as a sudden shower:
One took him for a victim of Earl Doorm,
Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on him:
Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,
Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl;
Half whispering and half singing a lonesome song;
He drove the dust against his willing eyes;
Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm
Before an ever-furled arrow, made
The long way smoke beneath him in his fear;
At which her palfrey whimpering lifted heel,
And scoured' into the copplikes and was lost,
While the great charger stood, grieved like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge Earl Doorm,
Broad-fed with under-fringe of russet beard,
Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,
Came riding with a hundred lances up;
But ere he came, like one that hails a ship,
Cried out with a big voice, "What, is he dead?"
"No, no, not dead!" she answered in all haste.
"Would some of your kind people take him up,
And bear him hence out of this cruel sun;
Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not dead."

Then said Earl Doorm: "Well, if he be not dead,
Why was he for thee that? you seem a child.
And be he dead, I count you for a fool:
Your willing will not quicken him: dead or not,
You nor a comely face with idiot tears.
Yet, since the face is comely—some of you,
Hence some of your kind people take him up,
And bear him hence out of this cruel sun;
And if he live, we will have him of our band;
And if he die, why earth has earth enough
To hide him. See ye take the charger too,
A noble one."

He spake, and past away,
But left two brauny spearmen, who advanced,
Each growling like a dog, when his good bone
Seems to be pinched' at by the village boys
Who love to vex him eating, and he fears
The memory of same, and hate his food
Growling and growling; so the ruffians grow'd,
Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,
Their chance of booty from the morning's raid;
Yet raised and laid him on a litter-bier,
Such as they brought upon their foemen out
For those that might be wounded; laid him on it
All in the hollow of his shield, and took
And bore him to the nacked hall of Doorm,
(Its gentle charger following him unlaid)
And cast him and the bier in which he lay
Down on an oaken settle in the hall,
And then departed, hot in haste to join
Their buckler mates, but growling as before,
And cursing their lost time, and the dead man,
And their own Earl, and their own souls, and her;
They might as well have blest her: she was dead
To blessing or to cursing save from one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her lord,
There in the naked hall, propping his head,
And chafing his pale hands, and calling to him,
And at the last he waken'd from his swoon,
And found his own dear bride propping his head,
And chafing his faint hands, and calling to him;
And felt the warm tears falling on his face;
And said to his own heart, "She weeps for me;"
And yet lay still, and felt himself as dead,
That he might prove her to the uttermost,
And say to his own heart, "She weeps for me."

But in the falling afternoon return'd
The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to the hall.
His lusty spearmen follow'd him with noise:
Each hurling down a heap of things that rang
Against the pavement, cast his lance aside,
And doff'd his helm; and then there flutter'd in,
Half-bald, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,
A tribe of women, dress'd in many hues,
And mingling with the spearmen; and Earl Doorm
Struck with a knife's haft hard against the board,
And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his spears.
And men brought in whole hogs and quarter beeves,
And all the hall was dim with steam of flesh:
And none spoke word, but all sat down at once,
And ate with tumult in the naked hall,
Feeding like horses when you hear them feed;
Till Enid shrank far back into herself,
To shun the wild ways of the lawless tribe.
But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he would,
He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and found
A damsel drooping in a corner of it.
Then he remember'd her, and how she went;
And out of her there came a power upon him.
And rising on the sudden he said, "Eat! I
I never yet beheld a thing so pale.
God's curse, it makes me mad to see you weep.
Eat! Look yourself. Good luck had your good man,
For were I dead who is it would weep for me?
Sweet lady, never since I first drew breath,
Have I beheld a lily like yourself.
And so there lived some color in your cheek,
There is not one among my gentlewomen
Were fit to wear your slipper for a glove.
But listen to me, and by he be ruled.
And I will do the thing I have not done,
For you shall share my eardrum with me, girl,
And we will live like two birds in one nest,
And I will fetch you forage from all fields,
For I compel all creatures to my will."

He spake: the brauny spearman led his cheek
Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and turning,
Shared:
While some, whose souls the old serpent long had drawn
Down, as the worm draws in the wither'd leaf
And makes it earth, his'd each at other's ear
What shall not be recorded—women they,
What shall not have been thought as the most noble things,
But now desired the humbling of their best,
Yea, would have helped him to it; and all at once
They hated her, who took no thought of them,
But answer'd in low voice, her meek head yet drooping, "I pray you of your courtesy,
He being as he is, to let me be."

She spake so low he hardly heard her speak,
But like a mighty patron, satisfied
With what himself had done so graciously,
Assumed that she had thanked him, adding, "Yea,
Eat and be glad, for I account you mine."

She answer'd meekly, "How should I be glad
Herfor'th in all the world at anything,
Until my lord arise and look upon me?"

Here the huge Earl cried out upon her talk,
As all but empty heart and weariness
And sickly nothing: suddenly seized on her,
And bare her by main violence to the board,
And thrust the dish before her, crying, "Eat."

"No, no," said Enid, sunk, "I will not eat,
Till yonder man upon the bier arise,
And eat with me." "Drink, then," he answer'd.
"Here!"
(And fl'd a horn with wine and held it to her),
"Lo! I, myself, when fl'd with fight, or hot,
God's curse, with anger—often I myself, Before I well have drunken, scarce can eat: Drink therefore, and the wine will change your will."

"Not so," she cried, "by Heaven, I will not drink, Till my dear lord arise and bid me do it, And drink with me; and if he rise no more, I will not look at wine until I die."

At this he turn'd all red and paced his hall, Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper lip, And coming up close to her, said at last: "Girl, for I see you scorn my courtesies, Take warning: yonder man is surely dead; And I compel all creatures to my will. Not eat nor drink? And wherefore wall for one, Who put your beauty to this fruit and scorn By dressing it in rags? Amaed am I, Beholding how you butt against my wish, That I forbear you thus: cross me no more. At least put off to please me this poor gown, This silken rag, this beggar-woman's woof: I love that beauty should go beautifully! For see you not my gentlewomen here, How gay, how suited to the house of one, Who loves that beauty should go beautifully! Rise therefore; robe yourself in this: obey." He spoke, and one among his gentlewomen Display'd a splendid silk of foreign born, Where like a shoulung sea the lovely blue Play'd into green, and thicker down the front With jewels than the sward with dew of dews, When all night long a cloud clogs to the hill, And with the dawn descending lets the day Strike where it clang: so thickly shine the gems. But Enid answer'd, harder to be moved Than hardest tyrants in their day of power, With life-long injuries burning unavenged, And now their hour has come; and Enid said: "In this poor gown my dear lord found me first, And loved me serving in my father's hall: In this poor gown I rode with him to court, And there the Queen array'd me like the sun: In this poor gown he bade me cloth myself, When now we rode upon this fatal quest Of war, where no honor can be found: And this poor gown I will not cast aside Until himself arise a living man, And bid me cast it. I have griefs enough: Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be: I never loved, can never love but him: Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness, He being as he is, to let me be."

Then strode the brute Earl up and down his hall, And took his rasset beard between his teeth; Last, coming up quite close, and in his mood Crying, "I count it of no more avail, Dame, to be gentle than arrogant with you; Take my salute," unkindly with that hand, However lightly, smote her on the cheek. Then Enid, in her utter helplessness, And since she thought, "he had not dared to do it, Except he surely knew my lord was dead," Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter cry, As of a wild thing taken in the trap, Which sees the trapper coming thro' the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his sword, (It lay beside him in the hollow shield,) Masked a short bound, and with a sweep of it Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like a ball The rasset-bearded head roll'd on the floor. So died Earl Doorm by him he counted dead. And all the men and women in the hall Rose when they saw the dead man rise, and fled Yelling as from a spectre, and the two Were left alone together, and he said:"

"Enid, I have used you worse than that dead man: Done you more wrong: we both have undergone That trouble which has left me thrice your own: Henceforward I will rather die than trouble. And here I lay this penance on myself, Not, thou' mine own ears heard you yestermorn— You thought me sleeping, but I heard you say, I heard you say, that you were no true wife: I swear I will not ask your meaning in it; I do believe yourself against yourself, And henceforward rather die than doubt." And Enid could not say one tender word, She felt so blust and stupid at the heart: She only pr'y'd him, "Fly, they will return And slay you; fly, your charger is without, My palfrey lost." "Then, Enid, shall you ride Behind me." "Yes," said Enid, "let us go." And moving out they found the stately horse, Who now no more a vassal to the thief, But free to stretch his limbs in lawful fight, Neigh'd with all gladness as they came, and stopp'd With a low whinny toward the pair: and she Kist the white stallion upon his noble hout, Glad also; then Geraint upon the horse Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on his foot She set her own and climb'd; he turn'd his face And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast her arms About him, and at once they rode away. And never yet, since high in Paradise O'er the four rivers the first roses blew, Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind, Then lived thro' her who in that pious hour Put hand to hand beneath her husband's heart, And felt him hers again: she did not weep, But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist Like that which kept the heart of Eden green Before the useful trouble of the rain: Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes As not to see before them on the path, Right in the gateway of the bandit bold, A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his lance In rest, and made as it to fall upon him. Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood, She, with her mind all full of what had chance'd, Shrick'd to the stranger, "Slay not a dead man!" "The voice of Enid," said the knight: but she, Beholding it was Edyrn son of Nudd, Was so endeared to her more, and shriek'd again, "O cousin, slay not him who gave you life." And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake: "My lord Geraint, I greet you with all love; I took you for a bandit knight of Doorm; And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him, Who love you, Prince, with something of the love Wherewith we love the Heaven that chastens us. For once, when I was up so high in pride That I was half way down the slope to Hell, By overthrowing me you gave the higher. Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table Round, And since I knew this Earl, when I myself Was half a bandit in my lawless hour, I come the mouthpiece of our King to Doorm (The King is close behind me) bidding him Dissipate himself, and scatter all his powers, Submit, and hear the judgment of the King."

"He bears the judgment of the King of Kings," Cried the wain Prince: "and to the powers of Doorm Are scatter'd," and he pointed to the field Where, huddled here and there on mound and knoll, Were men and women staring and aghast, While some yet fled; and then he plainlaid told
How the huge Earl lay slain within his hall,
But when the knight besought him, "Follow me,
Prince, to the camp, and in the King's own ear
Speak what has chanced: you surely have endured
Strange chances here alone:" that other flush'd,
And hung his heart, and halted in reply.
Fearing the mild face of the blameless King,
And after madness asked question ask'd:
Till Edyrn crying, "If you will not go
To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you."
"Enough," he said, "I follow," and they went.
But Enid in their going had two fears,
One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,
And one from Edyrn. Every now and then,
When Edyrn rais'd his charger at her side,
She shrank a little. In a hollow land,
From which old fires have broken, men may fear
Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving, said:

"Fair and dear cousin, you that most had cause
To fear me, fear no longer, I am changed.
Yourself were first the blameless cause to make
My nature's prideful sparkle in the blood
Break into furious flame; being repulsed
By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and wrought
Until I overthrew'd him; then set up
(With one main purpose ever at my heart)
My haughty jousts, and took a paramour;
Did her mock-honor as the fairest fair,
And, toppling over all antagonism,
So wax'd in pride, that I believed myself
Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad:
And, but for my main purpose in these jousts,
I should have slain your father, seized yourself.
I lived in hope that some time you would come
To these my lists with him whom best you loved:
And there, poor cousin, with your meek blue eyes,
The truest eyes that ever answer'd heaven,
Behold me overturn and trample on him.
Then, had you cried, or knelt, or pray'd to me,
I should not less have killed him. And you came,—
But once you came,—and with your own true eyes
Beheld the man you loved (I speak as one
Spakes of a service done him) overthrow

"He turned his face,
And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast her arms
About him, and at once they rode away."
My proud self, and my purpose three years old,
And set his foot upon me, and give me life.
There was I broken down; there was I saved.
That' thence I rode all-shamed, hating the life
He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.
And henceforth the Queen laid upon me
Was but to rest awhile within her court:
Where first as sullen as a beast new-caged,
And waiting to be treated like a wolf,
Because I knew my deeds were known, I found
Laziness of scowful pity or pure serenity,
Sure of reserve and noble relish,
Manners so kind, yet stately, such a grace
Of tenderness courtesies, that I began
To glance behind me at my former life,
And find that it had been the world indeed:
And oft I talked with Dubris, the high saint,
Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,
Subdued me somewhat to that gentleness,
Which, when it weds with manhood, makes a man.
And you were often there about the Queen.
But saw me not, or marked not if you saw:
Nor did I care or dare to speak with you.
But kept myself aloof till I was changed;
And fear not, cousin! I am changed indeed.

He spoke, and Eadil easily believed,
Like simple noble natures, creations
Of what they long for, good in friend or foe,
There most in those who must have done them ill.
And when they reach'd the camp the king himself
Advanced to greet them, and beholding her,
Tho' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a word,
But went apart with Elynn, whom he held
In converse for a little, and returned,
And, gravely smiling, lifted her from horse,
And kiss'd her with all pureness, brother-like,
And drest her as his love insisted on,
And glancing for a minute, till he saw her
Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and said:

"Prince, when of late you prattled me for my leave
To move to your own land, and there defend
Your marches, I was prick'd with some reproach,
As one that let foul wrong stagnate and be,
By having look'd too much thro' alien eyes,
And wrought too long with delegated hands,
Not thinking mine, but mine own to use:
To cleanse this common sewer of all my realm,
With Elynn and with others; have you look'd
At Elynn? have you seen how nobly changed?
This work of his is great and wonderful.
His very face with change of heart is changed.
The world will not believe a man repeats;
And this wise world of ours is mainly right.
Full seldom does a man repent, or use
Both grace and will to pick the vicious quitch
Of blood and custom wholly out of him,
And make all clean, and plant himself afresh.
Elynn has done it, weeding all his heart
As I will weed this land before I go.
I, therefore, made him of our Table Round,
Not only, but have prov'd him so way
One of our noblest, our most valiant.
Sanest and most obedient: and indeed
This work of Elynn wrought upon himself
After a life of violence, seems to me
A thousand-fold more great and wonderful
Than if some knight of mine, risking his life,
My subject with my subjects under him,
Should make an onslaught single on a realm
Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by one.
And were himself nigh-wounded to the death."

So spake the King; low bowed the Prince, and felt
His work was neither great nor wonderful,
And past to Eadil's tent: and thither came
The King's own leech to look into his hurt;
And Eadil tended on him there; and there
Her constant motion round him, and the breath
Of her sweet tendance hovering over him,
Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood
With deeper and with ever deeper love,
As the south-west that blowing fain take
Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his hurt,
The blameless King went forth and cast his eyes
On whom his father Uther left in charge
Long since, to guard the justice of the King:
He look'd and found them wanting; and as now
Men weed the white horse on the Berkshire hills
To keep him bright and clean as heretofore,
He rest'd out the slothful officer
Or guile, which for bribe had wink'd at wrong,
And in their chairs set up a stronger race
With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men
To till the wastes, and moving everywhere
Clean'd the dark places and let in the law,
And broke the bandit holds and cleansed the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again, they past
With Arthur to Caeleos upon Insk.
There the great Queen once more embraced her friend,
And drest her in apparel like the day.
And tho' Geraint could never take again
That comfort from their converse which he look'd
Before the Queen's fair name was breathed upon,
He rest'd well content that all was well.
Thenese after tarrying for a space they rode,
And fifty knights rode with them to the shores
Of Severn, and they past to their own land.
And there he kept the justice of the King;
So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts
Appalled, and the spiteful whisper died:
And being ever foremost In the chase,
And victor at the tilt and tournament.
They call'd him the great Prince and man of men.
But Eadil, whom her ladies loved to call
Eadil the Fair, a grateful people named
Eadil the Good; and in their halls arose
The cry of children, Eadils and Geraint's
Of times to be; nor did he doubt her more
But rested in her reality, till he crown'd
A happy life with a fair death, and fell
Again beneath the heathen fires of the Nether-Side
In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

VIVIEN.

A storm was coming, but the winds were still,
And in the wild woods of Broccoli,
Before an oak, so hollow huge and old
It look'd a tower of ruin'd masonwork,
At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's court:
She hated all the knights, and heard in thought
Their lavish comment when her name was named.
For once, when Arthur walking all alone,
Next to a rumor rife about the Queen,
Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair?
Would faire have wrought upon his cloudy mood
With reverent eyes mock-local, shaken voice,
And flutter'd adoration, and at last
With dark sweet hints of some who prized him more
Than who should prize him most; at which the King
Had gazed upon her blankly and gone by:
But one had watch'd, and had not hold his peace:
It made the laughter of an afternoon
That Vivien should attempt the blameless King.
And after that, she set herself to gain
Him, the most famous man of all these times,
Merlin, who knew the range of all their arts, Had built the King his havens, ships, and halls, Who also bard, and knew the starry heavens; There with Cado she sojourned and she stayed, In Arthur's barra hall at Camelot. She play'd about with slight and sprightly talk, And vivid smiles, and faintly-veeno'd points Of slander, glancing here and Grazing there; And yielding to his kithler moods, the Socier Would watch her at her petishments, and play. Ev'n when they seem'd unlovable, and laugh As those that watch a kitten: thus he grew Tolerant of what he half disdain'd, and she, Perceiving that she was but half disdain'd, Begain to break her spites with graver lips, Turn red or pale, would often when they met Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him With such a fix devotion, that the old man, Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at times Would flatter his own wish in age for love, And half believe her true. for thus at times He waver'd; but that other clung to him, Fixt in her will, and so the seasons went. Then fell upon him a great melancholy; And leaving Arthur's court he call'd the beach; There found a little boat, and stept into it: And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd her not. She took the helm and he the rae; the boat Drave with a sudden wind across the deeps, And no enchantings could that marke'nt mark. And then she follow'd Merlin all the way, Ev'n to the wild woods of Brochlande. For Merlin once had told her of a charm Which if any wrought on any one Within seven years and seven waving arms, The man so wrought on ever seem'd to lose Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower, From which was no escape forevmore; And none could find that man forevermore. Nor could he see what he wrought the charm Coming and going, and he lay as dead And lost to life and use and name and fame. And Vivien ever sought to work the charm Upon the great Enchanter of the Time, As fancying that her glory would be great According to his greatness whom she quench'd. There lay she all her length and kiss'd his feet, As if in deepest reverence and in love. A blight of gold wondering o'er her face, A robe Of samite without price, that more exact Than hid her, clung about her bosome limbs, In color like the satin-shining palm On sallows in the whindy gleams of March: And while she kiss'd them, crying, "O example me, Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro' the world, And I will pay you worship; tread me down And I will kiss you for it," he was mute: So dark a forethought roll'd about his brain, As on a dull day in an Ocean cave The blind wave feeling round his long sea-hall In silence: wherefore, when she lift'd up A face of sad appeal, and spake and said, "O Merlin, do you love me?" and again, "O Merlin, do you love me?" and once more, "Great Master, do you love me?" he was mute. And bosome Vivien, holding by his heel, Writhe'd toward him, slide'd up his knee and eat, Behind his ankle twined her hollow feet Together, curvel an arm about his neck, Clung like a snake; and letting her left hand Drop from his mighty shoulder as a leaf, Made with her right a comb of pearl to part The list of such a beard as youth gone out He naked hath, but apart. She might did, Not looking at her, "Who are wise in love Most wise, say least," and Vivien answer'd quick, "I saw the little elf-god careless once In Arthur's barra hall at Camelot: But neither eyes nor tongue,—O stupid child! Yet you are wise who say it; let me think Silence is wisdom: I am silent then And ask her, and the first to boldly all at once, "And bow, I clothe myself with wisdom," drew The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard Across her neck and bosom to her knee, And calle'd herself a gilded summer fly Caught in a great old tower, gilded web, Who mean't to eat her up in that wild wood Without one word. So Vivien calle'it herself, But rather seem'd a lovely balataf star With'd in gray vejes; till he sadly smil'd: "To what request for what strange boon," he said, "Are these your pretty tricks and foibles, O Vivien, the pramable? yet my thanks, For these have broken up my melancholy." And Vivien answer'd smiling slyly, "What, O my Master, have you found your voice I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks at last! But yesterday you never open'd lip, Except indeed to drink; no cup had we: In mine own hand I call'd the spring That gather'd trickling dropwise from the clent, And made a pretty cup of both my hands And offer'd you it kneeling: then you drank And knew no more, nor gave me one word: O no more thanks that might have given me With no more sign of reverence than a beard. And when we halted at that other well, And I was faint to sundown, and you lay Foot-gilt with all the blossoms-dust of these Deep meadow we had traversed, did you know That Vivien bathed your feet before her own? And yet no thanks: and all thro' this wild wood And all this morning when I fondled you: Boom, yes, there was a boom, one not so strange— How had I wrong'd your surely you are wise, But such a silence is more wise than kind." And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers and said: "O did you never lie upon the shore, And watch the carlly white of the coming wave Glass'd in the slippery sand before it breaks? Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasurable, Dark in the glass of some pressagious mood, Had I for three days reas to break her wrist And then the ice we fled from Arthur's court To break the mood. You follow'd me unask'd: And when I look'd, and saw you following still, My mind involv'd yourself the nearest thing In that mind-mist; for shall I tell you truth? You seem'd that wave about to break up wise, And sweep me from my hold upon the world, My use and name and fame. Your pardon, child. Your pretty sports have brightend all again. And ask your boon, for I once you thrice, Once for wrong done you by confusion, next For thanks it seems till now neglected, last For these your dainty gambols: wherefore ask: And take this boon so strange and not so strange,' And Vivien answer'd, smiling mournfully: "O not so strange as my long asking it, Nor yet so strange as you yourself are strange, Nor half so strange as that dark mood of yours. I ever fear'd you were not wholly mine; And see, yourself have own'd you did me wrong. The people call you prophet; let it be: But not of those that can expound themselves. Take Vivien for expounder: she will call That three-days-long pressagious ghost of yours No pressage, but the same mischastful mood That makes you seem less noble than yourself, Whenever I have ask'd this very boon. Now ask'd again: for see you not, dear love, That such a mood as that, which lately gloom'd
Your fancy when you saw me following you,
Must make me fear still more you are not mine,
Must make me yearn still more to prove you mine,
And make me wish still more to learn this charm
Of woven paces and of waving hands,
As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it me.
The charm so taught will charm us both to rest.
For, grant me some slight power upon your face,
I, feeling that you felt me most truly trust;
Should rest and let you rest, knowing you mine,
And therefore be as great as you are named,
Not muffled round with selfish reticence.
How hard you look and how denegingly!
O, if you think this wickedness in me,
That I should prove it on you unwares,
To make you lose your use and name and fame,
That makes me most indignant; then our bond
Had best be loosed forever: but think or not,
By Heaven that hears I tell you the clean truth,
As clean as blood of babes, as white as milk:
O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,
If these unwitty wandering wits of mine,
Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,
Have trip on such conjectural treachery—
May this hard earth cleave to the Nadir hell
Down, down, and close again, and nip me flat,
If I be such a traitress. Yield my boon,
Till which I scarce can yield you all I am;
And grant my re-reiterated wish,
The great proof of your love: because I think,
However wise, you hardly know me yet."

And Merlin loosed his hand from hers and said:
"'I never was less wise, however wise—
Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of trust,
Than when I told you first of such a charm.
Yes, if you talk of trust I tell you this,
Too much I trusted, when I told you that,
And stirr'd this vice in you which ruin'd man
Thro' woman the first hour; for howse'er
In children a great curiosiousness be.well,
Who have to learn themselves and all the world,
In you, that are no child, for still I find
Your face is practised, when I spell the lines,
I call it,—well, I will not call it vice:
But since you name yourself the summer fly,
I well could wish a cobweb for the great,
That settles, beaten back, and gather'd back
Settles, till one could yield for weariness:
But since I will not yield to give you power
Upon my life and use and name and fame,
Why will you never ask some other boon?
Yea, by God's road, I trusted you too much."

And Vivien, like the tenderest-hearted maid
That ever bided tryst at village stile,
Made answer, either eyelid wet with tears.
"Nay, master, be not wrathful with your maid;
Careess her: let her feel herself forgiven
Who feels no heart to ask another boon.
I think you hardly know the tender rhyme
Of 'trust me not at all or all in all.'
I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it once,
And it shall answer for me. Listen to it.

'In Love, if Love he Love, it Love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers:
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

'It is the little rift within the hate,
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.

'The little rift within the lover's hate,
Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
That rotting inward slowly monders all.

'It is not worth the keeping: let it go:
But shall it? answer, darling, answer, no.
And trust me not at all or all in all.'

O master, do you love my tender rhyme?"

And Merlin look'd and half believed her true,
So tender was her voice, so fair her face,
So sweetly gleam'd her eyes behind her tears
Like sunlight on a plain behind a shower:
And yet he answer'd half indigantly:

"'Far other was the song that once I heard
By this huge oak, sung nearly where we sit:
For here we met, some ten or twelve of us,
To chase a creature that was current then
In these wild woods, the hart with golden horns.
It was the time when first the question rose
About the founding of a Table Round,
That was to be, for love of God and men
And noble deeds, the flower of all the world.
And each incited each to noble deeds.
And while we waited, one, the youngest of us,
We could not keep him silent, out he flash'd,
And it was such a song, such fire and heart,
Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming down
To such a stern and iron-clashing close,
That when he stopp'd we long'd to hurl together,
And should have done it: but the beauteous beast
Scared by the noise upstartied at his feet,
And like a silver shadow slip away.
Thro' the dim land; and all day long we rode
Thro' the dim land against the rushing wind,
That glorious roundel echoing in our ears,
And chased the flashes of his golden horns
Until they vanish'd by the fairy well
That laughs at iron—as our warriors did—
Where children cast their plies and nails, and cry,
"Laugh little well," but touch it with a sword,
It buzzes wildly round the point; and there
We lost him: such a noble song was that.
But, Vivien, when you sang me that sweet rhyme,
I felt as tho' you knew this cursed charm,
Were proving it on me, and that I lay
And felt them slowly ebbing, name and fame."

And Vivien answer'd, smiling mournfully:
"'O mine have ebb'd away for evermore,
And all thro' following you to this wild wood,
Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.
Lo now what hearts have men! the never mount
As high as woman in her selfless mood.
And touching fame, how'er you scorn my song
Take one verse more—the lady speaks it:—this:

'My name, once mine, now thine, is closseller mine,
For fame, could fame be mine, that fame were thine,
And shame, could shame be thine, that shame were mine.
So trust me not at all or all in all.'

'Says she not well? and there is more—this rhyme
Is like the fair pearl necklace of the Queen,
That burst in dancing, and the pearls were split;
Some lost, some stolen, some as relics kept:
But nevermore the same two sister pearls
Ran down the silken thread to kiss each other
On her white neck—so is it with this rhyme:
It lives dispersedly in many hands,
And every minstrel sings it differently:
Yet is there one true line, the pearl of pearls:
'Man dreams of Fame while woman wakes to love.
True: Love, tho' Love were of the grossest, carves
A portion from the solid present, eats
And uses, careless of the rest; but Fame,
The Fame that follows death is nothing to us:
And what is Fame in life but half-dis fame,
And conuntered with darkness? you yourself
Know well that envy calls you Devil's son, 
And since you seem the Master of all Art, 
They fain would make you Master of all Vice."

And Merlin look'd his hand in hers and said, 
"I once was looking for a magic weed, 
And found a fair young squire who sat alone, 
Had carved himself a knightly shield of wood, 
And then was painting on it fancied arms, 
Azure, an Eagle rising, or, the Sun 
In dexter chief: the scroll 'I follow fame.' 
And speaking not, but leaning over him, 
I took his brush and blotted out the bird, 
And made a Gardener paining in a graft, 
With this for motto, 'Rather use true fame.' 
You should have seen him blush: but afterwards 
He made a stawwart knight. O Vivien, 
For you, methinks you think you love me well; 
For me, I love you somewhat: rest: and Love 
Should have some rest and pleasure in himself, 
Not ever be too curios for a boon, 
Too prai'rleit for a proof against the grain 
Of him you say you love: but Fame with men, 
Being but ampler means to serve mankind, 
Should have some rest or pleasure in herself, 
But work as vassal to the larger love, 
That dwarfs the petty love of one to one. 
Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame again 
Laundering gave me use. E'en th' other my boon! 
What other? for men sought to prove me vile, 
Because I wish'd to give them greater minds; 
And then did Evie call me Devil's son; 
The sick weak beast seeking to help herself 
By striking at her better, wounded, and brought 
Her own claw back, and wounded her own heart. 
Sweet were the days when I was all unknown, 
But when my name was lifted up, the storm 
Broke on the mountain and I cared not for it. 
Ruing well know I that Fame is fickle, 
Yet needs must work my work. That other fame, 
To one at least, who hath not children, vague, 
The cackle of the unborn about the grave, 
I cared not for it: a single misty star, 
Which is the second in a line of stars 
That seem a sword beneath a belt of three, 
I never gaz'd upon it but I dreamt 
Of some vast charm concluded in that star 
To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if I fear, 
Give me your power upon me and thine charm, 
That you might play me falsely, having power, 
However well you think you love me now 
(As sons of kings loving in papillage) 
Have turn'd to tyrants when they came to power) 
I rather dread the loss of use than fame. 
If you—and not so much from wickedness, 
As some wild turn of anger, or a mood 
Of overstrain'd affection, it may be, 
To keep me all to your own self, or else 
A sudden sport of woman's jealousy, 
Should try this charm on whom you say you love," 

Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower 
From which is no escape forevermore."

Then the great Master merrily answer'd her; 
"Full many a love in loving youth was mine, 
I needed them no charm to keep them mine 
But youth and love; and that full heart of yours 
Whereof you prattle, may now assure you mine; 
So live uncharm'd. For those who sought it first, 
The wrist is parted from the hand that waved, 
The feet unformed from their ankle-bones 
Who paced it, ages back: but will you hear 
The legend as in guardon for your rhyme? 

"There lived a King in the most Eastern East, 
Less old than I, yet older, for my blood 
Hath earnest in it of far springs to be. 
A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port, 
Whose bark had plunder'd twenty nameless isles; 
And passing one, at the high peak of dawn, 
He saw two cities in a thousand boats 
All fighting for a woman on the sea; 
And pushing his black craft among them all, 
He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought her off, 
With loss of half his people arrow-shain: 
A maid so smooth, so white, so wonderful, 
TheEyesight drew light came from her when she moved 
And since the pirate would not yield her up, 
The King impaled him for his prfracy; 
Then made her Queen: but those self-nurtur'd eyes 
Waged such unwilling the successful war 
On all the youth, they sicken'd: canesile thim'd, 
And arms wanced, for many manlike she drew, 
The restlest iron of old fighters' hearts, 
And beasts themselves would worship; camels knelt 
Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain back 
That carried kings in castles, bow'd black knees 
Of homage, ringing with their serpent hands, 
To make her smile, her golden ankle-bells, 
What wonder, being jealous, that he sent 
His horns of proclamation out th' all 
The hundred under-kindoms that he sway'd 
To find a wizard who might teach the King 
Some charm, which being wrou't upon the Queen 
Might keep her all his own: to such a one 
He promised more than ever king has given, 
A league of mountains full of golden mines, 
A province with a hundred miles of coast, 
A palace and a princess, all for him, 
But on all those who tried and fail'd, the King 
Promounced a dismal sentence, meaning by it 
To keep the list low and pretenders back, 
Or like a king, not to be trifled with, 
Their heads should moulder on the city gates. 
And many tried and fail'd, because the charm 
Of nature in her overbore their own: 
And many a wizard bore breath'd on the walls; 
And many weeks a troop of curious crows 
Hung like a cloud above the gateway towers." 

And Vivien, breaking in upon him, said: 
"I sit and gather honey; yet, methinks, 
Your tongue has tript a little: ask yourself. 
The lady never made unwilling war 
With those fine eyes: she had her pleasure in it, 
And made her good man jealous with good cause. 
And lived there neither dame nor damsel then 
Wroth at a lover's loss? were all as tame, 
I mean, as noble, as their Queen was fair? 
Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes, 
Or dash a furious drop into her drink, 
Or make her palfy with a poison'd rose? 
Well, those were not our days: but did they find 
A wizard? Tell me, was he like thee?"

She ceased, and made her lithe arm round his neck 
Tighten, and then drew back, and let her eyes 
Speak for her, glowing on him, like a bride's 
On her new lord, her own, the first of men.
He answer'd laughing, "Nay, not like to me. At last they found—his foragers for charms—
A little glassy-headed hairless man,
Who lived alone in a great wild on grass;
No rated down and flung away with thought,
So lean his eyes were monstrous; while the skin
Clung but to crate and basket, ribs and spine,
And since he kept his mind on one sole aim,
Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted flesh,
Nor wou'd a sensual wish, to him the wall
That sundered ghosts and shadow-casting men
Became a crystal, and he saw them thro' it,
And heard their voices talk behind the wall,
And learnt their elemental secrets, powers
And forces; often o'er the sun's bright eye
Drew the vast eyelid of an inky cloud,
And lash'd it at the base with slanting storm;
Or in the noon of mist and driving rain,
When the lake whiten'd and the pine-wood roar'd,
And the cairn'd mountain was a shadow, saun'd

The world to peace again; here was the man.
And so by force they dragged him to the King.
And then he taught the King to charm the Queen
In such wise, that no man could see her more,
Nor saw she save the King, who wrought the charm,
Coming and going, and she lay as dead,
And lost all use of life: but when the King
Made proffer of the league of golden mines,
The province with a hundred miles of coast,
The palace and the princess, that old man
Went back to his old wild, and lived on grass.
And vanish'd, and his book came down to me."

And Vivien answer'd, smiling saucily:
"You have the book: the charm is written in it:
Good: take my counsel: let me know it at once:
For keep it like a puzzle chest in chest,
With each chest lock'd and padlock'd thirty-fold.
And whelm all this beneath as vast a mound
As after furious battle turf the slain
On some wild down above the windy deep,
I yet should strike upon a sudden means  
To dig, dig, open, find and read the charm:  
Then, if I tried it, who should blame me then?"

And smiling as a Master smiles at one  
That is not of his school, nor any school  
But that where blind and naked Ignorance  
Delivers brawling judgments, unshamed,  
On all things all day long, he answered her:

"You read the book, my pretty Vivien!  
O ay, it is but twenty pages long,  
But every page having an ample margin,  
An every margin enclosing in the midst  
A square of text that looks a little blot,  
The text no larger than the limbs of fleas;  
And every square of text an awful charm,  
Writ in a language that has long gone by.  
So long, that mountains have arisen since  
With cities on their flanks—you read the book!  
And every margin scribbled, crost and crum'd  
With comment, densest condensation, hard,  
To mind and eye; but the long sleepless nights  
Of my long life have made it easy to me.  
And none can read the text, not even I:  
And none can read the comment but myself;  
And in the comment did I find the charm.  
O, the results are simple; a mere child  
Might use me to the harm of any one.  
And never could undo it: ask no more:  
For tho' you should not prove it upon me,  
But keep that oath you swore, you might, perchance,  
Assay it on some one of the Table Round,  
And all because you dream they babble of you."

And Vivien, frowning in true anger, said:

"What dare the fall-fed liars say of me?  
They ride abroad adressing human wrongs  
To thee, with knife in men and win a horn.  
They bound to holy vows of chastity!  
Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.  
But you are man, you well can understand  
The shame that cannot be explained for shame.  
Not one of all the drove should touch me: swine!"

Then answer'd Merlin, careless of her words,  
"You breathe but accusation vast and vague,  
Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If you know,  
Set up the charge you know, to stand or fall!"

And Vivien answer'd, frowning wrathfully:

"O ay, what say ye to Sir Valentine, him  
Whose kinsman left him watch'er o'er his wife  
And two fair babes, and went to distant lands;  
Was one year gone, and on returning found  
Not two but three: there lay the reckoning,  
But one hour old! What said the happy sire?  
A seven months' babe had been a tricer gift.  
Those twelve sweet months confused his fatherhood!"

Then answer'd Merlin: "Nay, I know the tale.  
Sir Valentine wedded with an outland dame:  
Some cause had kept him sunder'd from his wife:  
One child they had: it is lived with her: she died:  
His kinsman travelling on his own affairs  
Was charged by Valentine to bring home the child.  
He brought, not found it therefore: take the truth."

"O ay," said Vivien, "overtrue a tale.  
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagramore,  
That ardent man? 'tis pluck the flower in season;  
So says the song, 'I trow it is no treason.'  
O Master, shall we call him quick  
To crop his own sweet rose before the hour?"

And Merlin answer'd: "Overquick are you  
To catch a lothly plate fall'n from the wing  
Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole prey

Is man's good name; he never wrong'd his bride.  
I know the tale. An angry gust of wind  
Puff'd out his torch among the myriad-room'd  
And many-corridor'd complexities  
Of Arthur's palace: then he found a door  
And darkling felt the sculptured ornament  
That wrenched round it made it seem his own;  
And warning out made for the couch and slept,  
A stainless man beside a stainless maid;  
And either slept, nor knew of other three;  
Till the high dawn piercing the royal rose  
In Arthur's casement glimmer'd chastely down,  
Blushing upon them blushing, and at once  
He rose without a word and parted from her:  
But when the thing was blazed about the court,  
The brute world howling forced them into bonds,  
And as it chanced they are happy, being true."

"O ay," said Vivien, "that were likely too.  
What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale  
And of the horrid foulness that he brought,  
The saintly youth, the spotless lamb of Christ,  
Or some black wether of St. Satan's fold.  
What, in the predictics of the chapel-yard,  
Among the knightly brace of the graves,  
And by the cold Hic jacets of the dead?"

And Merlin answer'd, careless of her charge:

"A sober man is Percivale and pure;  
But once in life was fluster'd with new wine;  
Then paced for coolness in the chapel-yard,  
Where one of Satan's shepherdesses caught  
And meant to stamp him with her master's mark;  
And that he sma'd, is not believ'able;  
For, look upon his face—but if he sma'd,  
The sin that practice burns into the blood,  
And not the one dark hour which brings remorse,  
Will brand us, after, of what we be.  
Or else were he, the holy king, whose hymns  
Are chant'd in the minster, worse than all.  
But is your sleek froth'd out, or have ye more?"

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet in wrath:

"O ay; what say ye to Sir Launcelot,  
Traitor or true? that commerce with the Queen,  
I ask you, is it charitable to the child,  
Or whisper'd in the corner? do you know it?"

To which she answer'd sadly: "Yes, I know it.  
Sir Launcelot went ambassador, at first,  
To fetch her, and she took him for the King;  
So fixt her fancy on him: let him be,  
But have you no one word of loyal praise  
For Arthur, blameless King and stainless man?"

She answer'd with a low and chuckling laugh:

"Him! is he man at all, who knows and winks  
Sees what his fair bride is and does, and winks?  
By which the good king means to blind himself,  
And blinds himself and all the Table Round  
To the falseness that they do. Myself  
Could call him (were it not for weakness)  
The pretty, popular name such manhood earns,  
Could call him the main cause of all their crime;  
Yea, were he not crown'd king, coward, and fool."

Then Merlin to his own heart, loathing, said:

"O true and tender! O my liege and king!  
O selfless man and stainless gentleman,  
Who wouldst against thine own eye-witness fail  
Have all men true and loyal, all women pure;  
How, in the months of base interpreters,  
From over-thinness not intelligible  
To things with every sense as false and foul  
As the poached fish that floods the middle street,  
Is thy white blamelessness accounted blame?"
VIVIN.

But Vivien deeming Merlin overborne
By instance, recommended, and let her tongue
Rage like a fire among the noblest names,
Foliating, and imputing her whole self,
Defaming a sole defacing, till she left the

O, I, that flattering my true passion, saw
The knights, the court, the king, the dark in your light,
Who loved to make men darker than they are,
Because of that high pleasure which I had
To see all men say pedaling by the face of
Of worship—I am answer'd, and henceforth
The course of life that seem'd so flowery to me
With you for guide and master, only you,
Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken short,
And ending in a run—nothing left. In
But into some low cave to crawl, and there,
If the wolf spare me, weep my life away,
Ill'd with unsufferable unkindness.

She paused, she turn'd away, she hung her head.
The snake of gold slid from her hair, the braid
Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept afresh,
And the dark wood grew darker toward the storm
In silence, while his anger slowly died
Within him, till he let his wisdom go
For ease of heart, and half believed her true:
Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,
"Come from the storm," and having no reply,
Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and the face
Heard: as her heart burn'd for thinking of a friend;
Then thrice essay'd by tenderest-touching terms
To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in vain.
At last she let herself be conquer'd by him,
And as the cageling newly flown returns,
The seeing-injured simple-hearted thing;
Came to her old perch back, and settled there.
There while she sat, half-falling from his knees,
Half-nestled at his heart, and since he saw
The slow tear creep from her closed eyelid yet,
About her, more in kindness than in love,
The gentle wizard cast a shielding arm.
But she dislik'd herself at once and rose,
Her arms upon her breast across, and stood
A virtuous gentlewoman deeply wrong'd,
Upright and flash'd before him: then she said:

"There must be now no passages of love
Betwixt us twain henceforward evermore.
Since, if I be what I grossly call'd,
What should be granted which your own gross heart
Would reckon worth the taking? I will go.
In truth, but one thing now—better have died
Thrice than have ask'd it once—could make me stay—
That proof of truth—so often asked in vala!
How justly, after that vile term of yours,
I find my grief! I might believe one then,
Who knows? once more. O, what was once to me
Mere matter of the fancy, now has grown
The vast necessity of heart and life.

For ever so, let the wise look to your souls,
Since you are thus to lose your own, I ask
If I shamed against your peace in this,
May you just heaven, that darkens o'er me, send
One flash, that, missing all things, may make
My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie."

Scarcely had she ceased, when out of heaven a bolt
(For now the storm was close above them) struck,
Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining
With deadly spikes and splinters of the wood
The dark earth round. He raised his eyes and saw
The tree that shone white-listed thro' the gloom.
But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard her oath,
And dazzled by the livid-Nickered fork
And clasp'd with the stammering cracks and clefts
That follow'd, flying back and crying out,
"O Merlin, tho' you do not love me, save,
Yet save me!" clung to him and hung'd him close:
And call'd him dear protector in her sight,
Nor yet forgot her practice in her fright,
But wrought upon his mood and hung'd him close.
ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the lovely,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to the east
Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot—
Which first she placed where morning's earliest ray
Might strike it, and awake it with the glenn;
Then fearing rust or sojourn, fashion'd for it
A case of silk, and braided thereupon
All the devices blazon'd on the shield
In their own theft, and added of her wit,
A border fantasy of branch and flower,
And yellow-throated nestling in the nest.

Nor rested them content, but day by day
Leaving her household and good father'sAIM
That eastern tower, and entering bar'd her door,
Strip'd off the case, and read the naked shield,
Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his arms,
Now made a pretty history to herself
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
And every scratch a lance had made upon it,
Conjecturing when and where: this cut is fresh:
That ten years back: this dealt him at Caerlytle;
That at Caerleon, this at Camelot:
And ah, God's mercy, what a stroke was there!
And here a thrust that might have kill'd, but God
Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his enemy down,
And saved him: so she lived in fancy.

How came the lily maid by that good shield
Of Lancelot, she that knew not eu'n his name?
He left it with her, when he rode to tilt
For the great diamond in the diamond jousts,
Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by that name
Had named them, since a diamond was the prize.

For Arthur when none knew from whence he came,
Long ere the people chose him for their king,
Rowing the trackless realms of Lymonary,
Had found a gleam, gray border and black tarn,
A horror lived about the tarn, and clave
Like its own mist to all the mountain side:
For here two brothers, one a king, had met
And fraught together, till their names were lost.
And each had slain his brother at a blow,
And down they fell and made the lily abhor'd:
And there they lay till all their bones were bleached,
And lichen'd into color with the crag:
And he that once was king had on a crown
Of diamonds, one in front, and four aside.
And Arthur came, and laboring up the pass
All in a misty moonshine, mummery of
Had trodden that crown'd skeleton, and the skull
Brake from the nape, and from the skull the crown
Rol'd into light, and turning on its rims
Fiel'd like a glittering rivulet to the tarn:
And down the snaky scarr he plunged, and caught,
And set it on his head, and in his heart
Heard murmurs, "Lo, thou likewise shalt be king."

Thereafter, when a king, he had the gems
Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd them to his
Knights,
Saying "These jewels, whereupon I chanced
Divinely, are the kingdom's, not the king's—
For public use: henceforward let there be,
Once every year, a joust for one of these:
For so by nine years' proof we needs must learn
Which is our mightiest, and ourselves shall grow
In use of arms and manhood, till we drive
The Heathen, who, some say, shall rule the land
Hereafter, which God hinder."
Thus he spoke:
And eight years past, eight jousts had been, and still
Had Lancelot won the diamond of the year,
With purpose to present them to the Queen,
When all were won: but it meant all at once
To share her royal fancy with a boon.

Worth half her realm, had never spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and the last
And largest, Arthur, holding then his court
Hard on the river nigh the place which now
Is this world's bull's, let proclaim a joust at Camelot, and when the time drew nigh
Spike (for she had been sick to Guinevere)
"Are you so sick, my queen, you cannot move
To these fair jousts?"
"Yes, lord," she said, "you know it."

"Then will you miss," he answered "the great deeds
Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the lists,
A right you love to look on." And the Queen
Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt languidly.

On Lancelot, where he stood beside the King.
He thinking that he read her meaning there,
"Stay with me, I am sick; my love is more
Than many diamonds," yielded, and a heart,
Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen
(Howver much he yearnd to make complete
The tale of diamonds for his destined boon)
Urged him to speak against the truth, and say
"Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly whole,
And lets me from the saddle:" and the King
Glanced first at him, then her, and went his way.

No sooner gone than suddenly she began:
"To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot, much to blame
Why go you not to these fair jousts? the knights
Are half of them our enemies, and the crowd
Will murmur, to the shameless ones, who take
Their pastime now the trustful king is gone!"
Then Lancelot, vex'd at having lied in vain:
"Are you so wise? you were not once so wise,
My Queen, that summer, when you loved me first.
Then of the crowd you took no more account
Than of the myriad cricket of the mead,
When its own voice clings to each blade of grass,
And every voice is nothing. As to knights,
Them surely can I slay with all grace.
But now my loyal worship is allow'd
Of all men: many a hard, without offence,
Has link'd our names together in his lay,
Lancelot, the flower of beaivry, Guinevere.
The pearl of beauty: and our knights at least
Have pledged us in this union, while the King
Would listen smiling. How then? is there more?"
ELAINE.

Has Arthur spoken aught? or would yourself,
Now weary of my service and devoir,
Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord?

She broke into a little scornful laugh.
"Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless King,
That passionate perfection, my good lord—
But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven?
He never spake word of reproach to me,
He never had a glimpse of unlie truth,
He cares not for me: only here to-day
There gleams a vague suspicion in his eyes;
Some muddling rogue has tamper'd with him—else
Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
And swearing men to vows impossible,
To make them like himself: but, friend, to me
He is all fault who hath no fault at all:
For who loves me must have a touch of earth;
The low sun makes the color: I am yours,
Not Arthur's, as you know, save by the bond,
And therefore hear my words: go to the jousters:
The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream
When sweetest; and the vermin voices here
May baux so loud—we scorn them, but they sting."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights,
"And with what face, after my pretence made,
Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot,
Before a king who honors his own word,
As if it were his God's?"

"Yes," said the Queen,
"A moral child without the craft to rule,
Else had he not lost me: but listen to me,
If you must find wit: we hear it said
Then it go down before your spear at a touch,
But knowing you are Lancelot: your great name,
This conquer: hide it therefore; go unknown:
Win! by this kiss you will: and our true king
Will then allow your pretence, O my knight,
As all for glory; for to speak him true,
You know right well, how much so ever he seem,
No keenest hunter after glory breathes.
He loves it in his knights more than himself;
They prove to him his work: win and return."

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse,
Wroth at himself: not willing to be known,
He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare,
Chose the green path that show'd the rarer foot,
And among there the solitary downs,
F辄en often, lost his way;
Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track,
That all in loops and links among the dales
Han to the Castle of Astolat, he saw
Fired from the west, far on a hill, the towers.
Thither he made and wound the gateway horn,
Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man;
Who let him into lodging, and disarm'd.
And Lancelot marvell'd at the wordless man:
And issuing found the Lord of Astolat
With two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir Lavaine,
Moving to meet him in the castle court.
And close behind them stept the lily maid
Elaine, his daughter: mother of the house
There was not: some light jest among them rose
With laughter dying down as the great knight
Approach'd them: then the Lord of Astolat,
"Whence comest thou, my guest, and by what name
Lived between the lips? for by thy state
And presence I might guess thee chief of those,
After the king, who care of the Arthur's halls.
Him have I seen: the rest, his Table Round,
Known as they are, to me they are unknown."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights,
"I know not who, of Arthur's name I know,
What I by mere mischance have brought, my shield—
But since I go to joust as one unknown
At Camelot for the diamond, ask me not,
Hereafter you shall know me—and the shield—
I pray you lend me one, if such you have,
Blank, or at least with some device not mine."

Then said the Lord of Astolat, "Here is Torre's:
Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir Torre.
And, so, God wot, his shield is blank enough.
His you can have." Then answer'd plain Sir Torre,
"Yes since I cannot use it, you may have it."
Here laugh'd the father, saying, "Fie, Sir Churl,
Is that an answer for a noble knight?
Allow him: but Lavaine, my younger here,
He is so full of luithood, he will ride
Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an hour
And set it in this damsel's golden hair,
To make her thrice as wilful as before."

"Nay, father, nay, good father, shame me not
Before this noble knight," said young Lavaine.
"For nothing. Surely I but play'd on Torre:
He seem'd so smile, vext he could not go:
A jest, no more; for, knight, the maiden dreamt
That some one put this diamond in her hand,
And that it was too slippery to be held.
And slip and fell into some pool or stream,
The castle-well, belike: and then I said
That if I went and if I fought and won it
But all was jest and joke among ourselves
Then must she keep it safe for. All was jest.
But father give me leave, an he will,
To ride to Camelot with this noble knight:
Win shall I not, but do my best to win:
Young as I am, yet would I do my best."

"So you will grace me," answer'd Lancelot,
Smiling a moment, "with your fellowship.
O'er these waste downs whereon I lost myself,
Then were I glad of you as guide and friend;
And you shall win this diamond—as I hear,
It is a fair large diamond,—if you may
And yield it to this maiden if you will."
"A fair large diamond," added plain Sir Torre,
"Such be for Queens and not for simple maid's.
Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,
Elaine, and heard her name so true, about,
Flush'd slightly at the slight disparagement
Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,
Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus return'd:
"If what is fair be but for what is fair,
And only Queens are fain to be courted,
Rash were my judgment then, who deem this maid
Might wear as fair a jewel as is on earth,
Not violating the bond of like to like."

He spoke and ceased: the lily maid Elaine,
Won by the mellow voice before she look'd,
Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.
The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had mar'ld his face, and mark'd it ere his time.
Another shining on such heights with one,
The flower of all the west and all the world,
Had been the slender for it: but in him
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
And drov he into wastes and solitudes
For many, who was yet a living soul.
Mar'ld as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man,
That ever among ladies ate in Hall,
And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes.
However, more than two-score years, Seem'd with an ancient swordnet on the check,
And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes
And loved him, with that love which was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of the court,
Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall
Stept with all grace, and not with half disdain
Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,
But kindly man moving among his kind:
When they with meats and wines their best
And talk, and minstrelsy entertain'd.
And much they ask'd of court and Table Round,
And ever well and readily answer'd he:
Bat Lancelot, when they glanced at Guinevere,
Suddenly speech of the roulless man,
Heard of the Baron that, ten years before,
The heathen caught and reft him of his tongue.
"He learnt and warn'd me of their fierce design
Against my home, and him they caught and maim'd:
Laid up my sons and little daughter dead
From bonds or death, and dwelt among the woods
By the great river in a boarman's hut.
Dull days were those, till our good Arthur broke
The Pagan yet once more on Badon hill."

"O there, great Lord, doubtless," Lavaine said, rapt
By all the sweet and sudden passion of youth
Toward greatness in its elder, "you have fought.
O tell us; for we live apart, you know
Of Arthur's glorious wars."
And Lancelot spoke
And answer'd him at fall, as having been
With Arthur in the fight which all day long
Rang by the white mouth of the violent Glem;
And in the four wild battles by the shore
Of Dargle; that on Bassa; then the war
That thunder'd in and out the gloomy skirts
Of Cendon the forest; and again
By castle Garnion where the glorious King
Had on his casques worn our Lady's Head,
Carved of one emerald, centred in a sun
Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he breathed;
And at Caedlon he had help'd his lord,
When the strong neighlings of the wild white Horse
Set every glided parapet shivering;
And in Agned Cathregounion and
And down the wild rampart to Trath Teroit,
Where many a heathen fell; "and on the mount
Of Badon I myself beheld the King
Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
And all his legions crying Christ and him,
And break them; and I saw him, after, stand
High on a heap of shains, from spire to spume
Red as the rising sun with heathen blood,
And seeing me, with a great voice he cried,
"They are broken, they are broken," for the King
Horrors met me at some, nay, more;
For triumph in our muses war, the jomest—
For if his own knight cast him down, he laughs
Saying, his knights are better men than he—
Yet in this heathen war the fire of God
Fills him; I never saw his like; there lives
No greater leader."

While he utter'd this,
Low to her own heart said the lily maid,
"Save your great self, fair lord; and when he fell
From talk of war to traits of pleasanty—
Being mirthful he but in a stately kind—
She still took note that when the living smile
Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
Of melancholy severe, from which again,
Whenever in her hovering to and fro
The lily maid had striven to make him cheer,
There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness
Of manners and of nature; and she thought
That all was nature, all, perchance, for her,
And all night long his face before her lived,
As when a painter, poring on a face,
Divinely thro' all his faintness fade the man
Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
The diaphanous and mistred met a mind and life,
Lives for his children, even of its heart.
And fullest; so the face before her lived,
Dark-spleudi'd, speaking in the silence, full
Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.
Till rade she rose, half-cheated in the thought
She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.
First as in fear, step after step, she stole,
Down the long twelvet-w항ing viaduct,
Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the court,
"This shield, my friend, where is it?" and Lavaine
Past inward, as she came from out the tower.
There to his proud horse Lancelot turn'd, and smooth'd
The glorious shoulder, but the trembling tail.
Half-envious of the flattering hand, she drew
Neeter and stood. He look'd, and more amazed
Than if seven men had set upon him, saw
The maiden standing in the dewy light.
He had not dreamt she was so beautiful.
Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,
For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood
Rapt on his face as if it were a God's,
Suddenly flashed on her a wild desire,
That he should wear her favor at the tilt.
She brake a ronous heart in asking for it.
"Fair lord, whose name I know not—noble it is,
I well believe, the noblest—will you wear.
My favor at this tourney?" "Nay," said he,
"Fair lady, since I never yet have worn
Favor of any lady in the lists,
Such is my wont, as those who know me, know.
"Yea, so," she answer'd; "then in wearing mine
Needs must be lesser likehood, noble lord,
That those who know should know you.
And he turn'd:
Her counsel up and down within his mind,
And found it true, and answer'd, "True, my child.
Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:
What is it?" and she told him "a red sleeve
Brother'd with pearls," and brought it: then he bound
Her token on his helmet, with a smile
Saying, "I never yet have done so much
For any maiden living," and the blood
Sprang to her face, and fill'd her with delight;
But left her all the paler, when Lavaine
Returning brought the yet unblazon'd shield,
His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,
Who parted with his own to fair Elaine:
"Do me this grace, my child, to have my shield
In keeping till I come."

"A grace to me,
She answer'd, "twice to-day. I am your Squire."
Whereat Lavaine said laughing, "Lily maid,
For fear our people call you lily maid
In earnest, yet me bring your father back;"
Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed:
So kiss'd she, and Sir Lancelot his own hand,
And thus they mov'd away; she stay'd a minute,
Then made a sudden step to the gate, and there—
Her bright hair blown about the serious face
Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss—
Pased in the gateway, standing by the shield
In silence, while she watch'd their arms far off
Sparkle, until they dip below the dews,
Then to her tower she climb'd, and took the shield,
There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the new companions pass away
Far o'er the long back of the bushes down,
To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived a knight
Not far from Camelot, now for forty years
A hermit, who had pray'd, labord and pray'd
And ever labor'd and scooped't himself
In the white rock a chapel and a hall
On massive columns, like a shorecliff cave,
And cells and chambers: all were fair and dry,
The green light from the meadows underneath
Struck up and lived along the milky roofs;
And in the meadows tremulous aspen trees
And poplars made a noise of falling showers,
And dibber wending there that night they bode.

But when the next day broke from underground,
And shot red fire and shadows thro' the cave,
They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and rode away:
Then Lancelot saying, "Hear, but hold my name,
Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the Lake,"
Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant reverence,
Dearer to true young hearts than their own praise.
But left him leave to stammer, "Is it indeed?"
And after muttering "of the great Lances,
At last he got his breath and answer'd, "One,
One, have I seen—that other, our liege lord,
The dread Pendragon, Britain's king of kings,
Of whom the people talk mysteriously,
He will be there—then were I strucken blind.
That minute, I might say that I had seen."

So spake Lavaine, and when they reach'd the lists
By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes
Ruu thro' the poplars, gallery which half round
Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the grass,
Until they found the clear-faced King, that sat
Robed in red samite, easily to be known,
Since to his crown the golden dragon cling,
And down his robe the dragon writhed in gold,
And from the carven-work behind him crept
Two dragons gilded, sloping down to make
Arms for his chair, while all the rest of them
Thro' knots and loops and folds luminumare
Fied ever thro' the woodwork, till they found
The newest design whereon they held themselves,
Yet with all ease, so tender was the work:
And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,
Blazed the last diamond of the nameless King.

Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine and said,
"Me you call great: mine is the finer seat,
The truer lance: but there is many a youth
Now creasent, who will come to all I am
And overcome it: and in me there dwells
No greatness, save it will be some far greater
Of greatness to know well I am not great:
There is the man." And Lavaine gaped upon him
As on a thing miraculous, and anon
The trumpets blow; and then did either side,
They that assailed, and they that held the lists,
Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly move,
Meet in the midst, and there so furiously
Shock, that a man far-off might well perceive,
If any man that day were left afield,
There will earth shake, and a low sounder of arms,
And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw
Which were the weaker: then he hur'd it into
Against the stronger: little need to speak
Of Lancelot in his glory: King, duke, earl,
Count, baron—whom he smote, he overthrew,

But in the field were Lancelot's kith and kin,
Ranged with the Table Round that held the lists,
Strong men, and wrathful that a stranger knight
Should do and almost overdo the deeds
Of Lancelot; and one said to the other, "Lo!
What is he? I do not mean the force alone,
The grace and versatility of the man—
Is it not Lancelot?" "When has Lancelot worn
Favor of any lady in the lists?
Not such his wont, as we, that know him, know,"
"How then? who then?" a fury seiz'd on them,
A fiery family passion for the name
Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.
They check'd their spears and prick'd their steeds
And thus cry'd:
Their phantes driv'n backward by the wind they made
In moving, all together down upon him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wild North-sea,
Green-glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all
The sea's high crests what smote against the skies,
Down on a bank, and overthrows the bank,
And him that helsm it, so they overborne
Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a spear
Down-glanzeng lamed the charger, and a spear
Prick'd sharily his own cuirass, and the head
Fiercely thro' his side, and there snapt, and remain'd.

Then Sir Lancelot did well and worshipfully:
He bore a knight of old repate to the earth,
Away; then he rode to Lancelot to be lay.
He up the side, sweating with agony, got,
But thought to do while he might yet endure,
And being lustily holpen by the rest,
His party,— tho' it seemed half-miracule
To those he fought with—drave his kind and kin,
And all the Table Round that held the lists,
Back to the barrier; then the heralds blew
Proclaiming his the prize, who wore the sleeve
Of scarlet, and the pearls; and all the knights
His party, cried "Advance, and take your prize
The diamond;" but he answer'd, "Diamond me
No diamonds! for God's love, a little air!
Prize me no prizes, for my prize is death!
Hence will I and I charge you, follow me not."

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly from the field
With young Lavaine into the poplar grove.
There from his charger down he slid, and sat,
Gasping to Sir Lavaine, "Draw the laurel-head;"
"Ah, my sweet lord, Sir Lancelot," said Lavaine, "I dread me, if I draw it, you will die."
But he, "I die already with it: draw—
Draw—" and Lavaine drew, and that other gave
A marvellous great shriek and ghostly groan,
And hung his blood burst forth, and was rak'd
For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd away.
Then came the hermit out and bare him in;
The standch'd his wound; and there, in daily doubt
Whether to live or die, for many a week
Fell from the wide world's rumor by the grove
Of poplars with their noise of falling showers,
And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he lay.

But on that day when Lancelot flied the lists,
His party, knights of utmost North and West,
Lords of waste marches, kings of desolate isles,
Came round their great Pendragon, saying to him,
"Lo, sire, our knight th'o' whom we won the day
Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left his prize
Untaken, crying that his prize is death."
"Heaven hinder," said the King, "that such an one,
So great a knight as we have seen to-day—
He seem'd to me another Lancelot.
Young! many times I thought him Lancelot—
He must not pass uncare'd for. Gawain, rise,
My nephew, and ride forth and find the knight.
Wounded and wearied, needs must he be near.
I charge you that you get at once to horse.
And, knights and kings, there breathes not one of you
Will deem this prize of ours is rashly given:
His prowess was too wondrous. We will do him
No customary honor: since the knight
Came not to us, of us to claim the prize,
Ourselves will send it after. Wherefore take
This diamond, and deliver it, and return,
And bring us what he is and how he fares,
And cease not from your quest, until you find."

So saying from the carven flower above,
To which it made a restless heart, he took,
And gave the diamond: then from where he sat
Arms high, with smiling face arose
With swelling face and frowning heart, a Prince
In the mid night and demolished of his May,
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair and strong,
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and Geraint.
And Lamorack, a good knight, but therewithal
Sir Modred's brother, of a crafty house,
Nor often loyal to his word, and now
Wrot that the king's command to sally forth—
In quest of whom he knew not, made him leave
The banquet, and conourse of knights and kings.
So all to wrath he got to hause and went;
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in mood,
Past hearkening. "Tis Lancelot who has come
Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain
Of glory, and has added wound to wound,
And rid'd'aw away to die?" So fear'd the King,
And after two days' tarryance there, return'd.
Then when he saw the Queen, embrac'd, ask'd,
"Love, are you yet so sick?" "Nay, lady," said he,
"And where is Lancelot?" Then the Queen amazed,
"Was he not with you? won he not your prize?"
"Nay, but one like him." "Why that like was he." And while the King demanded how she knew,
Said, "Lord, no sooner had you parted from us,
Than Lancelot told me of a common talk
That men went down before his spear at a touch, but
knowing he was Lancelot; his great name Conquer'd; and therefore would he hide his name
From all men, e'en the king, and to this end
Had made the pretext of a hindering wound,
That he might just unknown of all, and learn
If his old prowess were in angit decay'd;
And added, 'Our true Arthur, when he learns,
Will well allow my pretext, as for gain
Of purer glory.'" Then replied the King:
"Fur beveller in our Lancelot had it been,
In liom of silly thought what he might come.
To have trusted me as he has trusted you.
Surely his king and most friendly friend
Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed,
Albeit I know my knights fantastical,
So fear'd was fear'd. That is Lancelot.
Must needs have moved my laughter: now remains
But little cause for laughter: his own kin—
Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him, these!
His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon him;
So that he was wound'd from the field:
Yet good news too: for goodly hopes are mine
That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart.
He wore, against his wont, upon his helm
A sleeve of scarlet, broderied with great pearls,
Some gentle maiden's gift.
"'Tis true, lord," she said,
"Your hopes are mine," and saying that she shook,
And sharply turn'd about to hide her face,
Moved to her chamber, and there flung herself
Down as the great King's couch, and whipt upon it,
And clench'd her fingers till they bit the palm,
And shriek'd out "traitor" to the unhearing wall,
Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose again,
And moved about her palace, proud and pale.

Gawain the while thro' all the region round
Rode with his diamond, warried of the quest,
Touch'd at all points, except the poplar grove,
And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat:
Whom glittering in enamell'd arms the maid
Glanced at, and cried "What news from Camelot,
lord?
What of the knight with the red sleeve?" He
"I knew it," she said. "But part from the jousts
Hurt in the side," whereat she caught her breath.
Thro' her own side she felt the sharp lance go:
Thereon she smote her hand: wellnigh she swoond:
And while he gazed wonderingly at her, came
The lord of Astolat out, to whom the Prince
Reported who he was, and on what quest
Sent, that he bore the prize and could not find
The victor, but had ridden wildly round
To seek him, and was wearied of the search.
To whom the lord of Astolat, "Bide with us,
And ride no longer wildly, noble Prince!
Here was the knight, and here he left a shield;
This will he send or come for: furthermore
Our son is with him; we shall hear anon,
Needs must we hear." To this the courteous Prince
Accorded with his wonted courtesy,
Courteously in a touch of truth for it,
And siny'd; and cast his eyes on fair Elaine:
Where could be found face daunier? then her shape
From forehead down to foot perfect—again
From foot to forehead exquisitely turn'd:
"Well—if I hide, 'tis this wild flower for me?"
And oft they met among the garden yews,
And there he set himself to play upon her
With sallying wit, free flashes from a height
Above her, graces of the court, and songs,
Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden eloquence
And amorous adulation, till the maid
Robell'd against it, saying to him, "Prince,
O loyal nephew of our noble King,
Why ask you not to see the shield he left?
Whence you might learn his name? Why slight
your King,
And lose the quest he sent you on, and prove
No surer than our falcon yesterday,
Who lost the hen we slipt him at, and went
To all the winds?" "Nay, by mine head," said he,
"I lose it; as we lose the lark in heaven,
O dannel, in the light of your blue eyes:
But an you will it let me see the shield."
And when the shield was brought, and Gawain saw
Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd with three
Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh and mock'd;
"Right was the King! our Lancelot! that true man!"
"And right was I," she answer'd merrily, "I,
Who dream'd my knight the greatest knight of all."
"Aye, and dream'm'd," said Gawain, "that you love
This greatest knight, your pardon! lo, you know it!
Speak therefore: shall I waste myself in vain?
Full simple was her answer: "What know I?
My brethren have been all my fellowship,
And, when often they have talked of love,
Would It had been my mother, for they talk'd,
Meseem'd, of what they knew; so myself—
I know not if I know what true love is,
But if I know, then, if I love not him,
Methinks there is none other I can love."
"'Tis true, by God's death," said he, "you love him well,
But would not, knew you what all others know,
And whom he loves." "So be it," cried Elaine,
And lifted her fair face and moved away:
But her pursu'd her calling. "Stay a little!
One golden minute's grace! he wore your sleeve!
Would he break faith with one I may not name?
Must our true man change like a leaf at last?
May it be so? why then, for be it from me
To create our mighty Lancelot in his love;
And, dancel, for I deem you know full well
Where your great knight is hidden, let me leave
My quest with you; the diamond also: here!
For if you love, it will be sweet to give it;
And if he love, it will be sweet to have it
From your own hand; and whether he love or not,
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you well
A thousand times!—a thousand times farewell!
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we two
May meet at court hereafter, there, I think,
So you will learn the courtesies of the court,
We two shall know each other." Then he gave,
And slightly kiss'd the hand to which he gave,
The diamond, and all warried of the quest
Leapt on his horse, and as blacking as he went
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

There to the court he past; there told the King
What the Knight knew, "Sir Lancelot is the knight."
And added, "Sire, my hege, so much I learnt;
But fail'd to find him tho' I rode all round
The region: but I lighted on the maid,
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him; and to her,
Decemng our courtesy is the truest law,
I gave the diamond: she will render it:

For by mine head she knows his hiding-place.

The seldon-frowning King frowned, and replied,

"Too courteous truly! you shall go no more
On quest of mine, seeing that you forget
Obedience is the courtesy due to kings."

He spake and parted. Wroth but all in awe,
For twenty strokes of the blood, without a word,
Linger'd that other, staring after him:
Then shook his hair, strode off, and buzz'd abroad
And lost the maid of Astolat, and her love.
All cars were prick'd at once, all tongues were loos'd:
"The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot,
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat."

Some read the King's face, some the Queen's, and all
Had marvel what the maid must be, but most
Predomin'd as unworthy. One old dame
Came suddenly on the Queen with the sharp news. She,
That had heard the noise of it before,
But sorrowing Lancelot should have stoop'd so low,
Marr'd her friend's point with pale tranquillity.
So ran the tale like fire about the court,
Fire in dry stubble a nine days' wonder flared:
Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice or thrice
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the Queen,
And pledging Lancelot and the lady maid
Scorn'd at each time by the bards to whom sat
With lips severely placid the felt the knot
Climb in her throat, and with her feet unseen
Crush'd the wild passion out against the floor
Beneath the banquet, where the meats became
As wormwood, and she hated all who pledged.

But far away in Astolat,
Her gullettless rival, she that ever kept
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her heart,
Courted in all, while he mused alone,
Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face and said,
"Father, you call me wiful, and the fault
Is yours, who let me have my will, and now,
Sweet father, will you let me lose my wits?"
"Nay," said he, "surely." "Wherefore let me hence,"
She answer'd, "and find out our dear Lavaine."
"You will not lose your wits for dear Lavaine: Bird," answer'd he: "we needs must hear anon
Of him, and of that other." "Aye," she said,
"I lack of that other need more hence
And find that other, wheresoe'er he be,
And with mine own hand give his diamond to him,
Lest I be found faithless in the quest
As you prond Prince who left the quest to me.
Sweet father, I behold him in my dreams.
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's aid.
The gentler-born the maiden, the more bound,
My father, to be sweet and serviceable
To noble knights in sickness, he you know,
When these have worn their tokens: let me hence
I pray you." Then her father nodding said,
"Ay, ay, the diamond: wit you well, my child,
Right fair were I to learn this knight was whole,
Being our greatest: yes, and you must give it
And sure I think this gift is humbling too:
For any month to gape for save a Queen's—
Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get you gone,
Being so very wiful you must go."  

Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slip't away,
And while she made her ready for her ride,
Her father's latest word humm'd in her ear,
"Being so very wiful you must go,
And chang'd itself and echoed in her heart,
"Being so very wiful you must do,
But she was happy enough and shook it off,
As we shake off the bee that buzzes at us;
And in her heart she answer'd it and said,
"What matter, so I help him back to life?"
Then far away with good Sir Torre for guide
Roile for the long back of the heathen downs
To Camelot, and before the city-gates
Came on her brother with a happy face
Making a round horse caper and curvet
For pleasure all about a field of flowers.
Who'd then saw, "Lavaine," she cried, "Lavaine,
How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?" He answer'd,
"Torre and Lavaine! why here? Sir Lancelot!
How know you my lord's name is Lancelot?"
But when the maid had told him all her tale,
Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in his moods
Left them, and under the strange-statued gate,
Where Arthur's wars were render'd mysteriously,
Past up the still rich city to his kin,
His own fair blood, which dwelt at Camelot;
And her Lavaine across the peopled grove
Led to the caves: there first she saw the casque
Of Lancelot on the wall: her scarlet sleeve,
Too carv'd and cut, and half the pears away,
Stream'd from it still; and in her heart she laugh'd,
Because he had not loos'd it from his helm,
But meant more perchance to tourny in it.
And when they gain'd the cell in which he slept,
His battle-writhe arms and mighty hands
Lay naked on the wofskin, and a dream
Of dragging down his enemy made them move.
Then saw that lady, that lying upon the couch,
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
Uter'd a little tender dolorous cry.
The sound not wonted in a place so still
Woke the sick knight, and while he roil'd his eyes
Yet blank from sleep, she started to him, saying:
"Your prize the diamond sent you by the King:
His eyes glisten'd: she fancied "is it for me?"
And when the maid had told him all the tale
Of King and Prince, the diamond sent, the quest
Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she knelt
Full lowly by the corners of his bed,
And laid the diamond in his open hand.
Her face was near, and as we kiss the child
That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd her face.
At once she slipp'd like water to the floor.
"Alas," he said, "your ride has wearied you.
Rest must you have." "No rest for me," she said;
"Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest."
What might she mean by that? his large black eyes
Yet look'd at her so keenly, drew her near,
Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself
In the heart's color on her simple face:
And Lancelot look'd and was perplex'd in mind,
And being weak in body said no more: but
Did not lose her; would he love her?
Save one, he not regarded, and so turn'd
Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro' the fields,
And past beneath the wildly-sculptured gates
Far up the dim rich city to her kin:
There bode the night: but woke with dawn, and pass'd
Down thro' the dim rich city to the fields,
Thence to the care: so day by day she past
In either twilight, ghost-like to and fro
Gliding out every day she tended him.
And likewise many a night: and Lancelot
Would bid he call'd his wound a little hurt
Whereof he should be quickly whole, at times
Brain-fever in his heat and agony, seem
Uncourteous, even he: but the meek maid
Sweetly forbore him ever, being to him
Meeker than any child to a rough nurse,
Ailder than any mother to a sick child,
And woman herself, since man's fall, fall
Did kindlier unto man, but her deep love
Uphore her; till the hermit, skild in all
The simples and the science of that time,
Told him that her fine care had saved his life.
And the sick man forgot her simple blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet Elaine,
Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and hold her tenderly,
And here with them except our love
Of man and woman when they love their best
Closet and sweetest, and had died the death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had been seen her first
She might have made this and that other world
Another world for the sick man; but now
The shackles of an old love straitened him,
His honor rooted in dishonor stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

Yet the great knight in his wild-sickness made
Full many a holy vow and pure resolve.
These, as but born of sickness, could not live:
For when the blood ran faster in him again,
Full often the sweet image of one face,
Making a treacherous quiet in his heart,
Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.
Then if the maiden, while that ghostly grace
Beamed on his fancy, spoke, he answer’d not,
Or shuddering, and coldly, and she, knew well
What the rough sickness meant, but what this meant:
She knew not, and the sorrow dimm’d her sight,
And drave her ere her time across the fields
Far into the rich city, where alone
She murmur’d, “Vain, in vain: It cannot be.
He will not love me: now then? must I die?”
Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
That has but one plain passage of few notes,
Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er
For all an April morning till the can
Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
Went half the night repeating, “Must I die?”
And now to right she turn’d, and now to left,
And found no ease in turning or in rest:
And him or death,” she answer’d, “Death or him,”
Again and like a burthen, “Bliss or death.”

But when Sir Lancelot’s deadly hurt was whole,
To Astolat returning rode the three
There morn by morn, arraigning her sweet self
In that wherein she deem’d she look’d her best,
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she thought
“If I be loved, these are my festal robes,
If not, the victim’s flowers before he fall.
And Lancelot ever the truest love
That she should ask some goodly gift of him
For her own self or hers; ‘and do not shun
To speak the wish most near to your true heart;
Such service have you done me, that I make
My will of yours, and Prince and Lord am I
In mine own land, and what I will I can.”
Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,
But like a ghost without the power to speak.
And Lancelot saw that she withheld her wish,
And bode among them yet a little space,
Till he should learn it; and one morn it chanced
He found her in among the garden yews,
And said, “Delay no longer, speak your wish,
Seeing I must go to-day;” then out she brake:
“Gone? and we shall never see you more.
And I must die for want of one bold word.”
“Speake: that I live to hear,” he said, “is yours.”
Then suddenly and passionately she spoke:
“I have gone mad. I love you; let me die,”
“Ah sister,” answer’d Lancelot, “what is this?”
And innocently extending her white arms,
“Your love,” she said, “your love—to be your wife,”
And Lancelot answer’d, “Had I choice to wed,
I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine;
But now there never will wife of mine.”
“No, no, no,” she cried, “I care not to be wife,
But to be with you still, to see your face,
To serve you, and to follow you thro’ the world.”

And Lancelot answer’d, “Nay, the world, the world.
All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart
To interpret ear and eye, and such a tongue
To blare its own interpretation—nay,
Full ill the true love of your brother’s love,
And your good father’s kindness.” And she said,
“Not to be with you, not to see your face—
Alas for me then, my good days are done.”
“Nay, noble maid,” he answer’d, “ten times nay!”
This is not love: but love’s first flash in youth,
Most common: yea, I know it of mine own self:
And you yourself will smile at your own self
Hereafter, when you yield your flower of life
To one more fitly yours, not thrice your age;
And then will I, for true you are and true
Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,
More specially should your good knight be poor,
Endow you with broad land and territory
Even to the half my realm beyond the seas,
So that would make you happy; furthermore,
Ev’n to the death, as tho’ you were my blood,
In all your quarrels will I be your knight.
This will I do, dear damsels, for your sake,
And more than this I cannot.”

While she spoke
She neither blushed nor shook, but death-pale
Stood grasping what was nearest, then replied,
“Of all this will I nothing:” and so fell,
And thus they bore her swooning to her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro’ those black walls of yew
Their talk had pierced, her father, “Ay, a flash,
I fear me, that will strike my blossom dead.
Two courtesans are you, fair Lord Lancelot.
I pray you, use some rough discourtesy
To blunt or break her passion.”

Lancelot said,
“That were against me; what can I will?—
And there that day remained, and toward even
Sent for his shield: full meekly rose the maid,
Stript off the case, and gave the naked shield;
Then, when she heard his horse upon the stones,
Unclasping flung the casement back, and look’d
Down on his helm, from which her sleeve had gone.
And Lancelot knew the little clicking sound;
And she by tact of love was well aware
That Lancelot knew that she was looking at him.
And yet he glanced not up, nor waved his hand,
Nor bade farewell, but slowly laid her head.
This was the one discourtesy that he used.

So in her tower alone the maiden sat:
His very shield was gone: only the case,
Her own poor work, her empty labor, left.
But still she heard him, still his picture form’d
And grew between her and the pictured wall.
Then came her father, saying in low tones
“Have comfort,” whom she greeted quietly,
Then came her brethren saying, “Peace to thee,
Sweet sister,” whom she answer’d with all calm.
But when they left her to herself again,
Death, like a friend’s voice from a distant field
Approaching thro’ the darkness, called; the owls
Wailing had power, upon her, and she mix’t
Her fancies with the sallow-ripted glooms
Of evening, and the moanings of the wind.

And in those days she made a little song,
And call’d her song ‘The Song of Love and Death,
And sang it: sweetly could she make and sing;
“Sweet is true love, tho’ given in vain, in vain;
And sweet is death who puts an end to pain:
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

“Love, art thou sweet? then bitter death must be:
Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to me.
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die."
"Sweet Love, that seems not made to fade away, 
Sweet death, that seems to make us loveless shy, 
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I."

"I fear would follow love, if that could be; 
I needs must follow death, who calls for me; 
Call and I follow, I follow! let me die!"

High with the last line scaled her voice, and this, 
All in a fiery dawning wild with wind 
That shook her tower, the brothers heard, and thought
With shuddering, "Hark the Phantom of the house 
That ever shrieks before a death," and call'd
The father, and all three in hurry and fear 
Ran to the door and looked by every light of dawn 
Plared on her face, she shrilling "Let me die!"

As when we dwell upon a word we know 
Repeating, till the word we know so well
Becomes a wonder and we know not why, 
So dwelt the father on her face and thought
"Is this Elaine?" till back the maiden fell, 
Then gave a languid hand to each, and lay, 
Speaking a still good-morrow with her eyes, 
At last she said, "Sweet brothers, yesternight
I seem'd a curious little maid again, 
As happy as when we dwelt among the woods, 
And when you used to take me with the flood 
Up the great river in the boatman's boat. 
Good you would pass beyond the scene 
That has the poplar on it: there you fixt 
Your limit, oft returning with the tide, 
And yet I cried because you would not pass 
Beyond it, and far up the shining flood 
Until we found the palace of the king. 
And yet you would not; but this night I dream'd 
That I was all alone upon the flood. 
And then I said, "Now shall I have my will:"
And there I woke, but still the wish remain'd. 
So let me hence that I may pass at last 
Beyond the poplar and far up the flood, 
Until I find the palace of the king, 
Where I will enter in among them all, 
And no man there will dare to mock at me: 
But there the fine Gawan will wonder at me, 
And there the great Sir Lancelot muse at me: 
Gawan, who bade a thousand farewells to me, 
Lancelot, who coldly went nor bade me one:
And there the King will know me and my love, 
And there the Queen herself will play me, 
And all the gentle court will welcome me, 
And after my long voyage I shall rest!"

"Peace," said her father, "O my child, you seem Light-headed, for what force is yours to go, 
So far, being sick? and wherefore would you look
On this proud fellow again, who scorns us all?"

Then the rough Torre began to heave and move, 
And bluster into stormy sols and say, 
"I never loved him; as I meet with him, 
I care not howsoever great he be, 
Then will I strike at him and strike him down. 
Give me good fortune, I will strike him dead, 
For this discomfort he hath done the house."

To which the gentle sister made reply, 
"Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor be wroth, 
Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's fault 
Not to love me, than it is mine to love 
Him of all men who seems to me the highest."

"Highest?" the father answer'd, echoing "highest."

(He meant to break the passion in her.) "Nay, 
Daughter, I know not what you call the highest; 
But this I know, for all the people know it, 
His loves the Queen, and in an open shame:
And she returns his love in open shame. 
If this be high, what is it to be low?"

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat: 
"Sweet father, all too faint and sick am I
For anger: these are slaunders: never yet 
Was noble man but made ignoble talk. 
He makes no friend who never made a foe. 
But me it is my glory to have loved
One peerless, without stain: so let me pass,
My father, howsoever I seem to you,
Not at unhappier, having loved God's best
And greatest, tho' my love had no return.
Yet, seeing you desire your child to live, 
Than see you work against your heart's desire; 
For if I could believe the things you say
I should but die the sooner: wherefore cease, 
Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly man
Hither, and let me shrive me clean, and die."

So when the ghostly man had come and gone, 
She with a face, bright as for sin forgiven,
Besought Lavaine to write as she devised
A letter, word for word; and when he ask'd 
"Is it for Lancelot, or is it for my daughter?"
Then will I hear it gladly:" she reply'd, 
"For Lancelot and the Queen and all the world, 
But I myself must bear it." Then he wrote The letter she devised; which being writ And sent, "O sweet father, tell me all true, 
Deny me not," she said—"you never yet Denied my fancies—this, however strange,
My latest: lay the letter in my hand
A little ere I die, and close the hand
Upon it; I shall guard it even in death. 
And when the heat is gone from out my heart,
Then take the little bed on which I died 
For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the Queen's 
For richness, and me also like the Queen 
In all I have of rich, and lay me on it. 
And let there be prepared a chariot-bler 
To take me to the river, and a barge 
Be ready on the river, clothed in black. 
I go in state to court, to meet the Queen, 
There surely I shall speak for mine own self, 
And none of you can speak for me so well, 
And therefore let our dumb old man alone 
Go with me, he can steer and row, and he
Will guide me to that palace, to the doors."

She ceased: her father promised; wherupon
She grew so cheerful that they deem'd her death
Was rather in the fantasy than the blood. 
But ten slow mornings past, and on the eleventh
Her father laid the letter in her hand, 
And closed the hand upon it, and she died.
So that day there was done in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from underground, 
Then, those two brethren slowly with bent brows
Accompanying, the sad chariot-bler 
Past like a shadow thro' the field, that shone 
Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge, 
Paule'd all its length in blackest samite, lay. 
There sat the life long creature of the house, 
Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck, 
Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face, 
So those two brethren from the chariot took 
And on the black decks laid her in her bed, 
Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung 
The stem case with braided brazings, 
And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying to her, 
"Sister, farewell forever," and again, 
"Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in tears. 
Then with the dumb old servitor, and the dead 
Sister by the dark current upperward went to the flood— 
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter—all her bright hair streaming down—
And all the coverlad was cloth of gold
Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white
All but her face, and that clear-featured face
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead
But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace craved
Audience of Guinevere, to give at last
The price of half a realm, his costly gift,
Hard-won and hardly won with brute and blow,
With deaths of others, and of his own
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds: for he saw
One of her house, and sent him to the Queen
Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen agreed
With such and so unmoved a majesty.
She might have scorn'd her statue, but that he,
Love-dropping till he wellnigh kiss'd her feet
For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye
The shadow of a piece of pointed lace,
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the walls,
And parted, laughing in his courtly heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the stream
They met, and Lancelot kneeling utter'd, "Queen,
Lady, by my life, I have my own,
Take, what I had not won except for you,
These jewels, and make me happy, making them
An armlet for the roundest arm on earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the swan's
Is tawnier than her cygnet's.

These are the words:
Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
In speaking, yet O grant my worship of it.
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such sin in words
Perchance we both can pardon: but, my Queen,
I hear of rumors flying thro' your court,
Our bond, as not the bond of man and wife,
Should have in it an absoluter trust
To make up that defect; let rumors be:
When did not rumors fly these, as I trust
That you trust me in your own nobleness,
I may not well believe that you believe."

While thus he spake, half turn'd away, the Queen
Broke from the vast oriel-embowering vine
Leaves, let fall, and tore, and cast them off,
Till all the place wheron she stood was green:
Then, when he ceased, in one cold passive hand
Received at once and laid aside the gems
There on a table near her, and replied:

"It may be, I am quicker of belief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the Lake.
Our bond is not the bond of man and wife.
This good is in it, whatsoever of ill,
It can be broken easier. I for you
This many a year have done despite and wrong
To one whom ever in my heart of hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are these?
Diamonds for me! they had been three times their worth
Being your gift, had you not lost your own.
To loyal hearts the value of all gifts
Must vary as the giver's. Not for me!
For her! for your new fancy. Only this
Grant me, I pray you; have your joys apart.
I doubt not that however changed, you keep
So much of what is graceful: and myself
Would shun to break those bonds of courtesy
In which as Arthur's queen I move and rule:
So cannot speak my mind. An end to this!
A strange one! I would with Amen,
So pray you, add my diamonds to her pearls;
Deck her with these; tell her, she shines me down:
An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's
Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck
Of a Worthen, fairer with once fair
Was richer than these diamonds—hers not mine—
Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself,
Or hers or mine, mine now to work my will—
She shall not have them."

Saying which she seized,
And, thro' the casement standing wide for heat,
Flung them, and down they flash'd, and smote the stream.
Then from the smitten surface flash'd as it were,
Diamonds to meet them, and they past away.
Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half disgust
At love, life, all things, on the window ledge,
Close underneath his eyes, and right across
Whereon these had fallen, slowly went the barge
Whereon the lady maid of Astolat
Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst away
To weep and wait in secret: and the barge
On to the palace-doorway sliding, paused.
There two stood arm'd, and kept the door; to whom,
All up the marble stair, tier over tier,
Were added months that gaped, and eyes that ask'd
"What is it?" but that one arm's hand, face,
As hard and still as is the face that men
Shape to their fancy's eye from broken rocks
On some cliff-side; appell'd them, and they said,
"He is enchanted, cannot speak a word.
Look how she sleeps—the Fairy Queen, so fair!
Yea, but how pale! what are they flesh and blood?
Or come to take the King to fairy land?
For some do hold our Arthur cannot die,
But that he passes into fairy land.

While thus they bobbled of the King, the King
Came girt with knights: then turn'd the tongeless man
From the half-face to the full eye, and rose
And pointed to the damsel, and the doors.
So Arthur bade the meeck Sir Percival
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid;
And reverently they bore her into hall.
Then came the fine Gawain and wonder'd at her,
And Lancelot later came and massed at her,
At last the Queen herself and pitied her:
But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
Stoop'd, took, brake seal, and read it; this was all:

"Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,
I, sometimes call'd the maid of Astolat,
Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
I loved you, and my love had no return,
And therefore my true love has been my death.
And therefore to our lady Guinevere,
And to all other ladies, I make moan.
Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
Pray for my soul, thou too, Sir Lancelot,
As thou art a knight peerless."

Thus he read,
And ever in the reading lords and dames
Wept, looking often from his face who read
To here which lay so silent, and at times,
So touch'd they were, half-thinking that her lips,
Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spake Sir Lancelot to them all:
"My lord Bege Arthur, and all ye that hear,
Know that for this most gentle maiden's death
Right heavy arm 1; for good she was and true,
But loved me with a love beyond all love
In women, whomsoever I have known.
Yet to be loved makes not to love again;
Not at my years, however it hold in youth.
I swear by truth and knighthood that I gave
No cause, not willingly, for such a love:
To this I call my friends in testimony,
Her brethren, and her father, who himself
Besought me to be plain and blunt, and use,
To break her passion, some discountory
Against my nature: what I could, I did.
I left her and I bade her no farewell.
The'had I dreamt the damsell would have died,
I might have put my wills to some rough use,
And help'd her from bereft.'
Then said the Queen
(Sea was her wrath, yet working after storm),
"You might at least have done her so much grace,
Fair lord, as would have help'd her from her death."
He raised his head, their eyes met and hers fell,
He adding,
"Queen, she would not be content
Save that I wedded her, which could not be.
Then might she follow me thru' the world, she ask'd;
It could not be. I told her that her love
Was but the dash of youth, would danke down
To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
Toward one more worthy of her—then would I,
More specially were he, she wedded, poor,
Became them with large land and territory
In mine own realm beyond the narrow seas,
To keep them in all joyance: more than this
I could not; this she would not, and she died."
He pausing, Arthur answer'd, "O my knight,
It will be to your worship, as my knight,
And mine, as head of all our Table Round,
To see that she be buried worshipfully."
So toward that shrine which then in all the realm
Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went,
The marshal'd order of their Table Round,
And Lancelet sad beyond his wont, to see
The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obsequies,
And mass, and rolling music, like a Queen.
And when the knights had laid her comely head
Law in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them, "Let her tomb
Be costly, and her image thereupon.
And let the shield of Lancelet at her feet
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.
And let the story of her dolorous voyage
For all true hearts be blazon'd on her tomb
In letters gold and azure!" which was wrought
Thereafter; but when now the lords and dames
And people, from the high door streaming, brake
Disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,
Whom Arthur's Sir Lancelet where his heart apart,
Drew near, and sigh'd in passing "Lancelot,
Forgive me; mine was jealousy in love."
He answer'd with his eyes upon the ground,
"That is love's curse: pass on, my Queen, forgive."
But Arthur who beheld his cloudy brow,
Approach'd him, and with full affection flung
One arm about his neck, and spake and said:
"Lancelot, my Lancelet, thon in whom I have
Most joy and most alliance, for I know
What thou hast been in battle by my side,
And many a time have watch'd thee at the tilt
Strike down the lusty and long-practis'd knight,
And let the younger and unskilful go by
To win his honor and to make his name,
And loved thy comtries and thee, a man
Made to be loved:—but now I would to God,
For the wild people say wild things of thee,
Thou couldst have loved this maiden, shaped, it seems,
By God for thee alone, and from her face,
If one may judge the living by the dead,
Delicately pure and marvelously fair,
Who might have brought thee, now a lonely man.
Widow and helpless, now a noble issue,
Born to the glory of thy name and fame,
My knight, the great Sir Lancelet of the Lake."
Then answer'd Lancelet, "Fair she was, my King,
Pure, as you ever wish your knights to be.
To doubt her fairness was to want an eye,
To doubt her pureness were to want a heart,—
Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
Could bind him, but free love will not be bound."
"Free love, so bound, were feciel," said the King
"Let love be free; free love is for the best:
And, after heaven, on our dull side of death,
What should be best, if not so pure a love
Clothed in so pure a loneliness? yet thee
She fall'd to bind, tho' being, as I think,
Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I know."
And Lancelet answer'd nothing, but he went,
And at the murmuring of a little brook
Sat by the river in a cave and watch'd
The high red wave, and lifted up his eyes
And saw the barge that brought her moving down,
Far-off, a bitt upon the stream, and said
Low in himself, "Ah simple heart and sweet,
You loved me, damsel, surely with a love
Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray for thy soul?"
Ay, that will I. Farewell too—now at last—
Farewell, fair lily. "Jealousy in love?"
Not rather dead love's harsh! help, jealous pride? Queen,
If I grant the jealous as of his true
May not your cresent fear for name and fame
Speak, as it waxes, of a love that wanes?
Why did the King dwell on my name to me?
Mine own name shames me, seeming a reproach,
Lancelet whom the Lady of the Lake
Sole from his mother—as the story runs—
She chant'd stanzas of mysterious song
Hear'd on the whirling waters, eye and morn
She kis'd me saying thou art fair, my child,
As a king's son, and often in her arms
She bare me, patch'd on the dusky mere,
Would she had drown'd me in it, where'er it be!
For what am I? what profits me my name
Of greatest knight? I fought for it, and have it:
Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it, pain?
Now grown a part of me: but what use in it?
To make men worse by making my sin known?
Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming great?
Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a man
Not after Arthur's heart! I needs must break
These bonds that so defame me: not without
She wills it: would I, if she will'd it? nay,
Who knows? but if I would not, then may God
I pray him, send a sudden Angel down
To seize me by the hair and bear me far,
And fill me deep in that forgotten mere,
Among the tumbled fragments of the hills."
So groan'd Sir Lancelet in remorseful pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

From noiseful arms, and acts of prowess done
In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,
Whom Arthur and his knighthood call'd The Pure,
Had pass'd into the silent life of prayer,
Praise, fast, and slime; and leaving for the cowl
The helmet in an abbey far away.
From Camelot, there, and not long after, died.

And one, a fellow-monk among the rest,
Ambrosius, loved him much beyond the rest,
And honor'd him, and wrought into his heart
A way by love that wak'en love within,
To answer that which came: and as they eat
Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darkening half
The cloisters, on a gustful April morn
That puff'd the swaying branches into smoke.
Above them, ere the summer when he died,
The monk Ambrosius question’d Percivale:—
"O brother, I have seen this yew-tree smoke,
Spring after spring, for half a hundred years:
For never have I known the world without,
Nor ever stayed beyond the pale: but thee,
When first thou camest,—such a courtesy
Spake thro’ the limbs and in the voice,—I knew
For one of those who eat in Arthur’s hall;
For good ye are and bad, and like to colus,
Some true, some light, but every one of you
Stamp’d with the image of the king; and now
Tell me, what drove thee from the Table Round,
My brother? was it earthly passion crast?"
"Nay," said the knight: "for no such passion
But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail
Drove me from all vainglories, rivalries,
And earthly heats that spring and sparkle out
Among us in the justices, while women watch
Who wins, who fails; and waste the spiritual
Strength within us, better offer’d up to Heaven."
To whom the monk:—"The Holy Grail!—I trust
We are green in Heaven’s eyes; but here too much
We moulder,—as to things without me,
Yet one of your own knights, a guest of ours,
Told us of this in our Refectory,
But spake with such a sadness and so low
We heard not half of what he said. What is it?
The phantom of a cup that comes and goes?"
"Nay, monk! what phantom?" answer’d Percivale.
"The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord
Draught at the last sad supper with his own.
This from the blessed land of Armor—
After the day of darkness, when the dead
Went wandering o’er Moriah, the good saint,
Arimatean Joseph, journeying brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord.
And there awhile it bodle; and if a man
Could touch or see it, he was bless’d at once,
By faith, of all his ills; but then the times
Grew to such evil that the Holy Cup
Was caught away to Heaven and disappear’d." To whom the monk:—"From our old books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arthur,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to build;
And there he built with wattles from the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, those books of eges, but seem
Mute of this miracle, far as I have read.
But who first saw the holy thing to-day?"
"A woman," answer’d Percivale, "a nun,
And one no further off in blood from me
Than sister; and if ever holy maid
With knees of adoration wore the stone,
A holy maid; tho’ never maiden glowed,
But that was in her earlier maidenhood,
With such a fervent flame of human love,
Which being rudest blunted glanced and shot
Only to holy things: to prayer and praise
She gave herself, to fast and alms; and yet,
Nun as she was, the scandal of the Court,
Sin against Arthur and the Table Round,
And the strange sound of an adventurous race
Across the Iron grating of her cell
Beat, and she pray’d and fasted all the more.
"And he to whom she told her ills, or what
Her all but utter whiteness held for sin,
A man wellnigh a hundred winters old,
Spake often with her of the Holy Grail,
A legend handed down three or six
And each of these a hundred winters old,
From our Lord’s time: and when Klug Arthur made
His Table Round, and all men’s hearts became
Clean for a season, surely he had thought
That now the Holy Grail would come again;
But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it would come,
And heal the world of all their wickedness!"
"O Father! I ask the maiden, ‘might it come
To me by prayer and fasting?’ "Nay," said he,
"I know not, for thy heart is pure as snow.
And so she pray’d and fasted, till the sun
Shone, and the wind blew, thro’ her, and I thought
She might have risen and floated when I saw her.
"For on a day she sent to speak with me.
And when she came to speak, behold her eyes
Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful,
Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,
Beautiful in the light of holiness.
And ‘O my brother, Percivale,’ she said,
‘Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail:
For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound
As of a silver horn from o’er the hills
Blown, and I thought it is not Arthur’s use
To hunt by moonlight, and the slender sound
As from a distance beyond distance grew
Coming upon me,—O never harp nor horn,
Nor nought we blow with breath, or touch with hand,
Was like that music as it came; and then
Stream’d thro’ my cell a cold and silver beam,
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,
Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,
Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed
With rosy colors leaping on the wall;
And then the music faded, and the Grail
Passed, and the beam decay’d, and from the walls
The rosy quiverings died into the night.
So now the Holy Thing is here again
Among us, brother, fast thou too and pray,
And tell thy brother knights to fast and pray,
That so perchance the vision may be seen
By thee and those, and all the world be heal’d."
"Then leaving the pale nun, I spoke of this
To all men; and myself fasted and pray’d
Always, and many among us a trick
Fastened and pray’d even to the uttermost,
Expectant of the wonder that would be.
"And one there was among us, ever moved
Among us in white armor, Galahad.
‘God make thee good as thou art beautiful,’
Said Arthur, when he dubb’d him knight; and none,
In so young youth, was ever made a knight
Till Galahad; and this Galahad, when he heard
My sister’s vision, all’d me with amaze;
His eyes became so like her own, they seem’d
Hers, and himself her brother more than I.
‘Sister or brother none had he; but some
Call’d him a son of Lancelot, and some said
Begotten by enchantment,—chatterers, they,
Like birds of passage piping up and down
That gape for filings,—we know not whence they come.
For when was Lancelot wanderingly knew?"
"But she, the wan, sweet maiden shore away
Clean from her forehead all that wealth of hair
Which made a silken mat-work for her feet,
And out of this she plaited branch and long
A strong sword-belt, and wound it with silver thread
And crimson in the belt a strange device,
A crimson grail within a silver beam;
And saw the bright boy-knight, and bound it on him
Saying, 'My knight, my love, my knight of heaven. O thou, my love, whose love is one with mine, I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my belt. Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have seen. And break thro' all, till one will crown thee king Far in the spiritual city:' and as she spake She sent the deathless passion in her eyes Thro' him, and made him hers, and laid her mind On him, and he believed in her belief.

"Then came a year of miracle: O brother, In our great hall there stood a vacant chair, Fashion'd with strange figures: and up and out The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll Of letters in a tongue no man could read. And Merlin call'd it 'The Siege perilous,' Perilous for good and ill; for there,' he said, 'No man could sit but he should lose himself.' And once by misadventure Merlin sat In his own chair, and so was lost; but he, Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom, Oxled, 'If I lose myself I save myself.'

"Then on a summer night it came to pass, While the great banquet lay along the hall, That Galahad would sit down in Merlin's chair.

"And all at once, as there we sat, we heard A cracking and a riving of the roofs, And rending, and a blast, and overhead Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry. And in the blast there stole along the hall A sort of light seven times more clear than day: And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail All over cover'd with a luminous cloud, And none might see who bare it, and it past. But every knight beheld his fellow's face As in a glory, and all the knights arose, And staring each at other like dumb men Stood, till I found a voice and aware a vow.

"I swear a vow before them all, that I Because I had not seen the Grail, would ride A twelvemonth and a day in quest of it, Until I found and saw it, as the nun My sister saw it; and Galahad swear the vow. And when Sir Bors, our Lancelot's cousin, swear, And Lancelot swear, and many among the knights, And Gawaine swear, and louder than the rest.

"Then spake the monk Ambrosias, asking him, 'What said the king? Did Arthur take the vow?'

"'Nay, for, my lord, (said Percivale,) the king Was not in hall: for early that same day, 'Scaped thro' a cavern from a bandit hold, An outraged maiden sprung into the hall Crying on help; for all her shining hair Was smear'd with earth, and either milky arm Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and all she wore Torn as a sail, that leaves the rope, is torn In pompous: so the king arose and went To smoke the scandalous hive of those wild bees That made such honey in his realm: howbeit Some little of this marvel he too saw, Returning o'er the plain that then began To darken under Camelot: whence the king Look'd up, calk'd aloud, 'Lo there! the roofs Of our great Hall are rolled in thunder-smoke! Pray Heaven they be not smitten by the bolt.' For dear to Arthur was that hall of ours, As having there so oft with all his knights Feasted, and as the stateliest under heaven.

"O brother, had you known our mighty hall, Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago! For all the sacred Monot of Camelot, And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,

Tower after tower, spire beyond spire, By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing brook, Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin built. And four great zones of sculpture set without With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall: And in the lowest beasts are slaying men, And in the second men are slaying beasts, And on the third are warriors, perfect men, And on the fourth are men with growing wings, And over all one statue in the mould Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown, And peak'd wings pointed to the Northern Star. And eastward fronts the statue, and the crown And both the wings are made of gold, and flame At sunrise till the people in far fields, Wasted so often by the heathen hordes, Behold it, crying, 'We have still a king.'

"And, brother, had you known our hall within, Broader and higher than any in all the lands! Where twelve great windows blazon Arthur's wars, And all the light that falls upon the board Streams thro' the twelve great battles of our king. Nay, out there is, and at the eastern end, Weaving with wandering lines of mont and mere, Where Arthur finds the brand Excalibur. And also one to the west, and counter to it, And blank: and who shall blazon it? when and how? O then, per chance, when all our wars are done, The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

"So to this hall full quickly rode the king, In horror lest the work by Merlin wrought, Dreamlike, should on the sudden vanish, wrap In unremorseful folds of rolling fire. And in he rode, and up I glanced, and saw The golden dragon sparkling over all; And many of those who burnt the hold, their arms Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed with smoke, and scar'd. Follow'd, and in among bright faces, ours Full of the vision, prest: and then the King Spoke to me, being nearest, 'Percivale,' (Because the Hall was all in tumult—some Vowing, and some protesting,) 'what is this?'

"O brother, when I told him what had chanced, My sister's vision, and the rest, his face Darken'd, as I have seen it more than once, When some brave deed seen'd to be done in vain, Darken'd: and 'Woe is me, my knights!' he cried, 'Had I been here, ye had not sworn the vow.' Bold was mine answer, 'Had thyself been here, My king, thou wouldst have sworn.' 'Yea, yea,' said he, 'Art thou so bold and hast not seen the Grail?'

"'Nay, Lord, I heard the sound, I saw the light, But since I did not see the Holy Thing, I swear a vow to follow it till I saw.'

"Then when he asked us, knight by knight, if any Had seen it, all their answers were as one, 'Nay, Lord, and therefore have we sworn our vows.'

"'Lo now,' said Arthur, 'have ye seen a cloud? What go ye into the wilderness to see?'

"Then Galahad on the sudden, and in a voice Shripling along the hall to Arthur, cal'd, 'But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail, I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry— O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me.'

"'Ah, Galahad, Galahad,' said the King, 'for each As thou art is the vision, not for these. Thy holy nun and thou have seen a sign: Holier is none, my Percivale, than she—"
A sign to main this Order which I made.  
But you that follow but the leader's bell!  
(Brother, the king was hard upon his knights,  
'Tallesin is our fullest throat of song,  
And one hath sung, and all the dumb shall sing.  
Lancelot is Lancelot, and he over lone  
Five knights at once, and every younger knight,  
Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,  
Till, overborne by one, he learns,—and ye,  
What are ye? Galahad,—no, nor Percivale!  
(For thus it pleased the king to range me close  
After Sir Galahad:) 'nay,' said he, 'but men  
With strength and will to right the wrong'd, of power  
To lay the sudden heads cf violence flat,  
Knights that in twelve great battles splash'd and dyed  
The strong White Horse in his own heathen blood,—  
But one hath seen, and all the blind will see.  
Go, since your vows are sacred, being made,—  
Yet, for ye know the cries of all the realm  
Pass thro' this hall, how often, O my knights,  
Your places being vacant at my side,  
The chance of noble deeds will come and go  
Unchallenged, while you follow wandering fires  
Lost in the quagmire: many of you, yea most,  
Return no more: ye think I show myself  
Too dark a prophet: come now, let us meet  
The morrow morn once more in one full field  
Of gracious pastime, that once more the king,  
Before you leave him for this quest, may count  
The yet unbroken strength of all his knights,  
Rejoicing in that Order which he made.'

"So when the sun broke next from underground,  
All the great table of our Arthur closed  
And clash'd in such a tourney and so full,  
So many lances broken,—never yet  
Had Camelot seen the like since Arthur came.  
And I myself and Galahad, for a strength  
Was in us from the vision, overthrew  
So many knights that all the people cried,  
And almost burst the barriers in their heat,  
Shouting 'Sir Galahad and Sir Percivale!'

"But when the next day brake from underground,  
O brother, and you known our Camelot,  
Built by old kings, age after age, so old  
The king himself bad fears that it would fall,  
So strange and rich, and dim; for where the roofs  
Tott'd toward each other in the sky,  
Met and spread all along the street of those  
Who watch'd us pass; and lower, and where the long  
Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh'd the necks  
Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,  
Thicker than drops from thunder showers of flowers  
Fell, as we past; and men and boys astir  
 Ou wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,  
At all the corners, named each by name,  
Calling 'God speed!' but in the street below  
The knights and ladies wept, and rich and poor  
Wept, and the king himself could hardly speak  
For sorrow, and in the middle street the queen,  
Who rode by Lancelot, wall'd and shirle'd aloud,  
'This madness has come on us for our sins.  
And then we reach'd the weirdly sculptured gate,  
Where Arthur's wars were render'd mysteriously,  
And thence departed every one his way.

"And I was lifted up in heart, and thought  
Of all my late-shown prowess in the lists,  
How my strong lance had beaten down the knights,  
So many and famous names; and never yet  
Had heaven appear'd so blue, nor earth so green,  
For all my blood danced in me, and I knew  That I should light upon the Holy Grail.

"Thereafter, the dark warning of our king,  
That most of us would follow wandering fires,  
 Came like a driving gloom across my mind.  
Then every evil word I had spoken once,  
And every evil thought I had thought of old,  
And every evil deed I ever did  
Awoke and cried, 'This quest is not for thee.'  
And lifting up mine eyes, I found myself  
Alone, in a land of sand and thorns,  
And I was thirsty even unto death;  
And I, too, cried, 'This quest is not for thee.'

"And on I rode, and when I thought my thirst  Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and then a brook,  With one sharp rapid, where the crisping white  Play'd ever back upon the sloping wave,  
And took both ear and eye; and o'er the brook  Were apple-trees, and apples by the brook  Fallen, and on the lawns, 'I will rest here,'  I said, 'I am not worthy of the quest;  
But even while I drank the brook, and ate  
The goodly apples, all these things at once  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone,  
And thirsting, in a land of sand and thorns.

"And then beheld a woman at a door  
Sunning, and fair the house whereby she sat;  
And kind the woman's eyes and innocent,  
And all her bearing gracious; and she rose  
Opening her arms to meet me, as who should say,  'Rest here,' but when I touched her, she  
Fell into dust and nothing, and the house  Became no better than a broken shed,  
And in it a dead babe; and also this  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone.

"And on I rode, and greater was my thirst.  
Then flash'd a yellow gleam across the world,  
And where it smote the ploughshare in the field,  
The ploughman left his ploughing, and fell down  
Before it; where it glitter'd on her pail,  
The milkmaid left her milking, and fell down  
Before it, and I knew not why; but thought  "The sun is rising,' tho' the sun had risen.  
Then was I ware of one that on me moved  
In golden armor, with a crown of gold  
About a casque all jewels; and his horse  
In golden armor jewel'd everywhere:  
And on the splendor came, flashing me blind;  
And seem'd to me the Lord of all the world,  
Being so huge; but when I thought he meant  To crush me, moving on me, lo, he too  
Opened his arms to embrace me as he came,  
And up I went and touch'd him, and he too  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone  
And wept in a land of sand and thorns.

"And on I rode and found a mighty hill,  
And on the top a city wall'd: the spires  
Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into heaven  
And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd: and there  
Cried to me, climbing, 'Welcome, Percivale!  
Thou mightiest and thou purest among men!'  
And glad was I and clomb, but found at top  
No man, nor any voice; and thence I past  
Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw  
That man had once dwell there; but there I found  
Only one man of an exceeding age,  
'Where is that godly company,' said I,  
'That so cried upon me?' and he had  
Scarce any voice to answer, and yet grasp'd  
'Whence is the world and what art thou?' and even as he spoke  
Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and I  
Was left alone once more, and cried, in grief,  
'Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself,  
And touch it, it will crumble into dust.'

"And thence I dropp'd into a lowly vale,  
Low as the hill was high, and where the vale
Was lowest found a chapell, and thereby
A holy hermit in a heritagiate,
To whom I told my phantoms, and he said:

"O son, thou hast not true humility,
The highest virtue, mother of them all;
For when the Lord of all things made Himself
Naked of glory for His mortal change,
"Take thou my robe," she said, "for all is thine,
And all her turned forth with all her light
So that the angels were amazed, and she
Follow'd him down, and like a flying star
Led on the gray-haired wisdom of the East;
But her thou hast not knowns for: what is this
Their way?" but moving by thy prowess and thy skill
Thou hast not lost thyself to save thyself
As Galahad. When the hermit made an end,
In silver armor suddenly Galahad shone
Before us, and against the chapel door
Laid lance, and entered, and we knelt in prayer.
And there the hermit slaked my burning thirst;
And at the sacring of the mass I saw
The holy elements alone; but he
Saw ye no more? I, Galahad, saw the Grail,
The holy things, descended upon the shrine:
I saw the fiery face of as a child
That smote itself into the bread, and went,
And hither am I come; and never yet
Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,
This holy thing, fall'd from my side, nor come
Cover'd, but moving by me night and day,
Feaster by day, but always in the night
Blood-red, and sliding down the blacken'd marsh
Blood-red, and on the naked mountain top
Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below
Blood-red: and in the strength of this I rode
Shattering all evil custom everywhere,
And past thro' Pagan realms, and made them mine,
And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and bore them down,
And broke thro' all, and in the strength of this
Come victor: but my time is hard at hand,
And hence I go; and one will crown me king
Far in the spiritual city; and come thou too,
For thou shalt see the vision when I go.'

"While thus he spake, his eye, dwelling on mine,
Drew me, with power upon me, till I grew
One with him, to believe as he believed.
Then when the day began to wane we went.

"Then rose a hill that none but man could climb,
Scar'd with a hundred whirly watercourses,—
Storm at the top, and, when we gain'd it, storm
Round us and death; for every moment glanced
His silver arms and gloom'd: so quick and thick
The lightnings here and there to left and right
Struck, till the dry old trunks about us, dead,
Yen, rotten with a hundred years of death,
Sprung into fire: and at the base we found
On either hand, as far as eye could see,
A great black swamp and of an evil smell
Part black, part whiten'd with the bones of men,
Not to be cross save that some ancient king
Had built a way, where, linked with many a bridge,
A thousand piers ran into the Great Sea.
And Galahad fled along them bridge by bridge,
And like a cloud, and like a cloud, and like a cloud,
Sprung into fire and vanish'd, tho' I yearn'd
To follow; and thrice above him all the heavens
Open'd and blazed with thunder such as seem'd
Shoutings of all the sons of God: and first
At once I saw I was on the green sea,
In silver-shining armor starry-clear;
And o'er his head the holy vessel hung
Clothed in white samite or a luminous cloud.
And with exceeding swiftness ran the boat,
If Piers were, — I saw not when he came.
And when the heaves open'd and blazed again
Roaring, I saw him like a silver star,—
And had he set the sail, or had the boat
Become a living creature clad with wings?
And o'er his head the holy vessel hung
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
For now I knew the veil had been withdrawn.
Then in a moment when they blazed again
Opening, I saw the least of little stars
Down on the water, and straight beyond the star
I saw the spiritual city and the Holy Grail
Which never eyes on earth again shall see.
Then fell the floods of heaven drouning the deep.
And how my feet recross'd the deathful ridge
No memory in me lives; but that I touch'd
The chapel-doors at dawn, I know; and thence
Taking my war-horse from the holy man,
Glad that no phantom vexed me more, return'd
To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's war.
THE HOLY GRAIL.

That flash'd across her orchard underneath
Her castle walls, she stole upon my walk,
And calling me the greatest of all knights,
Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the first time,
And gave her hand, and the blindest bow,
Then I remember'd Arthur's warning word,
That most of us would follow wandering fires,
And the quest faded in my heart. Anon,
The heads of all her people drew to me,
With supplication, both of knees and tongue.
'Ve have heard of thee: thou art our greatest knight:
Our Lady says it, and we well believe:
Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our land.'

O me, my brother! but one night they now
Burnt me within, so that I rose and died,
But wall'd and wept, and hated mine own self,
And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but her.
Then after I was jol'd with Galahad
Cared not for her, nor any thing upon earth.'

Then said the monk, "Poor men, when yule is
Must be content to sit by little fires. (cold)
And this am I, so that ye care for me
Ever so little; yea, and blest be Heaven
That brought thee here to this poor house of ours,
Where all the brethren are so hard, to warm
My cold heart with a friend: but O the pity
To find thine own first love once more,—to hold
Her as a wealthy bride within thine arms,
Or all but hold, and then—cast her aside.
Forgoing all her sweetness, like a weed.
For we that want the warmth of double life,
We that are plagued with dreams of something sweet
Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich,
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthly-wise,
Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,
But live like an old badger in his earth,
With earth about him everywhere, despite
All fast and penance. Saw ye none beside,
None of your knights?"

"Yea so," said Percivale,
"One night my pathway swerving east, I saw
The pelican on the casque of our Sir Bors
All in the middle of the rising moon
And toward him spur'd and hail'd him, and be me,
And each made joy of either; then he ask'd,
'Where is he? hast thou seen him—Lancelot? Once,'
Saith good Sir Bors, 'now mad, and
And madden'd what he rode; and when I cried,
'Ridest thou now so hotly on a quest
So holy?' Lancelot shout'd, 'Stay me not! I
Have been the sluggard, and I ride space,
For now there is a lion in the way.'
So vanish'd."

"Then Sir Bors had ridden on,
Softly and sorrowing for our Lancelot.
Because his former madness, once the talk
And scandal of our table, had return'd;
For Lancelot's kith and kin adore him so
That ill to him is ill to them; to Bors
Beyond the rest; he well had been content
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might have seen,
The holy cup of healing; and, indeed,
Being so clouded with his grief and love,
Small heart was his after the holy quest:
If God would send the vision, well: if not,
The Quest and he were in the hands of Heaven.

"And then, with small adventure met, Sir Bors
Rode to the lowest tract of all the realm,
And found a people there among their crags,
Our race and blood, a remnant that were left
Paynim amid their circles, and the stones
They pitch up straight to heaven: and their wise men
Strong in old that magic which can trace
The wandering of the stars, and scold'd at him,
And this high quest as at a simple thing:
Told him he follow'd—almost Arthur's words—
A mocking fire: 'what other fire than he
Whore and the blood-hounds and the blind and blows,
And the sea rolls, and all the world is warm'd'
And when his answer chas'd them, the rough crowd,
Hearing he had a difference with their priests,
Seiz'd him, and bound and plunged him into a cell
Great plated stones; and lying bounden there
In darkness thro' innumerable hours
He heard the hollow-ringing heavens sweep
Over him, till by miracle—what else?
Heavy as it was, a great stone slip and fell,
Such as wind could move and thump the gap
Glimmer'd the streaming scud: then came a night
Still as the day was loud; and thro' the gap
The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table round,—
For, brother, so one night, because they roll
Thro' such a round in heaven, we named the stars,
Rejoicing in ourselves and in our king—
And these like bright eyes of familiar friends
In on him shone, 'And then to me, for
 Said good Sir Bors, 'beyond all hopes of mine,
Who scarce would pay'd or ask'd it for myself—
Across the seven clear stars,—O grace to me!
In color like the fingers of a hand
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail
Gilded and past, and close upon it peal'd
A charm of thunder!' afterwards and said
Who kept our holy faith among her kin
In secret, entering, loos'd and let him go.

To whom the monk: 'And I remember now
That pelican on the casque: Sir Bors it was
Who spoke so low and sadly at our board;
And mighty reverent at our grace was he:
A square-set man and honest; and his eyes,
An out-door sign of all the warmth within,
Smiled with his lips,—a smile beneath a cloud,
But Heaven had meant it for a sunny one:
Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else? but when ye reach'd
The city, found ye all your knights return'd,
Or was there sooth in Arthur's prophecy?
Tell me, and what said each, and what the king.'

Then answer'd Percivale, 'And that can I,
Brother, and truly: since the living words
Of so great men as Lancelot and our king
Pass not from door to door and out again,
But sit within the house. O, when we reach'd
The city, our horses stumbling as they trode
On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,
Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd cockatrices,
And shattered talbots, which had left the stones
Raw, that they fell from, brought us to the hall.

"And there sat Arthur on the dais-throne,
And those that had gone out upon the Quest,—
Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of them,—
And those that had not, stood before the king:
Who, when he saw me, rose, and bade me hail,
Saying, 'A welfare in thine eye reproves
Our fear of some dislusions chance for thee
On hill, or plain, at sea, or flowing ford.
So fierce a gale made havoc here of late
Among the strange devices of our kings:
Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall of ours,
And from the stolen Merlin moulded us
Half wrenched a golden wug: but now—the quest,
This vision—hast thou seen the holy cup,
That Joseph brought of old to Glastonbury?"

"So when I told him all thyself hast heard,
Ambrosius, and my fresh but fxt resolve
To pass away into the quiet life,
He answer'd not, but, sharply turning, said:
"Of Gawain. 'Gawain, was this the quest for thee?'"
THE HOLY GRAIL.

"'Nay, lord,' said Gawain, 'not for such as I. Therefore I commauded with a solely man, Who made me sure the quest was not for me. For I was the heart of the quest. But found a silk pavilion in a field. And merry maidens in it; and then this gate Tore my pavilion from the teutlog-plu, And blew my merry maidens all about With all discomfort; ye, and thus for this My twelvemonths and a day were pleasant to me."

"He ceased; and Arthur turn'd to whom at first He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering, push'd Abiward the throng to Lancelot, came by his hand, Hic! fr, and there, half hidden by him, stood, Until the king espied him, saying to him, 'Hail, Bors! if ever loyal man and true Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail,' and Bors, 'Ask me not, for I may not speak of it, I saw it;' and the tears were in his eyes.

"Then there remain'd but Lancelot, for the rest Spake but of sundry perils in the storm, Perhaps, like him of Cava in Holy, Our Arthur kept his best until the last. 'Thon, too, my Lancelot,' ask'd the King, 'my friend, Our mightiest; hath this quest avail'd for thee?"

"'Our mightiest!' answer'd Lancelot, with a groan, 'O king!' and when he paused, methought I spied A dying fire of madness in his eyes, 'O king, my friend, if friend of thine I be, Happier are those that wert in their sin, Swine in the mud, that cannot see for slime, Slime of the ditch—but in me lived a sin So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure, Noble, and knighthood in me twined and hung Round that one sin, until the wholesome flower And poisonous grew together, and all a fetch, Not to be pluck'd Saunders; and when thy knights Spare, I spare with them only in the hope That could I touch or see the Holy Grail They might be pluck'd Saunders: then I spake To one most holy soul, who wept and said That save they could be pluck'd Saunders all My quest were but in vain; to whom I vow'd That I would work according as he will'd. And forth I went, and while I yearn'd and strove To tear the twain Sanders in my heart, My madness came upon me as a blast, And whipt me into waste fields far away. There was I beaten down by little men, Mean knights, to whom the moving of my sword And shadow of my spear had been enow To scare them from me once; and then I came All in my folly to the naked shore, Wide flats where nothing but coarse grasses grow, But such a blast, my king, began to blow, So loud a blast along the shore and sea, Ye could not hear the waters for the blast, The heapt in mounds and ridges all the sea Drove like a cataract, and all the sand Swept like a river, and the clouded heavens Were shaken with the motion and the sound. And blackening in the sea-som, swath'd a boat Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a chain; And in my madness to myself I said, "I will embark and I will lose myself, And in the great sea wash away my sin." I burst the chain, I sprang into the boat. Seven days I drove along the deep, And with me drove the moon and all the stars; And the wind fell, and on the seventh night I heard the shingle grinding in the surge, And felt the boat shock earth, and looking up But if, the enchanted towers of Carbonec, A castle like a rock upon a rock, With charm-like portals open to the sea,

And steps that met the breaker: there was none Stood near it but a lion on each side, That kept the entry, and the moon was full. Then the moon was most high, and up she leapt, and sung her thunders. There drew my sword. With sudden.darting manes. Those two great beasts rose upright like a man, Each girt a shouluer, and I stood between, And, when I would have smitten them, heard a voice, "Doubt not, go forward, if then doubt, the beasts Will tear thee piecemate,}' then with violence The sword was dash'd from out my hand and fell. And up into the sounding hall I past, But nothing in the sounding hall I saw, No bench nor table, painting on the wall, Or shield of knighthood: only the rounded moon Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea. But always in the quiet house I heard, Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark, A sweet voice singing in the topmost tower To the eastward: up I climbed a thousand steps With pain: as in a dream I seem'd to climb Forever: at the last I reach'd a door, A light was in the cranries, and I heard "Glad and just and honor to our Lord And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail."

Then in my madness I essay'd the door It gave, and thro' a stormy glare, a heat As from a seven-times-heated furnace, I, Blas'd and burnt, and blinded as I was, With such a fierce ness that I swoon'd away, O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail, All pall'd in crimson samite, and around Great angels, awful shapes, and wings and eyes. And for all my madness and my sin, And then my swooning, I had sworn I saw That which I saw; but what I saw was veil'd And cover'd; and this quest was not for me.'"
Pelleas and Ettarre.

King Arthur made new knights to fill the gap Left by the Holy Quest; and as he sat In hall at old Caerleon, the high doors Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these a youth, Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the fields Past, and the sunshine came along with him. "Make me thy knight, because I know, Sir King, All that belongs to knighthood, and I love," Such was his cry; for having heard the king Had let proclaim a tournament—the prize A golden circlet and a knapsack swallow'd, Full soon had Pelleas for his lady won The golden circlet, for himself the sword: And there were those who knew him near the king And promised for him: and Arthur made him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of the isles— But lately come to his inheritance, And lord of many a barren isle was he— Riding at noon, a day or twain before, Across the forest cal'd of Dean, to find Caerleon and the king; had felt the sun Beat like a strong knight on his helm, and reed'd Almost to falling from his horse; but saw Near him a mound of even-sloping side, Whereon a hundred stately beeches grew And here and there great hollies under them. But for a mile all round was open space, And fern and heath: and slowly Pelleas drew To that dim day, then binding his good horse To a tree, and himself down; and as he lay At random looking over the brown earth Thro' that green-glimmering twilight of the grove, It seem'd to Pelleas that the fern without Burnt as a living fire of emeralds, So that his eyes were dazzled looking at it. Then over it crost the dimness of a cloud Floating, and once the shadow of a bird Flying, and then a fawn; and his eyes closed. And since he loved all maidens, but no maid In special, half awak'd he whisper'd, "Where? O where? I love thee, tho' I know thee not. For fair thou art, and pure as Guinevere, And I will make thee with my spear and sword As famous—O my queen, my Guinevere, For I will be thine Arthur, when we meet." Suddenly waked with a sound of talk And laughter at the limit of the wood, And glancing through the hoary bales, he saw, Strange as to some old prophet might have seem'd A vision hovering on a sea of fire, Damsels in divers colors like the cloud Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them On horses, and the horses richly trapt Breast-high in that bright line of bracken stood: And all the damsels talk'd confusedly, And one was pointing this way, and one that, Because the way was lost. And Pelleas rose, And loosed his horse, and led him to the light. There she seem'd the chief among them, said, "In happy time behold our pill'd-star. Youth, we are damseis-errant, and we ride, Arm'd as ye see, to tilt against the knights There at Caerleon, but have lost our way: To right? to left? straight forward? back again? Which? tell us quickly." And Pelleas gazing thought, "Is Guinevere herself so beautiful? For large her violet eyes look'd, and her bloom A rosy dawn kindled in stainless heavens, And round her limbs, mature in womanhood, And slender was her hand and small her shape, But for those large eyes, the haunts of scorn, She might have seem'd a toy to trifle with, And pass and care no more. But while he gazed The beauty of her flesh abash'd the boy, As tho' it were the beauty of her soul: For as the base man, judging of the good, Puts his own baseness in him by default Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend All the young beauty of his own soul to hers, Believing her, and when she spake to him, Smirmer'd, and could not make her a reply, For out of the waste islands had he come, Where saving his own sisters he had known Scaree any but the women of his isles, Rough wives, that laugh'd and scream'd against the gulls, Makers of acts, and living from the sea. Then with a slow smile turn'd the lady round And look'd upon her people; and as when A stone is flung into some sleeping tarn, The circle widens till it lip the marge, Spread the slow smile thro' all her company. Three knights were thereamong; and they too smiled, Scoring him; for the lady was Ettarre, And she was a great lady in her land. Again she said, "O wild and of the woods, Knowest thou not the fashion of our speech? Or have the Heavens but given thee a fair face, Lacking a tongue?" "O dames," answer'd he, "I woke from dreams; and coming out of gloom Was dazzled by the sudden light, and crave Pardon; but will ye to Caerleon? Go likewise: shall I lead you to the King?" "Lend then," she said; and thro' the woods they went. And while they rode, the meaning in his eyes, His tenderness of manner, his love, His broken utterances and bashfulness, Were all a barden to her, and in her heart
She muttered, "I have lighted on a fool, Raw, yet so staid!" But since her mind was bent On hearing, after trumpet blown, her name And title, "Queen of Beauty," in the lists Cried—and she beholding him so sternly—she thought That adventure will fight for me, And win the circlet: therefore flatter'd him, Being so gracious, that he wellnigh deem'd His wish by hers was echo'd: and her knights And all her damsels too were gracious to him, For she was a great lady.

And when they reach'd Caerleon, ere they past to lodging, she, Taking his hand, "O the strong hand," she said, "See! look at mine! I but witt thou fight for me, And win me this circlet, Pellias, That I may love thee?"

Then his helpless heart Leapt, and he cried, "Ay! wilt thou if I win?" "Ay, that will I," she answer'd, and she laugh'd, And strictly nipt the hand, and flung it from her; Then glanced askew at those three knights of hers, Till all her ladies laugh'd along with her.

"O happy world," thought Pellias, "all, meseems, Are happy; I the happiest of them all."

Nor slept that night for pleasure in his blood, And green wood-ways, and eyes among the leaves: Then belug on the morrow knighted, swore To love one only, And as he came away, The men who met him rounded on their heels And wonder'd after him, because his face Shone like the countenance of a priest of old Against the flame about a sacrifice Kiadled by fire from heaven: so glad was he. Then Arthur made vast banquets, and strange knights From the four winds came in: and each one set, Tho' served with choice from air, land, stream, and sea.

Of in mid-banquet measuring with his eyes His neighbor's make and might: and Pellias look'd Noble among the noble, for he dream'd His lady loved him, and he knew himself Lord of the King: and him his new-made knight Worship'd, whose lightest whisper moved him more Than all the ranged reasons of the world.

Then blush'd and brake the morning of the jousts, And this was said—"The Tournament of Youth:" For Arthur, loving his young knight, withhold His older and his mightier from the lists, That Pellias might obtain his lady's love, According to her promise, and remain Lord of the tourney. And Arthur had the Jousts Down in the flat field by the shore of Usk Holden: the gilded parapets were crown'd With faces, and the great tower filled with eyes Up to the summit, and the trumpets blew. There all day long Sir Pellias kept the field With honor; so by that strong hand of his The sword and golden circlet were achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved: the heat Of pride and glory fired her face: her eye Sparkled; she caught the circlet from his hand, And went there before the people crown'd herself: So for the last time she was gracious to him. Then at Caerleon for a space—her look Bright for all others, cloudier on her knight— Linger'd Ettarre: and seeing Pellias droop, Said Guenever, "We marvel at thee much, O damsel, wearing this unsunny face"

To him who won thee glory!" And she said, "Had ye not held your Lancelet in your bower, My Queen, he had not won." Whereat the Queen, As one whose foot is bitten by an ant, Glanced down upon her, turn'd and went her way.

But after, when her damsels, and herself, And those three knights all set their faces home, Sir Pellias follow'd. She that saw him cry, "Damsels—and yet I should be ashamed to say it— I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him back Among your witches. WOULD rather that we had Some rough old knight who knew the worldly way, At least grizzlier than a bear, to ride And jest with: take him to you, keep him off, And pamper him with payment, if ye will, Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep, Such as the wholesome mothers tell their boys. Nay, shold ye try him with a merry one To find his mettle, good: and if he fly us, Small matter! let him." This her damsels heard, And mindful of her small and cruel hand, They, closing round him thro' the journey home, Acted her host, and always from her side Restrain'd him with all manner of device, So that he could not come to speech with her. And when she gain'd her castle, upsprang the bridge, Down the grate of iron thro' the groove, And he was left alone in open field.

"These be the ways of ladies," Pellias thought, "To those who love them, trials of our faith. Yea, yea, by my prove me, ye uttermost, For loyal to the uttermost am I." So made his moan: and, darkness fallug, songt A priory not far off, there lodg'd, but rose With morning every day, and, moist or dry, Full-arm'd upon his charger all day long. Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to him.

And this persistance turn'd her scorn to wrath. Then calling her three knights, she charg'd them, "Out! And drive him from the walls." And out they came, But Pellias overthrew them as they dash'd Against him one by one; and these return'd, But still he keep'd his watch beneath the wall.

Thereon her wrath became a hate: and once, A week beyond, while walking on the walls With her three knights, she point'd downward, "Look, He haunts me—I cannot breathe—besieges me: Down! strike him! put my hate into your strokes, And drive him from my walls." And down they went, And Pellias overthrew them one by one; And from the tower above him cried Ettarre, "Bind him, and bring him in."

He heard her voice; Then let the strong hand, which had overthrown Her minion-knights, by those he overthrew Be bounden straight, and so they brought him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre, the sight Of her rich beauty made him at one glance More bondman in his heart than in his bonds. Yet with good cheer he spake, "Behold me, Lady, A prisoner, and the vassal of thy will: And if thou keep me in thy donjon here, Content I am so that I see thy face But once a day: for I have sworn my vows, And thou hast given thy promise, and I know That all these pains are trials of my faith, And that thyself, when thou hast seen me strain'd Some time, and staid at the utmost, wilt at length Yield me thy love and know me for thy knight."

Then she began to rail so bitterly, With all her damsels, he was stricken mute; But when she mock'd his vows and the great King Lighted on words: "For pity of thine own self,
Peace, Lady, peace: is he not thine and mine?

"Thou fool," she said, "I never heard his voice
But long'd to break away. Unbind him now,
And thrust him out of doors: for save he be
Foul to the midstmost marrow of his bones,
He never die but thou hast me bound in thine
Knick, he return's; do ye not hate him, ye?
Ye know yourselves: how can ye bide at peace,
Affronted with his foulsome innocence?
Are ye but creatures of the board and bed,
No men to strike? Fall on him all at once,
And if ye slay him I reck not: if ye fall,
Give ye the slave mine order to be bound,
Bind him as heretofore, and bring him in:
It may be ye shall slay him in his bonds."

She spake; and at her will they couched'd their spears,
Three against one; and Gawain passing by,
Bound upon solitary adventure, saw
Low down bereav'd of most of those towers
A villany, three to one: and thro' his heart
The fire of honor and all noble deeds
Flash'd, and he call'd, "I strike upon thy side—
The catiffs!" "Nay," said Pelles, "but forbear;
He needs no aid who doth his lady's will."

So Gawain, looking at the villany done,
Forsore, but in his heat and cageriness
Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog, withheld
A moment from the vermin that he sees
Before him, shivers, ere he springs and kils.

And Pelles overthrew them, one to three;
And they rose up, and bound, and brought him in.
Then drew her anger, leaving Pelles, bare'd
Full on her knights in many an evil name
Of croun, weaking, and thrice-beaten hon'd
"Yet take him, ye that scarce ere fit to touch,
Far less to bind, your victor, and thrust him out;
And he who will release him from his bonds.
And if he comes again"—there she brake short;
And Pelles answer'd, "Lady, for indeed
I loved you and I deem'd you beautiful,
I cannot brook to see your beauty marry'd
Thro' evil spirit, and witless man's sense.
I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn:
I had lieber ye were worthy of my love,
Than to be loved again of you—farewell;
And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my love,
Vex not yourself: ye will not see me more."

While thus he spake, she gazed upon the man
Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds, and thought,
"Why have I push'd him from me? this man loves,
If love there be: yet him I loved not. Why?
I deem'd him fool? yea, so? or that in him
A something—was it nobler than myself?
Seem'd my reproach? He is not of my kind.
He could not love me, did he know me well.
Nay, let him go—and quickly." And her knights
Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden out of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed him from his
bonds,
And thrung them o'er the walls; and afterward,
Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's rag.
"Faith of my body," he said, "and art thou not—
Yen thou art he, whom late our Arthur made
Knights of his table: yes and he that won
The circlet—wherefore hast thou so fam'd
Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest,
As let these catiffs on thee work their will?"

And Pelles answer'd, "O, their wills are hers
For whom I won the circlet; and mine, hers,
Thus to be bounden, so to see her face,
Marry'd th'ot' he be with spite and mockery now.
Other than when I found her in the woods;
He and she had me bounden then with spite,
And all to flout me; when they bring me in,
Let me be bounden, I shall see her face;
Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness."

And Gawain answer'd kindly th'o' in scorn,
"Why, let my lady bind me if she will,
And let my lady beat me if she will:
But an she send her delegate to thrill
There fighting hands of mine—Christ kill me then
But I will slice him handless by the wrist,
And let my lady see the stump for him,
Howl as she may. But hold me for your friend:
Come, ye know nothing: here I pledge my troth,
Yea, by the honor of the Table Round,
I will be leal to thee and work thy work,
And tame thy jarring princes to thine hand.
Lend me thine horse and arms, and I will say
That I have slain thee. She will let me in
To hear the manner of thy fight and fall;
Then, when I come within her counsel's, then
From prime to vespers will I chant thy praise
As prouest knight and truest lover more
Than any have sung thee living, till she long
To have thee back in lasty life again,
Not to be bound, save by white bonnet and warm,
Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now thy horse
And armor: let me go: be comforted:
Give me three days to melt her fancy, and hope
The third night hence will bring thee news of gold."

Then Pelles lent his horse and all his arms,
Saving the goodly sword, his prize, and took
Gawain's, and said, "Betray me not, but help—
Art thou not whom men call light-of-love?"

"Ay," said Gawain, "for woman be so light.
Then bounded forward to the castle walls,
And raised a huge hanging from his neck,
And winded it, and that so musically
That all the old echoes hid by the wall
Rang out like hollow woods at hunting-time.

Up ran a score of damsels to the tower;
"Arvant," they cried, "our lady loves thee not."
But Gawain lifting up his visor said,
"Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's court,
And I have slain this Pelles whom ye hate:
Behold his horse and armor. Open gate,
And I will make you merry."

And down they ran,
Her damsels, crying to their lady, "Lo!
Pelles is dead—he told us—he that hath
His horse and armor: will ye let him in?
He slew him! Gawain, Gawain of the court,
Sir Gawain—there he waits below the wall,
Blowing his bugle as who should say him nay."

And so, leave given, straight on thro' open door
Rode Gawain, whom she greeted courteously.
"Dead; is it so?" she ask'd. "Ay, ay," said he,
"And oft in dying cried upon your name."
"Pity on him," she answer'd, "a good knight,
But never let me bide one hour at peace.
"Ay," thought Gawain, "and ye be fair enow:
But I to your dead man have given my troth,
That whom ye loathe him will I make ye love."

So those three days, aimless about the land,
Lost in a doubt, Pelles wandering
Wasted, until the third night brought a moon
With promise of large light on woods and ways.
The night was hot; he could not rest, but rode
Erch midnight to her walls, and bound his horse
Hard by the gates. Wide open were the gates,
And he watched, and in the dawn he kept,
And heard but his own steps, and his own heart
Benting, for nothing moved but his own self,
And his own shadow. Then he crost the court,
And saw the poster portal also wide
Yawning; and up a slope of garden, all
Of roses white and red, and wild ones mixt
And overgrowing, them went, on, and found,
Here too, all bush'd below the mellow moon,
Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave
Came lightening downward, and so split itself
Among the roses, and was lost again.

Then was he ware that white pavilions rose,
Three from the bushes, gilden-peak'd; in one,
Red after revel, dromed her kurdan knights
Slumbering, and their three squares across their feet:
In one, their malice on the placid lip
Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her damsel-lay:
And in the third, the circket of the jouiss
Bound on her brow, were Gawain and Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro' the leaf
To find a nest and feels a snake, he drew:
Back, as a coward slinks from what he fears
To cope with, or a traitor proven, or hound
Beten, did Pelleas in an utter shame
Cweep with his shadow thro' the court again,
Fingerling at his sword-handle until he stood
There on the castle-bridge once more, and thought,
"I will go back, and shay them where they lie."

And so went back and seeing them yet in sleep
Said, "Ye, that so disfellow the holy sleep,
Your sleep is death," and drew the sword, and thought,
"What! slay a sleeping knight? the King hath bound
And sworn me to this brotherhood;" again,
"Alas that ever a knight should be so false,"
Then turn'd, and so return'd, and groaning laid
The naked sword athwart their naked throats,
There left it, and them sleeping; and she lay,
The circket of the tourney round her brown,
And the sword of the tourney across her throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on his horse
Stared at her towers that, larger than themselves
In their own darkness, throng'd into the moon.
Then clomb the saddle with his thighs, and clench'd
His hands, and madd'd with himself and morn'd:

"Would they have risen against me in their blood
At the last day? I might have answer'd them
Even before high God. O towers so strong,
So solid, would that even while I live
The crack of earthquake shivering to your base
Split you, and Hell burst up your harlots roofs
Bellowing, and char'd you thro' and thro' within,
Back as the harlot's heart—hollow as a skull!
Let the fierce east scream thro' your eyelet-holes,
And whirl the dust of harlots round and round
In dung and nettles! hiss, snake— I saw him there—
Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell.
Who yells here in the still sweet summer night,
But I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd her fool?
Fool, beast, or she, or I myself most fool;
Beast too, as lacking human wit—disgrace'd,
Dishonor'd all for trial of true love—
Love— we be all alike: only the king
Hath made us fools and lions. O noble vows!
O great and sable and simple race of brutes
That own no last since they have no law!
For why should I have loved her to my shame?
I love her, as I loved her to my shame.
I never loved her, I but lust'd for her—
Away—"

He dash'd the rowel into his horse,
And bounded forth and vanish'd thro' the night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch on her throat,
Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd her self,
To Gawain: "If far, for thou hast not slain
This Pelleas I here he stood and might have slain
Me and thyself." And he that tells the tale
Says that her ever-vearing fancy turn'd
To Pelleas, as one true knight on earth,
And only lover; and thro' her love her life
Wasted and pined, desiring him in vain.

But he by wild and way, for half the night,
And over hard and soft, striking the sod
From out the soft, the spark from off the hard,
Rode till the star above the wakening sun,
Beside that tower where Percival was coul'd,
Glanced from the rose forehead of the dawn.
For so the words were flash'd into his heart
He knew not whence or wherefore: "O sweet star,
Pure on the virgin forehead of the dawn."
And then the king would have wept, but felt his eyes
Harder and drier than a fountain bed
In summer. Thither came the village girls
And linger'd talking, and they come no more
Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it from the heights
Again with living waters in the change
Of seasons: hard his eyes; harder his heart
Seem'd; but so weary were his limbs, that he,
Gasp'd, "Of Arthur's hall am I, but here,
Here let me rest and die," cast himself down,
And golf his griefs in immost sleep; so lay,
Till he be wak'd by a dream, that Gawain read
The hall of Merlin, and the morning star
Reed in the smoke, brake into flame, and fell.

He wok'd, and being ware of some one nigh,
Sent hands upon him, as to tear him, crying,
"False! I and I held thee pure as Guinevere."

But Percival stood near him and replied,
"Am I but false as Guinevere is pure?
Or art thou mix'd with dreams? or being one
Of our free-spoken Table hast not heard
That Lancelet— there he check'd himself and

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as with one
Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword
That made it plunge's thro' the wound again,
And pricks it deeper: and he shrank and whil'd,
"Is the Queen false?" and Percival was mire,
"Have any of our Round Table held their vows?"
And Percival made answer not a word.

"Is the King true?" "The King!" said Percival.
"Why then let men couple at once with wolves. What! art thou mad?"

But Pelleas, leaping up,
Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on his horse
And fled: small pity upon his horse had he,
Or on himself, or any, and when he met
A cripple, one that held a hand for ams—
Hunch'd as he was, and like an old dwarf-em,
That turns its back on the salt blast, the boy
Paused not but over rode him, shouting, "False,
And false with Gawain!" and so left him bruised
And batter'd, and fled on, and hill and wood
Went ever streaming into the change,
That follows on the turning of the world,
Dark'n'd the common path: he twitch'd the reins,
And made his beast that better knew it, swerve
Now off it and now on; but where he saw
High in heaven all the hall that Morn built,
Backening against the dead-green stripes of even,
"Black nest of rats," he groan'd, "ye build too high."
GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court, and sat there in the holy house at Almesbury. Woman of her will conceal her with her save a little maid: A novice, one low light betwixt them burn'd Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all abroad, Beneath a moon museum albeit at full The white mist, like a face-cloth to the face, Clung to the dead earth, and the land was still.

For bithin she fled, her cause of flight Sir Modred: he the nearest to the King, His nephew, ever like a subtle beast Lay slumber, great with the throne, Ready to spring, waiting a chance: for this, He chill'd the popular praises of the King, With silent smiles of easy dispensagement, And tamper'd with the Lords of the White Horse, Hcathen, the brood by Henigist left; and sought To make disruption in the Table Round Of Arthur, and to splinter it into foins Serving him traitorous end; and all his aims Were sharper'd by strong hate for Lancelot.

For this it chance'd one morn when all the court, Green-suited, but with plumes that mock'd the May, Had been, their wont, a-maying and return'd, That Modred still in green, all car and eye, Climb'd to the high top of the garden wall To spy some secret scandal if he might, And saw the Queen, who sat betwixt her best Gould, and Bosome Vivien of her heart. The wildest and the worst; and more than this He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by Splend where he couch'd, and as the gardener's hand Ficks from the coiewort a green cattepillar, So from the high wall and the flowering grove Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the heel, And cast him as a worm upon the way;

But when he knew the Prince, tho' marr'd with dust, He, reverencing king's blood in a bad man, Made such excuses as he might and could, Full knightly without scorn; for in those days No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in scorn; But, if a man were half or hunch'd, in him By those whom God had made full-limb'd and tall, Scor was allowed as part of his defect, And he was answer'd softly by the King And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot holt To raise the Prince, who rising twice or thrice Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled, and went: But, ever after, the small violence done, Ranks'd in him and ruffled all his heart, As the sharp wind that pulls all day long A little bitter pool about a stone On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told This matter to the Queen, at first she laugh'd Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty fall, Then shudder'd, as the village wife who cries, "I smirch'd, some one steps across my grave;" Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for indeed She half-foresaw that he, the subtle beast, Would track her guilt until he found, and hers Would be forevermore a name of scorn. Henceforward rarely could she front in Hall, Unleashed, with her fair face, bright face, Heart-biding-smile, and grey persistant eye: Henceforward, too, the Powers that tend the soul, To help it from the death that cannot die, And save it even in extremes, began To vex and plague her. Many a time a hour, Beside the placid breathings of the King, In the dread night, grim faces came and went Before her, or a vague spiritual fear; Like to some doubtful noise of cracking doors, Heard by the watchuer in a haunted house; That keeps the rust of murder on the walls— Held her awake; or if she slept, she dream'd An awful dream; for then she seemed to stand On some vast plain before a setting sun, And from the sun there swiftly made at her A ghastly something, and its shadow flew Before her, till it touch'd her, and she turn'd— When lo! her own, that broadening from her feet, And blackening, swallow'd all the land, and in it For cities burn'd, and with a cry she woke. And all this this trouble did not pass at grow; Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless King, And trustful courtesies of household life, Became her bane; and at the last she said, "O Lancelot, fetch me to this green land, For if thou tarry we shall meet again, And if we meet again some evil chance Will make the smouldering scandal break and blaze
GUINEVERE.

Before the people, and our lord the King," And Lancelot ever promised, but remain'd, And still they met and met. Again she said, "O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee hence," And till they were agreed upon a night (When the good King should not be there) to meet And part forever. Passion-pale they met And greeted: hands in hands, and eye to eye, Low on the border of her couch they sat Stammering and staring; it was their last hour, A madness of farewells, And Modred brought his creatures to the basement of the tower For testimony; and crying with full voice, "Traitor, come out, ye are trap't at last," aroused Lancelot, who rushing outward lion-like Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong, and he fell Stunn'd, and his creatures took and bare him off And all was still: then she, "The end is come And I am shamed forever:" and he said, "Mine be the shame: mine was the sin; but rise, And fly to my strong castle overseas; There will I hide thee, till my life shall end, There hold thee with my life against the world." She answer'd, "Lancelot, wilt thou hold me so? Nay, friend, for we have taken our farewell. Would God, that thou couldst hide me from myself! Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou Unwedded: yet rise now, and let us fly, For I will draw me sanctuary, And hide my doom." So Lancelot got her horse, Set her thereon, and mounted on his own, And then they rode to the divided way, There kis'd, and parted weeping: for he past, Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen, Back to his land; but she to Almesbury Fled all night long by glimmering waste and wild; And heard the Spirits of the waste and wild Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan; And in herself she moan'd, "Too late, too late!" Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn, A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high, Croak'd, and she thought, "He spies a field of death: For now the heathen of the Northern Sea, Lured by the crimes and fruilities of the court, Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land.

And when she came to Almesbury she spake There to the nuns, and said, "Mine enemies Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood, Receive and yield me sanctuary, and ask Her name, to whom ye yield it, till her time To tell you: and her beauty, grace, and power wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode For many a week, unknown, among the nuns; Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name, nor sought, Wrapt in her grief, for house or for drift, But communed only with the little maid, Who pleased her with a babbling headness Which often lured her from herself; but now, This night, a rumor wildly blown about Came, that Sir Modred had usurp'd the realm, And leagued him with the heathen, while the King Was waging war on Lancelot: then she thought, "With what a hate the people and the King Must hate me," and bow'd down upon her hands Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd No silence, brake it, uttering "Late! so late! What hour, I wonder, now?" and then she drew No answer, by and by and began to hum. An air the nuns had taught her: "Late so late!" Which when she heard, the Queen lookd up, and said, "O maiden, if indeed you list to sing, Sing, and unbind my heart that I may weep," Whereat full willingly sang the little maid. "Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill! Late, late, so late! but we can enter still. Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light had we: for that we do repeat; And learning this, the bridegroom will relent. Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light: so late! and dark and chill the night! O let us in, that we may find the light. Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet? O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet! No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now."

So sang the nuns, while, full passionately, Her head upon her hands, remembering Her thought when first she came, wept the sad Queen. Then said the little novice prattling to her: "O pray you, noble lady, weep no more: But let my words, the words of one so small, Who knowing nothing knows but to obey, And if I do not there is peneance given— Comfort your sorrows; for they do not flow From evil done; right sure an I of that. Who see your tender grace and stateliness, But weigh your sorrows with our lord the King's, And weighing find them less; for gone is he To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot there, Round that strong castle where he holds the Queen: And Modred whom he left in charge of all, The traitor—Ah sweet lady, the King's grief For his own self, and his own Queen, and realm, Must needs be thrice as great as any of ours. For me, I thank the saints I am not great. For there were ever come a grief to me: I cry my cry in silence, and have done: None knows it, and my tears have brought me good. But even were the griefs of little ones As great as those of great ones, yet this grief Is added to the griefs the great must bear, That howsoever much they may desire Silence, they cannot weep behind a cloud: As even here they talk at Almesbury About the good King and his wicked Queen, And knew I such a King with such a Queen? Well might I wish to veil her wickedness, But were I such a king, it could not be." Then to her own sad heart mother'd the Queen, "Will the child kill me with her innocent talk?" But openly she answer'd, "Must not I, If this false traitor have displaced his lord, Grieve with the common grief of all the realm?"

"Yea," said the maid, "this is all woman's grief, That she is woman, whose disloyal life Hath wrought confusion in the Table Round Which good King Arthur founded, years ago, With signs and miracles and wonders, there At Camelot, ere the coming of the Queen." Then thought the Queen within herself again, "Will the child kill me with her foolish prate?" But openly she spake, and said to her, "O little maid, shut in by narrow walls, What canst thou know of Kings and Tables Round, Or what of signs and wonders, but the signs And simple miracles of thy nursery?"

To whom the little novice garrulously: "Yea, but I know: the land was full of signs And wonders ere the coming of the Queen. So said my father, and himself was knight Of the great Table—at the founding of it: And rode thereto from Lyonnesse, and he said That as he rode, an hour or may be twain
"While he past the dim-lit woods,
Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy
Come dashing down on a tall wayside flower."

After the sunset, down the coast he heard
Strange music, and he paused and turning—there,
All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,
EACH with a beacon-star upon his head,
And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
He saw them—headland after headland flame
Far on into the rich heart of the west;
And in the light the white mermaid swim,
And strong man-breasted things stood from the sea,
And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the land,
To which the little elves of chasm and cleft
M ade answer, sounding like a distant horn.
So said my father—yea and furthermore,
Next morning, while he past the dim-lit woods,
Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy
Come dashing down on a tall wayside flower,
That shook beneath them, as the thistle shakes
When three gray linnets wrangle for the seed:

And still at evenings on before his horse
The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and broke
Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd and broke
Flying, for all the land was full of life.
And when at last he came to Canelot,
A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand
Swang round the lighted lantern of the hall;
And in the hall itself was such a feast
As never man had dream'd; for every knight
Had whatsoever meat he long'd for served
By hands unseen; and even as he said
Down in the cellars merry boated things
Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the butts
While the wine ran; so glad were spirits and men
Before the coming of the sinful Queen."

Then spake the Queen, and somewhat bitterly,
"Were they so glad? ill prophets were they all,
Spirits and men: could none of them foresee, 
Not even thy wise father with his signs 
And wonders, what has fall'n upon the realm?

To whom the novice garrulously again: 
"'Tis true, one, a bard: of whom my father said, 
Full many a noble war-song had he sung, 
Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's fleet, 
Between the steep cliff and the coming wave; 
And many a mystic lay of life and death 
Had chanted on the smoky mountain-tops, 
When round him bent the spirits of the hills 
With all their dewy hair blown back like flame: 
So said my father—and that night the bard 
Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang the King 
As welling more than man, and call'd at those 
Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois: 
For there was no man knew from whence he came; 
But after tempest, when the long wave broke 
All down the thundering shores of Bade and Bos, 
There came a day as still as heaven, and then 
They found a naked child upon the sands 
Of dark Dusdagil by the Cornish sea; 
And that was Arthur; and they foster'd him 
Till he by miracle was approv'd king: 
And all that his grave and fruitful 
From all men, like his birth; and could he find 
A woman in her womanhood as great 
As he was in his manhood, then, he sang, 
The twain together well might change the world. 
But up rose, the wild, for surely I repent. 
For what is true repentance but in thought— 
Not e'en in most thought to think again 
The sins that made the past so pleasant to us; 
And I have sworn never to see him more, 
To see him more."

And ev'n in saying this, 
Her memory from old habit of the mind 
Went slipping back upon the golden days 
In which she saw him first, when Lancelot came, 
Reputed the best knight and goodliest man, 
Ambassador, to lead her to her lord 
Arthur, and led her forth, and far ahead 
Of his and her reetune moving, they, 
Rapt in sweet thought, or lively, all on love 
And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for the time 
Was anything, and as yet no sin was dream'd) 
Rode under groves that look'd a paradise 
Of blossom, over sheets of haythatch 
That seem'd the heavens upbreking thro' the earth, 
And on from hill to hill, and every day 
Rode in gait, at noon in some delicious vale 
The silk pavilions of King Arthur raised 
For brief repast or afternoon reposè 
By courtiers gone before; and on again, 
Till yet once more ere set of sun they saw 
The dragon of the great Pendragonship, 
That crown'd the state pavilion of the King, 
Blaze by the rushing brook or silent well. 

But when the Queen immersed in such a trance, 
And moving thro' the past unconsciously, 
Came to that point, when first she saw the King 
Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to find 
Her journey done, glanced at him, thought him cold, 
High, self-contain'd, and passionless, not like him, 
"Not like my Lancelot"—while she brooded thus 
And in her half-guilty in her thoughts again, 
There rode an armed warrior to the doors. 
A murmuring whisper thro' the munsey ran, 
Then on a sudden a cry, "The King." She sat 
Still-stricken, listening; but when armed feet 
There in a long gallery from the outer doors 
Rang coming, prone from off her seat she fell, 
And grov'led'd with her face against the floor: 
There with her milkwhite arms and shadowy hair 
She made her face a darkness from the King: 
And in the darkness heard his armed feet
GUINEVERE.

Pause by her; then came silence, then a voice, 
Mournous strains of woe and the King's:

Denouncing judgment, but the' changed the King's

"Liest thou here so low, the child of one
I honor'd, happy, dead before thy shame?
Well is it that he is from thee so far.

The children born of thee are sword and fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,

The craft of kindred and the Godless hosts
Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern Sea.

When of true, yet onward, my right arm,
The mightiest of my knights abode with me,
Have everywhere about this land of Christ
In twelve great battles ruining overthrown.

And knowest thou now from whence I come—from
him.

From waging bitter-war with him; and he,
That did not shun to smite me in worse way,
Had yet that grace of courtesy in him left,
He spared to lift his hand against the King
Who made him knight; but many a knight was slain;
And many more, and all his kith and kin
Clave to him, and abode in his own land.
And many more when Modred raised revolt,
Forgetful of truth and fealty, clave
To Modred, and a remnant stays with me.

And of this remnant will I leave a part,
True men who love me still, for whom I live,
To guard thee in the wild hour coming on,
Least but a hair of this low head be harm'd.
Fear not; thou shalt be guarded till my death.
Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies
Have er'd not, that I march to meet my doom.
Thou hast not made my life so sweet to me,
That the King should grant thee to live,
For thou hast spolt the purpose of my life.

Bear with me for the last time while I show,
Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou hast sin'd.
For when the Roman left us, and their law
Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways
Were still'd with rapine, here and there a deed
Of prowess done redress'd a random wrong.
But I was first of all the kings who drew
The knighthood-errant of this realm and all
The realms together with the Great Heav'n,
In that fair order of my Table Round,
A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world,
And be the fair beginning of a time
I made them lay their trust in me and swear
To reverence the King, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their King,
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until they won her; for indeed I knew
Of no so sacred master under heaven;
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable words
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.
And all this trove until I wedded thee
Believing "lo mine helmate, one to feel
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy."

Then came thy shaming sin with Lancelot;
That shame the sin of Tristan and Isolde,
Then others, following these my mightiest knights
And drawing soul ensemble from fair names,
Sim'd also, till the loathsome opposite
Of all my heart had destined did obtain,
And all the three'eth so that this life of mine
I guard as God's high gift from scathe and wrong.

Not great care to lose; but rather think
How sad it were for Arthur to live,
To sit once more within his lonely hall,
And miss the wonted number of my knights,
And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds
As in the golden days before thy sin.

For wilt he not of whom I might be left, could speak
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at thee?
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk
Thy shadow still would glide from room to room,
And I should evermore be vex't with thee
In hanging robe or vacant ornament,
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.
For think not, tho' wouldst not love thy lord,
Thy lord has wholly lost his love for thee.
I am not made of so slight elements.

Yet man, I leave thee, woman, I hold thy shame.
I hold that man the worst of public foes
Who either for his own or children's sake,
To save his blood from scandal, lets the wife
Whom he knows false, abide and rule the house:
For being thro' his cowardice abhorr'd
Her station, taken everywhere for pure,
She like a new disease, unknown to men,
Creeps, no precaution used, among the crowd,
Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and saps
The fealty of our friends, and stirs the pulse
With devils' leaps, and paces, and parole half the young.
Worst of the worst were that man he that reigns!
Better the King's waste hearth and aching heart
Than thou resented in thy place of light,
The mockery of my people, and their bane."

He paused, and in the pause she crept an inch
Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
Far off a solitary trumpet blew.
Then waiting by the doors the war-horse neigh'd
As at a friend's voice, and he spake again:

"Yet think not that I come to urge thy crimes,
I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
I, whose word pitieth almost makes me die
To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
The wrath which forced my thoughts on that fierce
law,

The dooms of treason and the flaming death
(When first I learnt thee hidden here), is past.
The pang—which while I weigh'd thy heart with one
Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
Made my tears burn—is also past, in part.
And in my part thou art innocent, 1,
Let I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul the rest.
But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty such as never woman wore.
Until it came a kingdom's curse with thee—
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were the King's.
I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh hath lost stand'nd; and mine own flesh,
Here looking down on thine polluted, cries
'I loathe thee': yet not less, O Guinevere,
For I was every virgin save for thee,
My love thro' flesh hath wrought into my life
So far, that my doom is, I love thee still.

Let no man dream but that I love thee still.
Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our faith and trust,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before high God, and then
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thin, and know
I am thine husband—not: a smaller soul,
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me that,
I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I hence.
Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet blow:
They summon me their King to lead mine hosts
Far down to that great battle in the west,
Where I must strike against my sister's son,
Leagued with the lords of the White Horse and
knighted knights
Once mine, and strike him dead, and meet myself
Death, or I know not what mysterious doom.
And then remaining here will learn the event;
But lieth shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side, see thee no more,
Farewell!"

And while she grovelli'd at his feet,
She felt the King's breath wander o'er her neck,
And, in the darkness o'er her fallen head,
Perceived the waving of his hands that blest.

Then, listening till those armed steps were gone,
Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish found
The casement: "Feradventure," so she thought,
"If I might see his face, and not be seen."
And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!
And near him the sad nuns with each a light
Stood, and he gave them charge about the Queen,
To guard and foster her foremost.
And while he spoke to these his boon was lower'd,
To which for crest the golden dragon clung
Of Britain; so she did not see the face,
Which then was as an angel's, but she saw,
Wet with the mist and smitten by the lights,
The Dragon of the great Pendragon's
Blaize, making all the night a steam of fire.
And even then he turn'd; and more and more
The moony vapor rolling round the King,
Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold, and made him gray
And greyer, till himself became as mist.
Before her, moving ghostlike to his doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and cried aloud,
"O Arthur!" there her voice brake suddenly,
Then—as a stream that spoutting from a cliff
Fails in mid-air, but gathering at the base
Re-makes itself, and flashes down the vale—
Went on in passionate utterance.

"Gone—my lord!
Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be slain!
And he forgave me, and I could not speak.
Farewell? I should have answer'd his farewell.
His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord the King,
My own true lord! how dare I call him mine?
The shadow of another cloven to mine.
And makes me one pollution: he, the King,
Call'd me polluted: shall I kill myself?
What help in that? I cannot kill my sin,
If soul be soul; nor can I kill my shame;
No, nor by living can I live it down.
The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months,
The months will add themselves and make the years,
The years will roll into the centuries,
And mine will ever be a name of scorn.
I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.
Let the world be: that is but of the world.
What else? what hope? I think there was a hope,
Except he mock'd me when he spake of hope;
His hope he call'd it: but he never mocks,
For mockery is the fume of little hearts.
And blessed be the King, who hath forgiven
My wickedness to him, and left me hope
That in mine own heart I can live down sin
And be his mate hereafter in the heavens
Before high God. Ah great and gentle lord,
Who, was, as is the conscience of a saint
Among his warring senses, to thy knights—
To whom my false voluptuous pride, that took
Full easily all impressions from below,
Would not look up, or half-despised the height
To which I would not or I could not climb—

I thought I could not breathe in that fine air
That pure severity of perfect light—
I wanted warmth and color which I found
In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou art,
Thou art the highest and most human too,
Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there none
Will tell the King I love him tho' so late?
Now—ere he goes to the great Battle? none:
Myself must tell him in that purer life.
But now it were too daring. Ah my God,
What might I not have made of thy fair world,
Had I but loved thy highest creature here?
It was my duty to have loved the highest:
It surely was my profit had I known:
It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
We needs must love the highest when we see it,
Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand
Grasp'd, made her veil her eyes: she look'd and saw
The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said to her,
"Yea, little maid, for am I not forgiven?"
Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns
All round her, weeping; and her heart was loosed
Within her, and she wept with these and said:

"Ye know me then, that wicked one, who broke
The vast design and purpose of the King
O shut me round with narrowing nunmary-walls,
Meek maidens, from the voices crying 'Shame.'
I must not scorn myself: he loves me still.
Let no one dream but that he loves me still.
So let me, if you do not shudder at me
Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with you:
Wear black and white, and be a nun like you;
Fast with your fasts, not feasting with your feasts.
Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at your joys,
But not rejoicing; mingle with your rites;
Pray and be prayed for: lie before your air-shrine;
Do each low office of your holy house;
Walk your dirim cloister, and distribute dole
To poor sick people, richer in his eyes
Who ransom'd us, and halier than I;
And treat their loathsome hurts and heal mine own;
And so wear out in almsdeed and in prayer
The sombre close of that voluptuous day,
Which wrought the ruin of my lord the King."

She said: they took her to themselves; and she
Still hoping, fearing: "Is it ye yet too late?"
Dwelt with them, till in time their Abbess died.
Then she, for her good deeds and her pure life,
And for the power of ministration in her,
And likewise for the high rank she had borne,
Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess lived
For three brief years, and there, an Abbess past
To where beyond these voices there is peace.
And falter onward, like wild birds that change
Their season in the night and wail their way.
From cloud to cloud, down the long wind the dream
Shrii'd; but in going mingled with dim cries
Far in the moonlit haze among the hills
As of some lonely city sad by night. When all is lost, and wife and child with wail
Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke and call'd,
"Who spake? A dream. O light upon the wind,
Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are these dim cries
Thine, or doth all that haunts the waste and wild
Mourn, knowing it will go along with me?"

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and spake,—
"O me, my king, let pass whatever will,
Elves, and the harmless glamour of the field;
But in their sted thuy name and glory cling
To all high places like a golden cloud
Forever; but as yet thou shalt not pass.
Light was Gawain in life, and light in death
Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
And care not thou for dreams from him, but rise—
I hear the steps of Modred in the West,
And with him many of thy people, and knights
Once tilte, whom thou hast loved, but grosser grown
Than heathen, splitting at their voice and thee.
Right well in heart they know thee for the king.
Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,—
"For other is this battle in the West
Where to we move, than when we strove in youth,
And thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,
And shook him thro' the North. Ill doom is mine
To war against my people and my knights,
The king who fights his people fights himself;
And they my knights who loved me once the stroke
That strikes them dead is as my death to me.
Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way
Thro' this blind haze, which ever since I saw
One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
Hath folded in the passes of the world."

Then rose the king and moved his host by night,
And ever push'd Sir Modred, league by league.
Back to the sunset home of Lyonesse—
A land of old upheaven from the abyss
By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwell,
And the long mountain ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sands away away away.
The phantom circle of a mooning sea.
There the pursuer could pursue no more,
And he that fled no further fly the king;
And there, that day when the great light of heaven
Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,
On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.
Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
Like this last, dim, weird battle of the West.
The death-white mist slept over sand and sea;
Wherefore the chill, to him who breathe'd it, drew
Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold
With formless fear, and ev'n on Arthur fell
Confusion, since he saw not whom he sought,
For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,
And friend slew friend, not knowing whom he slew;
And some had visions out of golden youth,
And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
Look in upon the battle; and in the mist
Was many a noble deed, many a base,
And chance and craft in single fights,
And ever and anon with host to host
Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash
Of battle-axes on shatter'd helms, and shrieks
After the Christ, of those who falling down
Looked up for heaven, and only saw the mist;
And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights;
Oaths, insults, blights, and monstrous blasphemies,
Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of the lungs
In that close mist, and cryings for the light,
Mourns of the dying and voices of the dead.

Last as by some one death-bed, after wall
Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore,
Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
A dead hush fell; but when the dolorous day
Drew drearier toward twilight falling, came
A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
Roses, and the pale king glanced across the field
Of battle; but no man was moving there;
Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
Nor yet of heathen; only the wave
Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
Tumbling the hollow helments of the fallen,
And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,
And rolling far along the gloomy shore
The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
And whiter than the mist that all day long
Had held the field of battle was the king.

"Hereon thou this great voices that shakes the world,
And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,
And beats upon the faces of the dead,
My dead, as tho' they had not died for me?—
O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
Confusion, till I know not what I am,
Nor wherefore I am, nor whether I be king.
Behold, I seem but king among the dead."

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere, "My king,
King everywhere and so the dead have kings,
There also will I worship thee as king.
Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live
Who love thee; but who hates thee, he that brought
The heathen back among us, yonder stature,
Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine house."

Then spake the King, "My house hath been my doom.
But call not thou this traitor of my house
Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.
My house are they who swear my vows,
Yea, even while they brake them, own'd me king.
And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
When all the purry of my throne hath fall'd,
That quick or dead thou holdest me for king.
Grant am I, whatsoever be their cry;
And one last act of kinglyhood shalt thou see
Yet ere I pass." And, uttering this, the king
Made at the man: then Modred smote his liege
Hard on that helm, which many a heathen sword
Had beaten thin, while Arthur at one blow,
Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
Slew him, and all but slain himself he fell.

So all day long the noise of battleroll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their lord,
King Arthur; then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him; And home to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken channel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall sleep no more, at any future
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Thee Merlin swore that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In these old days, one summer morn, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and hast worn it, like a king:
And, whereassoever I am sung or told
In after-time, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aldless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet thy best will all perform at full.
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the rain'd shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shril, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subltest jewelry. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted water-flags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded king.

Then spake King Arthur to sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseech'd
Thy faithful, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for me,
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought:
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud:—

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeking obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The king is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to after-time, but empty breath
And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a justt of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lovely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the after-time
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honor and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded king.

Then spake King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unkightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a flying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights
In whom should meet the offices of an,
Then wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fall in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, then, spare to bring Excalibur
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the king.

Then spake King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, and the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men, 
So great a miracle of yonder hill. 
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him; 
But when I look'd again, beheld him clad 
Clothed in white samite, a mystic, wonderful, 
That caught him by the helt, and brandish'd him 
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard: 
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone. 
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight, 
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear 
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose, 
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm, 
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes 
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere 
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears, 
And would have spoken, but he found not words, 
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee, 
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands, 
And rieing bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard, 
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed, 
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the king, 
Muttering and mumur'd at his ear, "Quick, quick! 
I fear it is too late, and I shall die." 
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge, 
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd, 
Larger than man on the frozen hills. 
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry 
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad. 
But his clas'd his harness in the icy caves, 
And barren chasms, and all to left and right 
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he bas'd 
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang 
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels— 
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake, 
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge, 
Boat as a funeral scaff from stem to stern, 
Beneath them; and descending they were 
That all the decks were dence with stately forms 
Black-stoiled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these 
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them 
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars, 
rose 
And, as it were one voice, an aged 
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills 
All night in a waste land, where no one comes, 
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murr'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge," 
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens 
Put forth their hands, and took the king, and wept. 
But she, that rose the tallest of them all 
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap, 
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands, 
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud, 
And dropping bitter tears against his brow 
Striped with dark blood; for all his face was white 
And colorless, and like the wither'd moon 
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east; 
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops 
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls— 
That made his forehead like a rising sun 
High from the dais-throne—were parded with dust; 
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose, 
Mix'd with the knighthly growth that fringed his lips, 
So like a shatter'd column lay the king; 
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest, 
From spurs to plume a star of tournament, 
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged 
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere, 
"Ah! my lord Arthur, whither shall I go? 
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes? 
For now I see the true old days are past! 
When every morning brought a noble chance, 
And every chance brought out a noble knight. 
Such times have been not since the light that led 
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh. 
But now the whole Round Table is dissolved, 
Which was an image of the mighty world; 
And I, the last, go forth companionless, 
And the days darken round me, and the years, 
Among men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge: 
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new, 
And God fulfill's himself in many ways, 
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world. 
Comfort thyself; what comfort is in me? 
I have lived my life, and that which I have done 
May He within himself make pure I but thou, 
If thou shouldst never see my face again, 
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer 
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice 
Rise like a fountain for me night and day, 
For what are men better than sheep or goats 
That nourish a blind life within the brain, 
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer 
Both for themselves and those who call them friend? 
For so the whole round earth is every way 
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God, 
But now farewell. I am going a long way 
With these thou seest—if indeed I go— 
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt) 
To the leas-and-valley of AvLB 
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, 
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies 
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns 
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea, 
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail 
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan 
That, flitting a wild carol ere her death, 
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood 
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere 
Revolving many memories, till the hull 
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn, 
And on the mere the wailing dead away.

At length he groan'd, and turning slowly climb 
The last hard footstep of that iron crag: 
Thence mark'd the black hull moving yet, and cried, 
"He passes to be king among the dead, 
And after healing of his grievous wound 
He comes again; but—if he come no more— 
O me, be you dark Queens in you black boat, 
Who shreik'd and wall'd, the three whereat we gazed 
On that high day, when, clothed with living light, 
They stood before his throne in silence, friends 
Of Arthur, who should help him at his need?"

Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint 
As from beyond the limit of the world, 
Like the last echo born of a great cry, 
Sound's, as if some fair city were one voice 
Around a King returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb 
Even to the highest that he could climb, and saw, 
Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand, 
Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the king, 
Down the long water opening on the deep, 
Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go 
From less to less and vanish into light. 
And the new awn rose bringing the new year.
ENOCH. (His father lying sick and needing him)

An hour behind; but as he climbed the hill,
Just where the prone edge of the wood began
To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,
Enoch and Annie, sitting hand in hand,
His large gray eyes and weather-beaten face
All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
That burned as on an altar. Philip look'd,
And in their eyes and faces read his doom;
Then, as their faces grew together, ground
And slipt aside, and like a wounded life
Crep't down into the hollows of the wood;
There, while the rest were loud with merry-making,
Had his dark hour unseen, and rose and past
Bearing a life-long burden in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells,
And merrily ran the years, seven happy years,
Seven happy years of health and compeitence,
And mutual love and honorable toil;
With children: first a daughter. In him woke,
With his first babe's first cry, the noble wish
To save all earnings to the uttermost,
And give his child a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or hers: a wish renew'd
When two years after came a boy to be
The rosy idol of her solitude,
While Enoch was abroad on wrathful seas,
Or often journeying landward; for in truth
Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-ship
In ocean-smelling color, and his face,
Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter-gales,
Not only to the market-cross were known,
But in the leafy lanes behind the town,
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
And pheasant-yewtree of the lonely Hall,
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering.

Then came a change, as all things human change.
Ten miles to northward of the narrow port
Open'd a larger haven: thither used
Enoch at times to go by land or sea;
And once when there, and clambering on a mast
In harbor, by mischance he slipt and fell:
A limb was broken when they lifted him;
And while he lay recovering there, his wife
Bore him another son, a sickly one:
Another hand crept too across his trade
Taking her bread and theirs: and on him fell,
Alho' a grave and staid God-bearing man,
Yet living thus inactive, doubt and gloom.
He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the night,
To see his children leading evermore
Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
And her, he loved, a beggar: then he pr'y'd
"Save them from this, whatever comes to me."
And while he pr'y'd, the master of that ship
Enoch had served in, hearing his mischance,
Came, for he know the man and valued him,
Reporting of his vessel China-bound,
And wanting yet a boatswain. Would he go?
There yet were many weeks before she sail'd,
Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch have the place?
And Enoch all at once assented to it,
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance appear'd
No graver than as when some little cloud
The current of his talk to graver things
In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing
On providence and trust in Heaven, he heard,
Heard and not heard him; as the village girl,
Who sets her pitcher underneath the spring,
Musing on him that used to fill it for her,
Hears and not hears, and lets it overflow.

At length she spoke, "O Enoch, you are wise;
And yet for all your wisdom, well know I
That I shall look upon your face no more."

"Well then," said Enoch, "I shall look on yours,
Annie, the ship I sail in passes here
(He names the day, get by her seaward's grace,
Spy out my face, and laugh at all your fears.)"

But when the last of those last moments came,
"Annie, my girl, cheer up, be comforted,
Look to thy thimbles, and till the garden
Keep every shipshape, for I must go.
And fear no more for me; or if you fear
Cast all your cares on God; that anchor holds.
Is He not yonder in that cloud?

Parts of the morning? If I flee to these
Can I go from Him? and the sea is His,
The sea is His: He made it."

Enoch rose,
Cast his strong arms about his drooping wife,
And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little ones;
But for the third, the sickly one, who slept
After a night of feverous wakefulness,
When Annie would have raised him Enoch said,
"Wake him not; let him sleep; how should the child
Remember this?" and kiss'd him in his cot,
But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt
A day's hair, and gave it to this he kept,
Thro' all his future; but now hastily caught
His bundle, waved his hand, and went his way.

She, when the day that Enoch mention'd came,
Borrow'd a glass, and fill'd it in vain; perhaps
She could not fix the glass to suit her eye;
Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremulous;
She saw him not; and while he stood on deck
Waving, the moment and the vessel past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing sail
She watch'd it, and departed weeping for him;
Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as his grave,
Set her sad will no less to chime with his,
But thro' not in her trade, not being bred
To barter, nor compensating the want
By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,
Nor asking overmuch and taking less,
And still foreboding "What would Enoch say?"
For more than once, in days of difficulty
And pressure, had she sold her wares for less
Than what she gave in buying what she sold:
She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it; and thus,
Expectant of that news which never came,
Gave'd for her own a scanty sustenance,
And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly born and grew
Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for it
With all a mother's care; nevertheless,
Whether her business often call'd her from it,
Or thro' the want of what it needed most,
Or means to pay the voice who best could tell
What most it needed—howsoe'er it was,
After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—
Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,
The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie buried it,
Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for her peace
Since Enoch left he had not look'd upon her,
Sumote him, as having kept aloof so long.
"Or only," said Phillip, "I may see now,
May be some little comfort;" therefore went,
Past thro' the solitary room in front,
Penned for a moment at an inner door,
Then struck it thrice, and, no one opening,
Entered; but Annie, seated with her grief,
Fresh from the burial of her little one,
Cared not to look on any human face,
But turn'd her own toward the wall and wept.
Then Phillip standing up said earnestly,
"Annie, I came to ask a favor of you."

He spoke; the passion in her heart reply'd,
"Favor from one so sad and so forlorn
As I am?" half abashed him, yet unsk'd,
His bashfulness and tenderness at war,
He set himself beside her, saying to her:

"I came to speak to you of what he wish'd,
Enoch, your husband: I have ever said
You chose the best among us—a strong man;
For where he fixt his heart he set his hand
To do the thing he will'd, and bore it thro'.
And wherefore did he go this weary way,
And leave you lonely? not to see the world—
For pleasure—say, but for the wherewithal
To give his babes a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or yours: that was his wish.
And if he come again, vext will he be
To find the precious morning hours were lost.
And if he come, you will see how it may be
If he could know his babes were running wild
Like colts about the waste. So, Annie, now—
Have we not known each other all our lives?
I do beseech you by the love you bear
him and his children not to say me nay—
For, if you will, when Enoch comes again
Why then he shall repay me—if you will,
Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do.
Now let me put the boy and girl to school:
This is the favor that I came to ask."

Then Annie with her brows against the wall
Answer'd, "I cannot look you in the face;
I seem so foolish and so broken down;
When you came in my sorrow broke me down;
And do you think your kindness breaks me down;
But Enoch lives; that is borne in on me;
He will repay you; money can be repaid;
Not kindness such as yours."

And Philip ask'd
"Then you will let me, Annie?"

There she turn'd,
She rose, and fixt her streaming eyes upon him,
And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,
Then calling down a blessing on his head
Caght at his hand and wrung it passionately,
And past into the little garth beyond.
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to school,
And bought them needful books, and every way.
Like one who does his duty by his own,
Made himself theirs; and tho' for Annie's sake,
Fearing the lazy gossip of the poor,
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
And seldom cross her threshold, yet he sent
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs and fruit,
The late and early roses from his wall,
Or clusters from the down, and now and then,
With some pretence of fineness in the meal
To save the offence of charitable, flour
From his tall mill that whistled on the waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's mind:
Scarce could the woman when he came upon her,
Other than fell heart and boundless Tears:
Light could a broken word to thank him with.
But Philip was her children's all-in-all;
From distant corners of the street they ran
To greet his hearty welcome heartily;
Lords of his house and of his mill were they;
Worried his passive ear with petty wrongs
Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd with him
And call'd him Father Philip. Philip gain'd
As Enoch lost; for Enoch seem'd to them
Uncertain as a vision or a dream,
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn
Down at the far end of an avenue,
Going we know not where; and so ten years,
Since Enoch left his heart and native land,
Fled forward, and no new of Enoch came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children long'd
To go with others, nutting to the wood,
And Annie would go with them; then they begg'd
For Father Philip (as they him call'd) too:
But Philip was the working-bee in blossoms dust,
Blanch'd with his mill, they found; and saying to
him,
"Come with us, Father Philip," he deniel'd;
But when the children puck'd at him to go,
He said, "You must yield readily to their wish,
For was not Annie with them? and they went.

But after setting half the weary down,
Just where the prone edge of the wood began
To feather toward the hollow, all her force
Fail'd her; and singing "Let me rest" she said:
So Philip rested with her well-content;
While all the younger ones with jubilant cries
Brook'd from their elders, and tumultuously
Down thro' the whitening hazel wood,
To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent or broke
The bitte reluctant boughs to tear away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each other
And calling, here and there, about the wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
Her presence, and remember'd one dark hour
Here in this wood, when like a wounded life
He crept into the shadow; at last he said,
"Listen, Annie, how many they are down yonder in the wood."
"Tired, Annie?" for she did not speak a word."
"Tired?" but her face had fall'n upon her hands;
At which, as with a kind of anger in him,
"The ship was lost," he said, "the ship was lost!
No more of that! why should you kill yourself
And make them orphans quite?" And Annie said,
"I thought not of it: but—I know not why—
Their voices make me feel so solitary."

Then Phillip coming somewhat closer spoke.
"Annie, there is a thing upon my mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long,
That tho' I know not when it first came there,
I know that it will eat at last. O Annie,
It is beyond all hope, against all chance,
That he who left you ten long years ago
Should still be living; well then—let me speak:
I grieve to see you poor and wanting help:
I cannot help you as I wish to do
Unless—they say that women are so quick—
Perhaps you know what I would have you know—
I wish you for my wife. I fail'd would prove
A father to your children: I do think
They look to me as a father: I am sure I do,
That I love them as if they were mine own:
And I believe, if you were fast my wife,
That after all these sad uncertain years,
We might be still as happy as God grants
To any of His creatures. Think upon it:
For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,
No burden, save my care for you and yours;
And we have known each other all our lives,
And I have loved you longer than you know.

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she spoke:
"You have been as God's good angel in our house.
God bless you for it, God reward you for it,
Philip, with something happier than myself.
Can one love twice? can you be ever loved
As Enoch was? is what it is that you ask?"
"I am content," he answer'd, "to be loved
A little after Enoch." "O!" she cried,
Scared as it were, "dear Philip, wait a while;
If Enoch comes—but Enoch will not come—
Yet wait a year, a year is not so long:
Surely I shall be wiser in a year:
O wait a little?" Philip sadly said,
"Annie, as I have waited all my life
I well may wait a little." "Nay," she cried,
"I am bound: you have my promise—in a year:
Will you not bide your year as I bide mine?"
And Philip answer'd, "I will bide my year."

Here both were mute, till Philip glancing up
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen day
Pass from the Danish barrier overhead:
The fearning night and chills for Annie rise,
And sent his voice beneath him thro' the wood.
Up came the children laden with their spoil;
Then all descended to the port, and there
At Annie's door he paused and gave his hand,
Saying gently, "Annie, when I spoke to you,
That was your hour of weakness. I was wrong.
I am always bound to you, but you are free."
Then Annie weeping answer'd, "I am bound."

She spoke; and in one moment as it were,
While yet she went about her household ways,
Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest words,
That he had loved her longer than she knew,
That autumn into autumn flash'd again,
And there he stood once more before her face,
Claiming her promise. "Is it a year?" she ask'd.
"Yes, if the nuts," he said, "be ripe again;
Come out and see." But she—she put him off—
So wed to look to—such a change—
Give her a month—she knew that she was bound—
A month—no more. Then Philip with his eyes
Full of that lifelong hunger, and his voice
Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,
"Take your own time, Annie, take your own time."
And Annie could have wept for pity of him;
And yet she held him on delayingly
With many a scarce-believable excuse,
Trying his truth and his long-sufferance,
Till half another year had slid away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,
Abhorrent of a calculation coast,
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.
Some thought that Philip did but trifle with her;
Some that she but held off to draw him on;
And others laugh'd at her and Philip too,
As simple folk that knew not their own minds;
And one, in whom all evil lur'd to Annie
Like serpent eggs together, laughingly
Would hint at worse in either. Her own son
Was silent, tho' he often look'd his wish:
But evermore the daughter prest upon her
To wed the man so dear to all of them;
And lift the household out of poverty;
And Philip's rose face contracting grew
Careworn and wan; and all these things fell on her
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
That Annie could not sleep, but earnestly
Pray'd for a sign, "my Enoch, is he gone?"
Then compass'd round by the blind wall of night
Brook'd not the expectant terror of her heart,
Started from bed, and struck herself a light,
Then desperately seized the holy Book,
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,
Suddenly put her finger on the text:
"Under a palm-tree." That was nothing to her:
No meaning there: she closed the book and slept:
When lo! her Enoch sitting on a height,
Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun:
"He is gone," she thought, "he is happy, he is singing
 Hosanna in the highest: yonder shineth
 The Sun of Righteousness, and these be palms
 Whereof the happy people strewing cried
 Hosanna in the highest!" Here she woke,
Resolved, sent for him and said wildly to him,
"There is no reason why we should not wed."
"Then for God's sake," he answer'd, "both our sakes,
So you will wed me, let it be at once."

So these were wed and merrily rang the bells,
Merrily rang the bells and they were wed.
But never merrily beat Annie's heart.
A footstep seem'd to fall beside her path,
She knew it not whence; a whisper on her ear,
She knew not what; nor loved she to be left
Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.
What all'd her then, that ere she enter'd, often
Her hand dwelt languidly on the latch,
Fearing to enter: Philip thought he knew:
Such doubts and fears were common to her state,
Being with child: but when her child was born,
Then her new child was as herself renew'd,
Then the new mother came about her heart,
Then her good Philip was her all-in-all,
And that mysterious instinct wholly died.

And where was Enoch? Prosperously sail'd
The ship "Good Fortune," tho' at setting forth
The Biscay, roughly rigging eastward, shook
And almost overwhelm'd her, yet unvext
She slipt across the summer of the world,
Then after a long trundle about the Cape
And frequent interchange of fuel and air,
She passing thro' the summer world again,
The breath of Heaven came continually
And sent her swayed by the golden isles,
Till silent in her oriental harem.

There Enoch traded for himself, and bought
Quaint monkeys for the market of those times,
A gilded dragon, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage: at first indeed
Tho' many a fair sea-circle, day by day.
Scarcely-rocket, her full-basted figure-head
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from her bows:
They follow'd calms, and then winds variable,
Then baffling, a long course of them; and last
Storms, such as drov'd her under moonless heavens
Till hard upon the cry of "breakers" came
The crash of ruin, and the loss of all
But Enoch and two others. Half the night,
Dayo'd upon floating tackle and broken spars,
These drifted, stranding on an isle at morn
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sustenance,
Soft frugality, mighty masts and nourishing roots;
Nor save for pity it was hard to take
The helpless life so wild that it was tame.
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-gorge
They built, and thatch'd with leaves of palm, a hut,
Half hut, half native cavern. So the three,
Set in this Eden of all-peace,
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-content.
For one, the youngest, hardly more than boy,
Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and wreck,
Lay lingering out a three-years' death-in-life.
They could not leave him. After he was gone,
They found remaining for a fallen one
And Enoch's comrade, careless of himself,
Fire-hollowing in this Indian fashion, fell
Sun-stricken, and that other lived alone.
In those two deaths he read God's warning "wait."

The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns
And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven,
The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,
The lightining flash of insect and of bird,
The last of the long coulvolucres
That coil'd around the stately stems, and ran
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows
And glories of the broad belt of the world,
All these he saw; but what he fain had seen
He could not see, the kindly human face,
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd
And blossomed in the zenith, or the creep
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
As down the shore he ranged, or all day long
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail:
No man that day, but every day
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
Among the palms and ferns and precipices;
The blaze upon the waters to the east;
The blaze upon his island overhead;
The blaze upon the waters to the west;
Then the great stars that gazed themselves in
Heaven,
The hollerower-bellowing ocean, and again
The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail.

There, often as he watch'd or seem'd to watch,
So still, the golden lizard on him paused,
A phantom made of many phantoms moved
Before him haunting people, things and places, known
Far in a darkness beyond the line,
The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house,
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,
The peacock-yewtree and the lonely Hall,
The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill
Snow upon the smooth and dew-glistening downs,
The gentle shower, the smell of dying leaves,
And the low moon of leaden-colord seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears,
That fainely, merrily—and far away—
He heard the pealing of his parish bells:
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started up
Shuddering, and when the beamous haleful isle
Retourn'd upon him, had not his poor heart
Spoken with That, which being everywhere
Lests none, who speaks with him, seen all alone,
Sarely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering head
The sunny and rainy seasons came and went
Year after year. His hopes to see his own,
And pace the sacred old familiar fields,
Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely doom
Came suddenly to an end. Another ship
(She manned away) blown by baying winds
Like the Good Fortune, from her destined course,
Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where she lay;
For since the mate had seen at early dawn
Across a break on the mist-wreathed isle
The bent water slop, his longing for a land,
They sent a crew that lodging burst away
In search of stream or fount, and fill'd the shores
With clamor. Downward from his mountain gorge
Slopt the long-haired long-bearded solitary,
Brown, looking hardly human, strangely clad,
Muttering and mumbling, idiotlike it seem'd,
With harriculate rage, and making signs;
They knew not what: and yet he led the way
To where the rivulets of sweet water ran;
And even as he mingled with the crew,
And hand them talking, his long-bounden tongue
Was loosed, till he made them understand;
Whom, when their casks were fill'd they took aboard,
And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,
Scarce credited at first but more and more,
Amazed and mellow all who listen'd to it:
And none that they gave him and free passage home:
But oft he work'd among the rest and shook
His isolation from him. None of these
Came from his county, or could answer him,
If question'd, of what he cared to know.
And dull the voyage was with long delays,
The vessel scarce sea-worthy: but evermore
His fancy fled before the lazy wind
Returning, till beneath a clouded moon
He like a lover down thro' all his blood
Drank of the dewy moonlight mourning
Of England, blown across her ghostly wall:
And that same morning officers and men
Leved a kindly tax upon themselves,
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him it:
Then moving up the coast they landed him,
Ev'n in that harbor whence he said before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any one,
But homeward,—house,—what home? had he a home?
His brother walk'd. Bright was the afternoon,
Sunny but chill; till drawn thro' either chasm,
Which either haven open'd on the deeps,
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world in gray:
Cut off the length of highway on before,
And left but narrow breadth to left and right
Of wither'd holt or t比起 or pasture,
On the nigh-naked tree the Robin piped
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping haze
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore it down,
Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the gloom;
Last as it seem'd, a great mist-lit dropt light
Flied on him, and he came upon the place.

Then down the long street having slowly stolen,
His heart foreshadowing all calamity,
His bones he walk'd. Bright was the afternoon,
Upon the same few houses, he return'd to the home
Where Annie lived and loved him, and his babes
In those far-off seven happy years were born;
But finding neither light nor murmur there
(A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the drizzle) crapt
Still downward thinking "dead—or dead to me!"

Down to the pool and narrow wharf he went,
Seeking a tavern which of old he knew,
A front of timber-crest antiquity,
So neat, worm-cast, ruinsly old.
He thought it must have gone; but he was gone
Who kept it: and his widow, Miriam Lane,
With daily-dwindling profits held the house;
A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now
Stillfer, with yet a bed for wandering men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and garrulous,
Nor let him be, but often breaking in,
Told him, with other annals of the port,
Not knowing—Enoch was so brown, so bow'd,
So broken—all the story of his house.
His baby's death, her growing poverty,
How Philip put her little ones to school,
And lent them in it, his loose garments,
Her slow consent, and marriage, and the birth
Of Philip's child: and o'er his countenance
ENOCH ARDEN.

No shadow past, nor motion; any one, regarding, well had deemed he felt the tale

Less than the teller: only when she closed,

"Enoch, poor man, was cast away and lost," he, shaking his gray head pathetically.

Repeated musing "Cast away and lost!"

Again in deeper inward whispers "Lost!"

But Enoch yearned to see her face again;

"If I might look on her sweet face again

And know that she is happy." So the thought

Haunted and harassed him, and drove him forth

At evening when the dull November day

Was growing duller twilight, to the hill.

There he sat down gazing at all below;

There did a thousand memories roll upon him, Unspeakable for sadness. By and by

The ruddy square of comfortable light,

Far-bloazing from the rear of Philip's house, Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures

The bird of passage, till he madly strikes

Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the street,

The latest house to landward; but behind,

With one small gate that opened on the waste, Flourish'd a little garden square and wall'd:

And in it throwed an ancient evergreen,

A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk Of shingle, and a walk divided it:

But Enoch shun'd the middle walk and stole Up by the wall, behind the yew; and thence

That which he better might have shun'd, if griefs

Like his have worse or better, Enoch saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd board

Sparkled and shone; so gentle was the heart;

And on the right hand of the hearth he saw

Philip, the slighted suitor of old times, Scott, rosy, with his babe across his knees;

And o'er her second father stoop'd a girl, A later but a lovelier Annie Lee,

Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lifted hand

Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring

To tempt the babe, who rear'd his crooked arms,

Caught at and ever mis'd it, and they laugh'd:

And on the left hand of the hearth he saw

The mother glancing often toward her babe,

But turning now and then to speak with him, Her son, who stood beside her tall and strong,

And saying that which pleased him; for he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life beheld

His wife his wife no more, and saw the babe

Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee,

And all the warmth, the peace, the happiness,

And his own children tall and beautiful,

And him, that other, reigning in his place,

Lord of his rights and of his children's love—

The boy, the boy, Miriam Laine had told him all

Because things seen are mightier than things heard, Stagger'd and shook, holding the branch, and fear'd

To send abroad a shrill and terrible cry,

Which in one moment, like the blast of doom,

Would shatter all the happiness of the heart.

He therefore turning softly like a thief,

Lost the harsh shingle should grate underfoot,

And feeling all along the garden-wall,

Lost the soft shrill swown and tumbling beat, and found Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and closed, As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,

Behind him, and came out upon the waste.

And there he would have knelt, but that his knees

Were feeble, so that falling prone he dier

His fingers into the wet earth, and pray'd, "Too hard to bear! why did they take me thence?

O God Almighty, blessed Saviour, Thou

That didst uphold me on my lonely isle,

Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness A little longer! aid me, give me strength Not to tell her, never, never, to tell her Help me not to break in upon her peace.

My children too! must I not speak to these?

They know me not. I should betray myself. Never! no father's kiss for me,—the girl

So like her mother, and the boy, my son.

There speech and thought and nature fall'd a little,

And he lay tranced: but when he rose and paced back toward his solitary home again,

All down the long and narrow street he went

Beating it in upon his weary brain,

As tho' it were the barthen of a song,

"Not to tell her, never, to let her know.

He was not all unhappy. His resolve

Upbore him, and firm faith, and evermore

Prayer from a living source within the will,

And beating up thro' all the bitter world, Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,

Kpt him, a living soul. "The mildness, the wife," He said to Miriam, "that you told me of,

Has she no fear that her first husband lives?"

"Ay, ay, poor soul," said Miriam, "fear not!\n
If you could tell her you had seen him dead,

Why, that would be her comfort," and he thought,

"After the Lord has call'd me she shall know,

I wait His time," and Enoch set himself,

Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.

Almost to all things could he turn his hand, Cooper he was and carpenter, and brought

To make the boatsmen fishing-nets, or help'd

At lading and unlading the tall barks,

That brought the stinted commerce of those days:

Thus earn'd a scarity living for himself:

Yet since he did but labor for himself,

Work without hope, there was not life in it

Whereby the man could live; and as the year

Rol'd itself round again to meet the day

When Enoch had return'd, a languor came

Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually

Weakening the man, till he could do no more,

But kept the house, his chair, and last his bed.

And Enoch bore his weakness cheerfully.

For sure no gladlier does the stranded wreck

See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting squall

The boat that bears the hope of life approach

To save the life despair'd of, than he saw

Death dawning on him, and the close of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindlier hope

On Enoch thinking, "After I am gone,

Then may she learn I loved her to the last."

He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said;

"Woman, I have a secret—only swear,

Before I tell you,—swear upon the book

Not to reveal it, till you see me dead.

"Dead," clamor'd the good woman, "hear him talk! I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round."

"Swear," added Enoch sternly, "on the book."

And on the book, half-frightened, Miriam swore.

Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon her,

"Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?"

"Know him?" she said, "I knew him far away.

Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street:

He'd been so high, and so cared for no man, be.

Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her;

"His head is low, and no man cares for him. I think I have not three days more to live; I am the man." At which the woman gave

A half-incredible, half-hysterical cry.

"You Arden, you! nay,—sure he was a foot Higher than you be." Enoch said again,
"My God has bow'd me down to what I am; 
My grief and solitude have broken me;
Nevertheless, know you that I am he
Who married—but that name has twice been
changed—
I married her who married Philip Ray.
Sit, listen." Then he told her of his voyage,
His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,
His gazng in on Annie, his resolve,
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,
Fast dow'd the current of her easy tears,
While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly
To rush abroad all round the little haven,
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes;
But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,
Saying only, "See your bairns before you go!
Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden," and arose
Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung
A moment on her words, but then replied:

"Woman, disturb me not now at the last,
But let me hold my purpose till I die.
Sit down again; mark me and understand,
While I have power to speak. I charge you now,
When you shall see her, tell her that I died
Blessing her, praying for her, loving her;
Save for the bar between us, loving her
As when she laid her head beside my own.
And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw
So like her mother, that my lastest breath
Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.
And tell my son that I died blessing him.
And say to Philip that I blost him too;

He never meant us anything but good.
But if my children care to see me dead,
Who hardly knew me living, let them come,
I am their father; but she must not come,
For my dead face would vex her after-life.
And now there is but one of all my blood,
Who will embrace me in the world-to-be:
This hair is his: she cut it off and gave it,
And I have borne it with me all these years,
And thought to bear it with me to my grave:
But now my mind is changed, for I shall see him,
My babe in bliss: wherefore when I am gone,
Take, give her this, for it may comfort her;
It will moreover be a token to her
That I am he."

He ceased; and Miriam Lane
Made such a voluble answer promising all,
That once again he roll'd his eyes upon her
Repeating all he wish'd, and once again
She promised.

Then the third night after this,
While Enoch slumber'd motionless and pale,
And Miriam watch'd and dozed at intervals,
There came so loud a calling of the sea,
That all the houses in the haven rang.
He woke, he rose, he spread his arms abroad
Crying with a loud voice "A sail! a sail!
I am saved!" and so fell back and spoke no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away,
And when they buried him the little port
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.
ADDITONAL POEMS.

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

Dear are our frames; and, gilded dust, our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and sound;
Like that long-buried body of the king,
Found lying with his arms and ornaments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Slipt into ashes and was found no more.

Here is a story which in rougher shape
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I saw
Sunning himself in a waste field alone—
Old, and a mine of memories—who had served,
Long since, a bygone Rector of the place,
And been himself a part of what he told.

SIR AYLMER AYLMER, that almighty man,
The county God—in whose capacious hall,
Hung with a hundred shields, the family tree
Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate king—
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock’d the spire.
Stood from his walls and wing’d his entry-gates
And swung besides on many a windy sign—
Whose eyes from under a pyramidal head
Saw from his windows nothing save his own—
What lovelier of his own had he than her,
His only child, his Edith, whom he loved
As heeress and not heir regretfully
But "he that marries her marries her name"
This flat somewhat soothed himself and wife,
His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,
Insipid as the queen upon a card;
Her all of thought and bearing hardly more
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled corn,
Little about it stirring save a brook!
A sleepy land where under the same wheel
The same old rut would deepen year by year;
Where almost all the village had one name;
Where Aylmer follow’d Aylmer at the Hall
And Averill Averill at the Rectory
Thrice over: so that Rectory and Hall,
Bound in an immemorial intimacy,
Were open to each other: tho’ to dream
That Love could bind them closer well had made
The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up
With horror, worse than had he heard his priest
Preach an inverted scripture, sons of men
Daughters of God: so sleepy was the land.

And might not Averill, had he will’d it so,
Somewhere beneath his own low range of roofs,
Have also set his many-shielded tree?
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage once,
When the red rose was redder than itself,
And York’s white rose as red as Lancaster’s,
With wounded peace which each had prick’d to death.

"Not proven," Averill said, or laughingly,
"Some other race of Averills"—proven or no,
What cared he? what, if other or the same?
He lean’d not on his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living off

With Averill, and a year or two before,
Call’d to the bar, but ever call’d away
By one low voice to one dear neighborhood.
Would often, in his walks with Edith, claim
A distant kinship to the gracious blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing him.

Sanguine he was: a but less vivid hue
Than of that islet in the chestnut-bloom
Flamed in his cheek: and eager eyes, that still
Took joyful note of all things joyful, beam’d
Beneath a manelike mass of rolling gold,
Their best and brightest, when they dwelt on hers,
Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect else,
But subject to the season or the mood,
Shone like a mystic star between the less
And greater glory varying to and fro,
We know not wherefore: bonnестly made,
And yet so finely, that a troublesome touch
Thun’d, or would seem to thin her in a day,
A joyous to dilute, as toward the light.
And these had been together from the first.
Leolin’s first nurse was, five years after, here:
So much the boy foreran; but when his date
Doubled her own, for want of playmates, he
(Since Averill was a decade and a half
His elder, and their parents underground)
Had toast his ball and down his kite, and roll’d
His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her dipt
Against the rush of the air in the prone swing,
Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, arranged
Her garden, sow’d her name and kept it green
In living letters, told her fairy-tales,
Show’d her the fairy footings on the grass,
The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,
The petty marestail forest, fairy pines,
Or from the tiny pitted target blew
What look’d a flight of fairy arrows aim’d
All at one mark, all hitting: make-believes
For Edith and himself: or else he forged,
But that was later, boyish histories
Of battle, bold adventare, dungeon, wreck,
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and true love
Crown’d after trial: sketches rude and faint,
But where a passion yet unborn perhaps
Lay hidden as the music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale.
And thus together, save for college-times
Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
As ever painter painted, poet sang,
Or Heavn in lavish bounty moulded, grew.
And more and more, the maiden woman-grown,
He wasted hours with Averill: there, when first
The tented winter-field was broken up
Into that phalanx of the summer spears
That soon should wear the garland: there again
When burn and vine were gather’d; lastly there
At Christmas: ever welcome at the Hall,
On whose dull sameness his full tide of youth
Broke with a phosphorescence cheering even
My lady; and the Baronet yet had lain.
No har between them: dull and self-involved,
Tall and erect, but bending from his height
With half-allowing smiles for all the world,
And mighty courteous in the main—his pride.
Lay deeper than to wear it as his ring—
He, like an Aylmer in his Ayleirmian,
Would care more for Leolin's walking with her
Than his old Newfoundland, when they ran
to lose him at the stables, for he rose
Two-footed at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make a third: and how should Love,
Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-net eyes
Flash into derry lie from nothing, follow
Such dear familiarities of dawn?
Seldom, but when he does, Master of all.

So these young hearts not knowing that they loved,
Not she at least, nor conscious of a bar,
Between them, nor by plight or broken ring
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
Wander'd at will, but oft accompanied
By Averill: his, a brother's love, that hung
With wings of brooding shelter o'er her peace,
Might have been other, save for Leolin's—
Who knows? but so they wander'd, hour by hour
Gather'd the blossom that reboomed, and drank
The magic cup that fell'd itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to herself.
For out beyond her lodges, where the brook
Vocal, with here and there a silence, ran
By sallowy rims, arose the laborers' homes,
A prudent haunt of low souls
That dimpling died into each other, hates
At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.
Her art, her hand, her counsel all had wrought
About them: here was one that, summer-blanch'd,
Was slow to blend with the traveler's-joy.
In Autumn, parcel ivy-clad: and here
The warm-blue breathings of a hidden heart
Broke from a bower of vine and honeysuckle:
One look'd all rose-tree, and another wore
A close-set robe of jasmine sound with stars:
This had a rose sky of gillyflowers
About it: this a milky-way on earth,
Like visions in the Northern dreamer's heavens,
A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;
One, almost to the martin-haunted caves
A summer burial deep in hollyhocks:
Each, its own charm; and Edith's everywhere;
And Edith ever visitant with him,
He but less loved than Edith, of her poor:
For she—a lovely-lovely and so loving;
Quaintly responsive when the lovelorn hand
Rose from the clay it work'd in as she past,
Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing by,
Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice
Of comfort and an open hand of help,
A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs
Revered as theirs, but kindlier than themselves
to affing wife or wailing infancy
Or old bedridden palsy,—was adored;
He, loved for her and for himself: a grasp
Having the warmth and muscle of the heart,
A childly way with children, and a laugh
Ringing like proven golden coinage true,
Were no false passport to that easy realm,
Where once with Leolin at her side the girl,
Nursing a child, and turning to the warmth
The tender pluck five-headed baby-soles,
Heard the good mother softly whisper "Bless,
God bless 'em: marriages are made in Heaven."

A flash of semi-jalopeny clear'd it to her,
Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
Of patron "Good! my lady's kinsman! good!"
My lady with her fingers interlock'd,
And fiery throns on silken knees,
Call'd all her vital spirits into each car
To listen: unwares they flitted off,
Busying themselves about the flowerage
That stood from out a stiff brocade in which,
The meteor of a splendid season, she,
Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago,
Stept thro' the stately minuet of those days:
But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him
Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his life:
Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye
Hated him with a momentary hate.

Whife-hunting, as the rumor ran, was he:
I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd
His oriental gifts on every one
And most on Edith: like a storm he came,
And shook the house, and like a storm he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
He how'd and cbb'd uncertain, to return
When others had been tested) there was one,
A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it
Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd itself
Fine as ice-bergs on January panes
Made by a breath. I know not whence at first,
Nor what race, the work: but he told
The story, storming a hill-fort of thieves
He got it; for their captain after fight,
His comrades having fought their last below,
Was climbing up the valley; at whom he shot:
Down from the heeded crag to which he clang
Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,
This dagger with him, which when now admired
By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,
At once the costly Sahib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,
Tost over all her presents petulantly:
And when she show'd the wealthy seabbard, saying
"Look what a lovely piece of workmanship!"
Slight was his answer "Well—I care not for it."
Then playing with the blade he prick'd his hand,
"A gracious gift to give a lady, this!"
"But would it be more gracious," ask'd the girl,
"Were I to give this gift of his to one Tha?"
"Nor to any," said he; "Gracions? she, said he.
"Me?—but I cared not for it. O pardon me,
I seem to be ungraciousness itself."
"Take it," she added sweetly, "tho' his gift; For I am more ungracious ev'n than you,
I care not for it either," and he said;
"Why then I love it;" but Sir Aylmer past,
And neither loved nor liked the thing he heard.

The next day came a neighbor, blues and reds
They talk'd of: blues were sure of it, he thought:
Then of the latest fox—where started—kill'd?
In such a bottom: "Peter had the bruhe,
My Peter, first;" and did Sir Aylmer know
That great pock-pitten fellow had been caught?
Then made his pleasure echo, hand to hand,
And rolling as it were the substance of it
Between his palms a moment up and down—
"The birds were warm, the birds were warm upon him;
We have him now!" and had Sir Aylmer heard—
Nay, but must—the land was ringing it—
This blacksmith-border marriage—one they knew—
Raw from the nursery—who could trust a child?
That cursed France with her egalities! And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially With thinking the close and lower'd accent think—
For people talk'd—that it was wholly wise
To let that handsome fellow Averell walk So freely with his daughter? people talk'd—
The boy might get a notion into him; The girl might be entangled ere she knew. Sir Aylmer slowly stiffening spoke: 
"The girl and boy, Sir, know their differences!" 
"Go, and bring his friend, "but watch!" and he "enough, More than enough, Sir! I can guard my own." They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer watch'd.

Pole, for on her the thunders of the house Had fallen first, was Edith that same night: Pole as the Jephtha's daughter, a rough piece Of early rigid color, under which Withdrawing by the counter door to that Which Leolin opened; she cast back upon him A pensive glance, and vanish'd. He, as one Caught in a burst of unexpected storm, And pelted with outrageous epithets, Turning beheld the Powers of the House On either side the heath, indignant; her, Cooling her false cheek with a feather-fan, Him glaring, by his own stake devil spur'd, And, like a beast hard-ridden, breathing hard. "Ungenerous, dishonorable, base, Presumptuous! trusted as he was with her, The sole successor to their wealth, theirs, The last remaining pillar of their house, The one transmitter of their ancient name, Their child." "Our child?" "Our heiress?" "Ours!"

Like echoes from beyond a hollow, came Her sickler iteration. Last he said "Boy, mark me! for your fortunes are to make, I swear you shall not make them out of mine. Now is the bound as you have practised on her, Perplexed her, made her half forget herself, Sverve from her duty to herself and as— Things in an Aylmer decent'm impossible, Far as we track ourselves—I say that this,— Else I withdraw favor and connexions. From you and yours forever—shall you do. Sir, when you see her—but you shall not see her— No, you shall write, and not to her, but me: And you shall say that having spoken with me, Now in bounds as you have practised on her, And Leolin's horror-stricken answer, "I 
So foul a traitor to myself and her, Never, O never," for about as long As the wind-hover hangs in balance, paused Sir Aylmer redenning from the storm within, Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and crying "Boy, should I find you by my doors again My men shall lash you from them like a dog: Hence!" with a sudden exaction drove The footstool from before him, and arose So, stammering "scoundre!" out of teeth that ground As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin still Retreated half-sagast, the fierce old man Follow'd, and under his own intel stood Storming with lifted hands, a hoary face Meet for the reverence of the heath, but now, Beneath a pale and unmansions'moon, Veit with unworthy madness, and deform'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful eye That watch'd him, till he heard the ponderous door Close, crushing with long echoes thro' the land, West Leolin; then, his passions all in flood And masters of his motion, furiously Down thro' the hot breath of his brother's ran, And foam'd away his heart at Averill's ear: Whom Averill solaced as he might, amazed: The man was his, had been his father's friend: He must have seen, himself had seen it long; He must have known, himself had known: besides, He never yet had set his daughter forth Here in the woman-markets of the west, Where our Causerians let themselves hold. Some one, he thought, had slander'd Leolin to him. "Brother, for I have loved you more as son Than brother, let me tell you: I myself— What is their pretty saying? jilted, is it? Jilted I was: I say it for your peace, Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the shame The woman should have borne, humiliated, I've lived for years a stunted useless life; Till after our good parents past away Watching with growth, I seem'd to must again grow. Leolin, I almost sin in envying you: The very whitest lamb in all my fold Loves you: I know her: the worst thought she has Is whiter even than her pretty hand. She must prove true: for brother, where two fight The strongest wins, and truth and love are strength, And you are happy: let her parents be."

But Leolin cried out the more upon them— "Insolent, brassnose, heartless! heiress, wealth, Their wealth, their heiress! wealth enough was theirs For twenty matches. Were he lord of this, Why twenty boys and girls should marry on it, And forty blest ones bless him, and himself Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He believed This filthy marriage-bidding Mammon made The harlot of the cities; nature crost Was mother of the foul adulteries That saturate soul with body. Name, too! name, Their ancient name! they sought the crown; its worth Was being Edith's. Ah how pale she had look'd Darling, to-night! they must have rated her Beyond all tolerance. These old phcenant-lords, These partridge-breeders of a thousand years, Who had mildew'd in their thousands, doing nothing Since Egbert—why, the greater their disgrace! Fall back upon a name! rest, rot in that! Not keep it noble, make it nobler! fools, With such a vantage-ground for nobleness. He had known a man, a quintessence of man, The life of all—who madly loved—and he, Thwarted by one of those old father-fools, Had rioted his life out, and made an end. He would not do it! her sweet face and faith Held him back from that; but he had powers, he knew it: Back would he to his studies, make a name, Name, fortune too: the world should ring of him To shame these mouldy Aylmers in their graves: Chancellor, or what is greatest would he be— "O brother, I am griefed to learn your grief— Give me your fling, and let me say my say." At which, like one that sees his own excess, And easily forgives it as his own, Laught'd; and then was mate: but presently West like a storm: and honest Averill seeing How low his brother's mood had fallen, fetched His richest beaswing from a bin reserved For banquets, praised the waning red; and told The vintage—when this Aylmer came of age— Then drank and past it: till at length the two, Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again, agreed That much allowance must be made for men. After an angry dream this kindlier glow Faded with morning, but his purpose hold. Yet once by night again the lovers met, A perils meeting under the tall pines That dark'en'd all the northward of her Hall. Him, to her book and modest host best. In agony, she promised that no force, Persuasion, no, nor death could alter her: He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
Labor for his own Edith, and return
In such a sunlight of prosperity
He should not be rejected. "Write to me:
They loved me, and because I loved their child
They hate me: there is war between us, dear,
Which breaks all bonds but ours: we must remain
Sacred to one another," So they talk’d,
Poor children, for their comfort: the wind blew;
The rain of heaven, and their own bitter tears,
Tears, and the careness of heaven, mixt
Upon their faces, as they kiss’d each other
In darkness, and above them roar’d the pine.

So Leolin went; and we task ourselves
To learn a language known but smattering
In phrases here and there at random, till’d
Mastering the lawless science of our law,
That codeless myriad of procedent,
That wilderness of single instances,
Thro’ which a few, by wit or fortune led,
May beat a pathway out to wealth and fame.
The jests, that flash’d about the pleader’s room,
Lightning of the hour, the pun, the scurrilous tale,—
Old scandals buried now seven decades deep
In other scandals that have lived and died,
And left the living scandal that shall die—
Were dead to him already; bent as he was
To make disproof of scorn, and strong in hopes,
And prodigal of all brain-labor he,
Child of spleen and exile and exile,
Except what on a breathing-while at eve
Some niggard fraction of an hour he ran
Beside the river-bank: and then indeed
Harder the times were, and the hands of power
Were more according to the hearts of men.
Seem’d harder too; but the soft river-breeze,
Which fan’d the gardens of that rival rose
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
His former talks with Edith, on him breathed
Far purerlier in his rushings to and fro.
After his books, to flush his blood with air,
Then to his books again. My lady’s cousin,
Half-sickening of his pensioned afternoon,
Drove in upon the the student once or twice,
Ran a Malayian muck against the times,
Had golden hopes for France and all mankind,
Answer’d all queries touching those at home
With a heaved shoulder and a saucy smile,
And fain had hailed him out into the world,
And air’d him there: his nearer friend would say,
"No, not yet: be too sharply heart snap.
Then left alone he pluck’d her dagger forth
From where his worldless heart had kept it warm,
Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
And wrinkled benders often talk’d of him
Approbingly, and prophesied his rise:
For heart, I think, help’d head: her letters too,
Tho’ far between, and coming fitfully
Like broken music, written as she found
Or made occasion, being strictly watch’d,
Charm’d him thro’ every labyrinth till he saw
An end, a hope, a light breaking upon him.

But they that cast her spirit into flesh,
Her worldly-wise begetters, pledged themselves
To sell her, those good parents, for her gold.
Whatever eldest-born of rank or wealth
Might lie within their compass, him they lured
Into their net made pleasant by the bys
Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
So sought by month their noise about their doors,
And distant blaze of those dull hawngnels, made
The nightly wrier of their innocent hare
Paler before he took it. All in vain.
Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return’d Leolin
Rejected rivals from their front.
So often, that the folly taking wings
Slip’t o’er those lazy limits down the wind

With rumor, and became in other fields
A mockery to the yeomen over aile.
And laughter to their lords: but those at home,
As still around a haunted creature drew
The cordon close and closer toward the death,
Narrow’d her going out and coming in;
Forsbade her first the house of Averill,
Theu closed her access to the wealthier farms,
Lost from her own home-circle of the poor
They barred her: yet she bore it; yet her check
Kept color: wondrous! but, O mystery!
What amulet drew her down to that old oak,
So old, that twenty years before, a part
Failing had let appear the brand of John—
Once grevelle, now huge arm a tree, but now
The broken base of a black tower, a cave
Of touchwood, with a single florishing spray.
There the marialord lord too curiously
Raking in that millennial touchwood-dust
Pound for himself a bitter treasure-trove;
Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and read
Writhing a letter from his child, for which

came at the moment Leolin’s emissary,
A crippled lad, and coming turn’d to fly,
But seeded with threats of jail as Walter gave
To him that fluster’d his poor parish wits.
The letter which he brought, and swore besides
To play their go-between as heretofore
Nor let them know themselves betray’d, and then
Somi-stricken at their kindness to him, went
Hating his own lean heart and miserable.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot dream
Panting he woke, and oft as early as dawn
Around the black remembrance on his eyes,
Swep’t into the frenzy from the rescue, brush’d
Thro’ the dim meadow toward his treasure-trove,
Seized it, took home, and to my lady, who made
A downward crescent of her mimmon mouth,
Listless in all dependance, read: and tore,
As if the living passion symbol’d there
Were living nerves to feel the rent; and burst,
Now chafing at his own great self deft,
Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks of scorn
In babylimes, and dear diminutives
Sent’ed all over the vocabulary
Of such a love as like a childen bube,
After much walling, hush’d herself at last.
Hopeless of answer: then tho’ Averill wrote
And bade him with good heart sustain himself—
All would be well—the lower held his heart.

But passionately restless came and went,
And rustling once at night about the place,
There by a keeper shot at, slightly hurt,
Raging return’d: nor was it well for her
To keep the garden now, and grove of pines,
Watch’d even there: and one was set to watch
The watcheer, and Sir Ayler watch’d them all,
Yet bitterer from his readings: once indeed,
Warm’d with his wines, or taking pride in her
She kis’d so sweet, he kiss’d her tenderly.
Not knowing what possess’d him: that one kiss
Was Leolin’s one strong rival upon earth:
Seconded, for my lady follow’d suit,
Seem’d hope’s returning rose: and then ensued
A Martin’s summer of his faded love,
Or ordeal by kindness: after this
He seldom cross his child without a sneer:
The mother flow’d in shallower acroimones:
Never one kindly smile, one kindly word:
So that the gentle creature shut from all
Her charitable use, and face to face
With twenty months of silence, slowly lost
Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on life.
Last, some low fever ranging round to sly
The kindlosness of rich, or poor, or mean,
Like flies that haunt a woon, or deer, or men,
Or almost all that is, andart the hurt—
Save Christ as we believe him—found the girl
And flung her down upon a couch of fire,
Where careless of the household faces near,
And crying upon the name of Leolin,
She, and with her the race of Aylmer, past.

Star to star vibrates light: may soul to soul
Strike thro' a finer element of her own?
So,—from afar,—touch at once or why
That night, that moment, when she named his name,
Livid the keen shrill, "Edith, yes,"—
Shriil, till the commerce of his chambers woke,
And came upon him half-arisen from sleep,
With a weird bright eye, sweating and trembling,
His hair as it were crackling into flames,
His body half flung forward in pursuit.
And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp a flyer:
Nor knew he wherefore he had made the cry:
And being much befoul'd and idol'd
By the rough amity of the other, sank
As into sleep again. The second day,
My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,
A breaker of the bitter news from home,
Found a dead man, a letter edge'd with death
Beside him, and the dagger which himself
Gave to the harrow'd brother, praying him
To speak before the people of her child,
And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that day rose:
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded woods
Was all the life of it; for hard on these,
A breathless barmon of low-folded heavens
Stifted and child'd at once: but every roof
Sent out a listener: many too had known
Edith among the hamlets round, and since
The parents' harshness and the hapless loves
And double death were wideness mar'd,
Left their own gray tower, or plain-faced tabernacle.
To hear him; all in mourning those, and those
With blo's of it about them, ribbon, glove
Or kerchief; while the church,—one night,
Except for Spanish glimmerings the fire
Made stiller the pale head of him, who tower'd
Above them, with his hopes in either grave.

Long over his bent brows linger'd Aylmer,
His face magnetic to the hand from which
Livid he plac'd it forth, and labor'd thro'—
His brief prayer-pronelude, gave the verse
"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!
"But lapsed into so long a pause again
As half amazed, half frighten'd all his flock:
There, in his height and benumbing grief
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his angry heart
Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our earth became one sea,
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the proud,
And all but those who knew the living God
Eight that were left to make a saved world—
Since when had flood, fire, earthquake, thunder,
Wrought
Such waste and havoc as the industries,
Which from the low light of morrow
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven of Heavens,
And worship in their own darkness as the Highest?
"Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy brute Baal,
And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself.
For with thy worst self hast thou clothed thy God."
Then came a Lord in no wise like to Baal.
The babe shall lead the lion. Surely now
The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.

Crown them, crown them, thine own lusts!—
No coarse and blockish God of acreage
Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel to—
Thy God is far diffused in noble groves
And princely halls, and farms, and flowing lawns,
And heaps of living gold that daily grow,
And title-scrolls and gorgeous heraldries,
In such a shape dost thou behold thy God.
Thon wilt not gash thy flesh for him; for thine
Fires richly, in fine linen, not a hair
Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while
The deathless ruler of thy dying house
Is wounded to the death that cannot die;
And thou'rt numberest with the followers
Of One who cried "Leave all and follow me."
Thee therefore with His light about thy feet,
Thee with His message ringing in thine ears,
Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord from Heaven,
Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
Wonderful, Prince of peace, the Mighty God,
Count the more base ideal of the two;
Cruseler: as not passing thro' the fire
Bodies, but souls—thy children's—thro' the smoke,
The blight of low desires—lacerating thine own
To thine own likeness: or if one of these,
Thy better born unhappily from thee,
Should, as by miracle, grow straight and fair—
Friends, I was bid to speak of such a one
By those who most have cause to sorrow for—
Father than Rachel by the palmy well,
Father than Ruth among the fields of corn,
Fair as the Angel that said "half!" she seem'd.
Who entering fill'd the house with sudden light.
For so mine own was brightness'd: where indeed
The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven
Daw'd sometimes thro' the doorway? whose face
The babe
Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,
Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of shame,
The common care whom no one car'd for, long
To great her, wasting his forgetten time,
As with the mother he had never known,
In gambols; for her fresh and innocent eyes
Had such a star of morning in their blue,
That all neglected places of the field
Broke into nature's music as they saw her,
Low was her voice, but won mystery's way
Thro' the seal'd ear, to which a louder one
Was all but silence—free of alms her hand—
The hand that robed your cottage-walls with flowers
Has often told to clothe your little ones;
How often placed upon the sick man's brow
Cool'd it, or laid her feverous pillow smooth!
Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?
One barmon and she would not lighten it?
One spirit's doubt she did not soothe?
Or when some heat of differences sparkled out,
How sweetly would she glide between your wrathes,
And steal you from each other! for she walk'd
Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love,
Who still'd the rolling wave of Grief?
And one—of him I was not bid to speak—
Was always with her, whom you also knew.
Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.
And these had been together from the first:
They might have been together still the last.
Friends, this frail bark of ours, when sorely tried,
May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,
Without the captain's knowledge—hope with me.
Whose shame is that, if he went hence with shame?
Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these
I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls,
"My house is left unto me desolate."
While thus he spoke, his hearers wept; but some, Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than those That knit themselves for summer shadow, scowled At their despair. He, when it was over, saw No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but fork'd Of the near storm, and aiming at his head, Sat anger-char'd from sorrow, soldier-like, Erect; but when the preacher's cadence flow'd Softening thro' all the gentle attributes Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd his face, Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth; And, "O pray God that he hold up," she thought, "Or surely I shall shame myself and him."

"Nor yours the blame—for who beside your hearths Can take her place—if echoing me you cry 'Our house is left unto us desolate'? But thou, O thou that killest, hardest thou known, O thou that stonest, hardest thou understood The things belonging to thy peace and ours! Is there no prophet but the voice that calls Doom upon kings, or in the waste ' Repent!?' Is not our own child on the narrow way, Who down to those that samter in the broad Cries 'Come up hither,' as a prophet to us? Is there no stoning save with stilt and rock? Yes, as the dead we weep for testify— No desolation but by sword and fire. Yes, your morning's witness, and myself Am lonelier, darker, eartheir for my loss. Give me your prayers, for he is past your prayers, Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven. But I that thought myself long-suffering, meek, Because so poor in spirit—how hadst thou words Have twisted back upon themselves and mean Vileness, we are grown so proud—I wish'd my voice A rushing tempest of the wrath of God To blow those sacrifices thro' the world— Sent like the two-edged sword of God To inflame the tribes; but there—on yonder—earth Lightens from her own central Hell—O there The red fruit of an old idolatry— The heads of chiefs and princes fall so fast, They cling together in the ghastly sack— The land all shambles—naked marriages Flash from the bridge, and ever-murder'd France, By shores that darken with the gathering wolf, Runs in a river of blood to the sick sea. Is this a time to madness madness then? When this a time for these to dabble their pride? May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as dense as those Which hid the Holiest from the people's eyes Ere the great death, shroud this great sin from all: Doubles our narrow world must canvass it; O rather pray for those and pity them Who thro' their own desire accomplish'd bring Their own gray hairs with sorrow to the grave— Who broke the bond which they desired to break— Which else had link'd their race with times to come—

Who wove coarse webs to snare her purity, Grossly contriving their dear daughter's good— Poor souls, and knew not what they did, but, sat Ignorant, devising their own daughter's death May not that earthily chastisement suffice? Have not our love and reverence left them bare? Will not another take their heritage? Will there be children's laughter in their hall Forever and forever, or one stone Left on the edge, or is it a light thing That I their guest, their host, their ancient friend, I made by these the last of all my race Must cry to these the last of theirs, as cried Christ ere His agony to those that swore Not by the temple but the gold, and made Their own traditions God, and slew the Lord, And left their memories a world's curse—Behold, Your house is left unto you desolate!"

Ended he had not, but she brook'd no more: Long since her heart had beat remorselessly, Her cramp-up sorrow pain'd her, and a sense Of mediousness in her distressing life Then their eyes vex her; for on entering He had cast the curtains of their seat aside— Black velvet of the costliest—she herself Had seen to that; fain had she closed them now, Yet dared not stir to do it, only neard Her husband inch by inch, but when she laid, Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he yield'd His face with the other, and at once, as falls A creeper when the prop is broken, fell The man shrieking at his feet, and awood. Then her own people bore along the nave Her pendant hands, and narrow meagre face Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty years: And her the Lord of all the landscape round Ev'n to his last horizon, and of all Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd out Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle Reel'd, as a footeare ox in crowded ways Stumbling among the market to his death, Unpitied; for he grooped as blind, and seem'd Always about to fall, grasping the pews And oaken finials till he touch'd the door; Yet to the lyghate, where his chariot stood, Strode from the porch, tall and erect again.

But nevermore did either pass the gate
Save under pall with bearers. In one month, Thro' weary and yet ever wearier hours, The childless mother went to seek her child; And when she felt the silence of his house About him, and the change and not the change, And those fixt eyes of painted ancestors Staring forever from their glided walls On him their last descendant, his own head Bowed droop, to fall; the man, the man, Imbecile: his one word was "desolate;"

Dead for two years before his death was he: But when the second Christmas came, escaped His keepers, and the silence which he felt, To find a deeper in the narrow gloom By wife and child; nor wanted at his end The dark retinae reverencing death At golden thresholds; nor from tender hearts, And those who sorrow'd o'er a vanish'd race, Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave. Thence the great Hall was wholly broken down, And the broad woodland parcelld into farms; And where the two contrived their daughter's good, Lies the hawk's cast, the mode has made his run, The hedgehog underneath the plain in boxes, The rabbit famishes his own harmless face, The slow-worm creeps, and the thin weasel there Follows the mouse, and all is open field.

SEA DREAMS.

A curi clerk, but gently born and bred; His wife, an unknown artist's orphan child— One bade was thetsra, a Margaret, three years old; They, thinking that her clear germamter eye Droopt in the giant-factoried city-gloom, Came, with a month's leave given them, to the sea; For which his gains were dock'd, however small; Nowward his trade, and his hard work; besides, Their slender household fortunes (for the man Had risk'd but his little) like the little thirt, Trembled in perilous places o'er a deep; And oft, when sitting all alone, his face Would darken, as he burst his credulousness, And that one muncious month which lured him, rogue, To buy strange shares in some Peruvian mine.

Now seaward-bound for health they gaid'd a coast,
All sand and cliff and deep-lurining cave, At close of day; slept, woke, and went the next, The Sabbath, pious variers from the church, To chapel; where a heated pulpiteer, Not preaching simple Christ to simple men, Announced the coming doom, and fulminated Against the scarlet woman and her creed: For sideways up he swung his arms, and shriek'd, \"Thus, thus with violence,\" ev'n as if he held The Apocalypse millstone, and himself \nWore that great Angel: \"thus with violence Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;\nThen comes the close.\" The gentle-hearted wife \nSat shuddering at the ruin of a world; \nHe at his own: but when the wordy form \nHad ended, forth they came and paced the shore, \nRan in and out the long sea-framing caves, Drank the large air, and saw, but scarce believed (The soothsake of so many a summer still \nClung to their fancies) that they saw, the sea. \nSo now on sand they walk'd, and now on cliff, \nLinger ing about the thorny promontories, \nTill all the salls were darken'd in the west, \nAnd rosed in the east: then homeward and to bed: Where she, who kept a tender Christian hope \nHaunting a holy text, and still to that \nReturning, as the bird returns, at night, \n\"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,\" Said, \"Love, forgive him!\" but he did not speak; \nAnd selected by that silence lay the wife, \nRemembering her dear Lord who died for all, \nAnd musing on the little lives of men; \nAnd bow they mar this little by their feuds. \n
But while the two were sleeping, a full tide \nRose with ground-ewell, which, on the foremost rocks \nTouching, upjetted in spots of wild sea-smoke, \nAnd scaled in sheets of wasteful foam, and fell \nIn vast sea-cataract—ever and anon \nDead claps of thunder from within the cliffs, \nHeard thro' the living roar. At this the babe, \nTheir Margaret cradled near them, wail'd and woe \nThe mother, and the father suddenly cried, \n\"A wreck, a wreck!\" then turn'd, and groaning said \n\"Forgive! How many will say \'forgive,\' and find \nA sort of absolution in the sound \nTo hate a little longer! No; the sin \nThat neither God nor man can well forgive, \nHypocrisy, I saw it in him at once. \nIs it so true that truths are best? \nNot first, and third, which are a riper first? \nToo ripe, too late! they come too late for use. \nAh love, there surely lives in man and beast \nSomething divine to warn them of their foes; \nAnd each a sense, when first I fronded him, \nSaid, \'Trust him not;\' but after, when I came \nTo know him more, I lost it, knew him less; \nFought with what seem'd my own meehathy; \nSat at his table; drank his costly wines; \nMade more and more allowance for his talk; \nWent further, fool! and trusted him with all, \nAll my poor scrapings from a dozen years \nOf dust and deskwork; there is no such mine, \nNone; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing gold, \nNot making. Ruin'd! ruin'd! the sea roars \nRuin: a fearful night!\". \n\"Not fearful; fair,\" \nSaid the good wife, \"if every star in heaven \nCan make it fair: you do but hear the tide. \nHad you ill dreams?\" \n\"O yes,\" he said, \"I dream'd \nOf such a tide swirling to the shore, \nAnd I from out the boundless outer deep \nSwept with it to the shore, and enter'd one \nOf those dark caves that run beneath the cliffs. \nI thought the motion of the boundless deep \nBore through the cave, and I was heaved upon it \nIn darkness: then I saw one lovely star \nLarger and larger. \"What a world,\" I thought, \\"To live in!\" but in moving on I found \nOnly the landward exit of the cave. \nBright with the sun upon the stream beyond: \nAnd near the light a giant woman sat. \nAll over earthly, like a piece of earth, \nA picture in her hand: then out I slpt \nInto a land all sun and blossom, trees \nAs high as heaven, and every bird that sings: \nAnd here the night-light flickering in my eyes \nAwoke me.\" \n\"That was then your dream,\" she said, \"Not sad, but sweet.\" \n\"So sweet, I lay,\" said he, \n\"And mused upon it, drifting up the stream \nIn fancy, till I slept again, and pleas'd \nThe broken vision; for I dream'd that still \nThe motion of the great deep bore me on, \nAnd that the woman walk'd upon the brink: \nI wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd her of it: \n\"It came,\" she said, \"by working in the mines:\nO thou to ask her of my shares, I thought; \nAnd ask'd; but not a word; she shook her head. \nAnd then the motion of the current ceased, \nAnd there was rolling thunder; and we reach'd \nA mountain, like a wall of burn and thorus; \nBut she with her strong feet up the steep hill \nTrod out a path: I follow'd; and at top \nShe pointed seaward: there a fleet of glass, \nThat seem'd a fleet of jewels under me, \nSailing along before a golden cloud \nThat not one moment ceased to thunder, past \nIn sunshine; right across its track there lay, \nDown in the water, a long reef of gold, \nOr what seem'd gold: and I was glad at first \nTo think that in our often-ransacked world \nStill so much gold was left; and then I fear'd \nLest the gay navy there should splinter on it, \nAnd fearing waved my arm to warn them off; \nAn idle signal, for the brittle fleet \n(If thought I could have died to save it) near'd, \nTouch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and vanish'd, and I \nwoke, \nI heard the clash so clearly. Now I see \nMy dream was Life; the woman honest Work; \nAnd my poor venture but a fleet of glass, \nWreck'd on a reef of visionary gold.\" \n\"Nay,\" said the kindly wife to comfort him, \n\"You raised your arm, you tumbled down and broke \nThe glass with little Margaret's medicine in it; \nAnd, breaking that, you made and broke your dream: \nA trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks.\" \n\"No trifle,\" groan'd the husband; \"yesterday \nI met him suddenly in the street, and ask'd \nThat which I ask'd the woman in my dream. \nLike her, he shook his head. \"Show me the books!\" \nHe dodged me with a long and loose account. \nThe books, the books! but he, he could not wait, \nBound on a matter he of life and death: \nWhen the great Books (see Daniel seven and ten) \nWere open'd, I should find he meant me well: \nAnd then began to blast himself, and oze \nOver with the fat affectionate smile \nThat makes the widow lean. \"My dearest friend, \nHave faith, have faith! We live by faith,\" said he; \n\"And all things work together for the good \nOf those—It makes me sick to quote him—last \nGript my hand hard, and with God-bless-you went. \nI stood like one that had received a blow: \nI found a dear friend in his loose accounts,
SEA DREAMS.

A loose one in the hard grip of his hand, 
A curse in his God-bless-you: then my eyes 
Pursued him down the street, and far away, 
Among the honest shoulders of the crowd, 
Knew rascal in the motions of his back, 
And scoundrel in the supplicating knee."

"Was he so bound, poor soul?" said the good 
wife; 
"So are we all: but do not call him, love, 
Before you prove him, rogue, and proved, forgive. 
His gain is loss; for he that wrongs his friend 
Wrongs himself more, and ever hears about 
A silent court of justice in his breast, 
Himself the judge and jury, and himself 
The prisoner at the bar, ever commemorate; 
And that drags down his life: then comes what 
comes 
Hereafter: and he meant, he said he meant, 
Perhaps he meant, or partly meant, you well."

" 'With all his conscience and one eye askew'— 

Love, let me quote these lines, that you may learn 
A man is likewise counsel for himself, 
Too often in that silent court of yours— 

With all his conscience and one eye askew, 
So false, he partly took himself for true; 
Whose plows talk, when most his heart was dry, 
Made wet the crafty crow's foot round his eye; 
Who, never naming God except for gain, 
So never took that useful name in vain; 
Made him his cat's paw and the Cross his tool, 
And Christ the bait to trap his dupe and fool; 
Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he forged, 
And snake-like sliced his victim ere he gorged; 
And left at Bible meetings, over the rest 
Arising, did his holy oil best, 
Dropping the too rough II in Hell and Heaven, 
To spread the Word by which himself had thriven. 
'How like you this old satire?"

"Nay," she said, 

"I loathe it: he had never kindly heart, 
Nor ever cared to better his own kind, 
Who first wrote satire with no pity in it. 
But will you hear my dream, for I had one 
That altogether went to music? Still 
It awed me."

Then she told it, having dream'd 
Of that same coast.

—"But round the North, a light, 
A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapor, lay, 
And ever in it a low musical note 
Swell'd up and died; and, as it swell'd, a ridge 
Of breaker issued from the belt, and still 
Grew with the growing note, and when the note 
Had reach'd a thunderous fullness on those cliffs 
Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as that 
Living within the belt) whereby she saw 
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs no more, 
But huge cathedral fronts of every age, 
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see, 
One after one: and then the great ridge drew, 
Lessening to the lessening music, back, 
And past into the belt and swell'd again 
Slowly to music: ever when it broke 
The statues, king or saint, or founder, fell; 
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin left 
Came men and women in dark clusters round, 
Some crying 'Set them up! they shall not fall!' 
And others, 'Let them lie, for they have fallen.' 
And still they strove and wrangled: and she grieved 
In her strange dream, she knew not why, to find 
Their wildest wallings never out of tune 
With that sweet note; and ever as the shrieks 
Ran highest up the gamut, that great wave 
Returning, while none mark'd it, on the crowd 
Broke, mixt with awful light, and show'd their eyes 
Glaring, and passionate looks, and swept away 
The men of flesh and blood, and men of stone, 
To the waste deeps together.

"Then I first 
My wishful eyes on two fair images, 
Both crown'd with stars and high among the stars,— 
The Virgin Mother standing with her child 
High up on one of those dark minster-fronts— 
Till she began to totter, and the child 
Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry 
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and I woke, 
And my dream awed me:—well—but what are dreams? 
Yours came but from the breaking of a glass, 
And mine but from the crying of a child."

"Child? No!" said he, "but this tide's roar, and his, 
Our Bonerges, with his threats of doom, 
And lord-lung'd AntiBabylonians 
(Altho' I grant but little music there) 
Went both to make your dream: but if there were 
A music harmonizing our wild cries, 
Sphere-music such as that you dream'd about, 
Why, that would make our passions for too like 
The discords dear to the musician. No— 
One shriek of hate would jar all the hymns of heaven: 
True Devils with no ear, they howl in tune 
With nothing but the Devil!"

" 'True! indeed! 
One of our towns, but later by an hour 
Here on our own, spoke with me on the shore: 
While you were running down the sands, and made 
The dimpled furnace of the sea-furbelow flap, 
Good man, to please the child. She brought strange news, 
Why were you silent when I spoke to-night? 
I had set my heart on your forgiving him 
Before you knew. We must forgive the dead."

"Dead! who is dead?"

"The man your eye pursued. 
A little after you had parted with him, 
He suddenly dropt dead of heart-disease."

"Dead? he? of heart-disease? what heart had he 
To die off dead?"

"Ah, dearest, if there be 
A devil in man, there is an angel too, 
And if he did that wrong you charge him with, 
His angel broke his heart. But your rough voice 
(You spoke so loud) has roused the child again. 
Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not sleep 
Without her 'little birdie?' well then, sleep, 
And I will sing you 'birdies.'"

Saying this, 
The woman half turn'd round from him she loved, 
Left him one hand, and reaching thro' the night 
Her other, found (for it was close beside) 
And half embraced the basket cradle-head 
With one soft arm, which, like the pliant bough 
That moving moves the nest and nestling, sway'd 
The cradle, while she sang this baby song.

What does little birdie say 
In her nest at peep of day? 
Let me fly, says little birdie, 
Mother, let me fly away. 
Birdie, rest a little longer, 
Till the little wings are stronger.
THE GRANDMOTHER.

I.

And Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you say, little Anne?
Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks like a man.
And Willy's wife has written: she never was over-wise,
Never the wife for Willy: he would n't take my advice.

II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to save,
If n't a head to manage, and drank himself into his grave.
Pretty enough, very pretty: but I was against it for one.
Eh I—but he would n't hear me—and Willy, you say, is gone.

III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the flock;
Never a man could sling him: for Willy stood like a rock.
"Here's a leg for a baby of a week!" says doctor: and he would be bound,
There was not his like that year in twenty parishes round.

IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but still of his tongue!
I ought to have gone before him: I wonder he went so young;
I cannot cry for him, Annie: I have not long to stay;
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far away.

V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you think I am hard and cold;
But all my children have gone before me, I am so old:
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father, my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie: it cost me a world of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and I knew right well
That Jenny had tript in her time: I knew, but I would not tell.
And she to be coming and slandering me, the base little liar!
But the tongue is a fire, as you know, my dear, the tongue is a fire.

VIII.

And the parson made it his text that week, and he said likewise,
That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies,
That a lie which is all a lie may he met and fought with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

IX.

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a week and a day;
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the middle of May.
Jenny, to slander me, who knew what Jenny had been!
But soiling another, Annie, will never make one's self clean.

X.

And I cried myself wellnigh blind, and all of an evening late
I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the road at the gate.
The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale,
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chirrupt the nightingale.
XI.
All of a sudden he stopt; there past by the gate of the farm, Willy,—he did n't see me,—and Jenny hung on his arm. Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce knew how; Ah, there's no fool like the old one—it makes me angry now.

XII.
Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing that he meant; Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking courtesy and went. And I said, "Let us part: in a hundred years it 'll all be the same, You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good name."

XIII.
And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the sweet moonshine: "Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good name is mine. And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you well or ill; But marry me out of hand: we too shall be happy still."

XIV.
'Marry you, Willy!" said I, "but I needs must speak my mind, And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard and unkind." But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms, and answer'd, "No, love, no;" Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV.
So Willy and I were wedded: I wore a lilac gown; And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the ringers a crown. But the first that ever I bare was dead before he was born, Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.

XVI.
That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of death. There lay the sweet little body that never had drawn a breath. I had not wept, little Annie, not since I had been a wife; But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had fought for his life.

XVII.
His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or pain: I look'd at the still little body—his trouble had all been in vain. For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another morn: But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

XVIII.
But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay: Kind, like a man, was he; like a man, too, would have his way: Never jealous—not he: we had many a happy year; And he died, and I could not weep—my own time seem'd so near.

XIX.
But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then could have died: I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side. And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget: But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet.

XX.
Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two, Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you; Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will, While Harry is in the six-acre and Charlie ploughing the hill.

XXI.
And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too—they sing to their team: Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream. They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed— I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

XXII.
And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them left alive; For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five; And Willy, my eldest-born, at th'gh threescore and ten; I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

XXIII.
For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve; I am often sitting at home in my father's farm at eve: And the neighbors come and laugh and gossip, and so do I; I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone by.
XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make us sad;
But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to be had;
And God, not man, is the Judge of us all when life shall cease;
And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one of Peace.

XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be free from pain,
And happy has been my life; but I would not live it again.
I seem to be tired a little, that 's all, and long for rest:
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my flower;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for an hour,—
Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to be vex?

XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she never was over-wise.
Get me my glasses, Annie: thank God that I keep my eyes.
There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have past away.
But stay with the old woman now: you cannot have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.

OLD STYLE.

I.

Where 'asta bein saw long and mea liggins ere aloin?
Nooress? thoornt nowt o' a noorse: whoy, doctor 's bein an' agoin';
Says that I moult 'a nw mor yawle; but I beant a fool:
Git ma my ydle, for I beant a-goold to break my rule.

II.

Doctors, they knawt nowt, for a says what 's nawways true:
Naw soort o' kold o' use to sacy the things that a do.
I 've 'ed my point o' yail ivy night sin' I bein 'ere,
An' I 've 'ed my quart ivy market-night for foorty year.

III.

Parson 's bein loike awise, an' a sittin 'ere o' my bed.
"Tha moighty 's a talkin o' you to 'issen, my friend," 'a said,
An' a towd ma my sins, an' a toith were due, an' I gied it in hond;
I done my duty by un, as I 'a done by the lond.

IV.

Larn'd a ma' beed. I reckons I 'annot sa mooch to larn.
But a cost oop, thoat a did, 'boot Bessy Marris's barn.
Thof a knaws I hallus voiled wi' Squore an' choorh an ststile,
An' I the woost o' tolmes I wur niver agin the raile.

V.

An' I hallus comed to 'a choorh afoor my Sally wur dead,
An' 'eerd un a bummun' awayi lolke a buzzard-clock' ower my yeald,
An' I niver knaw'd what a moind'd but I thowt a 'ad summitt to sally,
An' I thowt a said what a owt to 'a said an' I comed awayi.

VI.

Bessy Marris's barn I tha knaws she laidu it to meai.
Mowt 'a beín, mayhap, for she wur a bad un, shei.
'Siver, I kep un, I kep un, my lass, tha mun understand;
I done my duty by un as 'a done by the lond.

VII.

But Parson a comes an' a goos, an' a says it easy an' freeai,
"Tha moighty 's a talkin o' you to 'isson, my friend," says 'eai.
I weant easy men be loars, thoat summun said it in woste:
But a reids woun sarmin a week, an' I 'a stubb'd Thornaby waisete.

VIII.

D' ya moind the waisete, my lass? naw, naw, tha was not born then:
Thee war a boggle in it, I offen 'eerd un mysen;
Moist lolke a butter-bump,† for I 'eerd un aboot an aboot,
But I stubb'd un oop wi' the lot, and raised an' rembled un oot.

* Cockchafer.
† Bittern.
I.

Keaper's it war: bo' they fun un theer a laid on 'is face
Doon' the world 'enemies' afore I comed to the plaise.
Noaks or Thimbbleby—tomen 'ed shot an as deid as a maill.
Noaks war 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize—but git ma my yale.

X.

Dubbut lookik at the waiste: theer war n't not feid for a cow;
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' lookik at it now—
War n't worth nowt a haircre, an' now thee'er lots o' feid,
Fourscore yows upon it an' some on it doon in seid.

XI.

Nobbut a bit on it 's left, an' I mean'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
Done it it-a-year I mean'd, an' rum'd plow thruff it an' all,
If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let ma aloin,
Mei, wi' haiite courderd haiacre o' Squire's an' loud o' my oon.

XII.

Do godamoighty know what a 's doing a-taikin' o' mei?
I beant wunn as saws 'ero a beain an' younder a peal;
An' Squire 'll be so mad an' 'ill—a' dear o' dear!
And I 'a managed for Squire come Michaelmas thirty year.

XIII.

A mowt 'a taiken Joines, as 'ant a 'hapoth o' sease,
Or a mowt 'a taiken Robins—a niver mended a fence:
But godamoighty a noost taike mei an' taike ma now
Wf' anf the cows to cauve an' Thornaby holms to plow!

XIV.

Look 'ow quotyty smoiles when they sees ma a passin' by,
Says to thesen naw doot "what a mon a be sewer-ly!"
For they knows what I beain to Squire sin fast a comed to the 'All;
I done my duty by Squire an' I done my duty by all.

XV.

Squire 's in Lannon, an' summun I reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,
For who 's to howd the lond ater mei that muddles ma quoit;
Surrin-sewer I bea, that a weant niver give it to Joines,
Neither a moant to Robins—a niver rembles the stoains.

XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater mei mayhap wi' 's kittle o' ste'am
Hazzin' an' maizin' the blessed fulda wi' the Divil's oul team
Gin I mun doy I mun doy, an' boile they says is sweet,
But gin I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn aseen to see it.

XVII.

What atta stamin' theer for, an' doesn bring ma the yale?
Doctor 's a 'tottler, lass, and a 's ba'llins l' the owd table;
I weant breik rules for Doctor, a knows naw moor nor a fay:
Git ma my yale I tell thn, an' gin I mun doy I mun doy.

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TITHONUS.

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapors weep their burden to the ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,
And after many a summer dies the swan.
Me only cruel immortality
Consumes: I wither slowly in thine arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A while-hair'd shadow roaming like a dream
The ever silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaning halls of morn.
Alas! for this gray shadow, once a man—
So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seem'd
To his great heart none other than a God!
I ask'd thee "Give me immortality."
Then di'dst thou grant mine asking with a smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how they give.

But thy strong Hours indignant work'd their wills,
And beat me down and marred and wasted me,
And tho' they could not end me, left me maim'd
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears
To hear me? Let me go: take back thy gift:
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?

A soft air fans the cloud apart: there comes
A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.
Once more the old mysteries glimmer steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure.
And bosom beating with a heart renew'd,  
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the gloom,  
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,  
 Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team  
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,  
And shake the darkness from their loosen'd manes,  
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful  
In silence, then before thine answer given  
Departed, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,  
And make me tremble lest a saying heart  
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true?  
"The Gods themselves cannot recall their gifts."

Ay me! ay me! with what another heart  
In days far-off, and with what other eyes  
I used to watch—if I be he that watch'd—  
The incise outline forming round thee; saw  
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;  
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my blood  
Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd all  
Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,  
Month, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm  
With kisses balmy than half-opening buds!  
Of April, and could hear the lips that kiss'd  
Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,  
Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,  
While Ilia like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not forever in thine Eust  
How can my nature longer mix with thine?  
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold  
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet  
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam  
Plants up from those dim while the homes  
Of happy men that have the power to die,  
And grassy bowers of the happier dead.  
Release me, and restore me to the ground:  
Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave;  
Thou wilt renew thy beauty ere I am torn;  
I earth in earth forget these empty courts,  
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

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THE VOYAGE.

I.

We left behind the painted buoy  
That tosses at the harbor-mouth:  
And madly danced on the hearts with joy,  
As fast we flitted to the South:  
How fresh was every sight and sound  
On open main or welding shore!  
We knew the merry world was round,  
And we might sail forevermore.

II.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,  
Dry sang the lickle, sang the sail;  
The Lady's-head upon the prow  
Coughed the shrill salt, and sheer'd the gale.  
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,  
And swept behind us quick the run,  
We felt the good ship shake and reel,  
We seem'd to sail into the Sun!

III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,  
And burn the threshold of the night,  
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,  
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light!  
How oft the purple-skirted robe  
Of twilight slowly downward draws,  
As thro' the slumber of the globe  
Again we dash'd into the dawn!

IV.

New stars all night above the brim  
Of waters lighten'd into view;  
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim  
Changed every moment as we flew.  
Far ran the naked moon across  
The houseless ocean's bearing field,  
Or flying shone, the silver boss  
Of her own halbo's dusky shield;

V.

The peepik islet shifted shapes,  
High towns on hills were dimly seen,  
We past long lines of Northern capes  
And dewy Northern meadows green.  
We came to warmer waves, and deep  
Across the boundless cast we drove,  
Where those long swells of breaker sweep  
The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,  
Gloom'd the low coast and quivering brine  
With angry rains, that spreading made  
Fantastic pinace or sable pine;  
By sands and streaming dunes, and floods  
Of mitigy month, we scudded fast,  
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods  
Glowed for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy glimes,  
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark!  
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times  
With wakes of fire we tore the dark;  
At times a carven craft would shoot  
From havens hid in farry bowers,  
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,  
But we nor paused for fruits nor flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever seld  
Down the waste waters day and night,  
And still we follow'd where she led,  
In hope to gain upon her flight.  
Her face was evermore unseen,  
And swift upon the far sea-line;  
But each man marmur'd, "O my Queen,  
I follow till I make thee mine."

IX.

And now we lost her, now she glean'd  
Like Fancy made of golden air,  
Now nearer to the shore she seem'd  
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,  
Now high on waves that wildly burst  
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the sea,  
And now, the bloodless point reversed,  
She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us—him  
We pleased not—he was seldom pleased:  
He saw not far: his eyes were dim:  
But ours he swore were all diseased.  
"A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,  
"A ship of fools," he sneer'd and wept.  
And overboard one stormy night  
He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was fast'd,  
Nor anchor dropt at eye or morn;  
We loved the glories of the world;  
But laws of nature were our scorn;  
For blasts would rise and rave and cease,  
But whence were those that drove the sail  
Across the whirlwind's heart of peace;  
And to and thro' the counter-gale?
IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

All along the valley, stream that flasheth white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the night,
All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two and thirty years were a mist that rolls away;
For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice to me.

THE FLOWER.

Once in a golden hour
I cast to earth a seed.
Up there came a flower,
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
Thru' my garden-bower,
And muttered discontent
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall
Stole the seed by night.

Sow'd it far and wide
By every town and tower,
Till all the people cried,
"Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable:
He that runs may read.
Most can raise the flowers now,
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
And some are poor indeed;
And now again the people
Call it but a weed.

THE ISLET.

"Whither, O whither, love, shall we go,
For a score of sweet little summers or so?"
The sweet little wife of the sailor said
On the day that follow'd the day she was wed;
"Whither, O whither, love, shall we go?"
And the sailor shaking his curly head
Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys
There at his right with a sudden crash,
Singing, "And shall it be over the seas
With a crew that is neither rude nor rash,
But a bevy of Erotes apple-check'd,
In a shallop of crystal ivory-back'd,
With a satin sail of a ruby glow,
To a sweet little Eden on earth that I know,
A mountain islet pointed and peaked;
Waves on a diamond shingle dash,
Cataract brooks to the ocean run,
Fairly-delicate palaces shine
Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,
And overstream'd and silver-streak'd
With many a rivulet high against the Sun
The facets of the glorious mountain flash
Above the valleys of palm and pine."

"Thither, O thither, love, let us go."

"No, no, no!
For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,
There is but one bird with a musical throat,
And his compass is but of a single note,
That it makes one weary to hear."

"Mock me not! mock me not! love, let us go."

"No, love, no.
For the bud ever breaks into bloom on the tree,
And a storm never wakes on the lonely sea,
And a worm is there in the lonely wood,
That pierces the liver and blackens the blood,
And makes it a sorrow to be."

REQUIESCAT.

Fair is her cottage in its place,
Where you broad water sweetly slowly glides.
It sees itself from thatch to base
Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah, how soon to die!
Her quiet dream of life this hour may cease.
Her peaceful being slowly passes by
To some more perfect peace.

THE SAILOR-BOY.

He rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,
And reach'd the ship and caught the rope,
And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud
He heard a fierce mermaid cry,
"O Boy, thou art young and proud,
I see the place where thou wilt lie."

"The sands and yeasty surges mix
In caves about the dreary bay,
And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
And in thy heart the scrawl shall play."

"Fool," he answer'd, "death is sure
To those that stay and those that roam,
But I will nevermore endure
To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,
My sisters crying, 'Stay, for shame,'
My father raves of death and wreck,
They are all to blame, they are all to blame.

"God help me! save I take my part
Of danger on the roaring sea,
A devil rises in my heart,
Far worse than any death to me."

THE RINGLET.

"Your ringlets, your ringlets,
That look so golden-grey,
If you will give me one, but one,
To kiss it night and day,
A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.—A DEDICATION.

March 7, 1863.

Sea-kings' daughter from over the sea,
Alexandria!

Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee,
Alexandria!

Welcome her, thunders of fort and of fleet!
Welcome her, thundering cheer of the street!
Welcome her, all things youthful and sweet,
Scatter the blossom under her feet!

Break, happy land, into earlier flowers!
Make music, O bird, in the new-budding bower!
Blazon your mottoes of blessing and prayer!
Welcome her, welcome her, all that is ours!

Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare!
Flags, flutter out upon turrets and towers!
Flames, on the windy headland flare!
Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire!

Clash, ye bells, in the merry March air!
Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire!
Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and higher
Melt into the stars for the land's desire!

Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,
Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the strand,
Roar as the sea when he welcomes the land,
And welcome her, welcome the land's desire,
The sea-kings' daughter as happy as fair,
Blissful bride of a blissful heir,

Bride of the heir of the kings of the sea—
O joy to the people, and joy to the throne,
Come to us, love us, and make us your own:
For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
Ten ton or Celt, or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,
Alexandria!

ODE SGNNED AT THE OPENING OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

Uplift a thousand voices full and sweet,
In this wide hall with earth's invention stored,
And praise th' invisible universal Lord,
Who lets once more in peace the nations meet,
Where Science, Art, and Labor have pour'd out
Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet.

O silent father of our Kings to be
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to thee!

The world-compelling plan was thine,
And lo! the long laborious miles,
Of Palace; lo! the giant aisles,
Rich in model and design;
Harvest-tool and husbandry,
Loom and wheel and engraving,
Secrets of the sullen mine,

Steel and gold, and corn and wine,
Fabric rough, or Fairy fine,
Sunny tokens of the Line,
Polar marvels, and a feast
Of wonder out of West and East,
And shapes and hues of Art divine!
All of beauty, all of use,
That one fair planet can produce.

Brought from under every star,
Blown from over every main,
And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
The works of peace with works of war.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who reign,
From growing commerce lose her latest chain,
And let the fair white-winged peacemaker fly
To happy havens under all the sky,
And mix the seasons and the golden hours,
Till each man finds his own in all men's good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood,

Breaking their malled fleets and armed towers,
And ruling by obeying Nature's powers,
And gathering all the fruits of peace and crown'd with all her flowers.

A DEDICATION.

Dear, best and true—no truer Time himself
Can prove you, 'tis he makes you evermore
Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
Shoots to the fall—take this, and pray that he,
THE CAPTAIN.
A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.
He that only rules by terror
Doth grieveous wrong,
Deep as Hell I count his error,
Let him hear my song.

Brave the Captain was; the seamen
Made a gallant crew,
Gallant sons of English freemen,
Bulls bold and true:

But they hated his oppression,
Stern he was and rash;
So for every light transgression
Doom'd them to the lash.

Day by day more harsh and cruel
Seem'd the Captain's mood;
Secret wrath like smoth'd fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.

Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Where'er'er he came.

So they past by capes and islands,
Many a harbor-mouth,
Soiling under palmy highlands
Far within the South.

On a day when they were going
Over the lone expanse,
In the North, her canvas flowing,
Rose a ship of France.

Then the Captain's color heighten'd
Joyful came his speech:
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
In the eyes of each.

"Chase," he said: the ship flew forward,
And the wind did blow:
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
Till she near'd the foe.

Then they look'd at him they hated,
Had what they desired:
Mute with folded arms they waited—
Not a gun was fired.

But they heard the foesman's thunder
Roaring out their doom:
All the air was torn in sunder,
Crashing went the boom.

Spars were splinter'd, decks were shattered,
Bullets felt like rain:
Over mast and deck were scatter'd
Blood and brains of men.

Spars were splinter'd, decks were broken:
Every mother's son—
Down they drop't—no word was spoken—
Each beside his gun.

On the decks as they were lying,
Were their faces grim,
In their blood, as they lay dying,
Did they smile on him.

Those, in whom he had reliance
For his noble name,
With one smile of still defiance
Sold him unto shame.

Shame and wrath his heart confounded,
Pale he turn'd and red,
Till himself was deadly wounded
Falling on the dead.

Dismal error!—fears fulminating
Years have wander'd by,
Side by side beneath the water
Crew and Captain lie;

There the sunlit ocean tosses
O'er them moundering,
And the lonely seabird crosses
With one waft of the wing.

THREE SONNETS TO A COQUETTE.

Carze'm or chidden by the dainty hand,
And singing airy trifles this or that,
Light Hope at Beauty's call would perch and stand,
And run thro' every change of sharp and flat;

And Fancy came and at her pillow sat,
When Sleep had bound her in his rosy band,
And chased away the still-recurring gust,
And waked her with a lay from fairy land.

But now they live with Beauty less and less,
For Hope is other Hope and wanders far,
Nor cares to lip in love's delicious creeds;
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,
That sets at twilight in a land of reeds.

2.

The form, the form alone is eloquent!
A nobler yearning never broke her rest
Than but to dance and sing, be gaily drest,
And win all eyes with all accomplishment:

Yet in the waiting-circle as we went,
My fancy made me for a moment blest
To find my heart so near the beauteous breast
That Sire of power to rob it of content.

A moment came the tenderness of tears,
The phantom of a wish that once could move,
A guest of passion that no smiles restore—
For ah! the slight coquette, she cannot love,
And if you kist'd her feet a thousand years,
She still would take the praise, and care no more.

3.

Wan Sculp'tor, weep'st thou to take the cast
Of those dead lineaments that near thee lie?
O sorrowest thou, pale Pater, for the past,
In painting some dead friend from memory?
Weep on: beyond his object Love can last:
His object lives: more cause to weep have I:
My tears, no tears of love, are flowing fast,
No tears of love, but tears that Love can die.
I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,
Nor care to sit beside her where she sits—
Ah pity—hint it not in human tones,
But breathe it into earth and close it up
With secret death forever, in the pits.
Which some green Christmas crams with weary bones.

ON A MOURNER.

Nature, so far as in her lies,
Imitates God, and turns her face
To every hand beneath the skies,
Counts nothing that she meets with base,
But lives and loves in every place;

Fills out the lonely quick-set screens,
And makes the purple lilac ripe,
Steps from her airy hill, and greens
The swamp, where huns the dropping snipe,
With moss and branded marsh-pipe.

* The fruit of the Spindle-tree (Euonymus Europaus).
3. And on thy heart a finger lays, Saying, "Beat quicker, for the time is pleasant, and the woods and ways Are pleasant, and the beech and lime Put forth and feel a gladder clime."

4. And murmurs of a deeper voice, Going before to some far shrine, Teach that sick heart the stronger choice, Till all thy life one way incline With one wide will that closes thine.

5. And when the zoning eve has died Where you dark valleys wind forlorn, Come Hope and Memory, spouse and bride, From out the borders of the morn, With that fair child betwixt them born.

6. And when no mortal motion jars The blackness round the tombing sod, Thro' silence and the trembling stars Comes Faith from tracts no feet have trod, And Virtue, like a household god,

7. Promising empire, such as those That once at dead of night did greet Troy's wandering prince, so that he rose With sacrifice, while all the fleet Had rest by stony hills of Cretan.

SONG.

Lady, let the rolling drums Beat to battle where thy warrior stands: Now thy face across his fancy comes, And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpets blow, Clasp thy little fingers about thy knee: Now their warrior father meets the foe, And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

SONG.

Hows they brought him slain with spears. They brought him home at even-fall: All alone she sits and hears Echoes in his empty hall, Sounding on the morrow.

The Sun peep'd in from open field, The boy began to leap and prance, Rode upon his father's lance, Best upon his father's shield— "O bush, my joy, my sorrow."

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EXPERIMENTS.

BOADICEA.

While about the shore of Mona those Neronian legions Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druidess, Far in the east Boadicea, standing loftily charioted, Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility, Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Càmmulodùne. Yelled and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy.

"They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's baronous populations, Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating? Shall I heed them in their anguish? shall I brook to be supplicated? Hear Iceni, Cathuckliain, hear Coritani, Trinobant!

Must their ever-ravening eagle's beck and talon annihilate ns? Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it gory quivering? Bark an answer, Britain's raven! bark and blacken innumerable, Blacken round the Roman carrion, make the carcass a skeleton, Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin, from the wilderness, swallow in it, Till the face of Bel he brighten'd, Taransis be propitiated. Lo their colony half-defended! lo their colony, Càmmulodùne! There the horde of Roman robbers mock at a barbarous adversary. There the hive of Roman liars worship a glutinous emperor-idol. Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear it, Spirit of Càssìvleiân!"

"Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard it, O Iceni, O Coritani! Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd, Cathuckliainian, Trinobant. These have told us all their anger in miraculous utterances, Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a murmuring heard electrically, Phantom sound of blows descending, mom of an enemy massacred, Phantom wail of women and children, multidimensional agonies. Bloodily flow'd the Tamesis rolling phantom bodies of horses and men; Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on the refluent estuary; Lastly roamer yester-even, suddenly giddily tottering— There was one who watch'd and told me—down their statute of Victory tol. Lo their precious Roman battling, lo the colony Càmmulodùne, Shall we teach it a Roman lesson? shall we care to be pitiful? Shall we deal with it as an infant? shall we dandle it amorously?

"Hear Iceni, Cathuckliainian, hear Coritani, Trinobant! While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating,
There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystical ceremony,
Loosely robed in flying rainment, sang the terrible prophetesses.
"Fear not, ile of blowing woodland, ile of silver parapets,
To the Roman eagle shadow there, to the gathering enemy narrow thee,
Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the mighty one yet!
Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated,
Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimitable,
Thine the lands of lasting summer, many-blossoming Paradises,
Thine the North and thine the South and thine the battle-thunder of God.'
So they chanted: how shall Britain light upon angiures happier?
So they chanted in the darkness, and there cometh a victory now.

"Hear Iceniand, Catieuchalian, hear Cortianian, Trinobant!
Me the wife of rich Prasutagas, me the lover of liberty,
Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of rufliam violators!
See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy!
Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satisfied.
Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony Camulodum!
There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory,
Thither at their will they hailed the yellow-ringleted Britones—
Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable.
Shout Iceniand, Catieuchalian, shout Cortianian, Trinobant,
Till the ycliml hear within and yearn to harry precipitously
Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the snoke in a hurricane whirl's Q.
Lo the colony, there they roited in the city of Canobeline?
There they drank in caps of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay,
Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effiminacy.
There they dwelt and there they roited; there—there—they dwell no more.
 Burst the gates, and burn the palaces, break the works of the stannary,
Take the hoary Roman head and shatter it, hold it abominable,
Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust and voluptuousness,
Lash the maiden into swooning, me they lash'd and humiliated.
Chop the breasts from off the mother, dash the brains of the little one out,
Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my chargers, trample them under us."

So the Queen Boadicea, standing loftily charioted,
Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances lioness-like,
Yelled and shrieked between her daughters in her fierce volubility,
Till her people around the royal chariot agitated,
Madly dash'd the darts together, writhing barbarous lineiments,
Made the noise of frosty woodlands, when they shiver in January,
Roar'd as when the rolling breakers boom and blanch on the precipices,
Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear an oak on a promontory.
So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries
Clash the darts and on the buckler beat with rapid unanimous hand,
Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice,
Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously,
Then her pulses at the clamoring of her enemy fainting away.
Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyrannous beds.
Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies.
Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valorous legonary.
Fell the colony, city and citadel, London, Verulam, Camulodum.

IN QUANTITY.

MILTON.

Alexics.

O mighty-shaping inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, how to resound for ages,
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,
Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean
Rings to the roar of an angel onset—
Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refine sunset of India,
Streams o'er a rich amphibial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palmwoods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Hendecasyllables.

O vor chorus of indolent reviewers,
Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
Look, I come to the test, a tny poem
All composed in a metre of Catullus,
All in quantity, careful of my motion,
Like the skater on ice that hardly bears him,
Leat I fall unawares before the people,
Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.
Should I flounder awhile without a tumble
Thro' this metrisation of Catullus,
They should speak to me not without a welcome,
All that chorus of indolent reviewers.
Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tumble,
So fantastical is the dainty metre.
Wherefore sligtme not wholly, nor believe me
Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.
O blatant Magazines, regard me rather—
Since I blush to belaud myself a moment—
As some rare little rose, a piece of inmost
Horticultural art, or half coquetlike
Maiden, not to be greeted unbenignly.
So Hector said, and sea-like roar'd his host;  
Then loosed their sweating horses from the yoke  
And each beside his chariot bound his own;  
And oxen from the city, and goodly sheep  
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted wine  
And bread from out the houses brought, and heap'd  
Their firewood, and the winds from off the plain  
Roll'd the rich vapor far into the heaven.

And these all night upon the "bridge of war  
Sat glorying; many a fire before them blazed:  
As when in heaven the stars about the moon  
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,  
And every height comes out, and jutting peak  
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens  
Break open to their highest, and all the stars  
Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his heart:  
So many a fire between the ships and stream  
Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,  
A thousand on the plain; and close by each  
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;  
And champing golden grain, the horses stood  
Hard by their chariots, waiting for the dawn.  

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*Iliad, viii. 542-561.*

* Or, "ridge."
MISCELLANEOUS.

THE NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.

Doss'n' thon 'ear my 'ersc's legs, as they can'ts away?
Proputtty, proputtty, proputtty—that's what I 'ears 'em sayy.
Proputtty, proputtty, proputtty—Sam, thon's an ass for thy paains.
Theer's moor sense t' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy brains.

II.

Wo—ther 's a craw to pluck w'l' tha, Sam: 'yon's parson's 'onse—
Dossn't thon know that a man muu be either a man or a mouse?
Time to think on it then; for thon 'll be twenty to week.*
Proputtty, proputtty—woa then woa—let me 'ear myse'n speak.

III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as hein a-talkin' o' thee;
Thou 's been talkin' to mother, an' she bein' a tellin' it me.
Thou 'll not marry for munny—thou 's sweet mu'n parson's lass—
Noi—thou 'll marry for luvv—an' we boath on us thinks tha an ass.

IV.

Seeli'd her todaiy goa by—Saint's-daiy—thay was ringing the bells.
She 's a beauty thou thinks—an' soi is scoors o' goils.
Them as 'as munny an' all—vot 's a beauty?—the flower as blaws.
But proputtty, proputtty sticks, an' proputtty, proputtty graws.

V.

Do'ant be stunt;† takye time: I knows what maikes tha sa mad.
Warrn't I crenzied fur the lasses myse'n when I war a lad?
But I know'd a Quaiker feller as often 'as towd ma this:
"Doin't thou marry for munny, but goa wheer mummy is!"

VI.

An' I went wheer mummy war: an' thy mother coom to 'and,
W'l' lots o' munny laaid by, an' a niceish hit o' land.
Mallybe she warrn't a beauty: —I never gib it a thou—
But warrn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt?

VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she welint 'a nowt when 'e 's daid,
Man be a guarness, lad, or sammu, and addlet her bredd:
Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weint nivir git naw 'igher;
An' 'e maize the bed as 'e liggs on afoor 'e coom'd to the shire.

VIII.

And thin 'e coom'd to the parish w'l' lots o' 'arsity debt,
Stook to his taall they did, an' 'e 'ant got shut on 'em yet.
An' 'e liggs on 'is back 'i' the grip, w'l' noin to lend 'im a shawe,
Woorse nor a far-welter'd yowe: fur, Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

IX.

Luvv? what 's luvv? thon can luvv thy lass an' 'er munny too,
Maskin' 'em goa togeth as they 've good right to do.
Could'n I luvv thy mother by cause o' 'er munny laaid by?
Naisy—for I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it; reason why.

* This week. † Obstinate. ‡ Earn. § Or bow-weltered—said of a sheep lying on its back in the sward.
THE VICTIM.

X.

Ay, an' thy mother says thou wants to marry the lass,
Cooms of a gentleman burn: an' we bothch on us thinks th'a an ass.
Woi then, propuyty, witha?—an' ass as near as may's nowt—'
Woi then, witha? dangthia!—the bees is as fell as owt.†

XI.

Break me a bit o' the chub for his 'ead, lad, out o' the fence!
Gentleman burn! what's a gentleman burn? Is it shillius an' pence?
Propuuyty, propuuyty 's everyth 'ere, an', Sammy, I'm blest!
If it is n't the same oop yonder, fur them as 'as it 's the best.

XII.

Tis'n them as 'as mummy as breaks into 'ouses an' steals,
Then as 'as coils to their backs an' takites their regular meals.
Noa, but it 's them as niver knows wheer a meal 's to be 'ad.
Take my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loup is bad.

XIII.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, man 'a been a laizy lot,
Far work mnn 'a gone to the gittin' whiniver munny was got.
Feather 'ad amost nowt; leasways 'is munny was 'id.
But 'e tued an' moll'd 'issin dead, an' 'e died a good un, 'e did.

XIV.

Look thou theeer wheer Wrigglesby beck comes out by the 'ill!
Feather run up to the farm, an' I runs up to the mill!
An' I 'll run up to the brig, an' that thou 'll live to see;
And if thou marries a good un, I 'll leave the land to thee.

XV.

Thim 's my noistions, Sammy, wheerby I means to stick;
But if thou marries a bad un, I 'll leave the land to Dick.—
Coom oop, propusty, propusty—that 's what I 'ears 'm saiy.
Propuuyty, propuuyty, propuuyty—canten an' canten away!

THE VICTIM.

1.

A plague upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low,
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire.
For on them brake the sudden foe;
So thick they died the people cried
"The Gods are moved against the land."
The priest in horror over his altar
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:
"Help us from famine
And plague and strife!
What would you have of us?
Human life?
Were it our nearest,
Were it our dearest,
(Answer, O answer)
We give you his life."

2.

But still the oldman spoil'd and burn'd,
And cattle died, and deer in wood,
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd
And whiten'd all the rolling flood;
And dead men lay all over the way,
Or down in a carrow seathed with flame:
And ever and aye the priesthood moan'd
Till at last it seem'd that an answer came:
"The king is happy
In child and wife:
Take you his dearest,
Give us a life."

3.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;
The King was hunting in the wild;
They found the mother sitting still;
She cast her arms about the child.
The child was only eight summers old,
His beauty still with his years increased.
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.
The priest beheld him,
And cried with joy:
"The Gods have answer'd;
We give them the boy."

4.

The King return'd from out the wild,
He bore but little game in hand;
The mother said: "They have taken the child
To spill his blood and heal the land:
The land is sick, the people diseased,
And blight and famine on all the lea:
The holy Gods, they must be appeased,
So I pray you tell the truth to me.
They have taken our son,
They will have his life.
Is he your dearest?
Or I, the wife?"

5.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,
He stay'd his arms upon his knee:
"O wife, what use to answer now?
For now the Priest has judged for me."
WAGES.—THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.—LUCRETIUS.

The King was shaken with holy fear;
"The Gods," he said, "would have chosen well;
Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot tell!
But the Priest was happy,
His victim won:
"We have his dearest,
His only son!"

6.
The rites prepared, the victim bare,
The knife uprising toward the blow,
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,
"Me, not my darling, no!"
He caught her away with a sudden cry;
Suddenly from him brake his wife,
And shrieking "I am his dearest, I—
I am his dearest!" rush'd on the knife.
And the Priest was happy,
"O, Father Odin,
We give you a life.
Which was his nearest?
Who was his dearest?
The Gods have answer'd;
We give them the wife!"

WAGES.
Glory of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Pul'd with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—
Glory of Virtue, to right, to struggle, to right the wrong—
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no lover of glory she:
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.
The wages of sin is death: if the wages of Virtue he dust,
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to back in a summer sky:
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.
This sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?
Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not that which He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?
Earth, these solid stars, this weighty body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?
Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why;
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel
"I am I!"
Glory about thee, without thee: and thou fulfill'st thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.
God is law, say the wise, O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.
Law is God, say some: no God at all, says the fool:
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool;
And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it not He?

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies:
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

LUCRETIUS.

LUCILLA, wedded to Lucretius, found
Her master cold; for when the morning first
Of passion and the first embrace had died
Between them, tho' he loved her none the less,
Yet often when the woman heard his foot
Return from purling in the field, and ran
To greet him with a kiss, the master took
Small notice, or austerely, for—his mind
Half buried in some weightier argument,
Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise
And long roll of the Hexameter—he past
To turn and ponder those three hundred scrolls
Left by the Teacher whom he held divine.
She brook'd it not; but wrathful, petulant,
Dreaming some rival, sought and found a witch
Who brew'd the philter which had power, they said,
To lead an errant passion home again.
And this, at times, she mingled with his drink,
And this destroy'd him; for the wicked broth
Confused the chemic labor of the blood,
And tickling the brute brain within the man's,
Made havoc among those tender cells, and check'd
His power to shape; he loath'd himself, and once
After a tempest woke upon a morn
That mock'd him with returning calm, and cried:

"Storm in the night! for thrice I heard the ram
Rushing; and once the flash of a thunderbolt—
I methought I never saw so fierce a fork—
Struck out the streaming mountain-side, and show'd
A riotous confluence of watercourses
Blanching and billowing in a hollow of it,
Where all but yester-eye was dusty-dry.

"Storm, and what dreams, ye holy Gods, what dreams!
For thrice I wak'n'd after dreams. Perchance
We do but recollect the dreams that come
Just ere the waking: terrible! for it seem'd
A void was made in Nature; all her bonds
Creek'd; and I saw the flaming atom-streams
And torrents of her myriad universe,
Ruining along the illimitable inane,
Fly on to clash together again, and make
Another and another frame of things

"
Forever: that was mine, my dream, I knew it Of and belonging to me, as the dog
With inward yelp and restless forefoot plies His function of the woodland; but the next! I thought that all the blood by Sylla shed
Came driving rainlike down again on earth, And where it dashed the reddening meadow, sprang
No dragon warriors from Cadmean teeth, For these: I thought my dream would show to me, But girls, Hetairai, curious in their art, Hired animalisms, vile as those that made
The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies worse Than aught they fable of the quiet Gods. And hands they mixt, and yard'd and round me drove In narrowing circles till I yel'd again Half suffocated, and sprang up, and saw— Was it the first beam of my latest day?

"Then, then, from utter gloom stood out the breasts,
The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly a sword Now over and now under, now direct, Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down shaded At all that beauty: and as it started, a fire,
The fire that left a roofless Ilios,
Shot out of them, and scorched'd me that I woke.

"Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus, thine,
Because I would not one of thine own doves, Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee? thine, Forgetful how my rich proemion makes
Thy glory fly along the Italian field, In hues that will outlast thy Deity!

"Deity? nay, thy worshippers. My tongue
Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of these Angers thee most, or angers thee at all?
Not if thou best of those who call aloof
From envy, hate and pity, and splice and scorn,
Live the great life which all our greatest pain Would follow, centred in eternal calm.

"Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like ourselves Touch, and be touched, then would I cry to thee
To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender arms Round him, and keep him from the last of blood
That makes a steaming slaughter-house of Rome.

"Ay, but I meant not thee; I meant not her, Whom all the pines of Ida shook to see Slide from that quiet heaven of hers, and tempt
The Trojan, while his neath-herds were abroad; Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter wept Her Deity false in human-amorous tears; Nor whom her beardless apple-aridet Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods, Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
Calliope to grace his golden verse—
Ay, and this Kypris also—did I take
That popular name of thine to shadow forth The all-generating powers and genial heat Of Nature, when she strikes through the thick blood Of cattle, and light is large and limbs are glad Nosing the mother's udder, and the bird Makes his heart voice amid the blaze of flowers Which things appear the work of mighty Gods.

"The Gods! and if I go my work is left Unfinish'd—if I go. The Gods, who haunt
The lucid interpace of world and world, Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind, Nor ever falls the least white star of snow, Nor ever lowest roll of thunder means; Nor sound of human sorrow, but to mar Their sacred everlasting calm! and such, Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm, Not such, nor all unlike it, man may gain
Letting his own life go. The Gods, the Gods!

If all be atoms, how then should the Gods
Being atomic not be dissoluble, Not follow the great law? My master held That Gods there are, for all men so believe. I press'd my footsteps into his, and meant
Surely to lead my Memmius in a train
Of flowery clauses onward to the proof
That Gods there are, and deathless. Meant? I meant:
I have forgotten what I meant: my mind
Stumbles, and all my faculties are lamed.

"Look where another of our Gods, the Sun, Apollo, Delius, or of older use
All-seeing Hyperion—what you will—
Has mounted yonder; since he never aware, Except his wrath were weak'd on wretched man, That he would only shine among the dead
Hereafter: tales! for never yet on earth Could dead flesh creep, or blue of roasting ox
Moon round the spit—nor knows he what he sees:
King of the East altib' he seem, and girl
With song and flame and fragrance, slowly lifts
His golden feet on those empurpled stairs
That climb into the windy halls of heaven;
And here he glances on an eye new-born, And gets for greeting but a wall of pain;
And here he stays upon a freezing orb
That fail would gaze upon him to the last:
And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n
And closed by those who mourn a friend in vain, Not thankful that his troubles are no more. And me, alco' his fire on my face
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell
Whether I mean this day to end myself, Or lead an ear to Plato where he says,
That men like soldiers may not quit the post Alloted by the Gods: but he that died
The Gods are careless, wherefore need he care
Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at once,
Being troubled, wholly out of sight, and sink Past earthquakes, ay, and goat and stone, that break
Body toward death, and pule, death-in-life,
And wretched age—and worst disease of all,
Those prodigies of myriad nakednesses,
And twined shapes of lust, unspeakable,
Abominable, strangers at my heart.

Not warning, harpies miring every dish,
The phantom husks of something faintly done,
And fleeing through the boundless universe,
And blasting the long quiet of my breast With animal heat and dire insanity.

"How should the mind, except it loved them, clasp
These idols to herself? or do they fly
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the flakes
In a fall of snow, and so press in, performe
Of multitude, as crowds that in an hour
Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear
The keepers down, and throng, their rags and they,
The basest, far into that council-hall
Where sit the best and stateliest of the land?

"Can I not thing this horror off me again,
Seeing with how great ease Nature can smile, Blunder and nobler from her bath of storm, At random range? and how easily
The mountain there has cast his cloudy slough,
Now towering o'er him in serenest air,
A mountain o'er a mountain, ay, and within
All hollow as the hopes and fears of men.

"But who was he, that in the garden shared
Pleas and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
To laugh he says, to laugh in silence, to laugh
To laugh so much as to laugh at himself—
For look! what is it? there? ye arbutus
Totters: a noiseless riot underneath
Strikes through the wood, sets all the tops quiver-
The mountain quickens into Nymph and Faun;
And here an Oread—how the sun delights
To glance and shift about her slippery sides,
And rosy knees and supple roundnessed,
And buddled bosom-peaks—who this way runs
Before the rest—a satyr, a satyr,
Follow'd but him I proved impossible
Twy-natured is no nature; yet he draws
Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now
 beastlier than any phantom of his kind
That ever hatted his rough brother-brother
For last or lusty blood or proven grace
I hate, abhor, spit, scicken at him; and she
Loneth him as well; such a precipitate heel,
Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-wug,
Whirls her to me; but will she fling herself,
Shameless upon me?—Catch her, goatfoot: any,
Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wilderness,
And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide! do I wish—
What?—that the bush were leafless? or to whom
All of them in one massacre? O ye Gods,
I know you careless, yet, behold, to you
From childly wont and ancient use I call—
I thought I lived securely as yourselves
No lewdness, narrowing easy, monkey-spite,
No madness of ambition, outrage, none:
No love, no honor, no bliss, no hate;
Nor with neighbors laid along the grass, to take
Only such cup as left us friendly warm,
Affirming each his own philosophy—
Nothing to mar the sober majesties
Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.
But now it seems some useless monster lays
His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
Wrenching it backward into his; and spoils
My bliss in being; and it was not great:
For when he blood in my veins up in rhythm,
or Heliconian honey in living words,
To make a truth less harsh, I often grew
Tired of so much within our life, life,
Of so little in our little life—
Poor little life that toddles half an hour
Crownd'd with a flower or two, and there an end—
And since the nobler pleasure seems to fade,
Why should I, beastlike as I find myself,
Not manlike end myself?—our privilege—
What beast has heart in it to do it? As what man,
What Roman would be dragged in triumph thus?
Not I; not he, who bears one name with her,
Whose death-blow struck the dustless doom of kings,
When brooking not the Turguia in her veins,
She wore her blood in sight of Cœlituc
And all his peers, flashing the guiltless air,
Spont from the maiden fountain in her heart.
And from it sprang the Commonwealth, which breaks
As I am breaking now!

"And therefore now
Let her, that is the womb and tomb of all,
Great Nature, take, and forcing far apart
Tuco blind beginnings that have made me man,
Dutch the mew together at her will.
Through all her cycles—into man once more
Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent flower—
But till this cosmic order everywhere
Shattered into one earthquake in one day
Cocks all to pieces,—and that hour perhaps
Is not so far when momentary man
Shall seem no more a something to himself,
But he, his hopes and hates, his homes and fames,
And even his bones long buried within the grave,
The very sides of the grave itself shall pass,
Vanishing, atom and void, atom and void,
Into the unseen forever,—till that hour,
My golden work in which I told a truth
That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake, and plucks
The mortal soul from out immortal ball,
And leave the name of Lover's Leap: not he:
He knew the meaning of the whisper now,
Thought that he knew it. "This, I stay'd for this;
O love, I have not seen you for so long.
Now, now, will I go down into the grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the kiss no more:
The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead."

The fancy stirr'd him so
He rose and went, and entering the dim vault,
And, making there a sudden light, beheld
All round about him that which all will be:
The light was but a flash, and went again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the threefold look:
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars
Of black and bands of silver, which the moon
Struck from an open grating overhead
High in the wall, and all the rest of her
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass, to sleep,
To rest, to be with her—'till the great day
Pen'd on us with that music which rights all,
And raised us hand in hand."
And kneeling there
Down in the dreadful dust that once was man,
Dust, as he said, that once was loving hearts,
Hearts that had beat with such a love as mine—
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as her—
He softly laid his hand about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till helpless death
And silence made him bold—'tis true, but wrong,
He reverence'd his dear lady even in death;
But raised his hand in hand." And kneeling there
"O, you warm heart," he moan'd, "not even death
Can chill you all at once!": then started, thinking
His dreams had come again. "Do I wake or sleep?
Or am I made immortal, or my love,
My soul once more?" It beat— the heart— it beat:
Faint— but it beat: at which his own began
To pulse with such a vehemence that it drown'd
The feeble motion underneath his hand.
But when at last his doubts were satisfied,
He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
And, wrapping her all over with the cloak
He came in, and now striding fast, and now
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
Holding his golden burden in his arms,
So bore her thro' the solitary land
Back to the mother's house where she was born.

There the good mother's kindly ministering,
With half a night's appliances, recall'd
Her fluttering life; she raised an eye that ask'd
"Where?" till the things familiar to her youth
Had made a silent answer: then she spoke,
"Here! and how came I here?" and learning it
(They told her somewhat rashly as I think),
At once began to wander and to wish
"Ay, but you know that you must give me back:
Send! bid him come!": but Lionel was away,
Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none knew where.
"He calls me out," she wept, "and goes"— a wall
That seeming something, yet was nothing, born
Not from believing mind, but shatter'd nerve,
Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
At some precipitance in her burial.
Then, when her own true spirit had return'd,
"O yes, and you," she said, "and none but you.
For you have given me life and love again,
And none but you yourself shall tell him of it,
And you shall give me back when he returns."
"Stay then a little," answer'd Julian, "here,
And keep yourself, my own, knowing to yourself.
And I will do your will. I may not stay,
No, not an hour; but send me notice of him
When he returns, and then will I return,
And I will make a solemn promise of you
To him you love." And faintly she reply'd,
"And I will do your will, and none shall know."

Not know? with such a secret to be known.
But all their house was old; he loved them both:
And all the house had known the loves of both.
Had died almost to serve them any way,
And all the land was waste and solitary;
And then he rode away; but after this,
An hour or two, Camilla's travel came
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
And passing at a hostel in a marsh,
There fever seiz'd upon him: myself was then
Travelling that land, and meant to rest an hour:
And sitting down to such a base repast,
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—
I heard a groaning overhead, and clim'd
The mould'rd stairs (for everything was vile),
And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
A flat malariam world of reed and rush!
But there from fever and my care of him
Sprang up a friendship that may help us yet.
For while we roost'd aloft the dreary coast,
And waited for her message, piece by piece
I learnt the drearier story of his life:
And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,
Found that the sudden wall his lady made
Dwelt in his fancy: did it not make her worth;
Her beauty even? should be not be taught,
Ev'n by the price that other set upon it,
The value of that jewel he had to guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we past,
I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the soul:
That makes the sequel pure: tho' some of us
Beginning at the sequel know no more.
Not such am I: and yet I say, the bird
That will not hear my call, however sweet,
But if my neighbor whistle answers him—
What matter? there are others in the wood.
Yet when I saw her (and I thought him craz'd,
Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of hers—
Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes alone,
But all from these two where she touch'd on earth,
For such a craziness as Julian seem'd
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
To greet us, her young hero in her arms!
"Kiss him," she said. "You gave me life again.
He, but for you, had never seen it once.
His other father you! and then
Forgive him, if his name be Julian too."

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart! his own
Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him
By that great love they both had borne the dead,
To come and revel for one hour with him
Before he left the land for evermore;
And then to friends—they were not many—who lived
And Julia made a solemn feast: I never
Sat at a costell; for all round his hall
Four columns, as tall as wood,
Not such as here—a equatorial one,
Great garlands swung and blossom'd; and beneath,
Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,
Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven knows when,
Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,
And kept it thro' a hundred years of gloom,
Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
Where nymph and god ran ever round in gold—
Others of glass as costly—some with gems
Movable and resplendent at will,
And trebling all the rest in value—Ah heavens!
Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say
That whatsoever such a house as his,
And his was old, has in it race or fair
Was brought before the guest: and they, the guests,
Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's eyes
(I told you that he had his golden hour),
And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,
And that resolved self-cible from a land
Had never would revisit, such a feast.
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n than rich,
But rich as for the nuptials of a king.
And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
Two great funereal curtains, hanging down,
Parted a little ere they met the floor,
About a picture of his lady, taken
Some years before, and falling hid the frame.
And just above the painting was a lamp:
So the sweet figure folded round with light,
Scem'd stepping out of darkness with a smile.
Well then,—our solemn feast—we ate and drank,
And might—the wines belong of such nobleness—
Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,
And something weird and wild about it all:
What was it? for our lover seldom spoke,
Scarce touch'd the meats, but ever and anon
A priceless goblet with a priceless wine
Arising, should he drink beyond his use;
And when the feast was near an end, he said:
"There is a custom in the Orient, friends—
I read of it in Persia—when a man
Who honores a feast with honor, he brings
And shows whatsoeuer he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom—"

Pausing here a moment, all
The guests broke in upon him with meeting hands
And cries about the banquet—"Beautiful!
Who could desire more beauty at a feast?"

The lover answer'd, "There is more than one
Here sitting who desires it. Land me not
Before my time, but hear me to the close.
This custom steps yet further when the guest
Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.
For after he has strain'd his gener or gold,
He brings and sets before him in rich guise
That which is thrice as beautiful as these,
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—
"O my heart's lord, would I could show you," he says,
"Ev'n my heart, too. And Julian rose too night
To show you what is dearest to my heart,
And my heart too.

"But solve me first a doubt.
I knew a man, nor many years ago;
He had a faithful servant, one who loved
His master more than all on earth beside.
He falling sick, and seeming close on death,
His master would not wait until he died,
But bade his menials bear him from the door,
And make the public way as to die.
I knew another, not so long ago,
Who found the dying servant, took him home,
And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved his life.
I ask you now, should this first master claim
His service, whom it does belong to?—
Who thrust him out, or him who saved his life?"

This question, so flung down before the guests,
And balanced either way by each, at length
When some were doubtful how the law would hold,
Was handed over by consent of all
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of phrase.
And he beginning languidly—his loss
Weigh'd on him yet; but warning as he went,
Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,
Affirming that as long as either lived,
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,
The service of the one so saved was due
All to the savior—adding, with a smile,
The first for many weeks—a semi-smile
As at a strong conclusion—"Body and soul,
And life and limbs, all his to work his will.

Then Julian made a secret sign to me
To bring Camilla down before them all.
And crossing her own picture as she came,
And looking as much lovelier as herself
Is lovelier than all others—on her head
A diamond circlet, and from under this
A veil, that seem'd no more than gilded air,
Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gaze
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace of hers,
Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
And bearing high in arms the mighty babe,
The younger Julian, who himself was crown'd
With robes, none so rosy as himself—
And over all her babe and her the jewels
Of many generations of his house—Sparkled and flashed, for he had decked them out
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
So she came in:—I am long in telling it.
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
Sad, sweet, and strange together—bound in
While all the guests in mute amazement rose,
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,
Before the board, there paused and stood, her breast
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
But him she carried, nor lights nor feast
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men: who cared
Only to use his own, and staring wide
And hungering for the gift and jewell'd world
About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

"My guests," said Julian: "you are honor'd now
Ev'n to the uttermost: in her behold
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,
Of all things upon earth the dearest to me."
Then waving as a sign to seat ourselves,
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.
And 1, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
Trice in a heart too. And I pause no time,
And heard him muttering, "So like, so like;
She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some companion of his and hers—O God, so like"
And then he suddenly asked her if she were.
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and was dumb.
And then some other question'd if she came From foreign lands, and still she did not speak.
Another, if the boy were here: but she
To all their queries answer'd not a word,
Which made the amazement more, till one of them
Said, shuddering, "Her spectre!" But his friend
Replied, in half a whisper, "Not at least
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
Prove, as I almost dread to find her, dumb!"

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all:
"She is not dumb, because in her you see
That faithful servant whom we spoke about,
Obedient to her second master now;
Which will not last. I have her here to-night a
guest
So bound to me by common love and loss—
What! shall I bind him more? in his behalf,
Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
That which of all things is the dearest to me,
Not only showing? and he himself pronounced
That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

"Now all be dumb, and promise all of you
Not to break in on what I say by word
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart."
And then began the story of his love
As here to-day, but not so wordily—
The passionate moment would not suffer that—
Past thro' his visions to the burial; thence
Down to this last strange hour in his own hall;

And then rose up, and with him all his guests
Once more as by enchantment; all but he,
Lionel, who faith had risen, but fell again,
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said:

"Take my free gift, my cousin, for your wife;
And were it only for the giver's sake,
And tho' she seem so like the one you lost,
Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
Lost there be none left here to bring her back:
I leave this land forever." Here he ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.
And there the widower husband and dead wife
Rushed each at each with a cry, that rather seem'd
For some new death than for a life renew'd;
At this the very babe began to wall;
At once they turned, and caught and brought him in
To their charmed circle, and, half killing him
With kisses, round him closed and clasp'd again.
But Lionel, when at last he freed himself
From wife and child, and lifted up a face
All over glowing with the sun of life,
And love, and boundless thanks—the sight of this
So frighted our good friend, that turning to me
And saying, "It is over: let us go!"—
There were our horses ready at the doors—
We bade them no farewell, but mounting these
He past forever from his native land;
And I with him, my Julian, back to mine.
A P O E M

ADDITIONAL POEMS.

PRINTED EXCLUSIVELY IN THIS EDITION.

TIMBUCTOO.

"Deep in that Haunted Inland lies
A mystic city, goal of high empire."—CHAPMAN.

I stood upon the Mountain which o'erlooks
The narrow seas, whose rapid interval
Parts Africa from green Europe, when the Sun
Had full'd below th' Atlantic, and above
The silent heavens were blench'd with fiery light,
Uncertain whether fiery light or cloud,
Flowing Southward, and the chasms of deep, deep blue
Slumber'd unfathomable, and the stars
Were flooded over with clear glory and pale.
I gazed upon the sheeny coast beyond,
There where the Giant of old Time infold'd
The limits of his prowess, pillars high
Long time erazed from earth: even as the Sea
When weary of wild inroad buildeth up
Great mounds whereby to stay his yeasty waves.
And much I mused on legends quaint and old
Which windsome won the hearts of all on earth
Toward their brightness, c'n a flame draws air;
But had their being in the heart of man
As air is th' life of flame; and thou wert then
A center'd glory-circled memory,
Divinest Atlantis, whom the waves
Have buried deep, and thou of later name,
Imperial Eldorado, roof'd with gold:
Shadows to which, despite all shocks of change,
All on-set of capricious accident,
Men clung with yearning hope which would not die,
As when in some great city where the walls
Shake, and the streets with ghastly faces thronged,
Do utter forth a subterranean voice,
Among the inner columns far retired
At midnight, in the lone Acropolis,
Before the awful deeps of the place
Kneels the pale Priestess in deep faith, the while
Above her head the weak lamp dips and winks
Unto the fearful summoning without:
Nathless she ever clasps the marble knees,
Bathes the cold hand with tears, and gazeth on
Those eyes which wear no light but that wherewith
Her phantasy informs them.
Where are ye,
Throne of the Western wave, fair Islands green?
Where are your moonlight halls, your cedar glooms,
The blossoming abysses of your hills?
Your flowering capes, and your gold-sanded bays
Blown round with happy airs of odorous winds?
Where are the infinite ways, which, saith-trod,
Wound through your great Elysian solitudes,
Whose lowest deeps were, as with visible love,
Filled with Divine effulgence, circumfused,
Flowing between the clear and polished stems,
And ever circling round their emerald cones
In coronals and glod and glistening shards?
The unfauling foreheads of the Saints in Heaven?
For nothing visible, they say, had birth
In that bliss ground, but it was played about
With its peculiar glory. Then I raised
My voice and cried, "Wid Afric, doth thy Sun
Lighten, thy hills enfold a city as fair
As those which starred the night of the elder world?
Or is the rumored by thy Timbuctoo
A dream as frail as those of ancient time?"
A carve of white wings! the bright descent
Of a young Seraph! and he stood beside me
There on the ridge, and looked into my face
With his unutterable, shining orbs,
So that with hasty motion I did veil
My vision with both hands, and saw before me
Such colored spot as dance athwart the eyes
Of those that gaze upon the noontide Sun.
Girt with a zone of flashing gold beneath
His breast, and compassed round about his brow
With triple arch of everlasting bows,
And circled with the glory of living light
And alternation of all hues, he stood.
"O child of man, why muse you here alone
Upon the Mountain, on the dreams of old
Which filled the earth with passing loveliness,
Which flung strange music on the howling winds,
And odors rapt from remote Paradise?
Thy sense is clogged with dull mortality:
Open thine eyes and see." I looked, but not
Upon his face, for it was wonderful
With its exceeding brightness, and the light
Of the great Angel Mind which looked from out
The starry glowing of his restless eyes.
I felt my soul grow mighty, and my spirit
With supernatural expectation bound
Within me, and my mental eye grew large
With such a vast circumference of thought,
That in my vanity I seemed to stand
Upon the outward verge and bound alone
Of full beatitude. Each falling sense,
As with a momentary flash of light,
Grew the thrillingly distinct and keen. I saw
The smallest grain that dappled the dark earth,
The indistinct stroma in deep air,
The Moon's white cities, and the opal width
Of her small glowing lakes, her silver heights
Washed with dew of fragrant cloud,
And the unsounded, undescended depth
Of her black hollows. The clear galaxy
Shorn of its hoary lustre, wonderful,
Distinct and vivid with sharp points of light,
Blaze within blaze, an unimagin'd depth
And harmony of planet-girded suns
And moon-encircled planets, wheel in wheel,
Arched the vast sapphire. Nay—the hum of men,
Or other things talking in unknown tongues,
And notes of busy life in distant worlds
Beat like a far wave on my anxious ear.
A maze of piercing, trackless, thrilling thoughts,
Involving and embracing each with each,
Rapid as fire, inextricably linked.
Expanding momently with every sight,
And sound which struck the palpitating sense,
The issue of strong impulse, hurried through
The riven rapt brain; as when in some large lake
From pressure of descendant crags, which lapse
Disjolted, crumbling from their present slope
At slender interval, the level calm
Is ridged with restless and increasing spheres
Which break upon each other, each th' effect
Of separate impulse, but more fleet and strong
Than its precursor, till the eye in vain
Amid the wild turret of swimming shade
Dappled with hollow and alternate rise
Of interpenetrated arc, would scan
Definite round.

I know not if I shape
These things with accurate similitude
From visible objects, for but dimly now,
Less vivid than a half-forgotten dream,
The memory of that mental excellence
Comes o'er me, and it may be I entwine
The indecision of my present mind
With its past clearness, yet it seems to me
As even then the torrent of quick thought
Absorbed me from the nature of itself
With its own fleetness. Where is he, that borne
Adown the sloping of an arrowy stream,
Could link his shallop to the fleeting edge,
And muse midway with philosophic calm
Upon the wondrous laws which regulate
The firmness of the bounding element?
My thoughts which long had grovelled in the slime
Of this dull world, like dusky worms which house
Beneath unshaken waters, but at once
Upon some earth-awakening day of Spring
Do pass from gloom to glory, and alight
Winnow the purple, bearing on both sides
Double display of star-lit wings, which burn
Fan-like and fibrèd with intensest bloom;
Even so my thoughts erewhile so low, now felt
Unutterable buoyancy and strength
To bear them upward through the trackless fields
Of undefined existence far and free.

Then first within the South methought I saw
A wilderness of spires, and crystal pile
Of rampart upon rampart, dome on dome,
Illimitable range of battlement,
On battlement, and the Imperial height
Of canopy o'ercanopied.

Behind
In diamond light up spring the dazzling peaks
Of Pyramids, as far surpassing earth's
As heaven than earth is fairer. Each sloth
Upon his narrowed eminence bore globes
Of wheeling suns, or stars, or semblances
Of either, shivering circular abysses
Of radiance. But the gleam of that place
Stood out a pillared front of burnished gold,
Interminably high, if gold it were
Or metal more ethereal, and beneath
Two doors of blazing brilliance, where no gaze
Might rest, stood open, and the eye could scan,
Through length of porch and valve and boundless hall,
Part of a throne of fiery flame, wherefrom
The snowy skirling of a garment hng,
And glimpse of multitude of multitudes
That ministered around it—if I saw
These things distinctly, for my human brain
Staggered beneath the vision, and thick night
Came down upon my eyelids, and I fell.

With ministering hand he raised me up:
Then with a mournful and ineffable smile,
Which but to look on for a moment filled
My eyes with irresistible sweet tears,
In accents of majestic melody,
Like a swollen river's gushings in still night
Mingled with floating music, thus he spake:
"There is no mightier Spirit than I to sway
The heart of man; and teach him to attain
By shadowing forth the Unattainable;
And step by step to scale that mighty stair
Whose landing-place is wrapt about with clouds
Of glory of heaven.* With earliest light of Spring,
And in the glow of sallow Summerside,
And in red Autumn when the winds are wild
With gambols, and when full-voiced Winter roars
The headland with inviolate white snow,
I play about his heart a thousand ways,
Visit his eyes with visions, and his ears
With harmonies of wind and wave and wood,
—Of winds which tell of waters, and of waters
Betraying the close kisses of the wind—
And win him unto me: and few there be
So gross of heart who have not felt and known
A higher than they see: they with dim eyes
Behold me darkling. Lo! I have given thee
To understand my presence, and to feel
My fullness: I have filled thy lips with power.
I have raised thee higher to the spheres of heaven,
Man's first, last home: and then with rivulets same
Listened the lordly music flowing from
The illimitable. I am the Spirit,
The permeating life which coursework through
All th' intricate and labyrinthine veins
Of the great vine of Cable, which, outspread
With growth of shadowing leaf and clusters rare,
Reacheth to every corner under heaven,
Deep-rooted in the living soil of truth;
So that man's hopes and fears take refuge in
The fragrance of its complicated glooms,
And cool impleached twilights. Child of man,
Seest thou yon river, whose transparent wave,
Forth issuing from the darkness, windeth through
The argent streets of the city, imaging
The soft inversion of her tranquil domes,
Her gardens frequent with the stately palm,
Her pagods hung with music of sweet bells,
Her obelisks of ranged chrysolite,
Minaretts and towers? Lo! how he paseeth by,
And glides himself in sandal and umbilg,
To carry through the world those waves, which bore
The reflex of my city in their depths.
Oh city: oh latest throne! where I was raised
To be a mystery of loveliness
Unto all eyes, the time is well-nigh come
When I must render up this glorious home
To keen Discovery; soon yon brilliant towers
Shall darken with the waving of her wand;
Darken and shrink and shiver into huts,
Black specks amid a waste of dreary sand,
Low-built, mound-walled, barbarian settlements.
How changed from this fair city!"

Thus far the Spirit:
Then parted heaven-ward on the wing: and I
Was left alone on Calpe, and the moon
Had fallen from the night, and all was dark!

* "Be ye perfect, even as your father in heaven is perfect."
POEMS PUBLISHED IN THE EDITION OF 1830,
AND OMITTED IN LATER EDITIONS.

ELEGICS.

LOWFLOWING breezes are roaming the broad valley
dimm'd in the glom'ing;
Tho' the blackstemmed pines only the far river
shines.
Creeping through blossom'd rushes and bower's
roseglowing boughs,
Down by the poplar tall rivulet's babble and fall.
Barketh the shepherd-dog cheerily; the grasshopper
carol'd clearly.
Deeply the tinkle coes; shrilly the owllet halloes;
Winds creep: dews fall chilly: in her first sleep
earth breathes stilly:
Over the pools in the burned watergnats murmur
and moan.

Sadly the far kine loweth: the glimmering water
onfloweth:
Twin peaks shadowed with pine slope to the dark
hyaline.
Lowthroned Hesper is stayed between the two
peaks; but the Nauvul
Throbbeth in wild unrest holds him beneath in her
breast.
The ancient poetess singeth that Hesperus all things
bringeth,
Smoothing the wearied mind: bring me my love,
Rosalind.
Thou comest morning and even; she cometh not
morning or even.
False-eyed Hesper, unkind, where is my sweet Ros-
alind?

THE "HOW" AND THE "WHY."

I AM any man's swain,
If any will be my tutor:
Some say this life is pleasant,
Some think it speedeth fast,
In time there is no present,
In eternity no past.
We laugh, we cry, we are born, we die,
Who will riddle me the how and the why?

The bulrush nods unto his brother,
The wheatears whisper to each other:
What is it they say? what do they there?
Why two and two make four? why round is not
square?
Why the rock stands still, and the light clouds fly?
Why the heavy oak grows, and the white willows
shig?
Why deep is not high, and high is not deep?
Whether we wake, or whether we sleep?
Whether we sleep, or whether we die?
If you are yet? why am I?
Who will riddle me the how and the why?

The world is somewhat; it goes on somehow:
But what is the meaning of thou and now?
I feel there is something; but how and what?
I know there is somewhat; but what and why?
I cannot tell if that somewhat be I.

The little bird pipeth—"why? why?"
In the summer woods when the sun falls low,
And the great bird sits on the opposite bough,
And stares in his face, and shouts "how? how?"
And the black owl scuds down the mellow twilight,
And chants "how? how?" the whole of the night.

Why the life goes when the blood is split?
What the life is? where the soul may lie?
Why a church is with a steeple built?
And a house with a chimney-pot?
Who will riddle me the how and the what?
Who will riddle me the what and the why?

SUPPOSED CONFESSIONS
OF A SECOND-RATE SENSITIVE MIND NOT IN
UNITY WITH ITSELF.

On God! my God! have mercy now.
I falut, I fall. Men say that thou
Didst die for me, for such as me,
Patient of ill, and death, and scorn,
And that my sin was as a thorn
Among the thorns that girt thy brow,
Wounding thy soul. —That even now,
In this extremest misery
Of ignorance, I should require
A sign: and if a bolt of fire
Would rive the slumberous summer noon
While I do pray to thee alone,
Think my belief would stronger grow!
Is not my human pride brought low?
The boastings of my spirit still?
The joy I had in my free will
All cold, and dead, and corpse-like grown?
And what is left to me, but thou,
And faith in thee? Men pass me by:
Christians with happy countenances—
And children all seem full of thee!
And women smile with salutary glances
Like thine own mother's when she bowed
Above thee, on that happy morn
When angels spake to men aloud,
And thou and peace to earth were born.
Goodwill to me as well as all—
—-I one of them: my brothers they:
Brothers in Christ—a world of peace
And confidence, day after day;
And trust and hope till things should cease,
And then one Heaven receive us all.

How sweet to have a common faith?
To hold a common scorn of death!
And at a burial to hear
The cracking cords which wound and eat
Into my human heart, where'er
Earth goes to earth, with grief, not fear,
With hopeful grief, were passing sweet!
A grief not uninform'd, and dull,
Hearted with hope, of hope as full
As is the blood with life, or night
And a dark cloud with rich moonlight.
To stand beside a grave, and see
The red small atoms wherewith we
Are built, and smile in calm, and say—
"These little motes and grains shall be
Clothed on with immortality;
More glorious than the noon of day.
All that is pass'd into the flowers,
And into beasts and other men,
And all the Norland whirlwind showers
From open vaults, and all the seas
O'erwashes with sharp salts, again
Shall fleet together all, and be
Indued with immortality."

Thrice happy state again to be
The trustful infant on the knee!
Who lets his waxen fingers play
About his mother's neck, and knows
Nothing beyond his mother's eyes.
They comfort him by night and day,
When light his little life alway;
He hath no thought of coming woes;
He hath no care of life or death,
Scarce outward signs of joy arise,
Because the Spirit of happiness
And perfect rest so inward is;
And loveth so his innocent heart,
Her temple and her place of birth,
Where she would ever wish to dwell,
Life of the fountain fresh, beneath
Its sallent springs, and far apart,
Hating to wander out on earth,
Or breathe into the hollow air,
Whose chillness would make visible
Her subtil, warm, and golden breath,
Which mixing with the infant's blood,
Fulfilles him with beatitude.
Oh! I sure it is a special care
Of God, to forfify from doubt,
To arm in proof of truth about.
With triple mailed trust, and clear
Delight, the infant's dawning year.
Would that my gloomed fancy were
As thine, my mother, when with brows
Propped on thy knees, my hands upheld
In thine, I listened to thy vows,
For me outpour'd in holiest prayer—
For me unworthy!—and beheld
Thy mild deep eyes upraised, that knew
The beauty and faith of thee,
And the clear spirit shining through.
Oh! wherefore do we grow away
From roots which strike so deep? why dare
Paths in the desert? Could not I
Bow myself down, and thou hast kneel'd,
To th' earth—until the ice would melt
Here, and I feel as thou hast felt?
What Devil had the heart to sancte
Flowers thou hadst reared—to brush the dew
From thine own lily, when thy grave
Was deep, my mother, in the clay?
Myself? Is it thus? Myself? Had I
So little love for thee? But why
Prevailed not thy pure prayers? Why pray
To one who needs not, who can save
But will not? Great in faith, and strong
Against the grief of circumstance
Wert thou, and yet unheard? What if
Thou pleadiest still, and seest me drive
Through utter dark a fall-sailed skiff,
Unpiloted, the echoing dance
Of roeanta whirlwinds, stooping low
Unto the death, not sunk! I know
At morn and at evening,
That thou, if thou hadst lived, in deep and daily prayers wouldst strive
To reconcile me with thy God.
Albeit, my hope is gray, and cold
At heart, thou wouldst murmuri still—
"Bring this lamb back into thy fold,
My Lord, if it be thy will."
Would'st tell me I must brook the rod,
And chastisement of human pride
That pride, the sin of devils, stood
Betwixt me and the light of God!
That hitherto I had defied,
And had rejected God—that Grace
Would drop from his overbrimming love,
As manna on my wilderness.
If I would pray—that God would move
And strike the hard, hard rock, and thence,
Sweet in their utmost bitterness,
Would issue tears of penitence
Which would keep green hope's life. Alas!
I think that pride hath now no place
Or sojourn in me. I am void,
Dark, formless, utterly destroyed.

Why not believe then? Why not yet
Anchor thy frality there, where man
Hath moored and rested? Ask the sea
At midnight, when the crisp slope waves
After a tempest, rib and fret
The broadinbasied beach, why he
Slumbers not like a mountain torn?
Wherefore his ridges are not curls
And ripples of an inland meer?
Wherefore he monocross that nor can
Draw down into his vexed pools
All that blue heaven which hues and paves
The other? I am too forlorn,
Too shaken: my own weakness fools
My judgment, and my spirit whirls,
Moved from beneath with doubt and fear.

"Yet," said I, in my morn of youth,
The unsunned freshness of my strength,
When I went forth in quest of truth,
"It is man's privilege to doubt,
If so be that from doubt at length,
Truth may stand forth unmoved of change,
An image with prodigious brows,
And perfect limbs, as from the storm
Of running fires and fluid range
Of lawless airs at last stood out
This excellence and solid form
Of constant beauty. For the Ox
Feeds in the herd, and shares, or fills
The horned valleys all about,
And hollows of the fringed hills
In summerbeats, with placid low.
Unfearing, till his own blood flows
About his hoof. And in the flocks
The lamb rejoiceth in the year,
And raceth freely with his sire,
And answers to his mother's calls
From the flowered furrow. In a time,
Of which he wots not, run short palms
Through his warm heart; and then, from whence
He knows not, on his light there falls
A shadow: and his native slope,
Where he was wont to leap and climb,
Floats from his sick and dimmed eyes,
And something in the darkness draws
His forehead earthward, and he dies.
Shall men live thus, in joy and hope
As a young lamb, who cannot dream,
Living, but that he shall live on?
Shall we not look into the jaws
Of life and death, and things that seem,
And things that be, and analyze
Our double nature, and compare
All credits till we find the one,
If one there be?" Ay me! I fear
All may not doubt, but every where
Some must clap Idols. Yet, my God,
Whom call I Idol? Let thy dove
Shadow me over, and my sites
THE BURIAL OF LOVE.

His eyes in eclipse,
Palecold his lips,
The light of his hopes unfed,
Mute his tongue,
His bow unstrung.
With the tears he hath shed,
Backward drooping his graceful head—
Love is dead;
His last arrow is sped;
He hath not another dart—
Go—carry him to his dark deathbed;
Bury him in the cold, cold heart—
Love is dead.

Oh, truest love! ah thou forlorn,
And unrevenged? thy pleasant wiles
Forgotten, and thine innocent joy?
Shall hollowhearted apathy,
The cruellest form of perfect scorn,
With languor of most hateful smiles,
For ever write,
In the withered light,
Of the tearless eye,
An epitaph that all may spy?
No! sooner she herself shall die.

For her the showers shall not fall,
Nor the round sun shine that shineth to all;
Her light shall into darkness change;
For her the green grass shall not spring,
Nor the rivers flow, nor the sweet birds sing,
Till Love have his full revenge.

TO

SAINTED Juliet: dearest name!
If to love be life alone,
Divinest Juliet,
I love thee, and live; and yet
Love unpurnished is like the fragrant flame
Folding the slaughter of the sacrifice
Offered to gods upon an altar-throne;
My heart is lighted at thine eyes,
Changed into fire, and blown about with sighs.

SONG.

I.
I' the glooming light
Of middle night
So cold and white,
Worn Sorrow sits by the moaning wave,
Beside her are laid
Her mattock and spade,
For she hath half delved her own deep grave.
Alone she is there:
The white clouds drizzle: her hair falls loose:
Her shoulders are bare;
Her tears are mixed with the beaded dews.

II.
Death standeth by;
She will not die;
With glazed eye
She looks at her grave: she cannot sleep;
Ever alone
She maketh her mean:
She cannot speak: she can only weep,
For she will not hope.
The thick snow falls on her face by face,
The dull wave mourns down the slope,
The world will not change, and her heart will not break.

SONG.

I.
The litlwwhite and the thrrostlecock
Have voices sweet and clear;
All in the bloomed May.
They from the bloomy breshe
Call to the fleeting year,
If that he would them hear.
And stay.
Alas! that one so beautiful
Should have so dull an ear.

II.
Fair year, fair year, thy children call,
But thou art deaf as death;
All in the bloomed May.
When thy light perisheth
That from thee issueth,
Our life cransheeth:
Oh! stay.
Alas! that lips so cruel-dumb
Should have so sweet a breath!

III.
Fair year, with brows of royal love
Then comest, as a king,
All in the bloomed May.
Thy golden largess flung,
And longer hear us sing;
Though thou art fleet of wing,
Yet stay.
Alas! that eyes so full of light
Should be so wandering!

IV.
Thy locks are all of sunny sheen
In rings of gold yronne,*
All in the bloomed May.
We pr' thee pass not on;
If thou dost leave the sun,
Delight is with thee gone.
Oh! stay.
Then art the fairest of thy feres,
We pr' thee pass not on.

SONG.

I.
Every day hath its night:
Every night its morn;
Thorough dark and bright
Winged hours are borne;
Ah! welaway!
Seasons flower and fade;
Golden calm and storm
Mingle day by day.
There is no bright form
Doth not cast a shade—
Ah! welaway!

* * His crink hair in rings was yronne,—Chacker, Knight's Tale.
II.
When we laugh, and our mirth
Apes the happy vein,
We're so kin to earth,
Pleasantness father's pain—
Ah! we all away!
Madness laugheth loud:
Laughter bringeth tears:
Eyes are worn away
Till the end of fears
Cometh in the shroud,
Ah! we all away!

III.
All is change, woe or weal;
Joy is Sorrow's brother;
Grief and gladness steal.
Symbols of each other;
Ah! we all away!
Larks in heaven's cope
Sing: the culvers mourn
All the livelong day,
Be not all forlorn
Let us weep in hope—
Ah! we all away!

NOTHING WILL DIE.
When will the stream be awaray of flowing
Under my eye?
When will the wind be awaray of blowing
Over the sky?
When will the clouds be awaray of fleetting?
When will the heart be awaray of beating?
And nature die?
Never, oh! never, nothing will die;
The stream flows,
The wind blows,
The cloud fleeteth,
The heart beats,
Nothing will die.

Nothing will die;
All things will change
Through eternity.
'Tis the world's winter;
Autumn and summer
Are gone long ago.
Earth is dry to the centre,
But spring a new comer—
A spring rich and strange.
Shall make the wind blow
Round and round,
Through and through,
Here and there,
Till the air
And the ground
Shall be filled with life anew.
The world was never made;
It will change, but it will not fade.
So let the wind range;
For even and more
Ever will be
Through eternity.
Nothing was born;
Nothing will die;
All things will change.

ALL THINGS WILL DIE.
Clearly the blue river chimes in its flowing
Under my eye;
Warmly and broadly the wind winds are blowing
Over the sky.
One after another the white clouds are fleetting;
Every heart this Maymorn in joyance is beating
Full merrily;
Yet all things must die.
The stream will cease to flow;
The wind will cease to blow;
The clouds will cease to fleet;
The heart will cease to beat;
For all things must die.

All things must die.
Spring will come never more.
Oh! vanity!
Death waits at the door.
See! our friends are all forsaking
The wine and merry-making.
We are called—we must go,
Laid low, very low,
In the dark we must lie.
The merry glees are still;
The voice of the bird
Shall no more be heard,
Nor the wind on the hill.
Oh! misery!
Hark! death is calling
While I speak to ye,
The jaw is falling,
The red cheek paling,
The strong limbs failing;
Ice with the warm blood mixing;
The eyelids fixing.
Nine times goes the passing bell;
Ye merry souls, farewell.
The old earth
Had a birth,
As all men know
Long ago.
And the old earth must die.
So let the warm winds range,
And the blue wave beat the shore;
For even and more
Ye will never see
Through eternity.
All things were born.
Ye will come never more,
For all things must die.

HERO TO LEANDER.
Oh go not yet, my love,
The night is dark and vast;
The white moon is hid in her heaven above,
And the waves climb high and fast.
Oh! kiss me, kiss me, once again,
Lest thy kisses be the last.
Oh kiss me ere we part;
Grow closer to my heart.
My heart is warmer surely than the bosom of the main.
O joy! O bliss of blisses!
My heart of hearts art thou.
Come bathe me with thy kisses,
My eyelids and my brow.
Hark how the wild rain kisses,
And the loud sea roars below.
Thy heart beats through thy rosy limbs,
So gladly doth it stir;
Thine eye in drops of gladness swims.
I have bathed thee with the pleasant myrrh;
Thy locks are dripping balm;
Thou shalt not wander hence to-night,
I'll stay thee with my kisses.
To-night the roaring brings
Will rend thy golden tresses;
The ocean with the morrow light
Will be both blue and calm;
And the billow will embrace thee with a kiss as soft,
As mine.
No Western odours wander
On the black and moaning sea,
And when thou art dead, Leander,
My soul must follow thee!
Oh go not yet, my love,
Thy voice is sweet and low:
The deep saltaire breaks in above
Those marble steps below.
The turrettstair are wet
That lead into the sea.
Leander! go not yet.
The pleasant stirs have set:
Oh! go not, go not yet,
Or I will follow thee.

THE MYSTIC.
Angels have talked with him, and showed him
thrones:
Ye knew him not; he was not one of ye,
Ye scorned him with an undiscerning scorn;
Ye could not read the marvel in his eye,
The still serene abstraction: he hath felt
The vanities of after and before;
Albeit, his spirit and his secret heart
The stern experiences of converse lives,
The linked woes of many a fiery change
Had purified, and chastened, and made free.
Always there stood before him, night and day,
Of wayward varcolored circumstance
The imperishable presences serene,
Colossal, without form, or sense, or sound,
Dim shadows but unwaning presences
Fourfaced to four corners of the sky:
And yet again, three shadows, fronting one,
One forward, one respectant, three but one:
And yet again, again and evermore,
For the two first were not, but only seemed,
One shadow in the midst of a great light,
One reflex from eternity on time,
One mighty confluence of perfect calm,
Awful with most invariable eyes.
For him the silent congregated hours,
Daughters of time, divinely tall, beneath
Severe and youthful brows, with shining eyes
Smiling a godlike smile (the innocent light
Of earliest youth pierced through and through with all
Keen knowledges of low-embowled eld)
Upheld, and ever hold aloft the cloud
Which droops lowhang on either gate of life,
Both birth and death: he in the centre fixt,
Saw far on each side through the grated gates
Most pale and clear and lovely distances.
He often lying broad awake, and yet
Reminiscing from the body, and apart
In intellect and power and will, hath heard
Time flowing in the middle of the night,
And all things creeping to a day of doom.
How could ye know him? Ye were yet within
The narrower circle; he had wellnigh reached
The last, which with a region of white flame,
Pure without heat, into a larger air
Upburning, and an ether of black blue,
Investeth and ingirds all other lives.

But an insect like and strong,
Bowing the seeded summer flowers.
Prove their falsehood and thy guillem.
Vaulting on thine airy feet.
Clap thy shielded sides and carol,
Carol clearly, chirrup sweet.
Thou art a mailed warrior in youth and strength complete;
Armed cap-a-pie
Full fair to see;
Unknowning fear,
Unclothing loes,
A gallant cavalier,
Sans peur et sans reproche,
In sunlight and in shadow,
The Bayard of the meadow.

II.
I would dwell with thee,
Merry grasshopper,
Thou art so glad and free,
And as light as air;
Thou hast no sorrow or tears,
Thou hast no compt of years,
No withered immortality,
But a short youth sunny and free.
Carol clearly, bound along,
Soon thy joy is over,
A summer of loud song,
And slumberers in the clover.
What hast thou to do with evil
In thine hour of love and revel,
In thy heat of summer pride,
Pushing the thick roots aside
Of the singing flowered grasses,
That brush thee with their silken tresses?
What hast thou to do with evil,
Shooting, singing, ever springing
In and out the emerald glooms,
Ever leaping, ever singing,
Lighting on the golden blooms?

LOVE, PRIDE, AND FORGETFULNESS.
Ere yet my heart was sweet Love's tomb,
Love laboured honey basily.
I was the hive, and Love the bee,
My heart the honeycomb.
One very dark and chilly night
Pride came beneath and held a light.
The cruel vapours went through all,
Sweet Love was withered in his cell;
Pride took Love's sweets, and by a spell
Did change them into gall;
And Memory, though fed by Pride,
Did wax so thin on gall,
Awhile she scarcely lived at all.
What marvel that she died?

'CHORUS
IN AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA, WRITTEN VERY EARLY.
The varied earth, the moving heaven,
The rapid waste of roving sea,
The fountainpregnant mountains riven
To shapes of wildest anarchy,
By secret fire and midnight storms
That wander round their windy cones,
The subtle life, the countless forms
Of living things, the wonderous tones
Of man and beast are full of strange
Astonishment and boundless change.
The day, the diamonded night,
The echo, feeble child of sound,
The heavy thunder's gridding night,
The herald lightning's starry bound,
The vocal spring of bursting bloom,
The naked summer's glowing birth,
The troubous autumn's sallow gloom,
The hearthead winter's pining earth
With sheeny white, are full of strange
Astonishment and boundless change.

Each sun which from the centre flings
Grand music and redundant fire,
The burning belts, the mighty rings,
The mura'rous planets' rolling choir,
The globefilled arch that, cleaving air,
Lost in its own effulgence sleep,
The lawless comets as they glare,
And thunder through the spongey deeps
In wayward strength, are full of strange
Astonishment and boundless change.

~~~

LOST HOPE.
You cast to ground the hope which once was mine:
But did the while your harsh decree deplore,
Embalming with sweet tears the vacant shrine,
My heart, where Hope had been and was no more.

So on an oaken spout
A goodly acorn grew;
But winds from heaven shook the acorn out,
And filled the cup with dew.

~~~

THE TEARS OF HEAVEN.
Heaven weeps above the earth all night till morn,
In darkness weeps as all ashamed to weep,
Because the earth hath made her state forlorn
With self-wrought evil of unnumbered years,
And doth the fruit of her dishonor reap.
And all the day heaven gathers back her tears
Into her own blue eyes so clear and deep,
And showering down the glory of lightsome day,
Smiles on the earth's worn brow to win her if she may.

~~~

LOVE AND SORROW.
O maiden, fresher than the first green leaf
With which the fearful springside flecks the lea,
Weep not, Alminda, that I said to thee
That thou hast half my heart, for bitter grief
Doth hold the other half in sovereignty.
Thou art my heart's sun in love's crystalline:
Yet on both sides at once thou canst not shine:
Thine is the bright side of my heart, and thine
My heart's day, but the shadow of my heart,
Issue of its own substance, my heart's light,
Thou canst not lighten even with thy light,
Allpowerful in beauty as thou art.

Alminda, if my heart were substanceless,
Then might thy rays pass through to the other side,
So swiftly, that they nowhere would abide,
But lose themselves in utter emptiness.
Halflight, half-shadow, let my spirit sleep;
They never learned to love who never knew to weep.

~~~

TO A LADY SLEEPING.
O thou whose fringed lids I gaze upon,
Through whose dim brain the wingèd dreams are borne,

Unroof the shrines of clearest vision,
In honor of the silvered morn:
Long hath the white wave of the virgin light
Driven back the billow of the dreamful dark.
Thou all unwittingly longest night,
Though long ago listening the posèd lark,
With eyes drop downward through the blue serene,
Over heaven's parapet the angels lea.

~~~

SONNET.
Could I but wear my present state of woe
With one brief winter, and lose l' the spring
Hues of fresh youth, and mightily outgrow
The wan dark coil of faded suffering—
Forth in the pride of beauty issuing
A sheeny snake, the light of vernal bower,
Moving his crest to all sweet plots of dower
And watered valleys where the young birds sing:
Could I thus hope my lost delight's renewing,
I straightly would command the tears to creep
From my charged lids; but inwardly I weep;
Some vital heat as yet my heart is wanting:
That to itself hath drawn the frozen rain
From my cold eyes, and melted it again.

~~~

SONNET.
Though Night hath climbed her peak of highest noon,
And bitter blasts the screaming autumn whirl,
All night through archways of the bridged pearl,
And portals of pale silver, walks the moon.
With clouds, my soul, nor crouch too to agony,
Turn close to light, and bitterness to joy,
And dross to gold with glorious alchemy,
Basing thy throne above the world's annoy.
 Reign thou above the storms of sorrow and ruth
That roar beneath; unshaken peace hath won thee;
So shalt thou pierce the venom grooms of truth:
Reign shall the blessing of the meek be on thee;
So in thine hour of dawn, the body's youth,
An honourable eld shall come upon thee.

~~~

SONNET.
Shall the bag Evil die with child of Good,
Or propagate again her loathed kind,
Thronging the cells of the diseased mind,
Hated with hanging cheeks, a withered brood,
Though hourly pastured on the salient blood?
Oh! that the wind which bloweth cold or heat
Would shatter and o'erhear the brazen beat
Of their broad vans, and in the solitude
Of middle space confound them, and blow back
Their wild cries down their cavern throats, and slake
With points of blastborne halt their heated eyes!
So their wan limbs no more might come between
The moon and the moon's reflex in the night,
Nor blod with floating shades the solar light.

~~~

SONNET.
Tune the pallid thunderstricken sigh for gain,
Down an ideal stream they ever float,
And sailing on Patoclus in a boat,
Drown soul and sense, while wistfully they strain
Weak eyes upon the glistening sands that rode
The understream. The wise, could be behold
Cathedral caverns, and of thickribbed gold
And branching silvers of the central globe,
Would marvel from so beautiful a sight.
How scorn and ruin, pain and hate could flow:  
But Hatred in a gold cave sits below;  
Pleached with her hair, in mall of argent light  
Shot into gold, a snake her forehead clips,  
And skins the colour from her trembling lips.

LOVE.

I.

Thou, from the first, unborn, undying love,  
Albeit thou gazed not on thy glories near,  
Before the face of God didst breathe and move,  
Though night and pain and ruin and death reign here.  
Thou holdest, like a golden atmosphere,  
The very throne of the eternal God:  
Passing through thee the edicts of his fear  
Are mellowed into music, borne abroad  
By the loud winds, though they uprend the sea,  
Even from its central depths: thine empery  
Is over all; thou wilt not brook eclipse;  
Thou goest and returnest to His lips
Like lightning: thou dost ever brood above  
The silence of all hearts, unutterable Love.

II.

To know thee is all wisdom, and old age  
Is but to know thee: dimly we behold thee  
Athwart the veils of evils which infold thee.  
We beat upon our aching hearts in rage;  
We cry for thee; we deem the world thy tomb.  
As dwellers in lone planets look upon  
The mighty disk of their majestic sun,  
Hollowed in awful charms of wheeling gloom,  
Making their day dim, so we gaze on thee.  
Come, thou of many crowns, whiterobed love,  
Oh! rend the veil in twain: all men adore thee:  
Heaven crieth after thee; earth waiteth for thee:  
Breathe on thy winged throne, and it shall move  
In music and in light o'er land and sea.

III.

And now—methinks I gazed upon thee now,  
As on a serpent in his agonies  
Awestricken Indians: what time liald low  
And crushing the thick fragrant reeds he lies,  
When the new year warreth on the Earth,  
Waiting to light him with her purple skies,  
Calls to him by the fountain to uprise.  
Already with the pangs of a new birth  
Strain the hot spheres of his coal-red eyes,  
And in his writings awful hues begin  
To wander down his sable-sheeny sides,  
Like light on troubled waters: from within  
Anon he rusheth forth with merry din,  
And in him light and joy and strength abides,  
And from his brow a crown of living light  
Looks through the thick-stemmed woods by day and night.

THE KRAKEN.

Below the thunders of the upper deep;  
Far, far beneath in the abyssal sea,  
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep,  
The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sunlights flee  
About his shadowy sides: above him swell  
Huge sponges of millenial growth and height;  
And far away into the sickly light,  
From many a wondrous grot and secret cell  
Unnumbered and enormous polypi  
Winnow with giant flus the slumbering green.  
There hath he lain for ages and will lie  
Batheing upon huge sea-worms in his sleep,  
Until the latter fire shall heat the deep;  
Then once by man and angels to be seen,  
In roaring he shall rise and on the surface die.

ENGLISH WAR-SONG.

Who fears to die? Who fears to die!  
Is there any here who fears to die?  
He shall find what he fears; and none shall grieve  
For the man who fears to die:

Crown. — Shout for England!  
Ho! for England! George for England!  
Merry England! England for eye!

The hollow at heart shall crouch forlorn,  
He shall eat the bread of common scorn;  
It shall be steeped in the salt, salt tear,  
Shall be steeped in his own salt tear:

Far better, far better he never were  
Than to shame merry England here.  
Crown. — Shout for England! etc.

There standeth our ancient enemy:  
Hark! he shouteth — the ancient enemy!  
On the ridge of the hill his banners rise;  
They stream like fire in the skies;  
Hold up the Lion of England on high  
Till it dazzle and blind his eyes.

Crown. — Shout for England! etc.

Come along! we alone of the earth are free;  
The child in our cradles is holder than he;  
For where is the heart and strength of slaves?  
Oh! where is the strength of slaves?  
He is weak! we are strong: he a slave, we are free;  
Come along! we will dig their graves.

Crown. — Shout for England! etc.

There standeth our ancient enemy:  
Will he dare to battle with the free?  
Spar along! spur amain! charge to the fight:  
Charge! charge to the fight!  
Hold up the Lion of England on high!  
Shout for God and our right!  
Crown. — Shout for England! etc.

NATIONAL SONG.

There is no land like England  
Where'er the light of day be;  
There are no hearts like English hearts,  
Such hearts of oak as they be.  
There is no land like England  
Where'er the light of day be;  
There are no men like Englishmen,  
So tall and bold as they be.

Chorus. — For the French the Pope may shrive 'em,  
For the devil a whilt we heed 'em:  
As for the French, God speed 'em  
Unto their heart's desire,  
And the merry devil drive 'em  
Through the water and the fire.

Full Chorus. — Our glory is our freedom,  
We lord it o'er the sea;  
We are the sons of freedom,  
We are free.

There is no land like England,  
Where'er the light of day be;  
There are no wives like English wives,  
So fair and chaste as they be.  
There is no land like England,  
Where'er the light of day be:  
There are no maids like English maids,  
So beautiful as they be.

Chorus. — For the French, etc.
DUALISMS.

Two bees within a crystal flowerbell rock'd,
Humb a lovelet to the westwind at noontide.
Both alike, they buzz together,
Both alike, they hum together,
Through and through the flowered heather,
Where in a creeping cove the wave unshocked
Lays itself calm and wide.

Over a stream two birds of glancing feather
Do woo each other, carolling together.
Both alike, they glide together,
Side by side;
Both alike, they sing together,
Arching blue-glossed necks beneath the purple weather.

Two children lovelier than Love adown the lea are singing,
As they gambol, lilgarlands ever stringing:
Both in bloushwhite silk are frocked:
Like, unlike, they roam together
Under a summervant of golden weather;
Like, unlike, they sing together
Side by side,
MidMay's darling golden locked,
Summer's tailling diamond eyed.

WE ARE FREE.

The winds, as at their hour of birth,
Leaning upon the winged sea,
Breathed low around the rolling earth
With mellow preludes, "We are free."
The streams through many a lined row
Down-carolling to the crisped sea,
Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow
Atween the blossoms, "We are free."

Oi riônteg.

I.

All thoughts, all creeds, all dreams are true,
All visions wild and strange:
Man is the measure of all truth.
Unto himself. All truth is change,
All men do walk in sleep, and all
Have faith in that they dream:
For all things are as they seem to all,
And all things flow like a stream.

Argal—this very opinion is only true relatively to
the flowing philosophers.

POEMS PUBLISHED IN THE EDITION OF 1833,
AND OMITTED IN LATER EDITIONS.

SONNET.

When, in the darkness over me,
The four-handed mole shall scrape,
Plant thou no dusky cypress tree,
Nor wreathe thy cap with doleful grape,
But pledge me in the flowing grape.

And when the sappy field and wood
Grow green beneath the showery gray,
And rugged barks begin to bud,
And through damp holts, newflushed with May,
Ring sudden laughters of the Jay;

Then let wise Nature work her will,
And on my clay the darcns grow.
Come only when the days are still,
And at my headstone whisper low,
And tell me if the woodbines blow,

Sweet as the noise in parch'd plains
Of bubbling wells that fret the stones
(If any sense in me remaine),
Thy words will be; thy cheerful tones
As welcome to my crumbling bones.
BUONAPARTE.

He thought to quell the stubborn hearts of oak,
Madman! to chain with chains, and bind with bands
That island queen that sways the floods and lands
From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight woke,
When from her wooden walls, lit by sure hands,
With thunders, and with lightnings, and with smoke,
Peal after peal, the British battle broke.
Lulling the brine against the Coptice sands,
We taught him bowler moods, when Elsinore
Heard the war moan along the distant sea,
Rocking with shattered spars, with sudden fires
Flamed over: at Trafalgar yet once more
We taught him: late he learned humility
Perforce, like those whom Gideon schooled with bri

SONNETS.

I.

O beauty, passing beauty! sweetest Sweet!
How canst thou let me waste my youth in sighs?
I only ask to sit beside thy feet.
Thou knowest I dare not look into thine eyes.
Might I but kiss thy hand! I dare not fold
My arms about thee—scarcely dare to speak.
And nothing seems to me so wild and bold,
As with one kiss to touch thy blessed cheek.
Methinks if I should kiss thee, no control
Within the thrilling brain could keep afloat
The subtle spirit. Even while I spoke,
The bare word Kiss hath made my inner soul
To tremble like a lustrestring, ere the note
Hath melted in the silence that it broke.

II.

But were I loved, as I desire to be,
What is there in the great sphere of the earth,
And range of evil between death and birth,
That I should fear,—if I were loved by thee?
All the inner, all the outer world of pain
Clear Love would pierce and cleave, if thou wert mine,
As I have heard that, somewhere in the main,
Fresh-water springs come up through bitter brine.
'Twere joy, not fear, clasped hand-in-hand with thee,
To wait for death—mute—careless of all ills,
Apart upon a mountain, though the surge
Of some new deluge from a thousand hills
Flung leagures of roaring foam into the gorge
Below us, as far on as eye could see.

THE HESPERIDES.

Hesperus and his daughters three,
That sing about the golden tree.—Comus.

The Northwind fall'n, in the newstarred night
Zidonian Hanno, voyaging beyond
The hoary promontory of Solos,
Past Thymisterion, in calm'd bays,
Between the southern and the western Horn,
Heard neither warbling of the nightingale,
Nor melody of the Libyan lotus flute
Blown seaward from the shore; but from a slope
That ran bloombright into the Atlantic blue,
Beneath a highland leaning down a weight
Of cliffs, and zoned below with cedar shade,
Came voices, like the voices in a dream,
Continous, till he reached the outer sea.

SONG.

I.

The golden apple, the golden apple, the hallowed
Guard it well, guard it wary;

Standing about the charmed root.
Round about all is mute,
As the snowfield on the mountain-peak,
As the sandfield at the mountain-foot.
Crocodiles in briny creeks
Sleep and stir not: all is mute.
If ye sing not, if ye make false measure,
We shall lose eternal pleasure,
Worth eternal want of rest.
Laugh not loudly: watch the treasure
Of the wisdom of the West.
In a corner wisdom whispers. Five and three
(Left not to be breathed abroad) make an awful mys
For the blossom unto threefold music bloweth;
Evermore it is born anew;
And the sap to threelfold music floweth,
From the root
Drawn in the dark,
Up to the fruit,
Creeping under the fragrant barks,
Liquid gold, honeysweet, thru' and thru'.
Reckless-eyed Sisters, singing airily,
Looking warily
Every way,
Guard the apple night and day,
Least one from the East come and take it away.

II.

Father Hesper, Father Hesper, watch, watch, ever
And aye,
Looking under silver hair with a silver eye.
Father, twinkle not thy steadfast sight;
Kingdoms waste, and climates change, and races
die;
 Honour comes with mystery;
Hoarded wisdom brings delight.
Number, tell them over and number
How many the mystic fruit tree holds
Lest the redcombed dragon slumber
Rolled together in purple folds.
Look to him, father, lest he wink, and the golden
apple be stolen away.
For his ancient heart is drunk with overwatchings
night and day,
Round about the hallowed fruit tree circled—
Sings away, sings aloud evermore in the wind, with
out stop,
Less his sealed eyeball drop,
For he is older than the world.
If he waken, we waken,
Rapidly levelling eager eyes.
If he sleep, we sleep,
Dropping the eyelid over the eyes.
If the golden apple be taken,
The world will be otherwise.
Five links, a golden chain, are we,
Hesper, the dragon, and sisters three,
Bound about the golden tree.

III.

Father Hesper, Father Hesper, watch, watch, night
And day,
Lest the old wound of the world be healed,
The glory unsalted,
The golden apple stolen away,
And the ancient secret revealed.
Look from west to cast along:
Father, old Himala weakens, Caucasus is bold and
strong.
Wandering waters unto wandering waters call;
Let them clash together, foam and fall.
Out of watchings, out of miles,
Comes the biles of secret smiles.
All things are not told to all.
Half-round the mantling night is drawn,
Purple fringed with even and dawn.
Hesper hath Phosphor, evening hath morn.
ROSA琳D.—SONG.—KATE.

IV.
Every flower and every fruit the redolent breath
Of this warm sea wind ripeneth,
Arching the billow in his sleep;
But the land wind wandereth,
Broken by the highland-steep,
Two streams upon the violet deep;
For the western sun and the western star,
And the low west wind, breathing afar,
The end of day and beginning of night
Make the apple holy and bright;
Holy and bright, round and full, bright and blest,
Mellowed in a land of rest;
Watch it warily day and night;
All good things are in the west.
Till mid noon the cool east light
Is shut out by the tall hillbrow;
But when the full-faced sunset yellowly
Stays on the flowering arch of the bough,
The lushous fruitage clustereth mellowly,
Gold-enkernelled, goldencored,
Sunset-ripened above on the tree.
The world is wasted with fire and sword,
But the apple of gold hangs over the sea.
Five links, a golden chain are we,
Hesper, the dragon, and sisters three,
Daughters three,
Bound about
The guarded bale of the charmed tree.
The golden apple, the golden apple, the hollowed fruit,
Guard it well, guard it warily,
Watch it warily,
Singing airily,
Standing about the charmed root.

ROSA琳D.

I.
My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
My frollic falcon, with bright eyes,
Whose free delight, from any height of rapid flight,
Stoops at all game that wing the skies,
My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
My bright-eyed, wild-eyed falcon, whither,
Careless both of wind and weather,
Whither fly ye, what game spy ye,
Up or down the streaming wind?

II.
The quick lark's closest-carolled strains,
The shadow rising up the sea,
The lightning flash betwixt the rains,
The sunlight driving down the lea,
The leaping stream, the very wind,
That will not stay, upon his way,
To stoop the cowslip to the plains,
Is not so clear and bold and free
As you, my falcon Rosalind.
You care not for another's pains,
Because you are the soul of joy,
Bright metal all without alloy.
Life shoots and glances thru your veins,
And flashes off a thousand ways,
Through lips and eyes in subtle rays.
Your hawkeyes are keen and bright,
Keen with triumph, watching still
To Pierce me through with pointed light;
But oftentimes they flash and glitter
Like sunshine on a dancing rill,
And your words are seeming-bitter,
Sharp and few, but seeming-bitter
From excess of wit delight.

III.
Come down, come home, my Rosalind,
My gay young hawk, my Rosalind:
Too long you keep the upper skies;
Too long you roam and wheel at will:
But we must hood your random eyes,
That care not whom they kill,
And your cheek, whose brilliant hue
Is so sparkling-fresh to view,
Some red heath flower in the dew,
Touched with sun rise. We must blind
And keep you fast, my Rosalind,
Fast, fast, my wild-eyed Rosalind,
And clip your wings, and make you love:
When we have lured you from above,
And that delight of frollic flight, by day or night,
From north to south;
Will bind you fast in silken cords,
And kiss away the bitter words
From off your rosy mouth.

NOTE TO ROSA琳D.
Perhaps the following lines may be allowed to stand as a separate poem; originally they made part of the text, where they were manifestly improper.

My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
Bold, subtle, careless Rosalind,
Is one of those who know no strife
Of inward woe or outward fear;
To whom the slope and stream of Life,
The life before, the life behind,
In the car, from far and near,
Chimeth musically clear.
My falconhearted Rosalind,
Fulisdail before a vigorous wind,
Is one of those who cannot weep
For others' woes, but overlap
All the petty shocks and fears
That trouble life in early years,
With a flash of frollic scorn
And keen delight, that never falls
Away from freshness, selflapborne
With such gladness as, whenever
The freshflushing springtime calls
To the flooding waters cool.
Young fishes, on an April morn,
Up and down a rapid river,
Leap the little waterfalls
That sing into the pebbled pool.
My happy falcon, Rosalind,
Hath daring fancies of her own,
Fresh as the dawn before the day,
Fresh as the early season blown
Through vineyards from an inland bay.
My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
Because no shadow on you falls,
Think you hearts are tennisballs,
To play with, wanton Rosalind?

SONG.

Who can say
Why Today
Tomorrow will be yesterday?
Who can tell
The why to swelle
The violet, recalls the dewy prime
Of youth and buried time?
The cause is nowhere found in rhyme.

KATE.
I know her by her angry air,
Her bright black eyes, her bright black hair,
Her rapid laughter wild and shrill,
As laughter of the woodpecker
From the bosom of a hill,
'Tis Kate—she sayeth what she will:
For Kate hath an unbridled tongue,
Clear as the twanging of a harp.

Her heart is like a throbbing star.
Kate hath a spirit ever strong
Like a new bow, and bright and sharp
As edges of the scymetar.

Whence shall she take a fitting mate?
For Kate no common love will feel;
My woman-soldier, gallant Kate,
As pure and true as blades of steel.

Kate saith "the world is void of might."
Kate saith "the men are gilded flies."
Kate snaps her fingers at my vows;
Kate will not hear of lovers' sighs.

I would I were an armed knight,
Far famed for wellworn enterprise,
And wearing on my swarthy brows
The barland of new-wreathed emprise;

For in a moment I would pierce
The blackest files of clanging fight,
And strongly strike to left and right,
In dreaming of my lady's eyes.

Oh! Kate loves well the bold and fierce;
But none are bold enough for Kate,
She cannot find a fitting mate.

SONNET
WRITTEN ON HEARING OF THE OUTBREAK OF THE POLISH INSURRECTION.
Blow ye the trumpet, gather from afar
The hosts to battle: be not bought and sold.
Arise, brave Poles, the boldest of the bold;
Break through your iron shackles—ding them far.
O for those days of Piast, ere the Czar
Grew to his strength among his deserts cold;
When even to Moscow's cupolas were rolled
The growing murmurs of the Polish war!

Now must your noble anger blaze out more
Than when from Sobieski, clan by clan,
The Moslem myriads fell, and fled before—
Than when Zamovsky smote the Tatar Khan;
Than earlier, when on the Baltic shore
Boleslas drove the Pomeranian.

SONNET
ON THE RESULT OF THE LATE RUSSIAN INVASION OF POLAND.
How long, O God, shall men be ridden down,
And trampled under by the last and least
Of men? The heart of Poland hath not ceased
To quiver, though her sacred blood doth drown
The fields; and out of every mouldering town
Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be increased,
Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the East
Transgress his ample bound to some new crown:—
Cries to Thee, "Lord, how long shall these things be?"

How long shall the icy-hearted Muscovite
Oppress the region?" O, O Just and Good,
Forgive, who smiled when she was torn in three;
Us, who stand nowe, when we should aid the right—
A matter to be wept with tears of blood!

SONNET.
As when with downcast eyes we muse and brood,
And ebb into a former life, or seem
To lapse far back in a confused dream
To states of mystical similitude;
If one but speaks or hems or sits his chair,
Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,
So that we say, "All this hath been before,
All this hath been, I know not when or where."
So, friend, when first I looked upon your face,
Our thought gave answer, each to each, so true,
Opposed mirrors each reflecting each—
Altho' I knew not in what time or place,
Methought that I had often met with you,
And each had lived in the other's mind and speech.

O DARLING ROOM.

I.
O darling room, my heart's delight
Dear room, the apple of my sight,
With thy two couches soft and white,
There is no room so exquisite,
No little room so warm and bright,
Wherein to read, wherein to write.

II.
For I the Nonnenwerth have seen,
And Oberwinter's vineyards green,
Musical Lurlei; and between
The hills to Bingen have I been,
Bingen in Darmstadt, where the Rhone
Curves toward Mentz, a woody scene.

III.
Yet never did there meet my sight,
In any town to left or right,
A little room so exquisite,
With two such couches, soft and white;
Not any room so warm and bright,
Wherein to read, wherein to write.

TO CHRISTOPHER NORTH.
You did late review my lays,
Crusty Christopher;
You did mingle blame and praise,
Rusty Christopher.
When I learnt from whom it came,
I forgave you all the blame,
Musty Christopher;
I could not forgive the praise,
Fusty Christopher.
OCCASIONAL POEMS.

NO MORE.*

On sad No More! Oh sweet No More!
Oh strange No More!
By a mossed brookbank on a stone
I smelt a wildweed flower alone;
There was a ringing in my ears,
And both my eyes gushed out with tears.
Surely all pleasant things had gone before,
Lowburied fathom deep beneath this, No More!

ANACREONTICS.

Worm roses muskybreathed,
And drooping daffodilly,
And silverleaved lily,
And ivy darkly-wreathed,
I wove a crown before her,
For her I love so dearly,
A Garland for Lenora.

A sere and的生命less
I pointed with my finger,
But the pulse of the sun no longer
Beat like the heart of a lover.

ANACREONTICS.

Where is the Giant of the Sun, which stood
In the midnoon the glory of old Rhodes,
A perfect Idol with profusent brows
Farshining down the purple seas to those
Who sailed from Mizraim underneath the star
Named of the Dragon—and between whose limbs
Of brassy vastness broodeth the Argus;
Drave into haven? Yet endure unsought
Of changeful cycles the great Pyramids
Broadbased amid the fleeting sands, and sloped
Into the slumberous summer noon; but where,
Mysterious Egypt, are thine obelisks
Graven with gorgeous emblems undiscerned?
Thy splendid Sphinxes brooding over the Nile?
Thy shadowing Idols in the solitude,
Awful Memnonian countenances calm
Looking athwart the burning flats, far off
Seen by the highmecked camel on the verge
Journeying southward? Where are thy monuments
Piled by the strong and snarinh Anakim
Over their crowned brethren Os and Verm?
Thy Memnon when his peaceful lips are kist
With earliest rays, that from his mother’s eyes
Flow over the Arabian bay, no more
Breathes low into the charmed ears of morn
Clear melody flattering the crisped Nile?

SONNET.*

Me my own fate to lasting sorrow doometh:
Thy woes are birds of passage, transitory:
Thy spirit, circled with a living glory,
In summer still a summer joy resumeth.

And by my hopeless melancholy gloometh,
Like a lone cypress, through the twilight hoary,
From an old garden where no flower bloometh,
One cypress on an island promontory.

But yet my lonely spirit follows thine;
As round the rolling earth night follows day:
But yet thy lights on my horizon shine
Into my night, when thou art far away.

I am so dark, alas! and thou so bright,
When we two meet there’s never perfect light.

A FRAGMENT.

THE SKIPPING-ROPE.†

Scene never yet was Antelope
Could skip so lightly by,
Stand off, or else my skipping-robe
Will hit you in the eye.

How lightly whirls the skipping-robe!
How fairy-like you fly?
Go, get you gone, you muse and mope—
I hate that sly sigh.

Nay, dearest, teach me how to hope,
Or tell me how to die.
There, take it, take my skipping-robe,
And hang yourself thereby.

THE NEW TIMON AND THE POETS.‡

We know him, out of Shakespeare’s art,
And those fine curses which he spoke;
The old Timon, with his noble heart,
That, strongly loathing, greatly broke.

* This and the two following poems are from the Gem, a literary
annual for 1831.
† Omitted from the edition of 1842.
‡ Published in Panch, Feb. 1844, signed "Alchymist."
NEW TIMON.—AFTER-THOUGHT.—BRITONS, GUARD YOUR OWN.

So died the Old: here comes the New.
Regard him: a familiar face:
I thought we knew him: What, it's you,
The padded man—that wears the stays—

Who killed the girls and thrilled the boys
With dandy pathos when you wrote!
A Lion, yon, that made a noise,
And shook a mane en papillotes.

And once you tried the Muses too:
You failed, Sir: therefore now you turn,
To fall on those who are to you
As Captain is to Subaltern.

But men of long-enduring hopes,
And careless what this hour may bring,
Can pardon little would-be Popes
And Brunelles, when they try to sting.

An Artist, Sir, should rest in Art,
And wave a little of his claim;
To have the deep Poetic heart
Is more than all poetic fame.

But you, Sir, you are hard to please;
You never look but half content:
Nor, like a gentleman at ease,
With moral breadth of temperament.

And what with spites and what with fears,
You can not let a body be:
It's always ringing in your ears,
"They call this man as good as me."

What profits now to understand
The merits of a spotless shirt—
A dapper boot—a little hand—
If half the little soul is dirt?

You talk of tinsel! why, we see
The old mark of rouge upon your cheeks.
You prate of Nature! you are he
That split his life about the cliques.

A TIMON you! Nay, nay, for shame:
It looks too arrogant a jest—
The fierce old man—to take his name,
You bandbox. Off, and let him rest.

AFTER-THOUGHT.*

Ah, God! the petty fools of rhyme,
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars
Before the stony face of Time,
And look'd at by the silent stars:—

That hate each other for a song,
And do their little best to bite,
That pinch their brothers in the throng,
And scratch the very dead for spite:—

And strive to make an inch of room
For their sweet selves, and can not hear
The sullen Lethe rolling down
On them and their, and all things here:—

When one small touch of Charity
Could lift them nearer Godlike State,
Than if the crowded Orb should cry
Like those that cried Diana great.

And f too talk, and lose the touch
I talk of. Surely, after all,
The noolest answer unto such
Is kindly silence when they bawl.

STANZAS.*

What time I wasted youthful hours,
One of the shining winged powers,
Show'd me vast cliffs with crown of towers.
As towards the gracious light I bow'd,
They seem'd high palaces and proud,
Hid now and then with sliding cloud.

He said, "The labor is not small;
Yet winds the pathway free to all:—
Take care thou dost not fear to fall!"

SONNET

TO WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY.†

Farewell, Macready, since to-night we part.
Full-handed thunders often have contest
 Thy power, well-used to move the public breast.
We thank thee with one voice, and from the heart.
Farewell, Macready; since this night we part.
Go, take thine honors home; rank with the best,
Garrick, and statelier Kemble, and the rest
Who made a nation prouer thro' their art.
Thine is it, that our Drama did not die,
Nor flicker down to brainless pandirntme,
And those gilt gauds men-children swarm to see.
Farewell, Macready; moral, grave, sublime.
Our Shakspere's bland and universal eye [thee.
Dwells pleased, thro' twice a hundred years, on

BRITONS, GUARD YOUR OWN.‡

Rise, Britons, rise, if manhood be not dead,
The world's last tempest darkness overhead.
The Pope has bless'd him;
The Church carr'd him.
He triumphs: may he we shall stand alone.
Britons, guard your own.

His ruthless host is bought with plunder'd gold,
By lying priests the peasants' votes control'd.
All freedom vanish'd,
The true men banish'd,
He triumphs: may be we shall stand alone.
Britons, guard your own.

Peace-lovers we—sweet Peace we all desire—
Peace-lovers we—but who can trust a liar?
Peace-lovers, haters
Of shameless traitors,
We hate not France, but this man's heart of stone
Britons, guard your own.

We hate not France, but France has lost her voice.
This man is France, the man they call her choice.
By tricks and spying,
By craft and lying,
And murder was her freedom overthrown.
Britons, guard your own.

"Vive l'Empereur!" may follow bye and bye;
"God save the Queen" is here a truer cry.
God save the Nation,
The toleration,
And the free speech that makes a Briton known.
Britons, guard your own.

Rome's dearest daughter now is captive France,
The Jesuit laughs, and reckoning on his chance,

* The Keepsake, 1851.
† Read by Mr. John Forster at a dinner given to Mr. Macready March 1, 1851, on his retirement from the stage.
‡ The Examiner, 1854.
THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1852.—HANDS ALL ROUND.

Would unrelenting,
Kill all dissenting,
Till we were left to fight for truth alone.
Brillods, guard your own.

Call home your ships across Biscayan tides,
To blow the battle from their oaken sides.
Why waste they yonder Their idle thunder?
Why stay they there to guard a foreign throne?
Seamen, guard your own.

We were the best of marksmen long ago,
We won old battles with our strength, the bow.
Now practice, yeomcn,
Like those bowmen,
Till your balls fly as their shafts have flown.
Yeomen, guard your own.

His soldier-ridden Highness might incline
To take Sardinia, Belgium, or the Rhine:
Shall we stand idle,
Nor seek to bide
His rude aggressions, till we stand alone?
Make their cause your own.

Should he land here, and for one hour prevail,
There must no man go back to bear the tale:
No man to bear it—
Swear it! we swear it!
Altho' though we fight the banded world alone,
We swear to guard our own.

THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1852.*

My lords, we heard you speak; you told us all
That England's honest census went too far;
That our free press should cease to brawl,
Not sting the fiery Frenchman into war.
It was an ancient privilege, my lords,
To fling whate'er we felt, not fearing, into words.

We love not this French God, this child of Hell,
Wild War, who breaks the converse of the wise;
But though we love kind Peace so well,
We dare not, e'en by silence, sanction lies.
It might seem be our censures to withdraw;
And yet, my lords, not well; there is a higher law.

As long as we remain, we must speak free,
Though all the storm of Europe on us break;
No little German state are we,
But the one voice in Europe; we must speak:
That if to-night our greatness were struck dead,
There might remain some record of the things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be bold.
Our Britain can not salve a tyrant o'er.
Better the waste Atlantic roll'd
On her and us and ours for evermore.
What! have we fought for freedom from our prime,
At last to dodge and palter with a public crime?

Shall we fear him? our own we never feared.
From our first Charles by force we wrung our claims
Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,
And flung the burthen of the second James.
I say we never fear'd! and as for these, [sece.]
We broke them on the land, we drove them on the
And you, my lords, you make the people muse,
In doubt if you be of our Barrons' breed—

Were those your sires who fought at Lewes?
Is this the manly strain of Runnymede?
O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,
Would lie in honey'd whispers of this monstrous fraud.

We feel, at least, that silence here were sin.
Not ours the fault if we have feeble hosts—
If easy patrons of their kin.
Have left the last free race with naked coats!
They knew the precious things they had to guard:
For us, we will not spare the tyrant one hard word.

Though maggar threats of Manchester may howl,
What England was, shall her true sons forget?
We are not cotton-spinners all,
But some love England, and her honor yet.
And these in our Thermopylae shall stand,
And hold against the world the honor of the land.

HANDS ALL ROUND.*

False drink a health, this solemn night,
A health to England, every guest—
That man's the best cosmopolite
Who loves his native country best.
May Freedom's oak for ever live
With stronger life from day to day:
That man's the best Conservative
Who lops the mouldered branch away.

Hands all round!
God the tyrant's hope confound!
To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

A health to Europe's honest men!
Heaven guard them from her tyrants' jails!
From wronged Poesy's noblest men,
From ironed limbs and tortured nails!
We curse the crimes of southern kings,
The Russian whips and Austrian rods—
We likewise have our evil things:
Too much we make our Ledgers, Gods.

Yet hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To Europe's better health we drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

What health to France, if France be she,
Whom martial progress only charms?
Yet tell her—better to be free
Than vanish all the world in arms.
Her frantic city's flashing hear's!
But fire, to blast, the hopes of men.
Why change the titles of your streets?
You fools, you'll want them all again.

Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To France, the wiser France, we drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

Gigantic daughter of the West,
We drink to thee across the flood,
We know thee and we love thee best;
For art thou not of British blood?
Should war's mad blast again be blown,
Permit not thou the tyrants powers
To fight thy mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with ours.

Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To our dear kinmen of the West, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

O rise, our strong Atlantic sons,
When war against our freedom springs! 

* The Examiner, 1852, and signed "Merlin."
O speak to Europe through your guns!  
They can be understood by kings.  
You must not mix our Queen with those  
That wish to keep their people fools;  
Our freedom's foes are her foes,  
She comprehends the race she rules.  
Hands all round!  
God the tyrant's cause confound!  
To our dear kinsman in the West, my friends,  
And the great name of England, round and round.

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THE WAR.*

Tarzan is a sound of thunder afar,  
Storm in the South that darkens the day,  
Storm of battle and thunder of war,  
Well, if it do not roll our way.  
\(\text{Form! form! Riflemen form!}\)  
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!  
\(\text{Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!}\)

Be not deaf to the sound that warns!  
Be not gull'd by a despot's plea!  
Are figs of thistles, or grapes of thorns?  
How should a despot set men free?  
\(\text{Form! form! Riflemen form!}\)  
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!  
\(\text{Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!}\)

Let your Reforms for a moment go,  
Look to your butts and take good aim.  
Better a rotten borough or so,  
\(\text{Than a rotten fleet or a city in flames!}\)  
\(\text{Form! form! Riflemen form!}\)  
\(\text{Ready, be ready to meet the storm!}\)  
\(\text{Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!}\)

\(\text{Form, be ready to do or die!}\)  
\(\text{Form in Freedom's name and the Queen's!}\)  
\(\text{True, that we have a faithful ally,}\)  
But only the Devil knows what he means.  
\(\text{Form! form! Riflemen form!}\)  
\(\text{Ready, be ready to meet the storm!}\)  
\(\text{Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!}\)

---

ON A SPITEFUL LETTER.†

Hear, it is here—the close of the year,  
And with it a spiteful letter.  
My fame in song has done him much wrong,  
For himself has done much better.

\(\text{O foolish bard, is your lot so hard,}\)  
\(\text{If men neglect your pages?}\)  
\(\text{I think not much of yours or of mine:}\)  
\(\text{I hear the roll of the ages.}\)

This fallen leaf, isn't fame as brief?  
\(\text{My rhymes may have been the stronger.}\)  
Yet hate me not, but abide your lot;  
\(\text{I last but a moment longer.}\)

\(\text{O faded leaf, isn't fame as brief?}\)  
\(\text{What room is there for a hater?}\)  
\(\text{Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,}\)  
\(\text{For it hangs one moment later.}\)

Greater than I—isn't that your cry?  
And I shall live to see it.  
Well, if it be so, so it is, you know;  
And if it be so—so be it!

\(\text{O summer leaf, isn't life as brief?}\)  
\(\text{But this is the time of hollies.}\)  
And my heart, my heart is an evergreen:  
I hate the spites and the follies.

---

* London Times, May 9, 1859.
† "Good Words," March, 1868.
"Once a Week," January 4, 1866.
THE WINDOW; or, THE SONGS OF THE WRENS.

WORDS WRITTEN FOR MUSIC.

THE MUSIC BY ARTHUR SULLIVAN.

Four years ago Mr. Sullivan requested me to write a little song-cycle, German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such old songs as "Orpheus with his lute," and I drest up for him, partly in the old style, a puppet whose almost only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.

December, 1870.

I.

ON THE HILL.

The lights and shadows fly!

Yonder it brightens and darkens down on the plain.

A jewel, a jewel dear to a lover's eye!

O is it the brook, or a pool, or her window-pane,

When the winds are up in the morning?

Clouds that are racing above,

And winds and lights and shadows that cannot be still,

All running on one way to the home of my love,

You are all running on, and I stand on the slope of the hill,

And the winds are up in the morning!

Follow, follow the chase!

And my thoughts are as quick and as quick, ever on,

O lights, are you flying over her sweet little face?

And my heart is there before you are come and gone,

When the winds are up in the morning!

Follow them down the slope!

And I follow them down to the window-pane of my dear,

And it brightens and darkens and brightens like my hope,

And it darkens and brightens and darkens like my fear,

And the winds are up in the morning.

II.

AT THE WINDOW.

Vine, vine and eglantine,

Cannot a flower, a flower, be mine?

Rose, rose and clematis,

Drop me a flower, a flower, to kiss,

Kiss, kiss—And out of her bower

All of flowers, a flower, a flower,

Drop, a flower.

III.

GONE!

Gone!

Gone till the end of the year,

Gone, and the light gone with her and left me in shadow here!

Gone—flitted away,

Taken the stars from the night and the sun from the day!

Gone, and a cloud in my heart, and a storm in the air!

Flown to the east or the west, flitted I know not where!

Down in the south is a flash and a groan: she is there! she is there!

IV.

WINTER.

The frost is here,

And fuel is dear,

And woods are sear,

And fires burn clear,

And frost is here

And has bitten the heel of the going year.

Bite, frost, bite!

You roll up away from the light

The blue woodhouse, and the plump dormouse,

And the bees are still'd, and the flies are kill'd,

And you bite far into the heart of the house,

But not into mine.
"Go, little letter, apace, apace."
Bite, frost, bite!
The woods are all the nearer,
The fuel is all the dearer,
The fires are all the clearer,
My spring is all the nearer,
You have bitten into the heart of the earth,
But not into mine.

V.

SPRING.

Birds' love and birds' song
Flying here and there,
Birds' song and birds' love,
And you with gold for hair!
Birds' song and birds' love,
Passing with the weather,
Men's song and men's love,
To love once and for ever.

Men's love and birds' love,
And women's love and men's!
And you my wren with a crown of gold,
You my Queen of the wrens!
You the Queen of the wrens—
We'll be birds of a feather,
I'll be King of the Queen of the wrens,
And all in a nest together.

VI.

THE LETTER.

Where is another sweet as my sweet,
Fine of the fine, and shy of the shy?
Fine little hands, fine little feet—
Dewy blue eye.
Shall I write to her? shall I go?
Ask her to marry me by and by?
Somebody said that she'd say no;
Somebody knows that she'll say ay!

Ay or no, if seek'd to her face?
Ay or no, from shy of the shy?
Go, little letter, space, space,
Fly!

Fly to the light in the valley below—
Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye:
Somebody said that she'd say no;
Somebody knows that she'll say ay!

VII.

NO ANSWER.

The mist and the rain, the mist and the rain!
Is it ay or no? Is it ay or no?
And never a glimpse of her window-pane!
And I may die but the grass will grow,
And the grass will grow when I am gone,
And the wet west wind and the world will go on.

Ay is the song of the wedded spheres,
No is trouble and cloud and storm,
Ay is life for a hundred years,
No will push me down to the worm,
And when I am there and dead and gone,
The wet west wind and the world will go on.

The wind and the wet, the wind and the wet!
Wet west wind, how you blow, you blow!
And never a line from my lady yet!
Is it ay or no? Is it ay or no?
Blow then, blow, and when I am gone,
The wet west wind and the world may go on.

VIII.

NO ANSWER.

Wrens are loud and you are dumb:
Take my love, for love will come,
Love will come but once a life.
Winds are loud and winds will pass!
Spring is here with leaf and grass:
Take my love and be my wife.
After-loves of maidens and men
Are but dainties drest again:
Love me now, you'll love me then:
Love can love but once a life.

IX.

THE ANSWER.

Two little hands that meet,
Cleft on her seal, my sweet!
Must I take you and break you,
Two little hands that meet?
I must take you, and break you,
And loving hands must part—
Take, take—break, break—
Break—you may break my heart.
Faint heart never won—
Break, break, and all's done.

IXa.

AY!

Be merry, all birds, to-day,
Be merry on earth as you never were merry before,
Be merry in heaven, O larks, and far away,
And merry for ever and ever, and one day more.
Why?
For it's easy to find a rhyme.

Look, look, how he flits,
The fire-crown'd king of the wrens, from out of the pine!
Look how they tumble the blossom, the mad little tilt!
"Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!" was ever a May so fine?
Why?
For it's easy to find a rhyme.

O merry the linnet and dove,
And swallow and sparrow and thrushie, and have your desire!
O merry my heart, you have gotten the wings of love,
And flit like the king of the wrens with a crown of fire.
Why?
For it's ay ay ay, ay ay.
X.
WHEN?
Sun comes, moon comes,
Time slips away,
Sun sets, moon sets,
Love, fix a day.

"A year hence, a year hence."
"We shall both be gray."
"A month hence, a month hence."
"Far, far away."

"A week hence, a week hence."
"Ah, the long delay."
"Wait a little, wait a little,
You shall fix a day."

"To-morrow, love, to-morrow,
And that's an age away."
Blaze upon her window, sun,
And honour all the day.

XI.
MARRIAGE MORNING.
Light, so low upon earth,
You send a flash to the sun.
Here is the golden close of love,
All my wooing is done.
O the woods and the meadows,
Woods where we hid from the wet,
Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,
Meadows in which we met!
Light, so low in the vale,
You flash and lighten afar:
For this is the golden morning of love,
And you are his morning star.
Flash, I am coming, I come,
By meadow and stile and wood:
O light into my eyes and my heart,
Into my heart and my blood!
Heart, are you great enough
For a love that never tires?
O heart, are you great enough for love?
I have heard of thorns and briars.
Over the thorns and briars,
Over the meadows and stiles,
Over the world to the end of it
Flash for a million miles.
No. I.

THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FLY.

Allegro vivace e poco agitato.

The lights and shadows fly,

Yonder it brightens and darkens
down on the plain...... A jewel,
THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FLY.

a jewel dear... to a lover's eye.

O is it the brook,.......

or a pool, or her window

cres. poco rit.

f a tempo.

When the winds are up in the morn-

f a tempo. sf sf
THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FLY.

Clouds that are racing above,
O winds and lights and shadows that cannot be still.
THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FLY.

All running on one way to the home of my love, All running on;

And I stand on the slope of the hill, And the
THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FLY.

winds are up in the morn - ing!

Con forza
dim.

Fol-low, I fol-low the chase,
And my thoughts are as

Con forza.
dim.

quick, are as quick run - ning on, run - ing

Dim.
Rit.
The Lights and Shadows Fly.

Un poco più lento.

O Lights,

are you flying over her

sweet little face? And my heart is

there before you are come and gone, And my
THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FLY.

When the winds are up in the morning,
follow them down the slope, and I
THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FLY.

Follow them down to the window pane of my dear; Oh, it brightens, and darkens, and brightens like my hope, It darkens and brightens, and darkens like my fear. When the sempre cres. e animato.

...
winds are up in the morning,

When the winds are up in the morning.
No. II.

VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.

Allegretto con molta tenerezza.

Vine, vine and eglantine,

Clasp her window, trail and twine, Rose, rose and
VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.

VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.

VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.

VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.

VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.

VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.

VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.
Vine, vine and eglantine, cannot a flower, a flower be mine? Rose, rose and clematis...
VINE, VINE AND EGLANTINE.

Drop me a flower, a flower to kiss, kiss.

And out of her bower, All of flowers, a flower, a flower, Dropt a flower.
No. III.

GONE! GONE TILL THE END OF THE YEAR.

Andantino quasi Allegretto.

And left me in shadow here.
GONE! GONE TILL THE END OF THE YEAR.

Gone—flit-ted a-way,

Taken the stars from the night, and the

sun from the day. Gone, and a cloud in my

heart, and a storm in the air!
GONE! GONE TILL THE END OF THE YEAR.

Flown to the east or the west, flitted I
till the end of the year.

know not where! Down in the south is a
flash and a groan.

She is there!

She is there.
No. IV.
THE FROST IS HERE.

*Allegro comodo ma vivace.*

**VOICE.**

**PIANO FORTE.**

The frost is here. And fuel is dear. And

woods are sear. And fires burn clear. And frost is

here, And has bitten the heel of the

going year.
The frost is here.

Bite, frost, bite!
You roll up away from the

light The blue wood-louse,
And the

plump dormouse;
And the bees are

still'd,
And the flies are kill'd,
And you
THE FROST IS HERE.

bite far, far into the heart of the house, But

not into mine; And you bite far

far into the heart of the house, But not into

mine.
THE FROST IS HERE.

Bite, frost,

bite! The woods are all the scar er,

The fuel is all the dear er,

fires are still the clear er,

My spring is all the near er,
You have bit ten in to the heart of the earth, But

not in to mine; You have bit ten in to the

heart of the earth, But not, not in to

colla voce.

mine.
No. V.

BIRDS' LOVE AND BIRDS' SONG.

Allegro scherzando.

VOICE.

PIANO
FORTE.

Birds' love and birds' song,
Fly - ing here and there;

Birds' song and birds' love,
And
you with gold for hair; Birds' song and

birds' love, passing with the weather;
Men's love and birds' love, And

Woman's love and men's,... And you, my wren, with

Crown of gold, You, the queen of the wrens!
You the Queen of the wrens, We'll be birds of a

feather, I'll be King of the Queen of the wrens, And

all in a nest together!
No. VI.

WHERE IS ANOTHER SWEET AS MY SWEET.

Andante con molta tenerezza.

Where is another sweet as my sweet? Such another beneath the sky! Fine little hands,

Voice.

Piano Forte.
WHERE IS ANOTHER SWEET AS MY SWEET.

Fine little feet, Fine little hearts and
dewy blue eye. Shall I write to her?

Shall I go! Ask her to marry me
by and by! Somebody said that
WHERE IS ANOTHER SWEET AS MY SWEET.

she'd say no, But some- bo- dy knows that

she'll say ay, Ay ay, Ay ay, Ay

ay!

Ah,... my la- dy if asked to her face,
WHERE IS ANOTHER SWEET AS MY SWEET.

Might say no, for she is but shy;

Fly, little letter, a pace, a pace,

Down to the light in the valley fly;

Fly to the light in the valley below,
WHERE IS ANOTHER SWEET AS MY SWEET.

Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye, For somebody

said that she'd say no, But she won't say

no, And I'll tell you why— She will say ay, Ay, ay!

ay!........................................

ay!
No. VII.

THE MIST AND THE RAIN.

Allegro molto e agitato.

The mist and the rain, The mist and the rain! Is it

And

never a glimpse of her
THE MIST AND THE RAIN.

And may I may

die, but the grass will

grow, And the grass will grow when
I am gone, And the wet west wind and the world will go on.

AY is the song of the wedded spheres, No is
trouble and cloud and storm, Ay is life for a

hundred years, No will push me down to the worm;

And when I am there, and dead, and gone, The

wet west wind and the world will go on, The world
THE MIST AND THE RAIN.

will go on. a tempo agitato.

wind and the wet, The wind and the wet!

Wet west wind, how you blow, you blow! And
THE MIST AND THE RAIN.

never a line from my

lady yet!

Is it ay or

no?

Is it ay or
THE MIST AND THE RAIN.

ff più animato.

no?

Blow, then, blow, and

dim.

ff

roll. al fine.

when I am gone The wet west wind and the

colla voce.

world may go on.
No. VIII.

WINDS ARE LOUD, AND YOU ARE DUMB.

Andante espressivo.

Winds are loud, and you are dumb, Take my love, for love will come; Love will come but once a life, Love will come but once... a life.
WINDS ARE LOUD, AND YOU ARE DUMB.

Winds are loud, and winds will pass;

Spring is here with leaf and grass,

Take my love, and be..... my wife!
WINDS ARE LOUD, AND YOU ARE DUMB.

Take my love and be .... my wife.

After pm

loves of maids and men Are but

dainties dressed again; Love me now you'll
WINDS ARE LOUD, AND YOU ARE DUMB.

love . . . . . me then . . . . . Love can

love but once . . . . a life, Love can

love . . . but once . . . . . . . . a life.
No. IX.

TWO LITTLE HANDS THAT MEET.

Andante.

Two little hands that meet,

PIANO FORTE.

Claspt on her seal, my sweet! Must I take you and break you,

Must I take you and break you,

Two little hands that meet?

I must take you.

a tempo.

ritenuto.

colla voce.
TWO LITTLE HANDS THAT MEET.

And break you, And loving hands must part;

Take, take; break, break; Break;—you may break my heart!

Faint heart never won, Break, break and all's done.

ff Allegro.
No. X.

SUN COMES, MOON COMES.

Allegro molto.

Sun comes, moon comes,

Time slips away.
SUN COMES, MOON COMES.

Sun sets, moon sets,

"A Love, fix a day."

year hence, a year hence,"

We shall both be gray; "A
SUN COMES, MOON COMES.

month hence, a month hence,"

Far, far away.

con fuoco.

"A week hence, a
SUN COMES, MOON COMES.

week hence," Ah! the long de-

lay! "Wait a lit- tle,

Wait a lit-tle, You shall fix a

un poco rit.

day;" To-mor-row, love, to-
cres.

Ped. Ped. Ped.
SUN COMES, MOON COMES.

mor - row, And that's an age a -

way; Blaze up - on her
cres. ff con forza.

wind - dow, sun, And hon - or all the day!

sf alla voce. ff f f

Ped.

Ped. * Ped.
No. XI.
LIGHT SO LOW UPON EARTH.

*Andante con moto.*

VOICE.

PIANO FORTE.

Light so low upon earth... You send a flash to the sun, Here is the golden close of love, All my wooing is done... O the woods and the meadows,
Light, so low in the vale, 
You flash and lighten a-

far; 
For this is the golden morn-ing of love, And
you are his morning star. . . . Flash! I am coming, I come. . . . By meadow and stile, and wood. . . . 0 con passione.

lighten into my eyes and my heart, Into my eyes and my blood. Heart, are you
great enough For a love that never tires?

O heart, are you great enough for love?

I have heard of thorns and briers......
LIGHT SO LOW UPON EARTH.

Over the thorns and briers,......

Over the meadows and stiles,......

Over the world to the end of it, Flash for a million miles.

Over the thorns and briers......

con anima.

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *
LIGHT SO LOW UPON EARTH.

O - ver the meadows and stiles, .......
O - ver the
doing

Fed.
Fed.
Fed.

world to - the end.......... of it........

Flash for a mil - lion miles,...............

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.
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