A la señora

E.

E. M. de Tulgarg
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.
1870.
To the present edition are added "Timbuctoo," the author's Cambridge University Prize Poem; Poems published in the edition of 1830, and omitted in later editions; and a number of hitherto uncollected Poems from various sources.
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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 brow
Of him that uttered 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 throstle calls
Where all about your palace-walls
The sunlit almond-blossom shakes—

Take, Madam, this poor book of song;
For tho' the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule as 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 council met
Who knew the seasons, when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet

"By chaplog 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-lleth
The breezes pause and die,
Letting the rose-leaves fall:
But the solemn oak-tree sightheth,

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

2.

At eve the beetle booneath
Asthwart the thicket lone:
At noon the wild bee hummest
About the moss'd headdstone:
At midnight the moon cometh,
And looketh down alone.

3.

Her song the linwhite sweleth,
The clear-voiced marie dwelleth,
The callow throstle lispesth,
The slumberous wave outwelleth,
The babbling runnel crispesth,
The hollow grot reptileth
Where Claribel low-lleth.

LILIAN.

1.

Aisy, fairy Lilian,
Fitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Claps 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-arch, so cunning-simple,
From beneath her gather'd whimple
Glaning with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughter dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks;
Then away she flies.

3.

Prythee weep, May Lilian!
Gaiety without eclipse
Wearieth me, May Lilian:
Thro' 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, 
Alry Lilian, 
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee, 
Fairy Lilian.

---

ISABEL.

1.
Eyes not down-dropped nor over-bright, but fed 
With the clear-pointed flame of chastity, 
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 wifehood, and pure lowlhead.

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 auspicious pride;

A courage to endure and to obey: 
A hate of gossip parlance and of away, 
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 muddy 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 parasitic, 
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." 
Measures for Measure.

Wren 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 shed’s look’d sad and strange: 
Unlifted was the clinking 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 fall with the dew at even; 
Her tears fall are the dew 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 eventide.

After the fitful of the bate,
Which to the crooning wind aloof
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glistening flats.

She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aawery, aawery,
I would that I were dead!"

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-bowl crow:
The cock sang 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 aawery, aawery,
I would that I were dead!"

About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marsh-mosses crept.

Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarled bark:
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 aawery, aawery,
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, to and fro,
She saw the gnsy shadow sway.

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 aawery, aawery,
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 moulderin' wainscot shrille'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 aawery, aawery,
I would that I were dead!"

The sparrow's chitter on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the woodely wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense; but most she losted the hour
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bower.

Then said she, "I am very dreary,
He will not come," she said;
She wept, "I am aawery, aawery,
O God, that I were dead!"
SONGS.—RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

The flush of anger’d shame
Overflows thy calmer glance;
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 entangled
In a golden-netted smile;
Then in madness and in blise,
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 ran home and light is come,
   And dew is cold upon the ground,
   And the far-off stream is dumb,
   And the whirring sail goes round,
   And the whirring sail goes round;
   Alone and warming his five wits,
   The white owl in the belfly sit.

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 belfly sit.

SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

1. Thy tuwhits are bull’d I wot,
   Thy tuwwoan of yesternight,
   Which upon the dark asoat,
   So took echo with delight,
   So took echo with delight,
   That her voice untuneable grown,
   Wears all day a fainter tone.

2. I would mock thy chant anew;
   But I cannot mimic it;
   Not a whist of thy tuwwoo,
   Thee to woo to thy tuwwit,
   Thee to woo to thy tuwwit,
   With a lengthen’d loud balloo,
   Tuwwoo, tuwwit, tuwwit, tuwwoo-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 forward-drowning tide of time;
And many a sheney summer morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat’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 Atrashid.

Anlight my shallops, rustling thro’
The low and bloomed foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue:
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering thro’ lamplight dim,
And broder’d sofsa in each side:
In sooth it was a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Atrashid,

Often, where clear-stemm’d platsans 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 award
Was damask-work, and deep inlay
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
Adown to where the water slept.
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Atrashid.

A motion from the river won
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
My shallops thro’ the star-strown calm,
Until another night in night:
I entered, from the clearer light,
Imbower’d vaults 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 Atrashid.

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

Above thro’ many a bowery turn
A walk with vary-color’d shells
Wander’d engrain’d.
On either side
All round about the fragrant marke
From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others stubb’d wider
With disks and tars, fed the tune
With odor in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Atrashid.

Far off, and where the lemon-grove
In closeter couverture prime,
The living airs of middle night
Died round the balmth as he sung,
Not he: but something which posses’d
The darkness of the world, delight,
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
Cessing not, mingled, unpress’d,
Apart from place, withholding time,
But flattering the golden prime
Of good Haroun Atrashid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
Slumber’d: the solemn palms were ranged
Above, unwo’d of summer wind:
A sudden splendor from behind
Flush’d all the leaves with rich gold-green,
And, flowing rapidly between
ODE TO MEMORY.

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 Alraschid.

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

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 Alraschid.

With dazed vision mawares
From the long alley's lattice shade
Emerged, I came upon the great
Pavilion of the Caliphat.
Right to the carved 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 Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight
As with the quintessence of flame,
A million tapers flaring bright
From twisted silvers lock'd to shame
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
Upon the mooned domes aloof
In num'rous Bagdad, till there seem'd
Hundred s of crescents on the roof
Of night new-risen, that marvellous time,
To celebrate the golden prime.
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

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

Six columns, three on either side,
Pure silver, underprop a rich
Throne of the massive ore, from which
Down-droop'd in many a floating fold,
Engarlanded and diapern'd
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
With merriment of kindly pride.
Solo star of all that place and time,
I saw him—in his golden prime,
The Good Haroun Alraschid!
SONG.  

When the first matin-song hath waken'd loud  
Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,  
What time the amber morn  
Forth gashes from beneath a low-hung cloud.

5.  

Large dowries doth the raptured eye  
To the young spirit present  
When first she is wed;  
And like a bride of old  
In triumph led,  
With music and sweet showers  
Of festal flowers,  
Unto the dwelling she must away.  
Well hast thou done, great artist Memory,  
In setting round thy first experiment  
With royal frame-work of wrought gold;  
Needs must thou dearly love thy first essay,  
And foremost in thy various gallery  
Place it, where sweetest sunlight falls  
Upon the storied walls:  
For the discovery  
And newness of thine art so pleased thee,  
That all which thou hast drawn of fairest  
Or boldest since, but lightly weighs  
With thee unto the love thou bearest  
The first-born of thy genius. Articles like,  
Ever relining thou dost gaze  
On the prime labor of thine early days:  
No matter what the sketch might be;  
Whether the high field on the bushless Pike,  
Or even a sand-built ridge  
Of heaped hills that mound the sea,  
Overthrown with murmurs hare,  
Or even a lowly cottage where we see  
Stretched'd wide and wild the waste enormous marsh,  
Where from the frequent bridge,  
Like emblems of infinity,  
The trenched waters ran from sky to sky:  
Or a garden bow'er'd close  
With plated alleys of the trailing rose,  
Long alleys falling down to twilight grots,  
Or opening upon level plots  
Of crowned lilies, standing near  
Purple-spiked lavender;  
Whither in after life retired  
From brawling storms,  
From weary wind,  
With youthful fancy re-inspired.  
We may hold converse with all forms  
Of the many-sided mind,  
And those whom passion hath not blinded,  
Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded,  
My friend, with you to live alone,  
Weto how much better than to own  
A crown, a sceptre, and a throne!  
O strengthen me, enlighten me!  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

---

2.  

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,  
As a sick man's room when he taketh repose  
An hour before death;  
My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves  
At the moist rich smell of the rotting leaves,  
And the breath  
Of the fading edges of box beneath,  
And the year's last rose.  
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly,  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

---

ADELINE.  

1.  

Mystery of mysteries,  
Faintly 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.  

Whence that airy bloom of thine,  
Like a lily which the sun  
Looks thro' in his sad decline,  
And a rose-bush leona upon,  
Thou that faintly smil'st still,  
As a Naiad in a well,  
Looking at the set of day,  
Or a phantom two hours old  
Of a maldean 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:  
Do beating hearts of salient springs  
Keep measure with thine own?  
Hast thou heard the butterflies,  
What they say betwixt their wings?  
Or in stilllest evenings  
With what voice the violet woos  
To his heart the silver dews?  
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, waving odorous sighs  
All night long on darkness blind.  
What aileth thee? whom wilt thou see  
With thy softest, shadow'd brow,  
And those dew-lit eyes of thine,  
Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

5.  

Lovest thou the doleful wind  
When thou gazest at the skies?
A CHARACTER.—THE POET.—THE POET'S MIND.

Both the low-toned Orient
Wander from the side of the morn,
Dripping with Sabean spice
On thy pillow, lowly bent
With melodious airs loveborn,
Breathing Light against thy face,
While his locks a-dropping twined
Round thy neck in subtle ring
Make a carcanet 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.

A CHARACTER.

With 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,
Like 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 hour by hour
He canvassed 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 fanned power.

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

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 flight,
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
Piling 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 fall, behold,
Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew
A flower all gold,
And bravely furnished all abroad to sing
The winged shafts of truth,
To thronch with stately blooms the breathing spring
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with beams,
The' 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 wreathes of floating dark upcur'd,
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise
Her benefiald bold brow,
When rites and forms before his burning eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
Sunn'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 ran,
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,
But one poor poet's scroll, and with his word
She shook the world.

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 canst 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 near;
All the place is holy ground;
Hollow smile and frozen humour
Come not here.
Holy water will I pour
Into every sprey 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 kill the plants.
Where you stand you cannot bear
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 they 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,
Shril 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 lea:
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 furl your sails,
Come hither to me and to me:
Hither, come hither and frolic and play;
Here it is only the mew that calls;
We will sing to you all the day:
Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,

For here are the blissful downs and dales,
And merrily merrily Carol the gales,
And the spangle dances in height and bay,
And the rainbow forms and dies 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 cove and care,
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:
O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
With pleasure and love and jubilee:
O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
When the sharp clear twang of the golden chords
Runs 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!

All within is dark as night;
In the windows is no light;
And no murmur at the door,
So frequent on its hinge before.

Close the door, the shutters close,
Or thro' the windows we shall see
The nakedness and vacancy
Of the dark deserted house.

"Life and Thought have gone away
Side by side."
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.

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-root of doleful gray.
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.

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 will,
And far thro' the marish green and still
The tangled water-courses slept,
Shot over with purple, and green, and yellow.

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,
Prevaling 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 rejoiced,
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 moses and clambering weeds,
And the willow-branches hoar and dank,
And the weary walk of the soughing reeds,
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,
And the silverly marish-flowers that thron
The desolate creeks and pools among,
Were flooded over with eddying song.

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

Thee nor carketh care nor slander;
Nothing but the small, cold worm
Pretteth thine ensnared form.
Let them rave.
Light and shadow ever wander
O'er the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed;
chanteth not the brooding bee
Sweter tones than calmany?
Let them rave.
Thou wilt never raise thine head
From the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee;
The woodbine and egrets
Drip sweeter dew than traitor's tear.
Let them rave.
Rain makes music in the tree
O'er the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,
Bramble-roses, faint and pale,
And long purples of the dale.
Let them rave.
These in every shower creep
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

The gold-eyed kingscup fine;
The frail bluebell peereth over
Rare brodary of the purple clover.
Let them rave.
Kings have no such couch as thine;
As the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

Wild words wander here and there;
God's great gift of speech abused
Makes thy memory confused:
But let them rave.
The balm-cricket carole clear
In the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

What time the mighty moon was gathering light
Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,
And all about him roll'd his histrion eyes:
When, turning round a casia, full in view
Death, walking all alone beneath a yew,
And talking to himself, first met his sight:
"You must begone," said Death, "these walks are mine."
Love wept and spread his sheeny vans 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 eminence creates the shade of death;
The shadow passeth when the tree shall fall,
But I shall reign forever over all."
THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

My heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.

There is no rest for me below,
Oriana.

When the long sun wolds 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 going,
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 stept a foeman tall,
Oriana,

A'ween 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.

Lond, loud rang out the bugle's brays,
Oriana.

Oh! deathful stabs were dealt space,
The battle deepened 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 smilest, but thou dost not speak,
And then the tears run down my cheek,
Oriana:

What wanst thou? whom dost thou seek,
Oriana?

I cry aloud, none hear my cries,
Oriana.

Thou comest between 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 case;
Two graves grass-green beside a gray church-tower,
Wash'd with still ralns 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-flower;
And holding them back by their flowing locks
I would kiss them often under the sea,
And kiss them again till they kiss'd 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 dell,
Call to each other and whoop and cry
All night, merrily, merrily;
They would pelt me with starry spangles and shells,
Laughing and clasping their hands between,
All night, merrily, merrily:
But I would throw to them back in mine
Turksk and agate and almondine:
Then leaping out upon them unseen
I would kiss them often under the sea,
And kiss them again till they kissed me
Laughingly, laughingly.
Oh! 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.

M E R M A I D .

1. Wasl would be
A mermaid fair,
Singing alone,
Combog 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 wold 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-bud crown
Love adown and around.
And I should look like a fountain of gold
Springing alone
With a shrill inner round,
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 trall himself sevenfold
Round the hall where I ate, 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 shell,
Whose silver spikes are highest the sea,
But if any cause near I would call, and shriek,
And adown the steeply like a wave I would leap.
From the diamond-ledges 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 see me, and woe 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 howless mosses under the sea
Would curl round my silver feet silently.
All looking up for the love of me.
And if I should carol aloud, from aloft
All things that are forked, and horned, and soft
Would leap out from the hollow sphere of the sea,
All looking down for the love of me.

S O N N E T T O J. M. K.
My hope and heart is with thee—thou wilt be
A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest
To scare church-hariples from the master's feast;
Our dusted velvets have much need of thee;
Thou art no Sabbath-drawer of old saws,
Distill'd from some worm-canker'd homily;
But spurr'd at heart with fieriest energy
To embattail and to wall about thy cause
With iron-worded proofs, bating to hard
The humbling of the droyne pulpit-drone
Half God's good Sabbath, while the worm-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.

P O E M S .

(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 1832.]

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

P A R T I .

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the world 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 whiten, aspen quiver,
Little breezes dust and shiver

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 immowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-well'd,
Slide the heavy barges till'd
By slow horses; and unhailed
The shallop lithe; 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 LADY OF SHALOTT.

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerily
From the river winding clearly,
Down to tower'd Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers, "Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

PART II.

Thus she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot:
And so she weaveth steadily,
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 surly 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 funeral, 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 red cross 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 hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewel'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
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 glowed;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trod;
From underneath his helmet flowed
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 lira," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She saw three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She saw 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.

Is the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were burning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily with the sky inclining.

Over tower'd Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left aloof,
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 dark'en wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot;
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the waters-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
A corse between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot,
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and barbour, 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 raised 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.

With 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 inlets 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 sadd'ly grew,
From brow and bosom slowly down
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
Her streaming car's 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, sad is 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 marv'led she;
Complaining, "Mother, give me grace
To help me of my weary load,"
And on the liquid mirror glowed
The clear perfection of her face.
"It is 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 increased from heat to heat,
On stony drought and steaming salt;
Till now at noon she slept again,
And seemed knee-deep in mountain grass,
And heard her native breezes pass,
And runlets babbling down the glen.
She breathed in sleep a lower moan,
And mermaring, 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 sulk willow sere and small.
The river-bed was dusty-white;
And all the furnace of the light
Struck up against the blinding wall.
She whisper'd, with a stifled moan
More inward 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 loved with true on 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 moan,
"The day to night, the light to morn,
And day and night I am left alone
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

At eve a dry clea sang,
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 Hebes glitter'd on her tears,
And deepening through the siluet spheres,
Heaven over Heaven rose the night.
And weeping then she made her moan,
"The night comes on that knows not morn,
When I shall cease to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

ELEANORE. 1.

Tuvi 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 the baby thought.
Far off from human neighborhood,
Thon wert born, on a summer morn,
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.
The bonnets' forehead was not fram'd
With breezes from our oaken glades,
But thou wert nurs'd in some delicious land
Of livish 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 call'd—
A glorions child, dreaming alone,
In silk-soft folds, upon yielding down,
With the hum of swarming bees
Into dreamful slumber fall'd.

3. Who may minister to thee?
Summer her self should minister
To thee, with frailtage golden-rinded
On golden salvers, 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-sal'd verse express,
How may measured words adore
The full-dowing 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 single:
Like two streams of incense free
From one censer, in one shrine,
Thought and motion mingle,
Mingle forever.
Motions flow
To another, even as thou
They were modulated so
To an unheard melody,
Which lives about thee, and a sweep
Of those praises, evermore
Drown from each other mellow-deep;
Who may express thee, Eleanore?

5. I stand before thee, Eleanore;
I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
Dally 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, whence'er
The laugour of thy love-deep eyes
Float on to me. I would I were
So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,
To stand apart, and to adore,
Gazing on thee forevermore,
Seren, 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 overpow'r'd quite,
I cannot veil, or droop my sight,
But am as nothing in its light:
As a star, in the most heaven set,
Ev'n while we gaze on it,
Should slowly round his orb, and slowly grow
To a full face, there like a sun remain
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,
Rood't the world with doubt and fear,
Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,
Grow golden all about the sky;
In thee all passion becomes passionless,
Touched by thy spirit's meekness, mellowness,
Losing his 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 moths of the outer sea:
And the selfsame influence
Controlleth all the soul and sense
Of passion gazing upon thee.
His bow-string slackened, languid Love,
Leaning his cheek upon his hand,
Droops both his wings, regarding thee,
And so would languish evermore,
Serenity, imperial Eleanore.

8.
But when I see thee roam, with tresses unconfined,
While the amorous, odorous wind
Breathes low between the sunset and the moon;
Or, in a shadowy saloon,
On even 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
Through my veins to all my frame,
Dissolvingly 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 tremulous tongue faltereth,
I lose my color, I lose my breath,
I drink the cup of a costly death,
Brimm'd 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, Eleanore.

†††

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 dusty 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 cap—
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 scare 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 unriddled by—by—by.
There's somewhat that doth us ill, in life,
But more is taken quite away.
Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,
That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth?
I least should breathe a thought of pain.
Would God remove 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 sphere,
Where this old mansion mounted high
Looks down upon the village spire:
Four even here, where I and you
Have lived and loved alone so long,
Each morn my sleep was broken thro'
By some wild skylark's matin-song.

And oft I heard the tender dove
In flirty 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 sway'd
Like those long masses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I learnt to hear
The milldam rushing down with noise,
And see the millmows everywhere
In crystal eddies glance and pulse,
The tall flag-dowers when they sprung
Below the range of stepping-stones,
Or those three chestnuts near, that hang
In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that,
When after roving in the wood
(‘Twas April then), I came and sat
Below the chestnuts, when their buds
Were glistening to the breezy blue;
And on the slope, an absent fool,
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,
Felt 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 loapt a trout. 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 bean-screen 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 ails the boy?
For I was alter'd, and began
THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

To move about the house with joy,
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam
Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,
The sleepy pool above the dam,
The pool beneath it never still,
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd 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 glistened 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-flow'd slope.

The deep brook grom'd beneath the mill:
And "by that lamp," I thought, "she sits!"
The white chalk-quarry from the hill
Gleamed 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 wish'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 give her for your sake;
Go fetch your Alice here," she said:
Her eyelid quivered as she spoke.

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 fail'd 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 silent 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 chestnuts whisper by.

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewe1
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 balm' bosom,
With her laughter or her sighs,
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A tride, 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 as in 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.

Arise, and let us wander forth, To yon old mill across the woods: For look, the sunset, south and north, Winds all the vale in rosy folds, And throw your casement glass, Touching the sullen pool below: On the chalk-hill the bearded grass Is dry and deadless. Let us go.

FATIMA.

O Love, Love, Love! O withering might! O sun, that from thy noonday height Sunderest 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 crushed them on my breast, my mouth: I looked athwart the burning drouth Of that long desert to the south.

Last night, when some one spoke his name, From my soul's 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, striking on my brow. In my dry brain my spirit soon Down-deepening from swwon to swwon, 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 stoop down in their desire; And, isled in sudden seas of light, My heart, pierc'd thro' with fierce delight, Burs'd into blossom in his sight. My whole soul waiting silently, All naked in a sultry sky, Droop'd 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 clasp'd in his embrace.

Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars The long brook falling thro' the clowr'n ravine In cataract after cataract to the sea. Behind the valley topmost Gargaraus Stands up and takes the morning: but in front The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal Troas and Illus' column'd citadel, The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon Mournful Geneve, wandering forlorn Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills. Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest. She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine, Sang to the stillness, till the mountains shade Sloped downward to her seat in the upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida, Dear mother Ida, 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 celes sleeps. The purple flowers droop; the golden bee Is lil'y-cradled: I alone awake. My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love, My heart is broken, and my eyes are dim, And I am all aerey of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida, Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die. Hear me O Earth, hear me O Hills, O Caves That house 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 here: for it may be That, while I speak of it, a little while My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida, Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die. I waited underneath the dawning hills, Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark, And dewy-dark aloft the mountain plane: Beautiful! Paris, evil Paris, Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd, white-hooved, Came up from reedy Simio's all alone.

"O mother Ida, 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 brighten'd When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart Went forth to embrace him coming ere he can.

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

"My Beautiful-brow'd Geneve, my own! Behold this fruit, whose gleaming "For the most fair," would seem As lovelier than whatever Oread. The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all Of movement, and the charm of..."
And added, 'This was cast upon the board, when all the full-faced presence of the Gods Ranged in the halls of Pelus; whereupon a rose-faint, with question and the vine-tendere due: But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve, Delivering, that to me, by common voice Elected umphre, Here comes to-day, Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each this need of favor: Then, within the cave Behind you whispering tuft of oldest pine, Mayst well behold them unheheld, unheard Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Idas, hearken ere I die. This was the mid-dawn: one silvery cloud Had lost its way between the piny sides Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came, Naked they came to that smooth-warded bower, And at their feet the crocus brake like fire, Violet, amaranus, and asphodel, Lotus and lilies: and a wind arose, And overhead the wandering ivy and vine, This way and that, in many a wild festoon Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs With buncb and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

"O mother Idas, hearken ere I die. On the tree-tops a crested peacock sits, And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and loind Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew. Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom Comming 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-sounder'd champagnu clothed with corn, Or labor'd mines unendurable 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.'

"Dear mother Idas, 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 of wisdom—from all neighbor crowns Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand Fall 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 Idas, hearken ere I die. And used, and Paris held the costly fruit To arm's-length, so much the thought of power Whet his spirit; but Pallas where she stood Depart, her clear and bared limbs With the brazen-headed spear piously shoulder leaning cold, As she, her full and earnest eye Cold-bred and angry cheek with frowning decision, made reply.

"I will, self-knowledge, self-control, To lead life to sovereign power. Power (power of herself and for) but to live by law, live by without fear: Here is right, to follow right the corn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Idas, hearken ere I die. Again she said: 'I woo thee not with gifts. Sequel of ordeon could not alter me To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am, So shalt thou find me fairest. Yet, indeed, If gazying on divisibility Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair, Unblazon'd by self-profit, oh i rest thee sure That I shall love thee well and cleave 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. Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will, Circled thro' all experiences, pure law, Commeasure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceased, And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O Ida, Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not, Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

"O mother Idas, many-foun^aded Ida, Dear mother Idas, hearken ere I die. Italian Aphrodite beautiful, Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells, With rosy slender fingers backward drow From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair Ambrosial, golden round her head that And shoulder: from the violets her light foot Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form Between the shadows of the vine-bunches Flotted the glowing sunbeams, as she moved.

"Dear mother Idas, hearken ere I die. She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes, The herald of her triumph, drawing high Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise thee The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.' She spake 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 withdraw into the golden clouds. And I was left alone within the bower: And from that time to this I am alone, And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Idas, hearken ere I die. Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair? My love hath told me so a thousand times. Me thinks I must be fair, for yesterday, When I passed by, a wild and wand'ring crowd Aileys the evening star, with playful tall Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most loving is she! Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms Were wont around thee, and my hot lips press Cheek, close to thine in that quick-falling dew Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rain. Fished in the pools of whirlring Simo's.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die. They came, they cut away my tallest plains, My dark tall pines, that plumed the craggy ledge High over the blue gorge, and all between The snowy peak and snow-white cataract Foster'd the callow eagle—from beneath Whose thick mysterious bows in the dark morn The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat Low in the valley. Never, never more Shall lone Cenece see the morning mist Sweep thro' them: never see them overlaid With narrow moon-li'te 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 realm of Idas, Among the fragments tumbling from the glens, Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her, The Abominable, that uninvited came
THE SISTERS.—TO DU—THE PALACE OF ART.

Into the fair Pelican 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 his love a thousand times,
In this green valley, under this green hill,
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
Seal'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-floating cloud,
There are enough unhappy 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 weighty heavy on the heart within,
Weld heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for thy 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 stony 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, where so'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 howling in turf 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 turf 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 turf and tree.
And after supper, on a bed,
Upon my lap he laid 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 turf 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 turf and tree.
As half-sisters, branch'd like mighty woods,
Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
Of spouted fountain-floods.

TO ———.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I send you here a sort of allegory,
(For you will understand it) of a soul,
A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,
A spacious garden full of flowering trees,
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,
That did love Beauty only. (Beauty seen
In all varieties of mould and mind.)
And Knowledge for its beauty: or If Good,
Good only for its beauty, seeing not
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
That dost 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 God, and temper'd with the tears
Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

THE PALACE OF ART.

I built 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 kingly
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast shade
Sleeps on his luminous ring."

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

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 lent 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, toasting 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 waver in the sun,
And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never fell'd,
And, while day sank or mounted higher,
The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,
Burrt 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 hang with araab green and blue,
Showing a gandy summer-morn,
Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter blew
His wrenched bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red,—a tract of sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Where 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 windy 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 salty 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 slugs,
Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
All barr'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-wall'd city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;
An angel looked at her.

Or throughing 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 slumbering 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 Ausonian king to hear
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 salt'd
A summer fame'd with spice.

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

Or else flushed Ganymede, his rosy thigh
Half-buried 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 Iouan 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 mosaiccholely plan'd
With cycles of the human tale.
Of this wide world, the times of every land
   So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
   Told'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 care.

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

And thro' the topmost Orelas' color'd flame
   Two godlike faces gazed below;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verniam,
   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 were blazon'd fair
   In diverse raiment strange:

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emerald, blue,
   Finsh'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 preamble 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 mine,
   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 flatter'd to the height.

"O all things fair to sake 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 here 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 brawl
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
   But contemplating all."
LADY CLARA VERÉ DE VERÉ.

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she threw and prosper'd; so three years
She prosper'd: on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fall and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal depths of Personality,
Plagued her with some despair.

When she would think, where'er she turn'd her sight,
The airy hand confusion wrong'd,
Wrote "Mene, mene," and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was born
Scorn of herself; again, from out that mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What I is not this my place of strength," she said,
"My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones were laid
Since my first memory!"

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasm weeping tears of blood,
And horrible nightmwares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,
And, with dim fretted foreheads old,
On corpses three-months old at noon she came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light,
Or power of movement, seem'd my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite.
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand:
Left on the shore; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance
Join'd not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had curl'd.
"'No voice," she shriek'd in that lone hall,
"No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this world:
One deep, deep silence all!"

She, moulderling with the dull earth's moulderding sod,
Inwrapt tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time,
And ever unrelied by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime:

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girl round
With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking slow,
In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moon-rise hears the low
Moon of an unknown sea;

And knows not if it be thunder or a sound
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry
Of great wild beasts; then thinketh, "I have found
A new land, but I die!"

She how'd aloud, "I am on fire within.
There comes no murmur of reply.
What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly finished,
She threw her royal robes away,
"Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,
"Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are
So lightly, beautifully built:
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt."

LADY CLARA VERÉ DE VERÉ.

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 doths on truer charms.
A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some meeker 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 limes 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.
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 you 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 crowns,
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 weared 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, Clara 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.

**THE MAY QUEEN.**

"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 bolder lad 'ill 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 made the Queen;
For the shepherd lads, on every side, 'ill 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 won its wary bowers,
And by the meadow-treecles blow the faint sweet cuckoo-flowers:
And the wild marsh-marlgold 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, 'ill be fresh and green and still,
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,
And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill 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 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year:
To-morrow 'ill 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! '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 'ill caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,
And the swallow 'ill 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."
CONCLUSION.

Upon the chamuel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,
In the early early morning the summer sun 'll shine,
Before the red cock crowes 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 wold the summer airs blow cool
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the burlsh 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;
Theo' you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face;
Theo' I cannot speak a word, I shall hearken 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 forevemore,
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 here: I shall never garden more:
But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rose-hush that I set
About the parlor-window and the box of mignonette.

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.

CONCLUSION.

I s arount 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 blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'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."
THE LOTOS-EATERS.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret;
There's many worthier 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;
No 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 trees
And what is life, that we should mean? 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 Effie 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.

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

"Courage:" he said, and pointed toward the land,
"This morning wave will roll us shoreward soon."
In the afternoon they came unto a land,
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the laughing air did woon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the moon:
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke, Slow-dropping vales of thinnest 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 pinacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flushed: and, dew'd with showery drops, Up-clomb the shadowy pines 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
Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender gallugalle:
A land where all things always seem'd the same!
And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed Melanoly-Eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
 Laden with flower and fruit, wherein 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-sleep 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 bliss-
ful skies.
Here are cool moses deep,
And thro' the moss the lilies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the puppy haws in sleep.

2.
Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utter consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toll alone,
We only toll, 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 wandering,
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 toll, the roof and crown of things?

3.
Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is wood from out the bud
With white rods upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweet-end'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,
Ripes and fades, and falls, and hath no toll,
Frost-rooted in the fruitful soil.

4.
Hateful is the dark-bloe sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-bloe sea.
Death 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
A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

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 cease.

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder 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 crisscross 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 the following characteristics
Heard over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

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 minstrel sings
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,
Some task, to hearken hearts worn out with many wars,
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

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 worn acanthus-wreathe divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone:
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spacy downs the yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, Roll'd to larboard, when the
surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-
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 bent.
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleam-
ing world:
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring
deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in a sole-
ful song
Steamling up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with endur-
ing toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine, and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whis-
pered—down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the
shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and car.
O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I read, 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 still
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 sullen clouds from raising, 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 flutes batter'd with clanging hoofs:
And I saw crowds in column'd sanctuaries;
And forms that passe'd at windows and on roofs
Of marble palaces;
Corpses across the threshold: heroes tall
Dismoungling pinnacle and parapet
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall;
Lances in ambush set;
And high shrive-doors burst thro' with heated blasts
That run before the flittering tongues of fire;
White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and masts,
And ever climbing higher;
A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

Squadrons and squares of men in brassen plates,
Scaffold, still sheets of water, divers voices,
Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,
And hush'd seraglions.

So shape chanced shape as swift as, when to land
Bluster the winds and tides the selfsame way,
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,
Turn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,
Resolved on noble things, and strove to speak,
As when a great thought strikes along the brain,
And bushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down
A cavalier off his saddle-bow,
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town;
And then, I know not how.

All those sharp fancies by down-lasping thought
Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and did creep
Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd, and brought
Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wandered far
In an old wood: fresh-wash'd in coolest dew,
The maiden splendors of the morning star
Shook in the steadfast blue.

Enormons elm-tree boles did stoop and lean
Upon the daisky brushwood underneath
Their broad curved branches, flegged with clearest green,
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey done,
And with dead lips smiled at the twilight plain,
Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,
Not any song of bird or sound of rill;
Gross darkness of the inner squinch
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine turn'd
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,
And at the root thro' lath green grasses burn'd
The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I knew
The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks drench'd in dew,
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Pout'd back into my empty soul and frame
The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone
Thrift'd thro' mine ears in that unblestful clime,
"Pass freely thro': the wood is all thine own,
Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,
Stillier than chisel'd marble, standing there;
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise
Froze my swift speech; she turning on my face
The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
Spoke slowly in her place.

"I had great beauty; ask thou not my name:
No one can be more wise than destiny.

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 die'd."
I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and sorrowful 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 loathes and fears:
My father held his hand upon his face:
I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak: my voice was thick with sighs
As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings with wolish eyes,
Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat:
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."

Wherein 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,
When then I left my home."

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

I turning saw, thrown on a flowery rise,
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd;
A queen, with swathly 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 mood of "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.

"Now—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 eat as God by God:
The Nilus would have risen before his time
And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sinn 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 Baccus 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 balk'd his fame.
What else was left? look here!"
A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half
The polish'd argentic of her breast to slight
Laid bare. Thereto she polished with a laugh,
Showing the aspic's bite.)

"I died a Queen. The Roman soldier found
Me lying dead, my crown about my brows,
A name forever—lying robbed and crown'd,
Worthy a Roman sponse." 

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range
Struck by all passion, did fall down and glance
From tone to tone, and gilded thro' all change
Of livellust utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for delight;
Because with sudden motion from the ground
She raised her piercing orbs, and stilk'd with light
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tlipt his keenest darts;
As once they drew into two burning rings
All beams of Love, inelting the mighty hearts
Of captious and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard
A noise of some one coming thro' the lawn,
And singing clearer than the crested bird,
That claps his wings at dawn.

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late and soon,
Sound all night long, in falling thro' the dell,
Far-heard beneath the moon.

The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue glose with beams di-
vine:
All night the splinter'd crags that wall the dell
With spires of silver shine."

As one that mused where broad sunshine laves
The lawn of some cathedral, thro' the door
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and tied
To where he stands,—so stood I, when that flow
Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow:

The daughter of the warrior Gilendite,
A maiden pure; as when she went along
From Milpeth's tower'd gate with welcome light,
With timbrel and with song.

My words leap't forth: "Heaven heads the count of
crimes
With that wild oath." She render'd answer high:
"Not so, nor once alone; a thousand times
I would be born and die.

Single I grew, like some green plant, whose root
Creeps to the garden water-pipes beneath.
Feeding the flower; but ere my flower to fruit
Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father.—these did move
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature gave,
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of love
Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair Hebrew boy
Shall smile away my maiden blame among
The Hebrew mothers'—emptied of all Joy
Leaving the dance and song,

"Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
Leaving the promise of my bridal bower,

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 dark'd glen,

"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 life.

"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 Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth." Here her face
Glows'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 afar,
Thrilling the sambre bokeage of the wood,
Toward the morning-star.

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

"Aias! ahas!" a low voice, full of care,
Morm'd 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 hush 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 creepimg
beams,
Stoo'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery
Of folder 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 clasp'd in her last trance
Her murder'd father's head, or Joan 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 balsmy 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
Compasse'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.

As when a soul laments, which hath been blest, Desiring what is mingled with past years, In yearnings that can never be express'd By sighs or groans or tears: Because all words, tho' null'd with cholest art, Failing to give the bitter of the sweet, With'er beneath the pain'ts, and the heart Pain'ts, 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 fall'ing shower? Who lent you, love, your morial dower Of pensive thought and aspect pale, Your melancholy sweet and frail As perfume of the cock-a-flow'r? From the westward-wind'ing flood, From the evening-lighted wood, From all things quaintly 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, Enrices all the heart, and feedeth The senses with a still delight Of daltry sorrow without sound, Like the tender amber round, Which the moon about her spreadeth, Moving thro' a sleery night.

2. You love, remaining peacefully, To hear the murmur of the strife, But enter not the toll of life. Your spirit is the calmest sea, Laid by the tumult of the fight. You are the evening star, alway Remaining betwixt dark and bright: Lively echoes of lab'rous 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 wan'ing 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 solitudes, You are not less divine, But more human in your moods, Than your twin-sister, Adeline. Your hair is darker, and your eyes Touch'd with a somewhat darker hue, And less aeryly blue But ever trembling thro' the dew Of dainty-woful sympat'hies.

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 slanty, 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 bow'er-sieves, 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 espallers and the standards all Are thine: the range of lawn and park: The unmet 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 dagger of thy bill To fret the Summer junketing.
A golden bill! the silver tongue, Cold February loved, is dry: Plenty 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 hawk'er hawks his wares.

Take warning! he that will not sing While you sun proppers in the blue, Shall sing for want, ere leaves are new, Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

Fall 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 live: You came to us so readily, You lived with us so steadily, Old year, you shall not live.

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 roth'd his bumpers to the brim, A jolly year we shall not see. But tho' his eyes are waxing dim, And tho' his feet 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 jokes and jests,
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.

How hard he breathes! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro:
The cricket chirps; the light burns low:
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.
Shake hands, 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.

'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.
Shake hands, before you die.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,
Those in whose laps our limbs are nurst,
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 thrived
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
Where faction seldom gathers head,
But by degrees to fulness wrought,
The strength of some diffuse thought Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unde o persist
Opinifon, and induce a time
When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute;

Tho' Power should make from land to land
The name of Britain trebly great—
Tho' every channel of the State Should almost choke with golden sand—
Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,
Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,
And I will see before I die
The palms and temples of the South.

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 fill 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
Bleedeth 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 moons 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;
Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

Or old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet:
Above her shook the starry lights:
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
Selfrighteous in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
Come rolling on the wind.

Then steep she down thro' town and field
To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fulness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
From her isec-altar gazing down,
Who, God-like, graspeth the triple forks,
And, King-like, wears the crown:

Her open eyes desire the truth.
The wisdom of a thousand years Is in them. May perpetual youth Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and shine,
Make bright our days and light our dreams,
Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes!

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 tarn'd round on fixed poles, Love, that endures not sordid ends, For English natures, freemen, friends, Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time, Nor feed with crude imaginings The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings, That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might To weakness, neither hide the ray From those, not blind, who wait for day, Tho' sitting girl with doubtful light.
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 touch  
Of pension, neither count on praise:  
It grows to guardun 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 interests of all.  

For Nature, also, cold and warm,  
And moist and dry, devising long,  
Thro' 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 bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.  
Ev'n now we hear with inward strife  
A motion toiling in the gloom—  
The Spirit of the years to come  
Yearning to mix himself with Life.  
A slow-developd 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, aptly join'd,  
Is bodied forth the second whole.  
Regard gradation, lest the soul  
Of Discord race the rising wind:  
A wind to puff youriol-tires,  
And heap their ashes on the head:  
To shame the boast so often made,  
That we are wiser than our sire.  
O yet, if Nature's evil star  
Drive men in madness, as in youth,  
To follow flying steps of Truth  
Across the brazen bridge of war—  
If New and Old, disasters send,  
Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
And this be true, till Time shall close,  
That Principle 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 hill.  
Would pace the troubled land, like Peace:  
Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
Would serve his kind in deed and word,  
Cerfain, 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 firmly, and one stroke:  
To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossom of the dead;  
Earn well the thirsty months, nor wod  
Raw Haute, half-lister to Delay.  

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

He held a goose upon his arm,  
He utter'd 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 pelf,  
And ran to tell her neighbors:  
And bless'd herself, and cursed herself,  
And rested from her labors.  

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

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

It clutter'd here, it check'd there;  
It stirr'd the old wife's mettle;  
She shifted in her elbow-chair,  
And hurled the pan and kettle.  

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

Then yelp'd the cur, and yaw'd the cat;  
Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammie,  
The goose flew this way and flew that,  
And fill'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 utter'd words of scoring;  
"So keep you cold, or keep you warm,  
It is a stormy morning."
The wild wind rang from park and plain,
And round the attics rumbled,
Till all the tables danced again,
And half the chimneys 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 cleard 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!"

ENGLISH IDYLS AND OTHER POEMS.
(PUBLISHED 1842.)

THE EPIC.
At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve—
The game of forfeits done—the girls all kis'd Beneath the sacred bush and past away—
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,
The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl,
Then half-way ebb'd: and there we held a talk,
How all the old honor had from Christmas gone,
Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd games
In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out
With cutting eights that day upon the pond,
Where, three times slipping from the outer edge,
I bumpt the ice into three, several stars,
Fell in a doze: and half-awake I heard
The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
Now harping of the church-commissioners,
Now hawking at Geology and schism;
Until I woke, and found him settled down
Upon the general decay of faith
Right thro' the world, "at home was little left,
And none abroad: there was no anchor, none,
To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt his hand
On Everard's shoulder, with "I hold by him."

"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 burnt
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 draft, much better burnt." "But I,
Said Francis, "pick'd the eleventh from this hearth,
And have it: keep a thing, its nce 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.

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 Lyouness about their Lord,
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 chancel 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 knighths
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,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shriil, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and just of yore hand,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.
There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And 'er he, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And quickly keen Sir Bedivere again the hilt;
For all the haft twinkled with diamond studs,
Myriads of topaz-lightes, and jaclinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazed, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the clear mind,
In the last last it seemed'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflag,
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 ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the craig.
To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beeseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For these signs I hold, nor do I hear
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 art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee which I look'd nobly performing.
"Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, 'twas in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely shaped the smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud.
"And if I indeed 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 fain should not he do
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And raiments of a doubt? yet were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a feast of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur.
Wrought by the lonely 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 aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honor and much fame were lost.'
So spake he, cloimed 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 craig,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."
To whom replied King Arthur in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see the wrath thou art
For thou, the latest left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldest betray me for the precious hilt:
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the mere:
Yet, for a man may fall 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."
Then quickly keen Sir Bedivere again 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 felt the brand Excalibur:
But ere he lifted 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 lightly went the other to the King.
Then spake the 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, lest the gems
Should blind my hard purpose. For I must saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not the! I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when he saw, and beheld, the brand
Clothed 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
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
Over both his shoulders drew his hilted hilt,
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 bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring 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 good,
Dry clush'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliffclang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-serril'd with the dint of armor seeds—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.
Then saw they how there shine a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scaffold from stem to stern.
To deem repaired and desiring the water were
That all the decks were dense with stateforms
Black-stoled, 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,
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 murmurd 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, 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 morn; and the light and lustrous curle—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur 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,

And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lost 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 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 new men, strange faces, other minds.
And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge;
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
"Laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And called him by his name."
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bounded by gold, and to these golds thou art, God,
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With those thou seest—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion,
Where falls not hail, rain, snow, nor 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, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plumes, 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 died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that long
Had wink’d and threaten’d darkness, shadored and fell:
At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,
And waked with silence, grunted “Good!” but we
Sat rapt: it was the tune with which he read—
Perhaps some modern touches here and there
Recede’d it from the charge of nothingness—
Or so we loved the barge with oar and sail
I know not: but we sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud; as at that time of year
The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn:
Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
“T’was now—that’s nothing,” drew a little back,
And drove his heel into the smoulder’d log,
That sent a blast of sparks up the flue: and so
to bed; where yet in sleep I seem’d
To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Past point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams
Began to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,
“Arthur is come again: he cannot die.”
Then those that stood upon the hilts behind
Repeate’d—“Come again, and thrice as fair!”
And, farther inland, voices echoed—“Come
With all good things, and war shall be no more.”
And I beheld, as I stand, and prayed his work;
That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas morn.

THE GARDENER’S DAUGHTER; OR,
THE PICTURES.

This morning is the morning of the day,
When I and Eustace from the city went
To see the Gardener’s Daughter; and he,
Brothers in Art; a friendship so complete
Portion’d in halves between us, that we grew
The fable of the city, when, I heard,
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,
And measure of loveliness, all grace
Summ’d up and closed in little;—Juliet, 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 touches 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.)

“The not your work, but Love’s. Love, unperceived,
A more ideal Artist he than all,
Came, drew your pencil from you, made those eyes
Darken the blackest panes, and on the hair
More black than ash-blinds 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 went, and on the spurned spring,
Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blomm the garden that I love.
News from the humming city comes to it
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear
The windy clanging of the minster clock;
Although between it and the garden lies
A league of grass, wash’d by a slow broad stream,
That, stirr’d with langulid pulses of the oar,
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crown’d with the minster towers.

The fields between Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-adder’d blue,
And all about the large lime feathers low,
The lime a summer home of monstrous wings.
In that still place she, hoarded in herself,
Grew, seldom seen: not less among us lives
Her fame from lip to lip. Who had not 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 wing’d seeds,
Born out of everything I heard and saw,
Flutter’d about my senses and my soul;
And vague desires, like stifl blasts of balm
To one that travels quickly, much to the life of
Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,
That verg’d upon them, sweeter than 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 heel. And now,
As tho’ ’t were yesterday, as tho’ it were
The hour just flown, that morn with all its sound,
(For those that travel quickly, much to 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 volantes of the well-consolient;
The lark could scarce get on his notes for joy,
But shook his song together as he neard
His happy home, the ground. To left and right,
The cuckoo told his name to all the hills;
The mellow onset staid in the elm-holt,
The redcap whistled; and the nightingale
Sang loud, as tho’ he were the bird of day.

And Eustace turn’d, and smiling said to me,
THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER.

"Hear how the bushes echo! by my life, These birds have joyful thoughts. Think you they 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 have?"

And in measure 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 slanting to the North; Down which a well-born pathway count'd us To one green wicket in a private hedge; This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk Thro' crowded lilac-ambush 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 momentarily The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights. It behoove thee not to cross the house," He nod'd, 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 an Eastern rose, That, flowering high, the last night's gale had catch'd, And blown across the walk. One arm aloft— 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 soft brown hair Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the flowers Stole all the golden glass, and, wavering Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist— Ah, happy shade—and still went waving down, But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have danced The greenward into greener circles, dipt, And in't with shadows of the common ground! But the full day dwelt on her brows, and annu'd Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe-bloom, And doubled his own warmth against her lips, And on the bounteous wave of such a breast As never pencil draw'd. Half light, half shade, She stood, a sight to make an old man young. So rapt, we hear'd the house: but she, A rose In roses, mingles with her fragrant toil, Nor hear'd us come, nor from her tendance turn'd I look'd in the world without, as those, and, And almost ere I knew mine own intent, Thrice murmur broke the stillness of that air Which brood'd round about her:

"Ah, one rose, One rose, but one, by those fair fingers cul'd, Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on lips Less exquisite than thine."

She look'd: but all Sussu'd with blushes—neither self-possess'd Nor startled, butbetwixt this mood and that, Divided in a graceful quiet—paus'd, And drop'd 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 put the kisses on her lips, and lift the veil, And in act to render thanks.

I, that whole day, Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there Till every daisy slept, and Love's white star But quiver'd in the west, till banish'd in the dusk.

So home we went, and all the livelong day With solemn gibe did Eastace banter me. "Now," said he, "will you climb the top of Art? You cannot fail but work in hues to dim The Titanic Flora."

My Julia, you not you—the Master, Love, A more ideal Artist be than all."

So home I went, but could not sleep for joy, Reading her perfect features in the glosn, Kissing the rose she gave me o'er my hand, And shaping faithful record of the glance That grace'd the giving—such a noise of life Swarn'd in the golden present, such a voice Call'd to me from the years to come, and such A length of bright horizon rim'd by the skies. And all that night I heard the watchmen peal The sliding season; all that night I heard The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy hours. The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good, Over the white city smile with flooding wrongs, Distilling odors on me as they went To greet their fairer sisters of the East.

Love at first sight, first-born, and heir to all, Made this night thus. Henceforward equal nor storm Could keep me from that Eden where she dwelt. Light pretexts drew me: sometimes a Dutch love For tulips; then for roses, moss or musk, To grace my city-rooms: or fruits and cream Served in the weeping elm: and more and more A word could bring the color to my cheek; A thought would fill my eyes with happy dew: Love trebled life within me, and with each The year increased.

The daughters of the year, One after one thro' that still garden pass'd: Each garlanded with her peculiar flower, Danse'd into light, and died into the shade: And each in passing touch'd with some new grace Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by day, Like one that never can be wholly known, Her beauty grew; till Autumn brought an hour For Eastace, when I heard his deep "I will," Breathed, like the covenant of a God, to hold From thence thro' all the worlds; but I rose up Full of his bliss, and following her dark eyes Felt earth and air beneath me, till we reach'd The wicket-gate, and found her standing there. There sat we down upon a garden mound, Two mutually enfolded; Love, the third, Between us, in the circle of his arms Enwound as both; and over many a range Of waving lime the gray cathedral towers, Across a lazy glimmer of the west, Reveal'd their shining windows: from them clash'd The bells; we listen'd; with the time we play'd; We spoke of other things; we coursed about The thoughtful at the stars, and threw the near, Like doves about a dovecot, wheeling round The central wish, until we settled there. Then, in that time and place, I spoke to her, Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own, Yet for the pleasure that I look'd to bear, Requiring at her hand the greatest gift, A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved; And in that time and place she answer'd me, And in the compass of three little words, More musical than ever came in one, The silver fragments of a broken voice, Made me most happy, faltering "I am thine." Shall I cease here? Is this enough to say That my desire, like all strongest hopes, By its own energy fulfilled itself, Merg'd in completion? Would you learn at full How passion rose thro' circumstantial grades Beyond all grades develop'd? and indeed I had not stayd so long to tell you all, But while I mused came Memory with sad eyes, Holding the faded and the days of my life, And while I mused, Love with knit brows went by, And with a flying finger swept my lips, And spake, "Be wise: not easily forgiven Are those, who, setting wide the doors that bar The secret bridal chamber of the heart. Let in the day." Here, then, my words have end. Yet might I tell of meetings, of farewells—
Of that which came between, more sweet each
In whispers, like the whiles the waves
That flout a hundred fold a nightingale — in sighs
Which perfect joy, perplex'd for utterance,
Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I not tell
Of difference, recompence, pledges given,
And vows, where there was never need of vows,
And kisses, where the heart on one wild leap
Hung trayred from all pulsation, as above
The heavens between their fairy fleeces pale
Sow'd all their mystic gufts with fleeting stars;
Or while the balmy glooming, crescent-bright,
Spied on the light base, lifting the river-shores,
And in the hollows; or as once we met
Uncheedful, 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 veil'd picture — veil'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, and, alas!
Now the most blessed memory of mine age.

DORA.

With 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 yearn'd 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'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 upon 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 his sake I bred
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 you, you shall pack,
And never more darken my doors again!"
But William answer'd mildly; bit his lips,
And broke away. The more he look'd at her
The less he liked her; and his ways were harsh;
But Dora bore them meekly. Then before
The month was out he left his father's house,
And hired himself to work within the fields;
And half in love, half spite, he woe'd and wed
A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.
Then when the belts 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 mind is made up!"
And days went on, and there was born a boy
To William; then distresses came on him;
And day by day he pass'd his father's gate,
Heart-broken, and his father help'd him not.
Dora shed what little she could weep, 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 looked 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 this 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 wheat; 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 unseen, where many poppies grew.
Far off the farmer came into the field
And 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 resp't;
And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.
But then the morrow 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 there, and did 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 that? 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 with me as you will, 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 knew my word was law, and yet you dared
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 upon 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 in her widowhood.
And Dora said, "My uncle took the boy;
But, Mary, let me work with you.
He says that he will never see me more."
Then answer'd Mary, "This shall never be,
That thou should'st make my trouble on thyself;
And now I think, he shall not have the boy.
For he will teach him bad ways, and make 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;"
Audley Court.—Walking to the Mail.

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 light was off the lichen; they peep'd, and saw
The boy set up betwixt his grandaire's knees,
Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
And clapt him on the hands and on the cheeks,
Like one that loved him; and the lad stretch'd out
And stagger'd for a breath and a throng
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 did at peace
With all men; for I ask'd him, and he said,
He could not ever rue his marriage:
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—many a time that I am!
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you
Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight
His father's memory; and take Dora back,
And let all this be as it was before.'"
So Mary said, and Dora hid her face
By Mary. There was silence in the room;
And all at once the old man burst in sobes:
"I have been to blame—to blame. I have kill'd
my son.
I have kill'd him—but I love him—my dear son.
May God forgive me!—I have been to blame.
Kiss me, my children."

Then they clung 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.

"The Ball, the Fleece are cram'dd, and not a room
For love or money. Let us picninc there
At Audley Court." I spoke, while Audley feast
Hum'd like a hive all round the narrow quay,
To Francis, with a basket on his arm,
To Francis just alighted from the boat,
And breathing of the sea. "With all my heart,"
Said Francis. Then we should'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 lipp'd
The flat red granite; so by many a sweep
Of meadow smooth from after wheat we reach'd
The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro' all
The pilliaged dusk of sounding sycamores,
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 bound,
Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of home,
And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly made,
Where quail and pigeon, dark and leveret lay,
Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolkis
Imbedded and injelli'd; last, with these,
A flack of elder from his father's vats,
Prime, which I knew; and so we sat and eat
And talk'd old masters over; who was dead,
Who married, who was like to be, and how
The races went, and who would rent the hall;
Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce it was
This season; glacian grose, dice'sd the farm,
The fourfield system, and the price of grain;
And struck upon the corn-laws where we spill'd,
And came again together on the king
With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;
And, while the blackbird on the pippin hung
To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and sang:
"'Who would fight and march and counter-march,
Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,
And shovell'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 on a bench as a cross upon a three-legged stool,
Till all his juice is dried, and all his joints
Are full of 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 trench'd 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 souge,
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir Robert's pride,
His books—the more the pity, 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 sleeping, haply dream her arm is mine.
"Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;
Emilla, fairer than all else but thou,
For thou art fairer than all else is that.
"Sleep, breathing health and peace upon her breast,
Sleep, breathing love and trust against her lip:
I thought: I come to-morrow morn.
"I go, but I return: I would were
The pilot of the darkness and the dream.
Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of me."
So sang we each to either, Francis Halle,
The farmer's son who lived across the bay,
My friend; and I, that having wherewithal,
And in the fallow leisure of my life,
Did what I would: but ere the night we rose
And sannter'd home beneath a moon, that, just
In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf
Twilight's of alry alver, till we reach'd
The limit of the hills; and as we sank
From rock to rock upon the flooding quay,
The town was bash'd beneath us: lower down
The bay was olly-calm; the harbor-bny
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 meadow's look
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.

O, me, my pleasant rambles by the lake.
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of a year,
My one Oas, in the dust and drouth
Of city life: I was a sketcher then:
See here, my doing: curves of mountain, bridge,
Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
When men knew how to build, upon a rock,
With torrents lichen-gilded like a rock:
And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,
New-comers from the Mersey, millionaires,
Here lived the Hill-top—tudor-clouded bulk
Of mellow brickwork on an isle of bowers.

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

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the names,
Long learned names of agaric, moes, 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, finish'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 sunlights more, my love for her.
My love for Nature and my love for her,
Of different ages, like twin-sisters grew,
Twin-sisters differing in the beautiful ones.
To some full music rose and sank the sun,
And some full music seem'd to move and change.

John.
James. The mail! At one o'clock.
John. What is it now?
John. A quarter to.
John. Whose hose is that I see?
No, not the County Member's with the vase;
Up higher with the yewtree by it, and half
A score of gables.
James. That? Sir Edward Head's:
But he's abroad: the place is to be sold.
John. O, his. He was not broken.
James. No, sir, he,
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his blood:
That vex'd the world with jaundice, hid his face
From all men, and commuring with himself,
He lost the sense that handles daily life—
That keeps us all in order more or less—
And sick of home went overseas for change.
John. And whither?
James. Nay, who knows he? he's here and there.
But let him go; his devil goes with him,
As well as with his tenant, Jocky Dawes.
John. What's that?
James. You saw the man—on Monday, was it?
There by the humpback'd willow; half stands up
And bristles; half has fallen and made a bridge:
And there he caught the yonkner tickling trout—
Caught in flagrante—what's the Latin word?
—Betwixt: but his house, for so he was,
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that shook
The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt at doors,
And rammaged like a rat; no servants stay'd:
The farmer vex's packs up his beds and chairs,
And all his household stuff: and with this boy
Betwixt he knees, his wife upon the tilt,
Sets out, and meets a friend who hailes him, "What!
You're flitting!" "Yes, we're flitting," says the ghost,
(For they had pack'd the thing among the beds.)
"O well," says he, "you flitting with us too—
Jack, turn the horses' heads and home again."
John. He left his wife behind; for so I heard.
James. He left her, yes; I met my lady once:
A woman like a butt, and harsh as crabs.
John. O yet but I remember, ten years back—
′T is now at least ten years—and then she was—
You could not light upon a sweeter thing:
A body slight and round, and like a pear
In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a foot,
Learning in perfection—sir, you know it
As clean and white as privet when it flowers.
James. Ay, ay, the blossom fades, and they that
Loved.
At first like dove and dove were cat and dog.
She was the daughter of a cottager,
Out of her sphere. What betwixt shame and pride,
New things and old, himself and her, she soon'd
To what she is: a nature never kind!
Like men, like manners: like breeds like, they say.
Kind nature is the best: those manners next—
That fit us like a nature second-hand;
Which are indeed the manners of the great.
John. But I had heard it was this bill that past,
And fear of change at home, that drove him hence.
James. That was the last drop in his cup of gall:
I once was near him, when his bill brought a
Charlatan pike. You should have seen him wince
As from a venomous thing; he thought himself
A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a cry
Should break his sleep by night, and his nice eyes
Should see the raw mechanic's bloody thumb
Sweat on his blazon'd chairs: but, sir, you know
That these two parties still divide the world—
Of those that want, and those that have: and still
The same old sore breaks out from age to age
With much the same result. Now, myself,
A Tory to the quick, was as a boy
Destructive, when I had not what I would.
I was at school—a college in the South:
There lived a fly-bait 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 dragged'd her to the college tower
From her warm bed, and up the corkscrew stair
With hand and rope we hal'd the groaning sow,
And on the leads we kept her till she pigg'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 Niohe of swine,
And so return'd unfavour'd 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
sound,
That we should mimic this raw fool 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 were he grown a
To Pity—more 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 quain a four-in-hand
As you shall see—three plebes and a roan.
With all the varied changes of the dark,
And either twilight and the day between;
For only hope fulfilled to rise in
Revolving toward fulfiment, made it sweet
To walk, to sit, to sleep, to breathe, to wake.

Or this or something like 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 dame 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 sudden touches, and can run.
My faith beyond my practice into his:
They'll, in danger after Letty Hill,
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 asked him half-seriously.

"Give! Give all thou art, be answer'd, and a light
Of laughter damped 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 breath: 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 jar'd: Whether he spoke too largely: that there seem'd
A touch of something false, some self-convict,
Or over-smoothness: howso'er 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 Latin song I learnt at school,
Subtract a full God-bless-ye right 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
Locks out of place: it is from no want in her:
It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,
Or something of a wayward modern mind
Dissecting 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-teles: and now we left
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shallows of the lissing lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the sound.

But, when the bracken rusted on their crage,
My salt had wither'd, npt to death by him
That was an God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy land.
The true, we met: one hour I had, no more:
She sent a note, the seal an Elle vous ait,
The close "Your Letty, only yours: and this
Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn
Cling the lake. My craft aground, and heard with beating heart
The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving keel:
And out I step, and up I crept; she moved,
Like Proserpine in Etna, 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 stile
Upon us and departed: "Leave," she cried,
"'O Death, dost know, never: here
I brave the worst: and while we stood like fools
Embracing, all at once a score of pugs
And puddles yell'd within, and out they came
Trustees and Aunties and Couples. "What, with him!"
"Go!" (shril'd the catonesspinning chorus) "him!
I choaked. Again they shriek'd the burthen "him!"
Again with hands of wild rejection "Go!—
Girl, get you in!" She went—and in one month
They wedded her to sixty thousand pounds,
To lands in Kent and messengers in York,
And slight Sir Robert with his merry smile
And educated whiskeer. 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 sherif, needless courtesy!

I read, and fled 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 him. Nor did I hear:
Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet long ago
I have pardoned 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 gloom of London life
She moves among my visions of the lake.
While the prime swallow dips his wing, or then
While the gold-dybl blows, and overhead
The light cloud amoniders on the summer craq.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

Altru! I be the least of mankind,
From scalp to sole one sough and crust of sin,
Unit for earth, unit for heaven, scarce meet
For troops of devils, mad with blasphemous,
I will not cease to grasp the hope I hold
Of saintdom, and to clamor, mourn, and sob,
Battering the gates of heaven with storms 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 hangings and in thirsts, fevers and cold,
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes and cramps,
A sign betiwixt the meadow and the cloud,
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne
Rain, wind, frost, heat, ball, damp, and sleet, and snow.
And I had hoped that ere this period closed
Thou wouldst have caught me up into thy rest,
Denying not these weather-beaten limbs
The meed 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, we were
Less burthen, by ten-hundred-fold, to bear,
Than were those lead-like 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 drop out, Would chatter when I'm cold, and them with my beard Yet with care and with icy fringes in the moon, I droned the whoopings of the owl with sound Of plains hymns and psalms, and sometimes saw An angel stand and watch me, as I sang. Now am I feeble growing and growing tall; 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 clamber and to cry, While my stiff spine can hold my weary head, Till all my limbs drop piece-meal from the stone, Have mercy, mercy: take away my sin. O Jesus, if thon 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 martyr die one death? For either they were stoned, or crucified, 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 heedfully I sifted all my thought) Most likely, I could have done this thing: Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate, I had not stinted practice, O my God. For not alone this pilfer-punishment, Not this alone I bore: but while I lived In the white coats and the yellow overcoat, 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 spake not of it to a single soul, Under the clear, eating thro' my skin Betray'd my secret penance, so that all My brethren marvel'd greatly. More than this I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest all. Three winters, that my soul might grow to thee, I lived up there on yonder mountain side. My right leg chain'd into the crag, I lay Pent in a roofless close of ragged stones; Inswathed sometimes in wandering mist, and twice Black'd with thy blinding thunder, and sometimes Swallow'd by the dark, drunk, and the fog. Except the spare chance-gift of those that came To touch my body and be heat'd, and live: And they say then that I work'd miracles, Whereof my fame is loud amongst mankind, Cured lameness, palsy, cankers, cancers, O God, Knowest alone whether this was or no. Have mercy, mercy: cover all my sin. Then, that I might be more alone with thee, Three years I lived upon a pillar, high Six cubits, and three years on one of twelve; And twice three years I crouch'd on that rock Twenty by measure; last of all, I grew, Twice ten long weary years 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!" then they praise Of penances I cannot have gone thro', Perplexing me with lies: and oft I fell, Many times IWept, and called 'the hou'gues, That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are choke'd. 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 roofs, Sit with their wives by fires, eat wholesome food, And wear warm clothes, and even beasts have stalls, I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the light, How down one thousand and two hundred times, To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the Saints; Or in the night, after a little shun; I wake: the chill stars sparkle; I am wet With drenching dew's, or stiff with crusting frost, I wear an undress'd goatskin on my back; A grazing iron collar grinds my neck; And in my arm, lean arm, I lift the Mortar cross, And strive and wrestle with thee till I die: O mercy, mercy! 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 silly 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 calend'red for saints. Good people, you do ill to kneel to me. What is it I can have done to be termed 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, so no, even among the saints, May many beul with holy nile; and 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 Stylites," Why, if so, God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul, God reaps a harvest in thee. 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; Yes, crown'd in shame. They shout, "Behold a saint!" And lower voices speak from above. Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chyrseals 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 sons, 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 bald brows in silent hours become Unnaturally hoar with rime, 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 boil over. Devils pluck'd my elbow. Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me. I amote them with the cross: they swarm'd again. In bed like monstrous serpents they crawl'd by my chest: They flapp'd my light out as I read: I saw Their faces grow between me and my book: With colt-like whiny and with hoggish wine They burst my prayer. Yet this way was left, And by the way I steep'd them in Mortify Thy flesh, like me, with scourgings and with thorns; Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may be, fast Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly, with slow steps,
THE TALKING OAK.

With slow, faint steps, and much exceeding pain,
Have scrambled past those pits of fire, that still
Sing in mine ears. But yet you yield 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—yes, even now,
Now, now, his footsteps smite the threshold stars
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 gathered to the glorious saints.
While I spake then, a sting of shrewdest pain
Ran shivering thro' me, and a cloud-like change,
In passing, with a groser film made thick
These heavy, horry 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! spikeward, and balm, and frankincense.
Ah! let me not be fool'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,
Anxious thou 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,
Ald all this foolish people; let them take
Example, pattern: lead them to thy light.

"Twere well to question him, and try
If yet he keeps the power.
Hall, hidden to the knees in fern,
Broad Oak of Summer-chase,
Whose topmost branches can discern
The roofs of Summer-place!

Say thou, whereon 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-chase:

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

"ERE yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
And number'd bead and shrift,
Ring Harry broke into the spence,
And turn'd the cowls adrift:

And I have seen some score of those
Fresh faces that would thrive
When his man-muddled 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 brooder's soul
Went by me, like a stork:

The slight she-slipes of loyal blood,
And others, passing prate,
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 shrift'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 gambol'd on the greens,
A baby-germ, to when
The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number five from ten.

"I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear me 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 slightily, musically made,
So light upon the grass:

"For as to fairies, that will fift
To make the greenward fresh,
I hold thee exquisitely kirt,  
But far too spar of flesh.

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

But thou, wherein 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 bis,  
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 gray.

"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-unread  
Upon the rosewood shelf;  
She left the new piano shut:  
She could not please herself.

"Then ran she, gameosome as the colt,  
And liveller than a lark  
She sent her voice thro' all the bight  
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 she 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 nuzzle round thy knees with fern,  
And shadow Samner-chace!  
Long may thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Sumner-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 course,  
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 stirred.

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

"Thrice-happy ho that may careless  
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 vapid 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 cold 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 leaning thro',  
I would have paid her kiss for kiss  
With ury thereeto."

O flourish high, with leafy towers,  
And overlook the lea,  
Purse on thy loves among the bowers,  
But leave thou 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 a little more; the day was warm;  
At last, tired out with play,  
She sank her head upon my 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 rife,
And lul'd them in my own.

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

"A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine;
Another slid, a sunny fleck,
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 pluck'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 thrice for me,
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lea
Shall grow so fair as this."
For love himself took part against himself
To war us off, and Duty loved of love—
Oh this world's cares,—beloved but hated—came
Like death between 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—
No, not to thee, but to myself in these.
Hard is the dream and thine: thou knowest it all.
Could love part thus? was it 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, brought the light
In which we sat together and alone,
And to the want, that hollow'd all the heart,
Gave utterance by the yearning of an eye,
That burn'd upon its object thro' such tears
As few but once a life.

The trance gave way
To those caresess, when a hundred times
In that last kiss, which never was the last,
Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and died.
There was no sight, nor sound and words
That make a man feel strong in speaking truth;
Till now the dark was worn, and overhead
The lights of sunset and of sunrise mix'd,
In that brief night; the summer night, that paused
Among her stars to hear us; stars to sung
Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels of Time
Spun 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—crying 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 early 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 quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
And paint thee fair with a distant light,
Or seem to lift a barrier from thy heart
And leave thee freer, till thou wake refresh'd,
Then when the low matin-chirp hath grown
Full choir, and morning driv'n thy plough of pearl
Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
Beyond the fair green field and eastern sea.

THE GOLDEN YEAR.
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 Snowdon; and I wish'd for Leonard there,
And found him in Llanberis: then we crost
Between the lakes, and clamber'd half way up
The steep side; and then came on the same son of his
He told me; for I banter'd him, and swore
They said he lived shut up within himself,
A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,
That, setting the how much before the how
Cry, like the daughters of the horse-deech, "Give,
Cram us with all," but count not me the herd!
To which "They call me what they will," he said:
"But I was born too late: the fair new forms,
That float about the threshold of an age,
Like truths of Science waiting to be catch'd—
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, and all things move—
The Sun flies 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, tho' the times, when some new thought can but
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 mounded heaps.
But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
In many streams to fatten lower lands,
And light shall spread, and man be liker man
Thro' all the season of the golden year.
"Shall eagles not be eagles? and who are worms?
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 souls and hear the Press;
Fly, happy with the mission of the Cross;
Kilt land to land, and blowing havenward
With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of toll,
Enrich the markets of the golden year.
"But slow 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; whereupon
"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,
'Tis like the second world to us that live;
'Twere 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 choler, and firm upon his feet,
And like an oaken stock in winter woods,
Overfurbish'd with the hoary clematis;
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 seedsman, 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 flap
And buffet and rend the hills from bluff to bluff.

ULYSSES.
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
Vext 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 where thro'
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 piled 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 bringsr of new things; and vile it were
For some one souls 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 ragged 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 told, 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 toll;
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
Masons round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sit ting well in order smite
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 gulf 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 't is early morn;
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn.

'T is the place, and all around it, as of old, the carlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overtops 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 Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-dites tangled in a silvery 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 coper's ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fullness 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!

Fals'er than all fancy fathoms, fals'er than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrivelling 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 from elys.

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 wilt dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou 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 perished: 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 for evermore.

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 memories, 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 thou 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,
"Th'is 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 heard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffered"—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 barr'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 racks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laced 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 raise'd a ghastly daw
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 hurl'd
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 jaded eye;

Eye, to which all order fester'd, 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,
Glares 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 moulders'd 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 Maharatta-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—the race to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breaths 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 lances in the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—
Not only we, the latest seed of Time
Now run, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down, the piping of a will
Oft told, and toll the warden, dash the lightnings, weigh the Sun—

Ancient sounds of inspiration well thru' all my fancy yet.

But I Walter, in the train at Coventry;

I hung about the three tall epires; and there I shaped

Mother—Ah! (for mine I knew not) help me as when life began:

Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt:

Let it all on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow:

And loathed to see them overtax'd:

For the mighty wind across, coming seaward, and I go.
The woman of a thousand summers back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled
In Coventry: for when he laid a tax
Upon his town, and all the mothers brought
Their children, clamoring, "If we pay, we starve!"
She sought her lord, and found him, where he strode
About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his hair
A yard behind. She told him of their tears,
And pray'd him, "If they pay this tax, they starve."
Whereat he stared, reply'ing, half-amazed,
"You would not let your little finger ache
For such as these?"—"But I would die," said she.
He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by Paul:
Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear;
"O, ay, ay, ay, you talk'?" she said,
"But prove me what it is I would not do."
And from a heart as rough as Esau's hand,
He answer'd, "Hide you naked thro' the town,
And I repeat it:" and nodding, as In scorn,
He parted, with great strides among his dogs.
So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As winds from all the compass shift and blow,
Made war upon each other for an hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
And bade him cry, with sound on trumpet, all
The hard condition; but that she would loose
The people: therefore, as they loved her well,
From then till noon no foot should pace the street,
No eye look down, she passing: but that all
Should keep within, door shut, and window bar'd.
Then fled she to her lairmost bower, and there
Unclasp'd the wedged eagles of her belt,
The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a breath
She linger'd, looking like a summer moon
Half-dip'd in cloud: anon she shook her head,
And show'r'd the rippled ringlets to her knee:
Unclad herself in haste; adown the stair
Stole on; and, like a creeping sunbeam, slid
From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd
The gateway; there she fond her palfrey trapt
In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.
Then she rode forth, clothed on with chastity:
The deep air listen'd round her as she rode,
And all the low wind hardly breathed for fear.
The little wide-mouth'd heads upont the spout
Had cannon eyes to see: the barking cur
Mark'd her cheek flame: her palfrey's footfall shot
Light horrors thro' her pulses: the blind walls
Were full of chinks and holes: and overhead
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared: but she
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she saw
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from the field
Gleam thro' the Gothic archways in the wall.
Then she rode back, clothed on with chastity:
And one low churl, compact of thankless earth,
The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little anger-hole in fear,
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had their will,
Were shrivell'd into darkness in his head,
And drop'd before him. So the Powers, who wait
On noble deeds, cancel'd a sense mislaced;
And she, that knew not, pass'd: and all at once,
With twelve great shocks of sound, the shameless noon
Wass clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers,
One after one: but even then she gain'd
Her bower; whence resounding, robed and crow'd,
To meet her lord, she took the tax away,
And built herself an everlasting name.

THE TWO VOICES.

A still small voice spake unto me,
"Thou art so full of misery,
Were it not better not to be?"

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 out clear places of sapphire mail.
"He dried his wings: like gauze they grew:
Thro' croits 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."

Thereto the silent voice replied:
"Self-blind'ned 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 multitude of hopes and fears
Could find no statelier than his peers
In yonder hundred million spheres?"

It spake, moreover, in my mind:
"Tho' thou wilt scatter'd 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 answer'd scornfully:
"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 cancel'd in the world of sense?"

I would have said, "Thou canst not know,"
But my full heart, that work'd below,
Ran'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 mycountenance,
I shut my life from happler chance.
"Some turn this sickness yet might take,
Ey'n yet. But he: "What drug can make
A wilder'd palsy cease to shake?"

I went, "Tho' I should die, I know
That all about the thorn will blow
In tufts 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 bear with early rime.

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

"Not less the bee would range her cells,
The furry prickie are 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-minded 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 the leastest, thought resign'd,
A healthy frame, a quiet mind."

I said, "When I am gone away,
He dared not tarry,' men will say,
Dying 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 howling on the fear of ill
The fear of men, a coward still.

"Do men love thee? Art thou so bound
To men, that thy name may sound
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,
Hears 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!

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

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

"I sang the joyful Psalm 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 melt 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 cause—

"In some good cause, not in mine own,
To perish, wept for, honored, known,
And like a warrior overthrown;

"Whose eyes are dim with glorious tears,
When, self'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."

"Yes!" said the voice, "thy dream was good,
While thou abodest in the bud.
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 mouth to mouth 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' scaling 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, toiling 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,
Warp in dense cloud from base to cope.

"Sometimes a little corner shines,
As over misty inclines
A gleaming crag with belts of pine.

"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, Milton-like:

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

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

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

"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 murmur of the fountain-head—

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

"He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,
Tho' cursed 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 fixed,
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,
Unmancled from bonds of sense,
He fix'd and from'n 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:
Will 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:
The 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 voice," I said,
"These things are wrap 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 Death? the outward sign?

"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:
Touch'd by his feet the delay slept.

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

"Why, if man rot in dreamless case,
Should that plain fact, as taught by there,
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 be nowhere find.
He sows himself on every wind.

"He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,
And through 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, chasms yawning, 
Vast images in glistening dawn, 
Half-shown are broken and withdrawn.

"Ah! I see 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 thine 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 duties 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 wrinkled 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 theses 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 avail 
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 lapse 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 unconfined, 
Of 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 be 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. Suffice it thee 
Thy pain is a reality."

"But thou," said I, "lest mine thy mark. 
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark, 
By marking all the horizon dark.

"Why not set forth, if I should do 
This rashness, that which might ensue 
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 pant: 
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 morn."

And I arose, and I released 
The casement, and the light increased 
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like sooten'd airs that blowing steal, 
When mares begin to unconfine, 
The sweet church bells began to peal. 

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

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

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

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

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

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

A second voice was at mine ear, 
A little whisper silver-clear, 
A murmur, "Be of better cheer."
As from some blissful neighborhood,
A notice faintly understood,
"I see the end, and know the good."
A little hint to solace woe,
A hint, a whisper breathing low,
"I may not speak of what I know."
Like an Æolian harp that wakes
No certain air, but overtones
Far thought with music that it makes:
Such seem’d the whisper at my side:
"What is it thou knowest, sweet voice?" I cried.
"A hidden hope," the voice replied:
So heavenly-toned, that in that hour
From out my e’en heart a power
Broke, like the rainbow from the shower,
To feel, altho’ no tongue can prove,
That every cloud, that spreads above
And veileth love, itself is love.
And forth into the fields I went,
And Nature’s living motion lent
The pulse of hope to discontent.
I wonder’d at the bounteous hours,
The slow result of winter-shower;
You scarce could see the grass for flowers.
I wonder’d, while I paced along:
The woods were still’d so full with song,
There seem’d no room for sense of wrong.
So variously seem’d all things wrought,
I marvel’d how the mind was brought
To anchor by one gloomy thought;
And wherefore rather I made choice
To commune with that barren voice,
Than him that said, "Rejoice! rejoice!"

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-eyed lips lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
I went thro’ many wayward moods
To see you dreaming—and, behind,
A summer crop with shining woods.
And I too dream’d, until at last
Across my fancy, brooding warm,
The reflex of a legend past,
And loosely settled into form.
And would you have the thought I had,
And see the vision that I saw,
Then take the broidery-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 SLEEPING PALACE.

1.
The varying year with blade and shear
Clothes and reclothes the happy plains:
Here rests the sap within the leaf,
Here stays the blood along the veins.
Faint shadows, vapors lightly curl’d,
Paint murmurs from the meadows come,
Like hints and echoes of the world
To spirits folded in the womb.

2.
Soft Instru bathes the range of arms
On every slanting terrace-lawn.
The fountain to his place returns,
Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
Here droops the banner on the tower,
On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
The peacock in his laurel bower,
The parrot in his gilded wires.

3.
Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs:
In these, in those the life is stay’d,
The mantles from the golden pega
Droop sleepily: no sound is made,
Not even of a gnat that slugs.
More like a picture seemeth all
Than those old portraits of old kings,
That watch the sleepers from the wall.

4.
Here sits the butter with a flask
Between his knees half-drawn; and there
The wrinkled steward at his task,
The maid-of-honor blooming fair:
The page has caught her hand in his;
Her lips are sever’d as to speak:
His own are pouted to a kiss:
The blush is fix’d upon her cheek.

5.
Till all the hundred summers pass,
The beams, that through the oriel shine,
Make prisms in every carven glass,
And bender brimm’d with noble wine.
Each Baron at the banquet sleeps,
Grave faces gather’d in a ring,
His state the king reposing keeps.
He must have been a jovial king.

6.
All round a hedge uphefts, 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, hur and brake and brier,
And glimpsing 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 high,
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 fated 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 tranced form
Porth streaming from a braid of pearl:
The broidered light is rich and warm,
And moves not on the rounded curl.

2.
The silk star-broider’d coverlid
Unto her limbs itself doth mond
Langdly ever; and, amid
Her full black ringlets downward roll’d,
THE DAY-DREAM.

Glows forth each softly-shadowed arm
With bracelets of the diamond bright;
Her constant beauty doth inform
Stillness with love, and day with light.

She sleeps: her breathings are not heard
In palace chambers far apart.
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
That lie upon her charmed heart.
She sleeps: on either hand upswells
The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest;
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL.

1.
All precious things, discover'd late,
To those that seek them issue 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 blanching on the grass.
He gazes on the silent dead,
"They perish'd in their daring deeds."
This proverb flashes thro' his head,
"The many fall; 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—to 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 clogs,
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 scrawld,
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 bang'd, and box'r'd, and clark'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 apeer'd,
And yawnd, and rubbed his face, and spoke,
"By holy rood, a royal beard!
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 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 leant,
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 princes follow'd him.

2.
"I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss."
"O wake forever, love," she hears,
"O love, 't was such as this and this."
And o'er them many a smiling 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 kiss 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 whiter guest 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 uses shall we put
The wildweed 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 salted to his mind.
AMPHION.

And liberal applications Ile
In Art like Nature, dearest friend;
So 't were to cram life, me, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOY

1.
You shake your head. A random string
Your finer female sense offends.
Well—were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends;
To pass with all our social ties
To elience 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 quinquennials would 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 awoke!
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 cur'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 waken'd hopes?
What lips, like thine, so sweetly join'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 unwind,
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 timber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And addled in the timber!

'T is said he had a truefule 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 bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirnetted down
Coquetting with young beeches;
And bruyz-yuice and ivy-wreath
Run forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
 Came little cypresses climbing.

The birch-tree swung her fragrant hair,
The bramble cast her bery,
The gin within the juniper
Began to make him merry,
The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers gallopaded.

Came wet-shot alder from the ware,
Came yews, 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 rose of pine,
Plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And was 't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
The country-side descended;
And shepherds from the mountain-eaves
Look'd down, half-pleased, half-frighten'd,
As dash'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 flexible then,
You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my thistle! shake the twig! And make her dance attendance; Blow, flute, and stir the still-set aprile, And shrill roots and tendrils.

'Tis vain in such a brassy age I could not move a thistle; The very sparrows in the hedge Scare answer to my whistle; Or at the most, when three-parts-sick With strumming and with scraping, A Jackass heehaws from the rick, The passive ozen gaping.

But what is that I hear? a sound Like sleepy counsel pleading: O Lord!—'tis 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 wither'd Misses! how they prose Over books of travel'd seamen, And show you slips of all that grows From England to Van Diemen.

They read in arbors clipped and cut, And alleys, falled places, By squares of tropic summer shut And warn'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt, Are neither green nor suppy: Half-conscious of the garden-square, The spinplings 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' months 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 bloom.

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLEAS 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 Lusitilian 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 dines Her laurel in the wine, And lays it thrice upon my lips, These favor'd lips of mine:

Until the charm have power to make New lifeblood warm the bosom, And barren commonplace break In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board, Her gradual figures 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 Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer sunny, 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 vinous mist, My college friendship glisters.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense. Unbodling 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 crosslogs, wet or dry, And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake, The 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 riffs 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 pint, you brought me, was the best That ever came from pipe.

But thro' the port surges 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, Unsolicited to confusion.

Tho' soak'd and satured, out and out, Thro' every convolution.

For I am of a numerable house, With many kinsemen gay,
Where long and largely we carouse,
As who should say me nay:
Each month, 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 fiery new,
Or, elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
As old as Waterloo;
Or stow'd (when classic Canning died)
In musty bines and chambers,
Had cast upon its rusty side
The gloom of ten Danzers.

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 fiery 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 chop to each.
He looks not like the common breed
That with the napkin daily;
I think he came like Gauymede,
From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg
Than modern poultry drop,
Stept forward on a firmer leg,
And cram'dd a plumper crop;
Upon an ampler dunghill trod,
Crow'd lustier late and early,
Slit 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 knuckled at the taw:
He spoop'd and clench'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 acclaim's,
A sign to many a staring villein,
Came crowing over Thames,
Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
Till, where the street grows straiter,
One fix'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 clod
Is it the weight of that half-crown,
Which I shall have to pay?
For, something duller 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 fullness of my life
I have an empty flask:
For I had hope, 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 what:
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 slipt
Away from my embraces,
And fall'n into the dusty crypt
Of dark'nd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou! thy better's went
Long since, and came no more:
With peaks of genial clamar sent
From many a tavern-door,
With twisted quirks and happy hits
From misty men of letters;
The tavern-hours of mighty wits,—
Thine elders and thy better.

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 sherris-warm'd
He flash'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 yonder empty glass
That makes me maunder-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 seek
Marrow of mirth and laughter;
And, whereas'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 pence
Go down among the pots:
Thon battehest by the greasy gleam
In haunts of hungry sinners,
Old boxes, larded with the steam
Of thirty thousand dinners.

Wt fret, we fame, would shift our skins,
Would quarrel with our lot:
They care is, under polisht'd tins,
To serve the hot-and-hot:
To come and go, and come again,
Retrinning like the pewit,
And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
That trifle with the crust.
Live long, ere from thy topmost head
The thick-set hazel dies;
Long, ere the luteful crow shall tread
The corners of thine eyes;
Live long, nor feel in head or chest
Thy changeable equinoxes,
Till mellow Death, like some late guest,
Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease
To pace the girdled floor,
And, laying down an unquiet lease
Of life, shall earn no more:
No carved cross-bones, the types of Death,
Shall show then-past to Heaven:
But carved cross-pipes, and, underneath,
A pint-pot, neatly graven.

TO

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.
"Cursed be he that moves my bone,"
Shakespeare's Epitaph.

You might have won the Poet's name,
If such be worth the winning now,
And gain'd a laurel for your brow
Of sounder leaf than I can claim;
But you have made the wiser choice,
A life that moves to gracious ends
Thro' troops of unreckoning friends,
A deedful life, a silent voice:
And you have miss'd the irreverent doom
Of those that wear the Poet's crown:
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown
Shall hold their organs at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die
Nor leave his music as of old,
But round him ere he scarce be cold
Begins the scandal and the cry:
"Proclaim the faults he would not show:
Break lock and seal: betray the trust:
Keep nothing sacred: 'tis but just
The many-headed beast should know."

Ah shameless! for he did but sing
A song that pleased us from its worth;
No public life was his on earth,
No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best:
His worst he kept, his best he gave.
My Shakespeare's curse on clown and knave
Who will not let his ashes rest!

Who make it seem so sweet to be
The little life of bank and brier,
The bird that pipes his lone dome
And dies unheard within his tree,
Than he that warbles long and loud
And drops at Glory's temple-gates,
For whom the carrion vulture waits
To tear his heart before the crowd?

LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,
And clouds are highest up in air,
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn:
Lovers long-betroth'd were they:

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 out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?"
Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"
"As God is above," 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."

"Falsely, 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 due."

"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 brooch 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,
"Thou! I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!"
"Alas, my child, I 'smud for 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 down,
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 stept Lord Ronald from his tower:
"O Lady Clare, you shame your worth:"
"Why come you drest 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 fall:
She looked into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

"If you are not the heirress 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 dashes come and go;
All heaven bursts her starry doors,
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 tough 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 thrall:
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 bonnieous 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 swines,
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 snowey 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 hear 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, split from brand and mall:
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height:
No branchy thicket shelter yields:
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste seas and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear:
I learn 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;
TO E. L.—THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

And, stricken by an angel’s hand,
This mortal armor that I wear,
This weight and also, 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 copres 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, whate’er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

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 Akrokorinian walls,
Tomohrit, 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 grew 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 throw’d
By fountain-springs;—and Naiads on’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 upon the rocks,
And fluted to the morning sea.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

In her ear he whispers gayly,
“If my heart by signs can tell,
Maiden, I have watch’d thee daily,
And I think thou lovest me well.”
She replies, in accents falter,
“There is none I love like thee.”
He is but a landscape-painter,
And a village maid she.
Heo to lips, that fondly falter,
Presses his without reproof;
Lends 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 roases,
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 lie shows her makes him dearer:
Evermore she seems to gaze
On that cottage growing nearer,
Where they twain will spend their days.
O 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 murmur,
When they answer to his call,
While he treads with step slow, a driner,
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 beauty,
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 flushes
Her sweet face from brow to chin:
As it were with shame she blushes,
And her spirit changed within.
Then her countenance all over
Pale again as death did prove;
But he clas’d her like a lover,
And he cheer’d her soul with love.
So she strove against her weakness,
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,
And her gentle mind was such
That she grew a noble lady,
And the people loved her much.
But a trouble weight’d upon her,
And perplex’d her, night and morn,
With the burden of an honor
Unto which she was not born.
Faith 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 back 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 treading,
Bore to earth her body, dead.
In the dress that she was wed in,
That her spirit might have rest.
EDWARD GRAY.—SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE.

EDWARD GRAY.
Sweet Emma Moreland of yonder tow'n
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, have 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;
Fli'd I was with folly and spite,
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

"Cruel, cruel the words I said!
Cruelly came they back to-day:
"You're too slight and fickle," I said,
'To trouble the heart of Edward Gray.'

"There I put my face in the grass—
Whisper'd, 'Listen to my despair:
I repent of all I did:
Speak a little, Ellen Adair!'

"Then I took a pencil and wrote
On the mossy stone, as I lay,
'Here lies the body of Ellen Adair,
And here the heart of Edward Gray!'

"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."

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SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE.
A FRAGMENT.
Like souls that balance joy and pain,
With tears and smiles from heaven again
The maiden Spring upon the plain
Came in a sunlit fall of rain.
In crystal vapor everywhere
Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
And, far in forest-deeps unseen,
The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song:
Sometimes the thrush whistle'd strong:
Sometimes the sparrowhawk wheel'd along,
Rush'd all the groves from fear of wrong:
By grassy copses with fuller sound
In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds began
To spread into the perfect fan,
Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,
With blissful treble ringing clear.
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 child of sin,
And took him by the curls, and led him in,
Where sat a company with heated eyes,
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, languid shapes,
By heaps of grourds, 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,
Wen 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 pearly hail;
Then the music touch'd the gates and died:
Rose again from where it seem'd to fall,
Storn'd in orbs of song, a growing gale:
Till throning in and in, to where they waited.
As't were a hundred-throated nightingale,
The strong tempestuous triple throb'd and pulsat'd:
Ran into his giddiest whirl of sound,
Caught the sparklies, and in circles,
Purple gazues, golden hazes, liquid mazes,
Flung the torrent rainbow round:
Then they started from their places,
Moved with violence exchanged in hue,
Caught each other with wild grirmaces,
Half-invisible to the view,
Wheeling with precipitate paces
To the melody, till they flew,
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
Like to Furies, like to Graces,
Dash'd together in blinding dew:
Till, kift'd with some luxurious agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flitter'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 casartet,
God made himself an awful rose of dawn,
Unheed'd: and detaching, fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly drawing near,
A vapor heavy, useless, formless, cold,
Came floating on for many a month and year,
Unheed'd: and I thought I would have spoken,
And warled 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 brine, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with muddy bay.
"Bitter barmain, waning fast!
See that sheets are on my bed;
What! the flower of life is past:
It is long before you wed.
"Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour,
At the Dragon on the heath!
Let us have a quiet half hour,
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.
"I am old, but let me drink;
Bring me splices, 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,
Cheek 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:
Caltest thou that thing a leg?
Which is thinnest? thine or mine?
"Thou shalt not be saved by works:
Thou hast been a sinner too;
Ruin'd 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 ruin'd blood;
Therefore comes it we are wise.
Fish are we that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy-dyes.
"Name and fame! to fly sublime
Through the courts, the camps, the schools,
Is to be the ball of Time,
Banded in the bands of fools.
"Friendship!—to be two in one—
Let the canting liar pack!
Well I know, when I am gone,
How she months behind my back.
"Virtue!—to be good and just—
Every heart, when oft enfeebled,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.
"O! we two as well can look
Whitened 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 binds a tyrant's power;
And the tyrant's cruel glee
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 applause, 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 brow.
"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,
Frantick love and frantic hate.
"Chant me now some wicked lays.
'Till thy dreeping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy cheery eyes.
"Fear not thou to loose thy tongue
Set thy hoary fancies free:
What is losthame 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 monudy 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 mould'd on a skull.
"Death is king, and Vivat Rex!
Tread a measure on the stones,
Madam—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
Joints of cunning workmanship.
"Lo! God's likeness—the ground-plan—
Nor mould'd, glazed, or framed.
Bass me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed!
"Drink to Fortane, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath!
Drink to heavy Ignorance!
Hob-sad-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 mandlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.
"Fill the cup, and fill the can!
Mingle madness, mingle scorn!
Dregs of life, and laces 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 sharps and scurf of salt, and scum of dross,
Old plash of ruins, and refuse pitch'd with moss;
Then some one spake: "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 glistening 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 then, 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.

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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 vanished hand. 
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break, 
At the foot of the crags O Sea! 
But the tender grace of a day that is dead 
Will never come back to me.

THE BEGGAR MAID. 

Hisa 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 steped 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 lonesome 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 blew from the gates of the sun, 
And waves of shadow went over the wheat, 
And he sat 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."
THE PRINCESS:
A MEDLEY.

TO
HENRY LUSHINGTON
THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED BY HIS FRIEND

A. TENNYSON.

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 them 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,
Greek, 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-rule in the park.
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time;
And on the tables every clime and age
Jumbled together: celts and calumets,
Claymore and snow-shoe, toys in lava, fans
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,
The cursed Malayn crescent, 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 Acacon:
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
Half-legend, half-historic, counts and kings
Who laid about them at their wills and died;
And mixt with these, a lady, that arm'd
Her own fair head, and saluting thro' the gate,
Had beat 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 lifted, 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 miselles 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 Lillia with the rest." We went
(I 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 rear'd a font 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 whereon the glided 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
Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter: round the lake
A little clock-work steamer paddling piled
And shook the lilacs: perch'd about the knolls
A dozen angry models jetted 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 flash'd a saucy message to and fro
Between the mimic stations: so that sport
Went hand in hand with science: otherwheres
Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamor bow'd,
And stamp'd the wicket; babies roll'd about
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maid's
Arranged a country dance, and drew thro' light
And shadow, while the twangling violin
Struck up with Soldier-ladle, and overhead
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight and smacking of the time;
And long we gazed, but satiated at length
Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and ivy-claup't,
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 award was trim as any garden lawn:
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
And Lillia with the rest, and lady friends
From neighbor seats: and there was Ralph himself,
A broken statue prop against the wall,
As gay as any. Lillia, wild with sport,
Half child, half woman as she was, had wound
A scarf of orange round the stony helm,
And robed the shoulders in a rose silk,
That made the old warrior from his livid 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.

Took this fair day for text, and from it preach'd And dwelt with the fairer sex, 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 I and the Master, as a rogue in grain Veered'd with sanctionious 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 tilt and tourney; then the tale of her That drove 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 beats them 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 us children! O I wish That I were some grand 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 sighs If our old huts could change their sex, and haunt With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans, And sweet girl-granmates in their golden hair, I wish they should not wear coarse common gowns, But move as rich as Emperor-moths or Ralph Who shines so in the corner: yet I fear, If there were many Lillas in the brood, However deep you might embower the nest, Some boy would spy it." At this upon the a_pad She tapt her thin 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-bud set with little wifful thorns, And sweet as English air could make her, she: But Walter half'd a score of names upon her, And "petty Ogress," and "ungrateful Fuss," And swore he loud'd at College; only long'd, All else was well, for she-society, They bosted and they cricketed; they talk'd At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics; They lost their weeks; they vex the souls of deans; They rode; they betted; made a hundred friends, And caught the blossom of the flying terms, But miss'd the mignonne of Vivian-place, The little heart-flow'ring Lilia. Thus be spoke, Part banter, part affection.

"True," she said, "we doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd us all. I'll stak my ruby ring upon it you 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 be with Lilia's. Daintily she shrlek'd And writing it, "Doubt 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 tutor 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 sinner's ash he: For while our culture held the faintest feet, And our long walks were stript as bare as brooms, We did but talk you over, pledge you all In wassail; often, like as many girls Sick for the holilies and the yews of home— As many little trivial Lillas—governess Charades 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-dissip Perch'd on the potted blossom of her lips: And Walter nod'd at me: "He began, The rest would follow, each in turn; and so We forg'd a sevenfold story. Kind? what kind? Chimeras, crochets, Christmas solecisms, Seven-bedded monsters only made to kill Time by the fire in winter." "Kill him now, The tyrant! kill him in the summer too," Said Lilia; "Why not now," the maiden Aunt. "Why not a summer's as a winter's tale? A tale for summer as bett's 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-solemn, that I laugh'd And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling mirth An echo like a ghostly woodpecker, Held in the ruins; till the maiden Aunt (A little sense of wrong and touched 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," clarm'd he, "And make her some great Princess, six feet high, Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you The Prince to win her!" "Then follow me, the Prince," I answer'd, "each be hero in his turn! Seven and yet one, like shadows 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, shrivels and strange experiments For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt them all— This were a mediacy 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 paws of the wind: And here I give the story and the songs.

1. 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, For on my cradle shone 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 PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

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, walking dreams were, no 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 would still to move among a world of ghosts,
And feel myself the shadow of a dream.
Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-head cane,
And paw’d his beard, and muttered ‘catalepsy.’
My mother pitying made a thousand prayers;
My mother was all willing and sufficient.
Half-canonized by all that look’d on her,
So gracious 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 if chanced that I had been,
While life was yet in bud and blade, betroth’d
To one, a neighboring Princess: she me
Was proxy-wedded with a beauteous calf.
At eight years old; and still from time to time
Came murmurs of her beauty from the South,
And of her brethren, youths of pululence;
And in 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:
The first, a gentleman of broken means
(His father’s fault) but given to starts and bursts
Of revel; and the inst, my other heart,
And almost my half-soul, for still we moved
Together, twain’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, snout’d it down, and rent
The wonder of the loom thro’ warp and woof
From skirt to skirt: and at the last be aware
That he would send a hundred thousand men,
And bring her in a whirlwind: then he chew’d
The thrice-turn’d cud of wrath, and cook’d his spleen,
Combining with his captain’s of the war.

At last I spoke. ‘My father, let me go.
It cannot be but some gross error lies
In this report, this answer of a king,
Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable:
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,
What’er my grief to find her less than fame,
May rae the bargain made.’ And Florian said:
‘I, too, have met at the foreign court,
Who moves about the Princes; whom you know,
Who wedded with a nobleman 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 trice;
I grate on rusty hinges here!’ but ‘No!’
Roar’d the rough king, ‘you shall not: 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 hung 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-tasseled moss;
What were those fancies? wherefore break her truth?
Proud look’d the lips: but while I meditated
A wind arose and mub’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, are the silver sickle of that month
Became her golden shield, I stole from court
With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,
Cat-footed thro’ the town and half a league
To hear my father’s clamor at our backs.
With Hlo! from some bay-window shake the night:
But all was quiet: from the bastion’s walls
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropped,
And flying reach’d the frontier: then we cross’d
To a liveller land; and so by tilth and grange,
And vine, and blowing 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 feasted 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 alignet gum,
‘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 olives fall’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 theories, 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,
But all she is and does is awful vanity.
About this losing of the child: and rhymes
And dream, and prophesying change,
Beyond all reason: these the women sang;
And they that know such things—I sought but peace;
No critic 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 widows. forlorn at an university.
For maidsen, on the spur she fled: and more
We know not.—only this: they see no men,
Not ev’n her brother Arce, 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 hear;
And, to speak the truth, I rate your chance
Almost at naked nothing.

Thus the king;
And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to stir
With garrison ease and oily courtesy
(Our formal compact; yet, in so case)
But chasing 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 met with evening on a rising sun.
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,
Close at the boundary of the liberties;
There enter'd an old host, call'd mine host
To council, pined him with his richest wines,
And show'd the late-writ letters of the king.

He with a long low ablation, stared
As blank as death in marble; then exclaim'd
Averring it was clear against all rules
For any man to go: but as his bristling town,
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 reverenced his liege-lady there;
He always made a point to post with mares;
His daughter and his household were the boys:
The land he understood for miles about
Was tll'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, hulp
To lace us up, till each, in maiden plumage
We rustled: him we gave a costly brio
To guerdon silence, mounted our good 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 glister gaily-like in coping
And Linden alley: then we past an arch,
Whereon a woman-staine rose with wings
From four wing'd horsea dark against the stars;
And some inscription ran along the front,
But deep in shadow: further on we gain'd
A little street half garden and half house; But scarce could hear each other speak for noise
Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers falling
On silver anvils, and the splash and air
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 blaze'd like Heaven and
Earth
With constellation and with continent,
Above an entry: riding in, we call'd;
A plump-armed Osteress and a stanch wench
Come running at the call, and help'd us down.
There were a boxam hostess forth, and said,
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?" "Lady Psyche." "Her 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 pupils."

This I read:

The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,
And o'er his head Urania hung,
And raised the blind ing bandage from his eyes:
I gave the letter to be sent with dawn:
And therewithal, the seal I wak'd
To float about a glimmering night, and watch
A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight, swell
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,
We fell out, 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.

A roar break of day the College Portress came:
She brought us Academic silks, in she
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,
And zoned with gold; and now when these were on,
And we as rich as moths from dust cocoons,
She, wearing her obedience, let us know
The Princess Isa wait'd: out we paced,
I first, and following thro' the porch that sang
All round with laurel, issu'd in a court
Compact of lucid marbles, broid'd with lengths
Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gav
Betwixt the pillars, and with great arms of flowers.
The Museus and the Graces, group'd in threes,
Unrilled a billowing fountain in the midst;
And here and there on lattice edges lay
Or book or late; but hastily we past,
And up a flight of stairs into the hall.
There at a board by tome and paper sat,
With two tame leopards couch'd 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 use and glory to yourselves ye 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 is the ladies of your land so tall?"
"We of the court," said Cyril. "From the court,"
She answered, "they hear the Prince" and be:
"The climax of his age! as tho' there were
One rose in all the world, your Highness that,
He worships your Ideal." She replied:
"We scarcely thought in our own hall to hear
This barren verbiage, current among men,
Like coin, the tinsel c limb 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 Never to wed. You 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 statues our lords ally Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale with scale."

At those high words, we, conscious of ourselves, Perused the matting; then an officer Ran up, and read the statutes, one of these: Not for three years to correspond with home; Not for three years to cross the liberties: Not for three years to speak with any men; And many more, which hastily subscribed, We enter'd on the boarders: and "Now," she cried, "Ye are green wood, see ye warp not. Look, our hall! Our statues!—not of those that men desire, Sleek Odalissques, or oracles of mode, Nor stunted squawes of West or East; but she That taught the Sabine how to rule, and she The foundress of the Babylonian wall, The Carian Artemisia strong in war, The Rhodope, that built the pyramid, Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene The famos venerable and the Roman brow Of Agripplina. Dwell with these and lose 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, &c. Better not be all Than not to 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 entered 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 staten-woven A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon-eyed, And on the hither side, or so she look'd, Of twenty summers. At her left, a child, In shilling draperies, headed like a star, Her maiden babe, a double April old, Agala slept. We sat: the Lady glanced: Then Florian, but no livelier than the dame That whisper'd "Asses' ear" 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 flint hazes of light, Till toward the centre set the starry tides, And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast The planets: then the monster, then the man: That taw'd or woaded, winter-clad in skies, Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate: As yet we find in barborous isles, and here Among the lowest."

Thereupon she took A bird's-eye view of all the ungracious past; Glanced at the legendary Amazon As emblematic of a nobler age: Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke of those That lay at write with Lar and Lencco; Ran down the Persian, Phoenician lines Of empire, and the woman's state in each, How far from just; till, warning with her theme, She fulminated her scorn of laws Salique And little-footed China, touch'd on Mahomet With such contempt, and came to chivalry: When some respect, however slight, was paid To woman, superstition all awry: However then commenced the dawn: a beam Had slanted forward, falling in a land Of promises; fruit would follow. Deep, indeed, Their debt of thanks to her who first had dared To leap the rotten pales of prejudice, Diysake their necks from custom, and assert None lordlier than themselves but that which made Woman and man. She had founded; they must build. Here might they learn whatever man ere taught: Let them not fear: some said their heads were less: Some men's were small; not they the least of men; For often fineness compensated size:

Besides the brain was like the hand, and grew With using; hence 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 lusher; and albeit their glorious names Were few, so scattered stars, yet to race in truth The highest is the measure of the man, And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay, Nor those horn-handed breakers of the gelse, But Homer, Plato, Verulam; 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, last not least, she who had left her place, And bowed her state to them, till they might grow To use and power on this Oasis, kept In the arms of leisure, sacred from the blight Of ancient influence and scorn."

"At last She rose upon a wind of prophetic Dilating on the future: "everywhere Two heads in council, two beside the hearth, Two in the tangled business of the world, Two in the liberal offices of life, Two plummets dropt for one to sound the abyss Of science, and the secrets of the mind: Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more: And everywhere the broad and bonneted 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 gratitude, till as a boat Tacks, and the slacker'd sail flats, all her voice Faltering 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 softer Argosy, or the more Aragonian, O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such As chant'd on the blanching bones of men?"

"But you will find it otherwise," she said.

"You jest: ill jesting with edge-tools! my vow Binds me to speak, and O that I could will, That axelike edge unturnable, our Head, The Princesses." "Well then, Psyche, take my life, And nall me like a weasel on a grange For warning: bury me beside the gale, And cut this epitaph above my head: Here lies a brother by a sister slain, All for the common good of womankind."
"Let me die too," said Cyril, "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 country's wedded to, for three years,
To the Lady Isla: 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'er I was
Disrobed, my name prefixed was Cyril.
Afflicted, Sir! love-whispers may not breathe
Within this vestal limits, and how should I,
Who am not mine, say, live: the thunderbolt
Flings silent; but prepare: I speak; it falls.

"Yet pause," I said: for that inscription there,
I think no more of deadly larks therein,
Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,
To scare the fowl from fruit: if more there be,
If more acted on, what follows? war;
Your own work man'd: for this your Academe,
Which ever side be Victor, in the hallow
Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass
With all fair theories only made to gild
A stormless summer." "Let the Prince judge
Of that," she said: "farewell, Sir—and to you.
I shudder at the sequel, but I go."

"Are you that Lady Psyche," I rejo'nd,"
The fifth in line from that old Florian,
Yet hang's his portrait in my father's hall
(The great old Baron with his besid' brow
Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)
As he bestrode my Grandseire, when he fell,
And all else fled: we point to it, and we say,
The loyal warmth of Florian is not cool,
But branches current yet in kindred veins."

"Are you that Psyche," Florian added, "she
With whom I sang about the morning hills,
Plung ball, flew kite, and raced the purple fly,
And snared the squirrel of the glen? are you
That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing brow,
To smooth my pillow, mix the foaming draithe
Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read
My sickness down to happy dreams? are you
That brother-sister Psyche, both in one?
"You heard that East and Melissa, 'twas then your turn!"

"You are that Psyche," Cyril said, "for whom
I would be that forever which I seem,
Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,
And glean your scater'd alpines."

Then once more,

"Are you that Lady Psyche," I began,
"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 war 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,
It gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn
Came; bright while you, besid' the well? the creature
Laid his muzzle on your lap,
And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it, and the blood
Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you wept.
That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet you wept.
O by the bright head of my little niece,
You were that Psyche, and what are you now?"

"You are that Psyche," Cyril said again,
"The mother of the sweetest little maid,
That ever crow'd for kisises."

"Out upon it!"

She answer'd, "peace! and why should I not play
The Spartan Mother with emotion, be
The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?
Him you call great: he for the common weal,
The fading politics of mortal Rome,
As I might slay this child, if good need were,
Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on whom
The secular emancipation turns
Of half this world, be awerved from right to save
A prince, a brother? a little will I yield.
Besiege those laertians, for use of you.
O hard, when love and duty clash! I fear
My conscience will not count me reckless yet—
Hear my conditions: promise (otherwise
You perish) as you came to slip away,
To-day, tomorrow, soon, it shall be said,
These women are too barbarous, would not learn;
They fled, who might have ashamed 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 lily arms
Tol both his 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 kiss'd his forehead, then, a moment after, clung
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 glisten and to fall: and while
They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a voice,
"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 blonde, and in a college gown,
That clad her like an April daffodilly
(I her mother's color) with her lips apart,
And all 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—yon; you
Heard your own name? and Melissa, 'tis so to me! I
Heard, I could not help 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," said the other, "for all 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 Dauid 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,
Not, not for all Aspasia's clearness,
Not, no to answer, Madam, all those hard things
That Sheba came to ask of Solomon.
"Be it as the other, 'tis what we may lead
The new light up, and culminate in peace,
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet."%

Said Cyril, "Madam, he the wisest man
Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls
Of Lebanonese cedar: nor should you
(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."
We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the child,  
And held her round the knees against his waist,  
And blew the swallow's cheek of a trumpet.  
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling, and the child  
Push'd her flat hand against his face and laugh'd:  
And thus our conference clos'd.

And then we strode  
For half the day thro' stately theatres  
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat, we heard  
The grave Professor. On the lecture slate  
The circle round'd under female hands.  
With flawless demonstration: follow'd then  
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,  
With scraps of thunderous Epic littered out  
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies  
And jewels five words-long  
That on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time  
Sparkle forever: then we dip't 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 broken fence,  
And glutton all night long breast-deep in corn,  
We indigested words, but wisely spoke:  
"Why, Sire, they do all this as well as we."  
"They hunt old trails," said Cyril, "very well;  
But when did woman ever yet invent?"  
"Ungracious," answer'd Florian, "have you learnt  
No more from Psyche's lecture, you that talk'd  
The trash that made me sick, and almost mad?"  
"O trash," he said, "but with a kernel in it.  
Should I not call her wise, who made me wise?  
And learnt? I learnt more from her in a flash,  
Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,  
And every Muse tumbl'd a selene.  
A thousand hearts lie fellow 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 clef't me thro' the stomacher; and now  
What think you of it, Florian? do I chase  
The substance or the shadow? will it hold?  
I have no sorcerer's malleon on me,  
No ghostly hallucinations like his Ilighness. I  
Flatter myself that always everywhere  
I know the substance when I see it. 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  
Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O to hear  
The Doctors! O to watch the thrifty plants  
Imbibing: once or twice I thought to roar,  
To break my chain, to shake my mane: but thou,  
Mediation motto, me. Soul and memory!  
Make liquid treble of that hussoo, my throat.  
Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet  
Star-sisters answering under crescent brows;  
Abate the stride, which speaks of man, and loose  
A more firm charm of blushes 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!"

And in we stream'd  
Among the columns, pacing, staid and still  
By two and three, till all from end to end  
With beauties every shade of brown and fair,  
In colors gayer than the morning 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 Astram age,  
Sat compass'd with professors: they, the while,  
Discus'd a doubt and tossed it to and fro:  
A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost terms  
Of art and science: lady Blanche alone  
Of faded form and haughtiest 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  
One walk'd rectiling 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 shallow by,  
Or under arches of the marble bridge  
Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some hid and sought  
In the orange thickesse: others tost a ball  
Above the fountain jets, and back again  
With laughter: others lay about the lawns,  
Of the older sort, and murmurd that their May  
Was passing: what was learning unto them?  
They wish'd to marry; they could rule a house:  
Men had learned with us, but we three  
Sat muffled like the Fates; and often came  
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts  
Of gentle satire, kin to charity.  
That har'mard not: then day droopt; 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,  
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court  
A long melodious 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,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying 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 salls all out of the west  
Under the silver moon:  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

III.

Morn in the white wake of the morning star  
Came 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 Muse's 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 bubble, approach'd  
Melissa, tinge'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 cri'd, "O fly, while yet you may!  
My mother knows!" and when I ask'd her "how,"  
"My fault," she wrpt, "my fault! and yet not mine;  
Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon me.  
My mother, 'tis her wont from night to night.
To call 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 left the or, not, or seldom used;
Here is the truth and maiden : for her and her.
And so last night she felt to canvass you:
' Her countrywomen! she did not easy her.
Who ever saw such wild barbarians?
Girls?-more like men!' and at these words the
sneeze,
My secret, seem'd to stir within my breast;
And O, Sire, could I help it, but my cheek
Began to burn and burn, and her lyxu eye
To fix and make me hotter, till she laugh'd:
Men! girls, like men: why, if they had been men
You need not set your thoughts in rubrie 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 revolvin the word)
'And so they are,—very like men indeed-
And with that woman closteted for hours!
'Why—thee—men—men! I shudder'd: ' and you
Then came these dreadful words out one by one,
' O ask me nothing'; I said: 'And she knows too,
And she conceals it.' So my mother clutch'd
The thmth at once, but with no word from me;
And she to know what she goes to inform
The Princess: Lady Psyche will be crush'd;
But you may yet be saved, and therefore fly:
And heal me with your pardon ere you go.'

"What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a bluf?"
Said Cyril: "Pale one, blush again: than wear
Those illus, better blush our lives away.
Yet let us breathe for one hour more In Heaven,
He stated, 'let us some classic Ango speak.
In scorn of us, 'they mounted, Gaunyuned,
To tumble, Vulcano, on the second morn.'
But I will melt this marble into wax
To yield us farther furlong.' and he went.

Melissa shook her doubtfull curls, and thought
He scarce would prosper. 'Tell ns,' Florian ask'd,
"How grew this feud betwixt the right and left."
"The day before," she said, 'between these two
Division solemnizers: 'tis my mother,
Too jealous, often stff as the wind
Pent in a crevice: much I bear with her:
I never knew my father, but she says
(God help her) she was wedded to a fool.
And still she ralf'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) immaculated:
Consorant chords that shiver to one note;
One mind in all things: yet my mother still
Affirms your Psyche thleved her theories,
And angled with them for her pupil's love:
She calls her plagiat; I know not what;
But I must go: I dare not tarry,' and light,
As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

Then murmur'd Florias, gazing after her:
'An open-hearted maiden, true and pure.
If I could love, why this were: how pretty
Her blushing was, and how she blush'd again,
As if to close with Cyril's random wish:
Not like your Princess cram'd with ering pride,
Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags in tow.'

"The crate," I said, 'may chatter of the crate,
The dove may murmur of the dove, but I
An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.
My princess, O my princess! train she err,
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 maiden: for her and her.
Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix
The nectar: but—ah—whene'er she moves
The Samian Heré rises and she speaks
A Memnon smitten 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 those balusters, high
Above the empurried champlains, drank the gale
That bloun about the foliage underneath,
And sated with the innumerable ruse,
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither came
Cyril, and yawning "O hard task," he cried:
'No fighting shadow here! I forced a way
Thro' solid opposition crab'd and gaur'd.
Better to clear prime forests, head and thump
A league of street in summer solstice down,
Than hammer at this reverend gentlewoman.
I knock'd and, hidden, enter'd; found her there
At point to move, and settled in her eyes
The green malignant light of coming storm.
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-oll'd,
As man's could be; yet maiden-meek I pray'd
Concealment: she demanded who we were,
And why we came. I fabled nothing fair.
But, your example pilot, told her all.
Up went the hub'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. Trust—we had, and thump
With open eyes, and we must take the chance.
But such extremes, I told her, well might harm
The woman's cause. 'Not more than now,' she said,
'So puddled as it is with favoritism.'
I tried the mother's heart. Shame might befal
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew:
Her auswer was, ' Leave me to deal with that.'
I spoke of war to come and many deaths,
And she replied, her duty was to seek,
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 recommended: 'Decide not ere you cause.
I find you here but in the second place,
Some say the third—the authentic foundress 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 broadening 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 gal'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 fall
Out yonder;' then she pointed on to where
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks
Beyond the thick-leaved platans 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 tame leopards. Kittenlike he roll'd And paw'd about her saudal. I drew near:
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure came
Upon me, the weird vision of our house:
The Princess Ida seemed to have smitten
Her gay-surr'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
Broke, as she smote me with the light of eyes
That bent my knee desire to kneel, and shook
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retvale following up
The river as it narrow'd 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 truer-hearted—ah, you seem
All he pleg'd for, 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 ev'n to death,
Or boser courses, children of despair." "Poor boy," she said, "can be not read—no books?
Quolt, 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 haughtier smile:
"And as to precontracts, we move, my friend,
At no man's beck, but know ourself and thee,
O Iqbal, noble Vashti! Summoned She kept her state, and left the drunken king
To bawl at Shuspan 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 assail this gray pre-eminence of man!
You grant me license; might I use it, think
Ere half be done perchance your life may fall;
Then comes the Fletcher helpless of your plan,
And takes and ruins all; and thus your palm
May only make that footprint upon sand
Which old-recurring waves of prejudice
Resmooth to nothing: might I dread that you,
Who as Ida seemed the boldness and your great deeds
For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,
Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due,
Love, children, happiness?"

And she exclam'd, 'Peace, you young savage of the Northern wild! What! tho' your Prince's love were like a God's,
Have we not made ourself the sacrifice?
You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd to thus:
Yet will we say for children, would they grew, Like field-flowers everywhere! we like them well:
But children die; and let me tell you, girl,
How'er you babble, great deeds cannot die:
They with the sun and moon renew 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—there is 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 sor wo whence afterhands
May move the world, tho' she herself effect
But little: whereabouts up and act, nor shrink
For fear our solid aim be dislape
By frail successors. Would, indeed, we had been,
In lieu of many mortal filial, a race
Of giants living, each, a thousand years,
That we might see our own work out, and watch
The saudy footprint harren into stone."

I answer'd nothing, doubtful 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
Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,
Dwarfs of the gymenacum, 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 surer, quicker proof—
O if our end were less achievable
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 veil a noble tear;
And up we came to where the river sloped
To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks
A breath of thunder. O'er it shook the woods,
And danced the color, and, below, stuck out
The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roard
Before man was. She gazed awhile and said,
"As the rude bones to us, are we to her
That will be." "Dare we dream of that," I ask'd,
"Which wrought us, as the workman and his work,
That practice better?" "How," she cried, "you love
The metaphysics! read and earn our price,
A golden bracch: beneath an emblem plane
Sits Dictima, 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 monstrous 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 microcosm,
Dabbling a shameless hand with shameful jest,
Encarnalize their spirit: yet we know
Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hange:
Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty,
Nor willing men should come among us, learnt,
For many weary moons before we came,
This craft of healing. Were you sick, ourself
Would tend upon you. To your question now,
Which Ipaqul is the workman and his work.
Let there be light and there was light: 't is so:
For was, and is, and will be, are but is,
And all creation is one act at once,
The birth of light: but we that are not all,
The Princess: A Medley.

As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that,
And live, perform, from thought to thought, and
make
One act a phantom 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 spake
With kindled eyes: we rode a league behind,
And, over a bridge of pine-wood 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 loved us.” “Yea,”
She answer’d, “or with fair philosophies
That lift the fancy; for indeed these fields
Are lovely, lovelier not the Elydan 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 awd;
Lay out the viands.” At the word, they raised
A tent of sateen, elaborately wrought,
With fair Cortona’s triumph; here she stood,
Engirt with many a florid maiden-check,
The woman-conqueror: woman-conquer’d there
The bearded Victor of ten-thousand hymns.
And all the men mournd at his side: but we
Set forth to climb; then, climbing, Cyril kept
With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I
With mine affianced. 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 cag: and then we turn’d,
We wound
About the cliffs, the copes, out and in,
Hammering and clanking, chattering stony names
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff,
Amazed the world; till in a side to side
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 shades across the lakes
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle: answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
The horns of Eltland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying;
Blow, bugle: 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 forerer and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

IV.

“Thus 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 cuppy-feather’d chasm and cleft,
Dropt thro’ the ambrosial glose to whom below
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the tent
Lamp-let 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 satins domes and enter’d in,
There leaning deep in broider’d down we sank
Our elbows: on a tripod in the midst
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glow’d
Fruit, blossom, vioand, amber wine, and gold.

Then she, “Let some one sing to us: lightler
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-awaken’d 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 felg’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 mondder lodges of the Past
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men,
Well needs it we should cram our ears with wool
And so pace 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,
Thuone after throne, and molten on the waste
 Becomes a cloud: for all things serve their time
Toward that great year of equal mights and rights,
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the end
Found golden: let the past be past: let be
Their cancel’d labels: tho’ the romance be break
The star’d mosaic, and the wild goat hang
Upon the shaft, and the wild fig-tree split
Their monstrous Idaho, 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 means about the retrospect,
But deals with the other distance and the home
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 maldenlike as far
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

“O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eyes,
And tell her, tell her what I tell to thee.

“O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.”
"O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow and light Upon her ladies' wide pipe and trill, And cheep 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 lingerest thou 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 Ithacensian suitors in old time, Stared with great eyes, and laughed with alien lips, And knew not what they meant; for still myvoice Rang false: but smiling, "Not for thee," she said, "O Bulbul, any rose of Guflstan Shall burst her veil: marsh-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 lute and flute fantastic tenderness, And turn the victim 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 canzonets 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: oneself have often tried Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have dash'd The passion of the propheteess; for nothing Is dier unto freedom, force and growth Of spirit, than to junketing 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, Nor vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes To be dandled, no, but living wills, and sheltered Whole in ourselves and owed to none. Enough! But now to heaven play with profit, you, Know you no song, the true growth of your soil, That gives the manners of your countrywomen?"

She spoke and turn'd her symptoms head with eyes Of shining expectation fixt on mine. Then while I drum'd my brains for such a song, Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd flack had wrought, Or master'd by the sense of sport, began To toll a careless, careless tavern-catch Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences Under dark and muddy banes. And thus: What? I, frowning; Psyche finsh'd and wann'd and shook; The lilylike Melissa droom'd her brows; "Forbear," the Princess cried: "Forbear, Sir," I; And heated thro' and thro' with wrath and love, I smote him on the breast; he started up; There rose a shriek of as of a city sack'd, Melissa clamor'd, "Flee the death!" "To horse," Said Ida: "home! to horse!" and fled, as flies

A troop of snowy doves athwart the duck, When some of them was at the dozen doors, Disorderly the women. Alone I stood With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at heart, In the pavilion: there like parting hopes I heard them passing from me; hoof by hoof, And each a leaf to my desire. Clang'd on the bridge; and then another shriek, "The Head, the Head, the Princess, O the Head!" For blind with rage she mied the plank, and roll'd In the river. Out I sprang from glow to gloom: There stood her white robe like a blossomed'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 tobuffet to land in vain. A tree Was half-disrooted from his place and stoop'd To draw 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 burren from mine arms; they cried, "She pierced thee, and to thee now she turns! They bore her back into the tent: but I, So much a kind of shame within me wrought, Not yet endured 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 hideway, found at length The garden portals. Two great statues, Art And Science, Caryatides, lifted up A weight of emblem, and betwixt were valves Of openwork in which the hunter read His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows Had sprouted, and the branches thereupon Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the gates.

A little space was left between the horns, Thro' which I clamber'd over at top with pain, Dropt on the sward, and up the Linden walks, 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 breast and wheel'd Thro' a grove of his seven slow suns. A step Of lightest echo, then a loftier form Than female, moving thro' the uncertain gloom, Distant 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 rules. Moreover ' Seize the strangers ' is the cry. How came you here?" I told him: "I," said he, "Last of the train, a mortal leper, I, To whom none spake, half-laugh at heart, return'd, Arriving all confused among the rest With hooded bows I crept into the hall, And, cough'd behind a Judith, underneath The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw. Girl a girl was call'd to trial; this was she, And Disclarm'd all knowledge of us: last of all, Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her. She, question'd if she knew us men, at first Was silent; closer press'd, denied it not: And then she tell'd me all she knew. Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied: From whence the Royal mind, familiar with her, 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 reat for Blanche to accuse her face to face; And I slipt out: but whither will you now? And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are fled:
The Princess: A Medley.

What, if together? were not too well. Would rather we had never come? I dress His wildness, and the chances of the dark.

"And yet," I said, "you wrong him more than I That struck him: this is proper to the clown, Tho' smocked or, far from and piles, still the clown, To harm the thing that he trusts him, and to shame That which he says loves: for Cyril, however 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 townes on the morning can not be. He has a solid base of temperament: But as the water-lily starts and slides Upon the level in little puffs of wind, Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he.

Scarce had we ceased when from a tamarisk near Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying, "Names," He, standing still, was cloutch'd: but I began To thrill the musky-circled marke, wind And double in and out the holes, and race By all the fountains: fleet I was of foot: Before me shower'd the rose in flowers; behind I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine ear Bubbleth the midnight gale and needeth not, And secret images of the plenteous soul. At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine, That claspt the feet of a Memosyne, And falling on my face was caught and known.

They bade us to the Princess where she sat. High in the hall: above her droop'd a lamp, And made the single jewel on her brow Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-head, Prophet of storm: a handmaid on each side Bow'd her down; on whom to whom she wrote black hair. Damp from the river; and close behind her stood Eight daughters of the plough, stronger than men, Huge women blowzed with health, and wind, and rain, And labour. Each was like a Druid rock; Or like a spike of land that stands apart Close from the main, and walk'd about with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing clave An aduent to the throne: and there beside, Halfocked, as if caught at once from bed. And tumbled on the purple footcloth, lay The lily-shining child; and on the left Bow'd on her palms and folded up from wrong, Her round white shoulders shaken with her sob; Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanches erect Stood up and spake, an affluent orator. "It was not thus, O Princess, in old days: You prized my counsel, lived upon my lips: I led you then to all the Caustelles; 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 sinken 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 conscious of my own deserts, And partly that you were my civil head, And chiedy you were born for something great, In which I might your fellow-worker be, Whose fame 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 standard came before, and on that you placed her path To Lady Psyche, yonder, but no worse, A foreigner, 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. They came these wolves: they know her: they endured, 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 man, at first his purpose was not be. Last night, their mask was patent, 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, perforce; 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 misconstrued 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 mble we were seen; And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it) I came to tell you: found that you had gone, Hid'n to, the hills, she likewise: now, I thought, That surely she will speak; if not, then I: Did she? The counsel of her blazon'd they were, According to the coarseness of their kind, 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: She turn'd in whom to whom she wrote her rage, I, that have lent my life to build up yours, I that have wasted here health, wealth, and time, And talents, I—yes: you see—I will not boast: Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan, Divorced from my experience, will be chaff For every gust of chance, and men will say We did not know the real light, but chased The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread.

She ceased; the Princess answer'd coldly "Good: Your oath is broken: we dismiss you: go. For this lost lamb (she pointed to the child) Our mind is changed: we take it to ourselves."

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture throat, And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile, "The plan was mine. I built the nest," she said, "To hatch the cuckoo. Rise! and stoop'd to updrag Melissa: she, half on her mother prop'd, Half-dropping from her, turn'd her face, and cast A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer, Which melted 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 pursued, A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear Stared in her eyes, and chalk'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 surmise. Regarding, while she read, till over brow And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful bloom As of some fire against a stormy cloud gone. 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, Beaten with some great passion at her heart,
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard
In the dead bushes the papers that she held.
Rustle: at once the lost lamb at her feet
Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;
The plaintive cry jar'd on her ear; she crush'd
The scrolls together, made a sudden turn
As if to speak, but, utterance failing in her,
She whirl'd them on to me, as who should say
"Read," and I read—two letters—one aire's.

"Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince your way
We knew not your ungracious laws, or what learnt,
We delivered in the customary phrase,
Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but fell
Into his father's hands, who has this night,
You lying close upon his territory,
Slipst 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;
Clear of your connexions: the provisions hear
You hold the woman is the better man;
A rampant heresy, such as if it spread
Would make all women kick against their lords
Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve
That we, with this night, weld 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 importunately.

"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 scorner of your sex
But venerator, zealou's it should be heard
All that might be; hear me, for I bear
Tho' man, yet human, whatsoever your wrongs,
From the flaxen curl to the grey lock a life
Less mine than yours: my nurse would tell me of you;
I babbled for you, as babies for the moon,
Vague brightness; when a boy, you stoop'd to me
From all high places, lived in all fair lights,
Came in long breezes rapt from inmost south
And blowed to inmost north; at eve and dawn
With Ida, Ida, Ida, singing the wood's:
The leader wildswan in among the stars
Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of glow-worm light
The mellow breaker murmurd Ida. Now,
Because I would have reach'd you, had you been
Sphered up with Cassiopëa, or the enthroned
Persephone in Hades, now at length,
Those winterns of abeyance all worn out,
A man I came to see you: but, indeed,
Not in this frequency can I lend full tongue,
O noble Ida, to these thoughts that wait
On you, their centre: let me say but 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,
With me, that except you stay al în here,
According to your blater 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 golden thousand maidens for your palace
The breadth of life; 0 more than poor men wealth,
Than sick men health—yours, yours, not mine—but half
Without you, with you, whole: and of those haltes
You worthiest; and how'er you block and bar
Your heart with system out from mine, I hold
That it becomes no man to nurse despair,
But in the teeth of clench'd antagonism
To follow up the worthiest till he die:
Yet that I came not all unauthoriz'd
Behold your father's letter."

On one knee
Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and dash'd
Unope'd at her feet: a tide of fierce
Fervent seem'd to well behind her lips,
As wafts a river level with the dam
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 malde
Gather'd together: from the illuminated hall
Long launes of splendour slanted o'er a press
Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded ewes,
And rainbow robes, and gems and gem-like eyes,
And gold and golden heads; they to and fro
Flutter'd, 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 very walls,
And some they cared not: till a claniow grew
As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
And worse confounded: high above them stood
The placid marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head: but rising up
Roub'd in the long night of her deep hair, so
To the open window moved, remaining there
Fix't like a beacon-tower above the waves
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye
Glarea ruin, and the wild birds on the light
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 unfurl the maiden baner of our rights,
And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,
Or, falling, promontary of our cause,
Hie: I blame ye not so much for her fear:
Six thousand years of fear have made ye that
From which I would redeem ye: but for those
That stir this hubbub—you and you—I know
Your faces there in the crowd—to-morrow morne
We have a great conversation: they are they
That love their voices more than duty, learn
With whom they deal, dissemble'd in shame to live
No wiser than their mothers, household stuff,
Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
Full of weak polson, turnpits for the clown,
The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,
Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,
But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to thrum,
To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to scour,
Forever slaves at home and fools abroad."

She, ending, waved her hands: thereat the crowd
Muttering dissolved: then with a smile, that look'd
A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,
When all the glens are drown'd in azure gloom
Of thunder-shower, she floated to 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 worse confounded and like a gentle man.
You saved our life: we owe you bitter thanks:
Better have died and split our bones in the flood—
Then men had said—but now—What hinders me
To take such bloody vengeance on you both!—Yet since our father—Wasps in our good hive, you would be quicker at my trade:—Berthemon, measureless than your native bears—O would I had his sceptre for one hour! You that have dared to break our bound, and gulp'd our servants, wrong'd and lied and thwarted us—If weet with these! I bound by procarrants—Your bride, your bondslavet not the all the gold That veins the world were pack'd to make your crown, And every spoken tongue should lord you. Sir, Your falsehood and yourself are useful 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 cause, But on my shoulder hung their heavy hoods, The weight of destiny: so from her face They push'd us down the steps, and thro' the court, And with grim 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 voice of murmuring. While I was come On a sudden the weird seclusion and the 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增强 Were shadows; and the long fantastic night With all its doings had and had not been, And all things were and were not.

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 whom the touch of all mischeif but came As nght to him that sitting on a hill Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway 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 brood 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, felting plague at what she call'd The railliery, or grotesque, or false sublime—Like one that wishes at a dance to change The music—clapt her hands and cried for war, Or some grand fight to kill and make an end: And he that next inherited the tale Half turning to the broken statue said, "Sir Ralph has got your colors: if I prove Your knight, and fight your battle, what for me?" It chanced, her empty glove upon the tomb Lay by her like a model of her hand. She look it and she flung it. "Fight," she said, "And make us all we would be, 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 stumbl'd on a stationary voice, And "Staud, who goes?" "Two from the palace," I

"The second two: they wait," he said, "pass on: His highness wakes? and one, that clash'd in arms, By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas, led Threading the soldier-cit, 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 wakes A hlisping of the innumerable leaf and dies, Each blessing in his neighbor's ear; and then A strangle glitter, out of which there brake On all sides, clamoring 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 heaved and blew, And slain with laughter roll'd the glided Squire.

At length my Sir, his rough check wet with tears, Panted from weary sides, "King, you are free! We did but keep you surety for our son, If this be he,—or a drugged mawlin, thou, That tends her bristled grunlers in the sludge:" For I was drench'd with ozo, and torn with briars, More crumpled than a poppy from the sheath, And all one rag, displeased from head to heel. Then some one sent beneath his breast A whisper'd jest to some one near him "Look, He has been among his shadows." "Satan take The old women and their shadows! (than the King Roard) make yourself a man to fight with men. Go: Cyril told us all.

As boys that slink From ferule and the trespassing-eye, Away we stole, and transcient in a trice From what was left of faded woman-slaoght To sheathing splendors and the golden scale Of harness, laid in the sun, that half-blind 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, rescold'd peace, whereon Follow'd his tale. Amazed he fled 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 text A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and there Among pilled arms and rough accoutrements, Pitiful sight, wrapt 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 churr'd and wrinkled piece of womanhood, Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

Then Florian knelt, 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 least act abides the nameless charm That none has else for me?" She heard, she mov'd, She moan'd, a folded voice; and up she sat, And raised the cloak from brows as pale and smooth As those that mourn half-shrouded over death In deathless marble. "Her," she said, "my friend— Varied from her—betray'd her Courage and mine— Where shall I breathe? why kept ye not your faith? O base and bad! what comfort? none for me?" To whom remorseful Cyril, "Yet I pray
The sleek and shining creatures of the chase,  
We hunt them for the beauty of their skins;  
They love us for it, and will we ride them down.  
Wheeling and siding with them! Out I for shame!  
Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear to them  
As he that does the thing they dare not do,  
Breathing and sounding beantone battle, comes  
With like to man, and had not abred the death,  
The rest of the triumph round my head and leeps  
In Among the women, names them by the score  
Flatter'd and dinsier'd, wins, through dash'd with death  
He redens what he kisses: thus I won  
Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,  
Worth winning;" "this fire-brand—gentleness  
To such as her! If Cyril will spake her true,  
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,  
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,  
Were wisdom to it."  
"Yes, but Sire," I cried,  
"Wild natures need wise curbs. The soldier? No:  
What dares not Ida do that she should prize  
The soldier? I beheld her, when she rose  
The yester-night, and storming in extremes  
Stood for her cause, and flung defiance down  
Gagellon to man, and had not abred the death,  
No, not the soldier's: yet I hold her, king,  
True woman: but you clash them all in one,  
That have as many differences as we.  
The violet varies from the lily as far  
As oak to elm; one loves the soldier, one  
The alken priest of peace, one this, one that,  
And some unworthily: their sinless faith,  
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,  
Glorifying clown and saty; whence they need  
More breadth of culture: is not Ida right?  
They worth it? Truer to the law within?  
Severer in the logic of a life?  
Twice as magnetic to sweet influences  
Of earth and heaven? and she of whom you speak,  
My-mother, looks as whole as some serene  
Creation misted 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 plebeian miscellany, man  
Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mir,  
But whole and one: and take them all-in-all,  
Were we ourselves but half so good, as kind,  
As truthful, much that Ida claims as right  
Had ne'er been moosed, but as frankly theirs  
As dues 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 kindler: we esteem you for it.  
He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince,  
I would have our daughter: for the rest,  
Our own detention, why the causa weigh'd,  
Fatherly fears—you used us courteously—  
We would do much 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 gobulines in the night,  
Nor in the furrow broke the ploughman's head,  
Nor burnt the grange, nor hea'd the milkingmald,  
Nor rob'd the farmer of his bowl of cream:  
But let your Prince (our royal word upon it)  
He comes back safe ride with as to our lines,  
And speak with Arac: Arac's word is thrice  
As ours with Ida: something may be done—  
I know not what—and ours shall see us friends.  
You, likewise, our late guestes, if so you will,  
Follow ye purs: who knows? we fear may build some plan  
Forsquare to opposition."
Here he reach'd
White hands of farewell to my sire, who grew'd!
An answer which, half-misled in his head,
Let so much out as gave us leave to go.

Then rode we with the old king across the lawns
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings of Spring
In every hole, a song on every spray
Of birds that piped their Valentines, and woke
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love
In the old king's ears, who promised help, and ooeed
All o'er with honey'd answer as we rode;
And blossom-sprang afitt the heavy dew.
Gather'd by night and peace, with each light air
On our saddle's heads: but other thoughts than Peace
Burst in us, when we saw the embattled squares,
And squadrongs of the Prince, trampling the flowers
With clamor: for among them rose a cry
As if to greet the king: they made a halt;
The horses yield'd; they clush'd their arms; the drum
Beat; merrily-blowing shrill'd the martial strife;
And in the blast and bray of the long horn
And serpent-throve bungle, undulated
The banner: anon to meet us lightly pranced
Three captains out; nor ever had I seen
Such thros of men: the midstmost of the highest
Was Arac: all about his motion clang
The shadow of his sister, as the beam
Of the East, that play'd upon them, made them glance
Like those three stars of the airy Giant's zone,
That glitter burnish'd by the frosty dark;
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,
And bickers into red and emerald, shone
Their morions, wash'd with morning, as they came.

And I that prated peace, when first I heard
War-musick, felt the blind wildbeast of force,
Whose home is in the sinews of a man,
Stir in me as to strike: then took the king
His three broad sons: with now a wandering hound
And now a pointed finger, told them all:
A common light of smiles at our disgrace
Broke from their lips, and, ere the windy jest
Had labor'd down within his ample lungs,
The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in words.

"Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he himself
Your captive, yet my father wills not war: And,
'sdeath! I myself, what care I, war or no? But then this question of your truth remains:
And there's a downright honest thing in her;
She flies too high, she flies too high! and yet
She ask'd but space and fairplay for her scheme:
She prest and prest it on me—I myself,
What know I of these things? but, life and soul!
I thought her half-right talking of her wrongs:
I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what of that?
I take her for the flower of woman-kind,
And so I often told her, right or wrong,
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those she loves,
And, right or wrong, I care not: this is all
I stand upon her side: she made me wear it—
'sdeath,—and with solemn rites by candlelight—
Swear by St. something,—I forget her name—
Her that talk'd down the fifty wise men:
She was a princess too; and so I swore
Come, this is all; she will not: wait your claim,
If not, the foughten field, what else, at once
Decides it, 'sdeath! against my father's will!"

I lag'd in answer loath to render up
My protestant, and loath by brainless war
To cleave the rift of difference deeper yet;
Till one of those two brothers, half aside
And fingering at the hair about his lip,
To prick us on to combat "Like to like!
The woman's garment hid the woman's heart.
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

Of those that iron-crank'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 snarling hounds the raked desolate land of those,—
Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity, sing
Their pretty maidens in the running flood, and swoops
The vulture, beak and talon, at the heart
Made for all noble motion: and I saw
That equal baseness lived in sleeker times
With smoother mean; the old leave laugh'd at:
Millions of throats would bawl for civil rights,
No woman named: therefore I set my face
Against all men, and lived but for mine own.
Parf off from men I built a fold for them:
I reared it full of rich memorials;
I fenced it round with gallant institutes,
And biting laws to scare the beasts of prey,
And prosper'd; till a rout of saucy boys
Brake on us at our books, and marr'd our peace,
Masquer'd like our maidens, blustering I know not what
Of insolence and love, some pretext held
Of baby troth, invalid, since my will
Seal'd not the bond—the striplings!—for their sport—
I tamed my leopards: shall I not tame these?
Or you? or I? for since you think me touch'd
In honor—what, I would not sugh of false—
Is not our cause pure? and whereas I know
Your prowess, Arach, and what mother's blood
You draw from, fight; you falling, I abide
What end soever: fall you will not. Still
This is the risk'd it for my own;
His mother lives: yet whatsoe'er you do,
Fight and flight well; strike and strike home. O dear
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you, you
The sole men to be mingled with our cause,
That we may prove to you, in the after-time,
Your very armor hallow'd, and your statues
Rear'd, 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 claim on chum 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, shower the dery grain
Of freedom broadcast over all that orbs
Between the Northern and the Southern morn."

Then came a postcript 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-girdled here: indeed I think
Our chieftest comfort is the little child
Of one unworthy mother; which she left;
She shall not have it back: the child shall grow
To prize the antheric mother of her mind.
I look it for an hour in mine own bed.
This morning: there the tenderer dews hands
Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world: farewell."

I ceased: he say'd, "Stubborn, but she may sit
Upon a kIng's right hand. In thunder-storms,
And soundly sleep'd up: saw her face yourself
Bemused by the wildbro Love to sboughs
That swallow common sense, the spindling kIng,
This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.
When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up,
And toppies down the scales; but this is fix't
At his right hand: the old leave laugh'd at:
Man for the field and woman for the hearth;
Man for the sword and for the needle she:
Man with the head and 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 whinny shrills
From tile to scullery, and her small goodman
Shrinks in his arm-chair when the fires of Heli
Mist with a blue sheet; but you—oh, a colt—
Take, break her: strongly groom'd and strictly curb'd
She might not rank with those detestable
That let the bustling scald at home, and brawl
Their rights or wronge like potherbs in the street.
They say she's comely; there's the fairer chance:
'like left her the leves for rating 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 hearing 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 burst sorcerer's curse
That one should right with shadow and should fall;
And I saw a flash of the weird affection
King, camp and college turn'd to hollow shows;
I seem'd to move in old memorial tits,
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. Empennopled and plumed
We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet biared
At the barrier like a wild horn in a land
Of echoes, and a moment, 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 thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream; I dream'd
Of fighting. On his hunches rose the steed,
And into dery splinters leapt the lance,
And out of stricklen helmets sprang the fire.
A noble dream; what was it else I saw?
Part sat as rocks, part reed'd but kept their seats;
Part laid on the earth and rose again; and drew:
Part stumbled mist 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 large blows rai'd, as here and there:
He rose the mealy, lord of the ringling lists,
And all the plain—brand, mace, and shaft, and shield—
Shock'd, like an iron-clauging suvli hand'g
With hammers; till I thought, can this be so
From Gama's dwarfish lains? If this be so
The mother makes us most—and in my dream
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-front
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies' eyes,
And highest, among the statues, statue-like,
Between a cymbal'd 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—inaexorable—no tenderness—
Too lute, too shrill; is she not like a fight,
Yet, here be seen fall! with that I drave
Among the thickest and bore down a Prince,
And Cyrill, one. Yes, let me make my dream
All that I would. But that large-moulded man,
His visage all again as at a wake,
Made on the press the press, and, staggering back
With stroke on stroke the horse and horneman, came
As comes a pillar of electric cloud.
Playing the roofs and enqueue the dwanks,
And shadowing down the champaign till it strikes
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 dark'ning clouds, from swelling drops 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 lares broken; fear ye not
To break them more in their behalf, whose arms Champon'd our cause and won it with a day
Blanch'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 in the tents with coarse manklid, ill array'd,
But descend, and, proffering flowers,
The brethren of our blood and cause, that there
Lie bruised and maim'd, 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 maidens in train across the palace,
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 waving fell,
And over them the tremulous laves of light,
Slid, they moving under shade: but Blanché
At distance follow'd: so they came: anon
Thro' 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 airy 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 upon her, and call'd them dear deliverers,
And happy warrior and immortal names,
And said, "You shall not lie in the tents but here,
And nursed 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 whelpless eye,
Silent; but when she saw me lying stark,
Dishelm'd and meek, and motionlessly pale,
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd: and when she saw
The haggard father's face and reverend board
Of grisly twine, all dabbled 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 trees,
And held them up: she saw them, and a day
Rose from the distance on her memory.
When the good Queen, her mother, shore the trees
With kisses, ere the days of Lady Blanché:
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 was broken in her mind;
Her noble heart was molten in her breast;
She bowed, she set the child on the earth; she laid
A feeling finger on my brows, and presently
"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 clog of thanks, that make
Our progress fatter to the woman's goal."

She said: but at the happy word "he lives,"
My father stoop'd, refather'd o'er my wounds.
So those two foes above my fallen life,
With battle bore like night and evening mixt
Their dark and grey, till I slight Psyche ever stole
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden brede,
Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the grass,
Uncared for, spild its mother and began
A blind and babbling laughter, and to dance
Its body, and reach its fatling Innocent arms
And lazy laging fingers. She the appeal
Brook'd not, but clamping out "Mine—mine—not yours,
It is not yours, but mine: give me the child,"
Ceased all on trembling: piteous was the cry:
So stood the unhappy mother open-mouth'd,
And turn'd each face her way: wan was her cheek
With hollow watch, her blooming mantle torn,
Red grief and mother's hunger in her eyes,
And down dead-heavy sunk her curls, and half
The sacred mother's bosom, panting, burst
The laces toward her babe; but she nor cared
Nor knew it, clambering 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, Cyril, batter'd as he was,
Traft himself up on one knee: then he drew
Her robe to meet his lips, and down she look'd
At the hand man eyewards, 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,
While we carouse, while you, the Victor of all.
What would you more? give her the child! remain
Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,
Or all as dead: henceforth we let you be:
Win you the hearts of women; and beware
Lioness—never provoke her, nor amuse love of these,
The common hate with the revolving wheel
Should drag you down, and some great Nemesis
Break from a dark'en'd future, crown'd with fire,
And tread you out forever: but hoo'soe'er
Fix'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 loved
The breast that fed or arm that dandleth you,
Or own one part of sense not flint to prayer,
Give her the child! or if you scorn to lay it,
Yourself, in banes so lately clasp'd with yours,
Or speak to her, your dearest, her one fault
The tenderness, 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, into mournful twilight mellowing, dwelt
Full on the child: she took it: "Pretty lamb! I lift the vale: half-open'd, to the woods!
Solc comfort of my dark hour, when a world
Of traitorish 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 far was I
To dream thy course emascul'd in mine, to think
I might be something to thee, when I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast
In the dead prime: but may thy mother prove
As true to thee as false, false to me!
And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I wish it
Gentle as freedom"—here she kiss'd it: then—
"All good go with thee! take it, Sir," and so
Laid from her soft babe in his hard-set hands,
Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she sprang
To meet it, with an eye that swarm in thankst
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,
And hugg'd and never hugg'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 plans: yet speak
To me,
Say one soft word and let me part forgiven."

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the child.
Then Arac. "Ida—wesith! you blame the man:
You wrong yourselves—the woman is so hard
Upon the woman. Come, a grace to me!
I am your warrior; I and mine have fought
Your battle: kiss her; take her hand, she weeps:
'Sneath! I would sooner fight thrice o'er than see it."

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the ground,
And redden in the furrows of his chin,
And moved beyond his custom, Gana 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 saint with saints.
She said you had a heart—I heard her say it—
Our Ida has a heart—'tis ere she died—
But see that some one with authority
Be near her still," and I—I sought for one—
All people said she had authority—
The man Blanche—much profit: not one word:
No! tho' your father ense: see how you stand
Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the great knights maim'd,
I trust that there is no one hurt to death,
For your wild whim: and was it then for this,
Was it for this we gave our palace up,
When you withdrew from sumnassoras and state,
And had our wine and cheese 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, allflush'd you said to me
Now had you a friend of your own age,
Now could you share your thought; now should
men see
Two women faster welded 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 sine and are, spheroid and azimuth,
And right ascension, Heaven knows what; and now
A word, but one, one little kindly word,
No one to spare her: out upon you, flirt!
You know her, nor me, nor any other, 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,
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

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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 rosed with indignation: but the Prince Her brother came; the king her father char'd Her wounded soul with words: nor did mine own Refuse her proffer, lastly gave her hand.

Then as they lifted up, dead weights, and bare Straight to the doors: to them the doors gave way Groaning, and in the Vestal entry shriek'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 these 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 these, all said the same 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 o'er the statues leapt from head to head, Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,

Now set a wrathful Brian'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 sounded, issuing ordinances: 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 chariot, many a maiden passing home Till happier times; but some were left of those Held sagac, 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 faded 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.

Vil.

So was their sanctity violated, So their fair college turn'd to hospital; At first with all confusion: by and by Sweet order lived again with other laws: A kindlier influence reign'd: and everywhere Low voices with the ministering hand Ring round the sick: then the molder 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

Down thro' her limbs a drooping languor wtpt: Her head a little bent; and on her mouth A doubtful smile dwelt as a clouded moon. In a still water: then brake 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 wus'd it—but we see The accomplice of your madness unforgiven, And think that you might mix his draught with death, When your skiles change again: the rougher hand is safer: on to the tents: take up the Prince."

He rose, and while each car was prick'd to attend A tempest, thro' the cloud that dimm'd her broke A genial warmth and light once more, and shone Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend.

"Come hither," she cried out, "embrace me, come, Quick while I melt; make a reconciliation sure With one that cannot keep her mind an hour: Come to the hollow heart they slander so! Kiss and be friends, like children belog child! feare no more: I want for good: I should have had to do with none but maids, 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 mine own brother. For my debt to him, This nightmare weight of gratitude, I know it; Taunt me no more: yourself and yours shall have Free adit; we will scatter all our mards 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 draws me down From my first height to mob me up with all The soft and milky rabble of woman-kind, Poor weanking 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 wounded 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 sang 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 brawling 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, Iwas 1. 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 askance a wintry eye: But Ida with a voice, that like a bell, In Told by an earthquake in a trembling tower, Hang 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 son, Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe, Shall light it. If he will, let him come: Till the storm die! but had you stood by us, The roar that breaks the Pharaoh from his base Had left us rock. She faint would stinging us too,
With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,  
Like creatures native unto gracious act,  
And in their own clear element, they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,  
And hatred of her weakness, bent with shame.  
Old studies fad'd; seldom she spoke; but oft  
Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours  
On the invisible lover, saviour of men.

Darkening her female field: void was her use;  
And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze  
Over land and main, and sees a great black cloud  
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night.

But once more from wandering she came,  
And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,  
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn  
Expunge the world: so faced she gazing there;  
So black'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  
Let him allude the muffled cage of life:  
And twilight gloom'd; and broader-grown the bowers  
Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,  
Star after star, arose and fell; but I,  
Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay  
Quite sudder'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 off  
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 glanceed about the couch,  
Or thro' the parted silks the tender face  
Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man  
With blushes and smiles, a medicine in themselves  
To wilt 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 tremble deeper down,  
And slip at once all-frangent into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd  
At first with Psyche. Not though Blanche had sworn  
That after that dark night among the fields,  
She needs must wed him for her own good name;  
Not tho' he built upon the babe restored:  
Nor tho' she like him, yielded she, but fear'd  
To Incense the Head once more; till on a day  
When Cyril led, 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, pilighted troth, and were at peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred halls  
Held carnival at will, and flying struck  
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!" clasp it once again,  
And call her Ida, then 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 when she believ'd that I should die:  
Till out of long frustration of her sexes  
And pensive tendance in the all-veary noons,  
And watches in the dead, the dark, when clocks  
Throb'd 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 listentings to my mother's dream,  
And often feeling of the helpless shore  
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 evenings silent light  
Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought  
Two grand designs: for on one side arose  
The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd  
At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they cram'd  
The forum, and half-crush'd among the rest  
A dwarf that 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 scowls,  
And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their veins,  
The fierce triumvir; 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  
Dwell in her eyes, and softer all her shape  
And rounder show'd: I moved; I sigh'd: a touch  
Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand:  
Then all for languor and self-pity ran  
Mine down my face, and with what life I had,  
And like a flower that cannot all unfold,  
So drench'd it is with tempest, to the sun,  
Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I 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.  
Stoop 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 languor leapt a cry;  
Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death;  
And I believed that in the living world  
He sat closed with Ida's at the bases;  
Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose  
Glowing all over noble shame: and all  
Her falser self slipp from her like a robe,  
And left her woman, lovelier in her mood  
Than in her mould that other, when she came  
From barren 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 dress'd her out  
For war without end: nor end of mine,  
Statelier, for thee! but mute she gilded forth,
The Princess: A Medley.

Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and slept,
Fil'd th' ear and th' ear 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 cypraea in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry foot:
The fiery wakens: waken thou with me.

"Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmered on to me.

"Now lies the Earth all Danae to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

"Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, 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 Idyl, 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 Heavens, 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 thee a buoy threshold, be,
Or hand in hand with Pliny 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 Horns,
Nor will thou spare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him drop upon the friths of Lee,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven 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 dashing 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 heath
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 mon of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees."

So she low-toned; while with that eyes I lay
Listening: then look'd. Pale was the perfect face
The bosom with long sighs laboured; and meek
Seem'd the full lips, and mild the luminous eyes,
And the voice trembled and the hand. She said
Brokenly, 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 said she not to judge their cause from her
That wrong'd it, sought far less for truth than
in knowledge: something wild within her breast,
A greater than all knowledge, beat her down.
And she had nurs'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 of praise!
When comes another such? never, I think
Till the Sun drop dead from the signs."

Her voice
Choked, and her forehead sank upon her hands,
And her great heart through all the faithful Past
Went sorrowing in a Jason I dared not break;
Till nothing of a change in the dark world
Was haply 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.
Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that know
The woman's case is man's; they rise or sink
Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free:
For she that out of Lethe 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 his hands—
If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
How shall men grow? but work no more alone!
Our place is much: as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in aiding her—
Will clear away the parasitic foes
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 and 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 likeer must they grow:
The man be more of woman, she of man;
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
Nor lose the wrestling thieves that throw the world:
She 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-equal'd in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other ev'n as those who love,
Then comes the stately Eden back to men;
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm,
Then springs the crowning race of human-kind.
May these things be!"

Sighing she spoke, "I fear
They will not."

"Dear, but let us trye them now
In our own lives, and this proud watchword rest
Of equal; seeing either sex alone
Is half itself, and in true marriage lies
Nor equal, nor unequall: each fultus
Defect in each, and always thought in thought,
Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,
The single pure and perfect animal,
The two-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 foreshadowings of the world,
I loved the woman: he, that doth not, live.
A dawning life, besotted in sweet self,
Or plaines in sad experience worse than death,
Or keeps his wing'd affections still with crime:
Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one
Not learned, save in gracious household ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants.
No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipl.
In Angel Instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the Gods and men,
Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforse
Sway'd to her from their orbit as she moved,
And with white garments the clay'stume.
Happy he
With such a mother! faith in woman-kind
Breathe 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!",

"And even," tremulously, "so all unlike—
It seems you love to cheat yourself 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 then, and saw
These women thro' the crust of low moods
That mask'd thee from men's reverence up, and forced
Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood: now,
Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro' thee,
Indeed I love: the new day comes, the light
Deeper for night, as dearer than for faults
Lived over: lift thine eyes; my doubts are dead,
My haunting sense of hollow 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 fair 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 woods with reeds
After the smoke of burning weeds forgive me,
I waste my heart in sighs: let be. My bride,
My wife, 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 signal. 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 age mostly mine: for when we ceased
There came a minstrel's pane, and Walter said,
"I wish she had not yielded!" then to me,
"What, if you dress it up poetically?"
So the words men, the women I gave assent:
Yet how to bind the scatter'd scheme of seven
Together in one sheaf? What style could suit?
The men required that I should give throughout
The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,
With which we banter'd little Lilla 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 harlesque,
And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close.
They hated banter, wish'd for something real,
A gallant fight, a noble princes—why
Not make her true-heroic—true-sublime?
Or all, they said, as earnest as the case
Which yet with such a framework scarce could be
Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,
Betwixt the mockers and the realities;
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 nether pleased myself nor them.

But Lilla pleased me, for she took not part
In our dispute: the sequel of the tale
Had touch'd her; and she sat, she peck'd the grass,
She flung it from her, thinking: last, she fix't
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 racks.

So I and some went out to these: we climb'd
The slope to Vivian-place, and turning saw
The happy valleys, half in light, and half
Far-shaping from the west, a land of peace;
Gray balls alone among the massive groves;
Trim hamlets; here and there a rustic tower
Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths of wheat;
The shimmering glimpses of a stream; the sea:
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 Britains, whole within herself,
And nation yet, the mires 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 gravest citizen seems to lose his head,
The king is scared, the soldier will not fight,
The little boys begin to shoot and stab,
A kingdom topples over with a shriek
Like an echo, as a wave down rolls the world
In mock heroes stranger than our own;
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most
No graver than a school-boys' baring out;
Too comic for the solemn things they are,
Too solemn for the cockle-touched in them.
Like our wild Princess with a wise a dream
As some of theirs—God bless the narrow seas!
I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad."

"Have patience," I replied, "ourselves are full
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest dreams
Are but the useful preludes of the truth:
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,
The sport half-science, fill me with a faith.
This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the great heart. Patience! Give it time
To heal its limbs: there is a hand that giveth."

In such discourse we galm'd the garden racks,
And there we saw Sir Walter where he stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head and wonder head, and look'd
No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Englishman,
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of plums,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none;
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy morn;
Now shaking hands with him, now him, of those
That stood the nearest—now address'd to speech—
Who spoke few words and pluffy, such as closed
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the year.
To follow: a shout rose again, and made
The long line of the approaching rookery swerve
From the elm, and shook the branches of the dear
From the high advantage thro' distant forms, and rang
Beyond the bourn of sunset; O, a shout
More joyfull than the city-roar that calls
Premier or king! Why should not these great Sirs
Give up their parks some dozen times a year
To let the people breathe? So thrice they cried,
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and sat on,
So much the gathering darkness charm'd: we sat
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
Perchance upon the future man: the walls
Blacken'd about us, base 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
'Tho' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of Heavens.

Last little Lilla, rising quietly,
Disrob'd the glimmering statue of Sir Ralph
From those rich silks, and home well-pleased we went.

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:
Thine 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, hollest 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 vaster. We are fools and slight:
We mock thee when we do not fear:
Help thy vaunt 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 worthier 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.

1849.

IN MEMORIAM.

A. II. II.

OBIT MDCCXXXIII.

I.
I need 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 raven 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 graspest 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 dusk 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 branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom:

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for thy shinburnt hardlihood,
I seem to fall from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thee.

III.

0 sorrow, cruel fellowship,
Priestess in the vaults of Death,
O sweet and bitter in a breath,
What whispers from thy lying lips?
"The stars," she whispers, "blindly run;  
A web is wov'n 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 helmsless 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 darker'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 pledged now thy gallant son:  
A shot, ere half thy drought be done,  
Hast still'd 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 sittest ranging golden hair;  
And glad 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 paling 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 clasped 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 beguils again,  
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain  
On the bald 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 sadness, 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 vanish'd 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
Sails the placid ocean's plains;
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and wash 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 arm.

All night no ruder air perplex
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright
As our pure love, tho' 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.

Thon bringest the sailor to his wife;
And travel'd men from foreign lands;
And letters unto trembling hands;
And, thy dark height, a vanish'd life.

So bring him: we have idle dreams:
This look of quiet slaters thus
Our home-bred fancies: O to us,
The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,
That takes the sunshine and the rain,
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
Tho' chalice of the grapes of God;

Than if with thee the roaring wells
Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine;
And hands so often claspt'd in mine,
Should toss with tauntle and with shells.

XI.
Calm is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
And only thro' the failed leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground:

Calm and deep peace on this high wold
And on these dews that drench the furze,
And all the slivery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold:

Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lennening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main:

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
These leaves that redden to the fall;
And in my heart, if calm at all,
If any calm, a calm despair:

Calm on the seas, and sliver 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 thr' 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 fringer 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 widow's, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms, and feels
Her place is empty, fall like these;

Which weep a loss forever new,
A void where heart on heart reposèd,
And, where warm hands have prest and clas'd,
Silence, 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 fancies time to rest on wings,
And glance about the approaching sails,
As tho' they brought but merchants' bales,
And not the burthen that they bring.

XIV.
If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touch'd the land to-day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port:

And standing, muffled round with woe,
Should see thy passengers in rank
Come stepping lightly down the planks,
And beckoning onto those they know;

And if along with these should come
The man I hold 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 droop'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.
To-morrow the winds begin to rise
   And roar from yonder dropping day:
The last red leaf is whirled away,
The rooks are blown about the skies;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea;
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
Athevert a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could break the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches lond;
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.

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 changeling be?

Or doth she only seem to take
The touch of change in calm or storm;
But knows not more of transient form
In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lark
Hung in the shadow of a heaven?
Or has the shock, so harmfully given,
Confused me like the unhappy bark

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
   And stagger blindly ere she sink?
And stunn'd me from my power to think
And all my knowledge of myself;

And made me that delirious man
Whose fancy faces old and new,
And flashes into false and true,
And mingles all without a plan?

XVII.

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 bear 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.

XVIII.

The Danube to the Severn gave
The darken'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 hurst half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is husb'd nor moved along,
And in'st my deepest grief of all,
When still'd with tears that cannot fall,
I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again
Is vocal in its wooden 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 falseness 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 arose 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 hear's me now and then,
And sometimes hazily will he speak:
"This fellow would make weakness weak,
And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers, "Let him be,
I know to make parade of pain,
That 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 sink and to swoon,
When Science reaches forth her arms
To feel from world to world, and charm
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 lunets 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 stow'n away.

**XXII.**

The path by which we twain did go,
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,
Tho' four sweet years arose 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 went,
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 wrapt 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 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 cloack'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
Tho' 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 thickest rang
To many a flute of Aradey."

**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
Suco Adam left his garden yet.

And is it that the haze of grief
Makes former gladness look 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 pale,
And part it, giving half to him.

**XXVI.**

Still onward winds the dreary way;
I with it: for I long to prove
No faze 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 monider'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 infant 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 plighted troth,
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befal;
I feel it, when I sorrow best;
’T is better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

XXVIII.
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 hamlets round,
From far and near, on mead 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 Yale.

XXIX.
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 enrich the threshold of the night
With shower’d largess of delight,
In dance and song and game and jest.

Yet go, and while the holy-boughs
Embrace 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.
When trembling fugitives did weave
The holy round the Christmas hearth;
A rainy cloud possess’d the earth,
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
We gambol’d, mak ing 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 sung, 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:
“’Tis 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 theickle and the frail
With gather’d power, yet the same,
Pierces the keen 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.
When Lazarus left his charnel-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 remaineth unreveal’d;
He told it not: or something seal’d
The lips of that Evangelist.

XXXII.
Iza eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sate,
And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother’s face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All sublime thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour’s feet
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice 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 thou that after toil and storm
Mayst 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 thru’ form is pure as thine,
Her hands are lighter unto good:
O, sacred be the flesh and blood
To which she links a truth divine!
see thou, that countest reason ripe
In holding by the law within,
Thou fall not in a world of slu,
And ev’n for want of such a type.

XXXIV.
My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is;

This round of green, this orb of flame,
Pourastic beauty; such as larks
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,
’T he 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 Eonian hills, and sow
The dust of continents 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 had not been,
Or been in narrowest working shut,
Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,
Or in his coarsest Satyr shape;
Had bruised the herb and crush’d the grape,
And bask’d and batt’en in the woods.

XXXVI.
Two’ thurs in manhood darkly John,
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 fail,
When truth embodied 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 deeds,
More strong than all poetical thought;

Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

XXXVII.
Urania speaks with darken’d brow:
“Though protest here where thou art least.
This faith has many a purer priest,
And many an abler voice than thou.

“Go down beside thy native hill,
On thy Famassus set thy feet,
And hear thy laurel whisper sweet
About the ledges of the hill.”

And my Melphomene replies,
A touch of shame upon her cheek:
“I am not worthy ev’n to speak
Of thy prevailing mysteries;

“For I am but an earthly Muse,
And cursing but a little art
To lull with song an aching heart,
And render human love his dues;

“But brooding on the dear one dead,
And all he said of things divine,
(And dear to me as sacred wine
To dying lips is all he said,)”

“I murmur’d, as I came along,
Of comfort clasp’d in truth reveal’d;
And loiter’d in the Master’s field,
And darken’d sanctuaries with song.”

XXXVIII.
With weary steps I loiter on,
Thou’st always nuder alter’d 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 delightful 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’d hour,
And look on Spirits breathed 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 latest 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 knit
The generations each with each;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given
A life that bears immortal fruit
In such great offices of art
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern!
How often shall her old fireside
Be cheer’d with tidings of the bride,
How often she herself return,
And tell them all they would have told,
And bring her babe, 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.
Tuy spirit ere our fatal loss
Did ever rise from high to higher;
As mounts the heavenward altar-dre,
As flies the lighter thro' the gross.

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 heap the grades of life and light,
And flash at once, my friend, to thee:

For tho' my nature rarely yields
To that vague fear implied in death;
Nor shudder at the gulfs beneath,
The howlings 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 behind.

XL.
I vex my heart with fancies dim:
He still outstript me in the race;
It was but unity of place
That made me dream I rank'd with him.

And so may Place retain us still,
And be the much-beloved again,
A lord of large experience, train
To ripen 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.
Is Sleep and Death be truly one,
And every spirit's folded bloom
Thro' all its intervalt gloom
In some long trance should slumber on;

Unconscions 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
Rewakened 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 tint,
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 Lethain springs)
May some dim touch of earthly things
Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.

If such a dreamy touch should fail,
O turn thee round, resolve the doubt;
My guardian angel will speak out
In that high place, and tell thee all.

XLIV.
The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "this is 1:"

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of "1," and "me,"
And finds "I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch."

So rounds 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 fall 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 reveal'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
Reemerging 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
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 harsher moods return,
What slender shade of doubt may fill,
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 loosens from the lip
Short swallow-slings 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 to mow a shiver'd lance
That breaks about the dappled pools:
The lightest wave of thought shall lift,
The fancy's tenderest eddy wreathes,
The slightest air of song shall breathe
To make the sullen surface crep.
And look thy look, and go thy way,
But blame not thou the winds that make
The seeming-wanton ripple break,
The tender-pencil'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 prick
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 slingling flame.
Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the files of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,
And weave their petty cells and die.
Be near me when I fade 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 vileness that we dread?
Shall he be for whose applause I strove,
I had such reverence for his blame,
See with clear eye some hidden shame,
And I be lessen'd 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.
Able: thy wealth is gather'd 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 green:
And dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild-oat not been sown,
The soil, 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
Procureus to the Lords of Hell.

LIII.
O YET we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill:
To pause of nature, slue of will,
Defects of doubt, and talents 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 vain desire
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.
Behold we know not anything:
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—for 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.

But 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 falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's aitar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch tane 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
Sighs, "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 he,

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,—
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravin, shriek'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 earthily song;
Peace; come away: we do him wrong
To sing so wildly: let us go.

Come; let us go: your cheeks are pale;
But half my life I leave behind:
Methinks my friend is richly shrin'd:
But I shall pass; my work will fail.

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.

In those sad words 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 consol'd 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 Sonow, wilt thou live with me,
No common 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 centred passion cannot move,
Nor will it 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 thou art mine,
With so much hope for years to come,
That, howso'er 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.
LXI.

Tis if an eye that's downward cast
Could make thee somewhat bleach or fall,
Then be my love an idle tale,
And fading legend of the past;
And then, as one that once declined
When he was little more than boy,
On some unworthy heart with joy,
But lives to wed an equal mind;
And breathes a novel world, the while
His other passion wholly dies,
Or in the light of deeper eyes
Is matter for a flying smile.

LXII.
Yet play for a horse o'er-driven,
And love in which my hound has part,
Can hang no weight upon my heart
In its assumptions up to heaven;
And I am so much more than these,
As then, 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 sound
A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXIII.
Down 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 invincible bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breaths the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star;
Who makes by force his merit known,
And lives to watch 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 tea
And reaps the labor of his hands,
Or in the narrow musing stands:
"Does my old friend remember me?"

LXIV.
Sweet soul, do with me as thou wilt;
I fall a fancy trouble-lost
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 phases 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 trifle 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,
Bly that broad river 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 swains away;
From off my bed the moonlight dies;
And, closing caves of weared eyes,
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray:
And then I know the mist is drawn
A lucid veil from coast to coast,
And in the dark church, like a ghoul,
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, know not Death,
Nor can I dream of thee as dead:
I walk as ere I walk'd forborn,
When all our path was fresh with dew;
And all the hule creces blew
Revel-like 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 sea
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,
The sun'succeed 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:
I met with scoffs, I met with scorns
From youth and babe and hoary hairs:
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 seem'd 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;
Cloud-towers by ghostly masons wrought,
A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,
A hand that points, and palled shapes
In shadowy thoroughfares of thought;
And crowds that stream from yawning doors,
And souls of pock'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.
Siker, kinsman thou to death and trance
And madness, thou hast forgot 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,
Drop down the blindfold sense of wrong
That so my pleasure may be whole;
While now we talk as once we talk'd
Of me and mists, 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.
Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
And howest, issuing out of night,
With blasts that blow the poplar white,
And lash with storm the streaming pane?
Day, when my crown'd estate began
To pine in that reverse of doom,
Which sicken'd every living bloom,
And blur'd the splendor of the sun;
Who ushest 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 heared a windless flame
Up the deep East! or, whispering, play'd
A chequer-work of beam and shade
Along the hills, yet looked 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 mayst thy burthen'd brow
Those clouds that drench the morning star,
And whirl the ungarner'd sheaf afar,
And sow the sky with flying boughs,
And up thy vault with roaring sound
Climb thy thick noon, diastrous day;
Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,
And hide thy shame beneath the ground.

LXII.
So many worlds, so much to do,
So little done, each thing to be,
How know I what had need of thee?
For thou wert strong as thou wert true?
The fame is queech'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 wrath of dying fame,
Fade wholly, while the soul exults,
And self-infolds the large result
Of force that would have forged a name.

LXIII.
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.

LXIV.
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 guess'd:
What practice howse'er expert
In filling aptest words to things,
Or voice the richest-toned that rings
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 has 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 tho'
The secular abyss to come,
And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb
Before the moulnering of a yew;
And if the matin songs, that woke
The darkness of our planet, last,
Thine own shall wither in the vast,
Ere half the lifetime of an oak.
Ere these have clothed their branchy bowers
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 lullabies 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 posses'd the earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas-eye:
The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
No wing of wind the region sweep'd;
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 cut,
Thro' all his eddyng coves; the same
All winds that roan 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 fashen 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 moved me kindly from his side,
And drop the dust on fearless 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 hears the burthen of the weeks;
But turns his burthen into gain.
His credit thus shall set me free:
And, influence-rich to soothe and save,
Unseed 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 further 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 all the richness of 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 Iweep
The wrath that garners in my heart;
He put our lives so far apart
We cannot hear each other speak.

LXXXII.
Dir down upon the northern shore,
O sweet new-year, delaying long:
Thou dost expectant nature wrong;
Delayed 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 noons?

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 fresher throat with song.

When I contemplate all alone
The life that had been thine below,
And fix my thoughts on all the glow
To which thy reverence would have grown;

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,
A central warmth diffusing blaze,
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 babble'* "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 fills
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 booneous hours
Conduct by paths of growing powers
To reverence and the silver hair;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,
Her infant mission richly wrought,
Leaving great legacies of thought,
Thy spirit should fail 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?

Tus truth came borne with bier and pall,
I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,
'Tis 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 trust in things above
Be dim'd of sorrow or susta'n'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,
'Tho' 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 cyclical 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-ploized 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-comprehensive 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 bow.

My pulses therefore beat again
For other friends that once I met;
Nor can it eit me to forget
The mighty hopes that make us men.
IN MEMORIAM.

I woo your love; I count it crime
To mourn for any overmuch;
I, the divided half of such
A friendship as had master'd Time;

Which masters Time indeed, and is
Eternal, separate from fears:
The all-assuming months and years
Can take no part away from this:

But Summer on the steaming floods,
And Spring that swell's the narrow brooks,
And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,
That gather in the waving woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave
Recalls, in change of light or gloom,
My old affection of the tomb,
And my prime passion in the grave:

My old affection of the tomb,
A part of stillness, years to speak:
"Arise, and get thee forth and seek
A friendship for the years to come."

"I watch thee from the quiet shore;
Thy spirit up to mine can reach;
But in dear words of human speech
We two communicate no more."

And I, "Can clouds of nature stain
The starry clearness of the free?
How is it? Canst thou feel for me
Some painless sympathy with pain?"

And lightly does the whisper fall:
"Tis hard for thee to fathom this:
I triumph in conclusive bliss,
And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead;
Or so methinks the dead would say:
Or so shall grief with symbols play,
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,
That these things pass, and I shall prove
A meeting somewhere, love with love,
I crave your pardon, O my friend;

If not so fresh, with love as true,
I, clasping brother-braids, aver
I could not, if I would, transfer
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart
The promise of the golden hours?
First love, first friendship, equal powers,
That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,
That beats within a lonely place,
That yet remembers his embrace,
But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest
Quite in the love of what is gone,
But seeks to beat in time with one
That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,
Knowing the primrose yet is dear,
The primrose of the latter year,
As not unlike to that of Spring.

LXXXV.
Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,
That rolls from the gorgeous gloom
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below
Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd 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."

LXXXVI.
I past 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 ears
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 lines 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 crush'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 h ung 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.

LXXXVII.
Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
Rings Eden thro' theudded quacks,
O tell me where the senses mix,
O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiant; fierce extremes employ
Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
And in the midst of heart of grief
Thy passion clasps a secret joy:
And I—my harp would predilect woe—
I cannot all command the strings;
The glory of the sun of things
Will flash along the chords and go.

LXXXVIII.
WITCH-ELMS that counterchange the floor
Of this flat lawn with drone and bright;
And thun, with all thy breadth and height
Of foliage, towerling sycamore;

If we often, hither 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 he saw;
He mixt in all our simple sports;
They pleased him, fresh from broiling courts
And dusty purities 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 gush 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, snag
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:

Whereas we glanced from them to theme,
Discussed 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 null,
We rub each other's angles down,

"And merge," he said, "in form and gloss
The picturesque of man and man."
We talked: the stream beneath us ran,
The wine-flask lying conch'd in moss,

Or cool'd within the g loafing wave;
And last, returning from afar,
Before the crimson-cirred star
Had fall'n into her father's grave,

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
We heard behind the woodbine well
The milk that bubbled in the fall,
And buzzings of the honeyed hours.

LXXXIX.
His 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 wall, 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.

Yea, 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.
When rosy plumelets Flaft 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 lonely grange;

Come: not in watches of the night,
But where the sunbeam broodeth warm,
Come, beantoeas in thine after form,
And like a finer light in light.

XCl.
If any vision should reveal
Thy likeness, I might count it vuln,
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 premonitions,
And such refraction of events
As often rise 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 claspt 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.
IN MEMORIAM.

O, therefore from thy sightless range
With gods in unconfounded bliss,
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 bluntness of the frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

XCIII.
How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affection bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communio 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,
Imaginations 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 waite,
They can but listen at the gates,
And bear the household jar within.

XCIV.
By night we linger'd on the lawn,
For underfoot the herb was dry;
And genial warmth: and o'er the sky
The slivery haste 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 fluttering urn:

And bats went round in fragrant skyes,
And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes
That haunt the dusk, with ermine 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 kine glimmer'd, and the trees
Laid their dark arms about the field.

But when those others, one by one,
Withdrew 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' wordy spaces to track
Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,
The dead man touch'd me from the past,
And all at once it seem'd at last
His living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in his was wound, and whir'd
About empyreal heights of thought,
And came on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world.

XCIV.
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 vers'd,
Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true:

Perplex't 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 creed.

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.

XCVI.
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.
IN MEMORIAM.

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 threads 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 fixt 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 said'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 Lothio in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair  
Enwind her isles, immark'd of me:  
I have not seen, I will not see  
Venus: rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunt's  
The birth, the bridal; friend from friend  
Is oftener parted, fathers bend  
Above more graves, a thousand wants.

Guar at the heels of men, and pray  
By each cold hearth, and sadness sings  
Her shadow on the blaze of kings:  
And yet myself I have heard him say,

That not in any mother town  
With statelier progress to and fro  
The double tides of charlots flow  
By park and suburb under brown.

Of laster 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.

Russ'd thou thus, dim dawn, again,  
So loud with voices of the birds,  
So thick with lowings of the herds,  
Day, when I lost the flower of men:

Who trembles thro' thy darkling red  
On you swell'n brook that bubbles fast  
By meadows breathing of the past,  
And woodlands holy to the dead;

Who murmur'st in the folded eaves  
A song that slights the coming care,  
And Autumn laying here and there  
A fiery flanger 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'd 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 how 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 runlet tinkling from the rock:  
Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves  
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 kindlier day;  
And, leaving these, to pass away,  
I think once more he seems to die.

C.

Unwarch'd, the garden bough shall sway,  
The tender blossom flutter down,  
Unloved, that beech will gather brown,  
This maple born 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 wain  
Is twirling round the solar star;

Uncared for, gr'd the windy grove,  
And flood the haunts of horn and crane;  
Or into silver arrow's break  
The sailing moon in crook 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.

CI.

We leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky;
The roots, 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 Amsterdam.

One whispers, here thy boyhood sung
Long since its main song, and heard
The low love-language of the bird
In native hazels tassel-hung.

The other answers, "Yea, but here
Thy feet have strayed in after hours
With thy lost friend among the bower,
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.

CII.

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.

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 veil'd, to which they sang;

And which, tho' veil'd, 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 wall'd, but led the way
To where a little shallow lay
At anchor in the flood below;

And on by many a level mead,
And shadowing binn that made the banks,
We glided 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 thaws 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 shapling 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 beat
To greet us. Up the side I went,
And fell in silence on his neck:

Whereat those maidens with one mind
Declare'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.

CIII.

The sun 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' volca here they sound,
In lands where not a memory strays,
Nor landmark breathes of other days,
But all is new unhallow'd ground.

CIV.

Tune holly by the cottage-cave,
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 skies;
There in due time the woodbine 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 chiefsly proved,
A little spare the night I loved,
And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the door,
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 touch'd, nor flute be blown;
No dance, no motion, save alone
What lightens in the lucid east
Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
Long sleep the summer in the seed;
Run out your measured arcs, and lead
The closing cycle rich in good.

CV.
Ring 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.

CVL
It is the day when he was born,
A bitter day that early sank
Behind a purple-frosty bank
Of vapor, leaving night forlorn.

The time admits not flowers or leaves
To deck the banquet. Fiercely flies
The blast of North and East, and ice
Makes daggers at the sharpened eaves,
And bristles all the brakes and thorns
To you hard crescent, as she hangs
Above the wood which grides and clangs
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 wine,
Arrange the board and brim 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 muse, surely we
Will drink to him what'er he be,
And sing the songs he loved to hear.

CVII.
I will not shut me from my kind,
And, lest I stiffen into stone,
I will not eat 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 was held that sorrow makes us wise,
Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CVII.
HEART-APPEALCE
In discursive talk
From household fountain never dry;
The critic clearness of an eye,
That saw thro' all the Muse's walk;
Seraphic intellect and force
To setze and throw the doubts of man;
Impassion'd logic, which outran
The hearer in its fiery course;
High nature amornous 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 hysteries of the Celt;
And manhood fused with female grace
In such a sort, the child would twine
A trustful hand, unsak'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.
Thy converse drew us with delight,
The men of rath 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 thouwertby,
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 gracefu$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.
IN MEMORIAM.

CX.

This heart in spirit, up or down
Along the scale of ranks, thru' all,
To him who grasps a golden ball,
By blood a king, at heart a clown;

The heart in spirit, however be veil
I'll want in forms for fashion's sake,
Will let his colder nature break
At seasons thru' the gilded pale:

For who can always act but be,
To whom a thousand memories call,
Not being less but more than all
The gentleness he seemed 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 fleeting by,
Drew in the expression of an eye,
Where God and Nature met in fight:

And thus he bore without abuse
The grand old name of gentleman,
Defamed by every charlatan,
And soli'd with all ignoble use.

CXI.

Hon'or wisdom holds my wisdomless,
That I, who gaze with temperate eyes
On glorious insufficiencies,
Set light by narrower perfection.

But thou, that fillest 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 went thou? some novel power
Sprung 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.

'T is 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 fulfill—
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 lover to uplift the earth
And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and go,
With agonies, with energies,
With overthrowings, and with ills,
And undulations to and fro.

CXIII.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall rail
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,
Submitting 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 camest to thy goal
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew 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 violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drown'd in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamless 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 keener in sweet April wakes,
And meets the year, and gives and takes
The colors of the crescent 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.

CXV.

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 enere
Desire of nearness doubly sweet;
And unto 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 toothed 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 lime;

But trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an ampler day,
Forever nobler ends. They say,
The solid earth wherein we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to semblings-random forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
Till at the last arose the man;

Who threw 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 fears,
And dipp'd 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.

Dooms, where my heart was used to bent
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 treat I have not wasted breath;
I think we are not wholly brain,
Magnetic mockery; not in vain,
Like Paul with heasts, 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.

CX.

Sad Hesper o'er the buried sun,
And ready, thou, to die with him,
Thou watchest all things ever dim
And dimmer, and a glory done:
The team is loose'd from the wain,
The boat 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 call it from the brink;
Thou hearest 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, want thou with me, dearest, then,
While I rose up against my doom,
And yearnd to burst the folded gloom,
To bare the eternal Heavens again,

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 brink,
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quick'en'd with a liveller 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 palates a bow,
The wizard lightnings deeply glow,
And every thought breaks out a rose.

CXXII.

There rolls the deep where grew the tree;
O earth, what changes thou hast seen!
There where the long street roars, hath been
The stillnesses 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.
MEMORIAM.

CXXIII.

That which we dare invoke to bless;
Our dearest faith; our ghastliest doubt;
He, 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 fall'n 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;
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, menscullmg men.

CXXIV.

Whatever I have said or sung,
Some bitter notes my harp would give,
Yet, tho' there often seem'd to live
A contradiction on the tongue,
Yet Hope had never lost her youth;
She dêd but look thro' dammer eyes;
Or Love but play'd with gracious lies
Because he felt so fix'd 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, fail.

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 Lord and King,
And will be, tho' as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and sleep
Encircled by his faithful guard,
And hear at times a sentinel
Who moves about from 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 smother'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'n tho' thrice again
The red fool-fury of the Sene
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
And him, the lasar, in his rage;
They tremble, the sustaining crags;
The spires of ice are toppled down,
And molten up, and roar in flood;
The fortress crashes from on high,
The brute earth lightens to the sky,
And the great Zelon sinks in blood,
And compass'd by the fires of Hell;
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
Overlook'st the tumult from afar,
And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXVII.

The love that rose on stronger wings,
Unpeated 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 result that look like new;
If this were all your mission here,
To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,
To fool 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 cram the student at his desk,
To make old barrenness picturesque
And tuft 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 toll coœperant 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 deepener, darkler understood;
Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee.

CXXIX.

Thy 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 thou I seem in star and flower
To feel thee some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less:
My love involves the love before;
My love be vaster passion now;
Thou'st mix'd with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.
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 IVER and tried, so well and long,
Demand not thou 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 monied 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 brawling rhymes,
The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,
That must be made a wife ere noon?
She enters, glowing like the moon
Of Eden on its bridal 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 bad,
He too foretold the perfect rose.
For thee she grew, for thee she grows
Forever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy; fall of power;
As gentle; liberal-minded, great,
Consistent; wearing all that weight
Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out: the noon 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 tablets round her head,
And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,
The "will thou," answer'd, and again
The "will 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—maiden's of the place,
That pelt 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.

Lot all my genial spirits advance
To meet and greet a whiter sun;
My drooping 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,
Perchance, perchance, among the rest,
And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,
And those while-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,
And last the dance;—till I retire:
Dumb is that tower which spake so loud,  
And high in heaven the streaming cloud,  
And on the downes a rising fire:

And rise, O moon, from yonder down,  
Till over down and over dale  
All night the shining vapor sail  
And pass the silent-lighted town,

The white-faced halls, the glancing rills,  
And catch at every mountain head,  
And over the frithe that branch and spread  
Their sleeping elver thro' the hills;

And touch with shade the bridal doors,  
With tender gloom the roof, the wall;  
And breaking let the splendor fall  
To spangle all the happy shores

By which they rest, and ocean sounds,  
And, star and system rolling past,  
A soul shall draw from out the vast  
And strike his being into bounds;

And, moved thro' life of lower phase,  
Result in man, be born and think,  
And set and love, a closer link  
Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look  
On knowledge; under whose command  
Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand  
Is Nature like an open book;

No longer half-skin to brute,  
For all we thought and loved and did,  
And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed  
Of what in them is flower and fruit;

Whereof the man, that with me trod  
This planet, was a noble type  
Appearing ere the times were ripe,  
That friend of mine who lives in God,

That God, which ever lives and loves,  
One God, one law, one element,  
And one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.

MAUD, AND OTHER POEMS.

MAUD.

I.

I saw the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,  
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,  
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,  
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers "Death."

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 flatt'd, and crush'd, and dinted into the ground:  
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast speculation had fall'd,  
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,  
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling wall'd,  
The flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd  
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trall'd, by a whisper'd fright,  
And my pulse closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard  
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

Villany somewhere! whose? One says, we are villains all.  
Not he: his honest fame should at least by me be maintaing'd:  
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,  
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and dryn'd.

Why do they praise of the blessings of Peace? we have made them a curse,  
Pickpockets, each hand lusting 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 hearthstone?
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 ware 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 flint,
Cheat and be cheated, and die: who knows? we are ashes and dust.

9.

Peace sitting under her olive, and starring the days gone by,
When the poor are lovell'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 slum 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 arm'd, for the villainous centre-bits
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush 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 tipt,
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home.—

14.

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood?
Mast 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 liar, 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't 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 gift by the touch of a millionaire.
I have heard, I know not whence, of the slugular beauty of Maud;
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised then to be fair.

18.

Maud with her venturesome climblings and tumbles and childish escapes,
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,
Maud with her sweet pure-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 dead best know or whether woman or man be the worse.
I will bury myself in my books, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

II.
Love 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 savour nor salt,
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,
Terribly 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, lily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not been
For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the rose,
Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too fall,
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 drown'd,
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,
Passionless, pale, cold face, starSweet 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,
Laundrons, gnomlike, 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-lying shipwrecking roar,
Now to the scream of a maiden's beach dragg'd down by the wave,
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghostly glimmer, and found
The shining daffodil dead, and Orton low in his grave.

IV.
1.
A MILLION emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime
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 far-off salt is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,
Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
The silent sapphire-splintered marriage ring of the land?

2.
Below me, there, is the village, and looke 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, glimpses 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 stic, 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 Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd 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 it out, we men are a little breed.
6.
A monstrous evil was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.
As nine months go to the shaping an infant rife 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 whirled 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 Isea hld 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 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 dispair,
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.
Ah Maud, 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 bangle 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 courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.
1.
Morning arises stormy and pale,
No sun, but a wanshle glaze
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,
And the budding peaks of the wood are bow'd
Caught and cuff'd by the gale:
I had fanc'd it would be fair.

2.
Whom but Maud should I meet
Last night, when the sunset 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 snare
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.

5.  
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 Man 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.

6.  
What if tho' her eye seem'd full  
Of a kind intent to me,  
What if that dandy-despot, he,  
That jewell'd mass of millinery,  
That oil'd and car'd Assyrian Bull  
Smelling of mask and of insolence,  
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,  
Who wants the finer politico  
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,  
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn,—  
What if he had told her yestermorn  
How prettily for his own sweet sake  
A face of tenderness might be felton'd,  
And a molest mirage in desert eyes,  
That so, when the rotten husings shake  
In another month to his brazen lies,  
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

7.  
For a raven ever crooks, 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.

8.  
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-bid in the gleaming wood,  
Where I hear the dead at midday moan,  
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot mornce,  
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 mixt,  
And a morbid eating lichen flat  
On a heart half-turnd to stone.

9.  
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 so 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?

10.  
I have play'd with her when a child:  
She remembers it now we meet.  
Ah well, well, well, I may be beguil'd  
By some coquettish deceit.  
Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
If Man 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.

VII.  
1.  
Did I hear it half in a daze  
Long since, I know not where?  
Did I dream it an hour ago,  
When asleep in this arm-chair?  
2.  
Men were drinking together,  
Drinking and talking of me;  
"Well, if it prove a girl, the boy  
Will have plenty: so let it be."

3.  
Is it an echo of something  
Read with a boy's delight,  
Viziers nodding together  
In some Arabian night?

4.  
Strange, that I hear two men,  
Somewhere, talking of me;  
"Well, if it prove a girl, my boy  
Will have plenty: so let it be."

VIII.  
She came to the village church,  
And sat by a pillar alone:  
An angel watching an urn  
Wep't over her, carved in stone;  
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,  
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely binsh'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-banded, dillettante,  
Delicate-handed priest intone;  
And thought, is it pride, and mused and sigh'd  
"No surely, now it cannot be pride."

IX.  
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 moor,  
And riding at set of day  
Over the dark moor land,  
Rapidly riding 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.

X.  
1.  
Stark, am I sick of a jealous dread?  
Was not one of the two at her side  
This new-made lord, whose splendor plucks  
The slaveish hat from the villager's head?  
Whose old grandfather has lately died,  
Gone to a blacker plps; for whom  
Griny nakedness dragging his trucks  
And laying his trams in a poison'd gloom  
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted mine  
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 soft as if to a girl; and hold
Ave-stricken breaths at a work divine,
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,
New as his title, built last year,
There amid perky larches and pine,
And over the sullen-purple moor
(Look at it) prickling a cockney ear.

2.
What, has he found my jewel out?
Nor 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.
Bilbte 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 sags—
Bought what is it he cannot buy?
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,
A wounded thing with a rancorous 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 deepest kings,
Tho’ the state has done it and three as well:
This broad-brim’d hawker of holy things,
Whose car is stuff’d with his cotton, and rings
Even in dreams to the chink of his pence,
This huckster 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 blatant 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 cease 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 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. Birds 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. Score’s, to be score’d by one that I scorn,
Is that a matter to make me fret?
That a calamity hard to be borne?
Well, he may live to hate me yet.
Fool that I am to be vex’d 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.
Sounded itself on his breast and his hands.

Who shall call me, gentle, unfair,
I long'd so heartily then and there
To give him the grasp of fellowship;
When I past he was humming an air,
Stopt, and then with a riding whip
Leisurably tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonized me from head to foot
With a stony British stare.

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 once only, 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 nature;
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 haply the whole inherited in
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!
Has not his sister smiled on me?

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 thither I climb'd at dawn
And stood by her garden gate:
A lion ramps at the top,
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

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 hausp 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.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,
And again seem'd overbold:
Now I thought that she cared for me,
Now I thought she was kind
Only because she was cold.
MAUD.

Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.
When the happy Yes
Falters from her lips,
Pass and blush the news
O'er 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,
Blush it thro' the West.

1. I have led her home, my love, my only friend.
There is none like her, none,
And never yet so warmly ran my blood
And sweetly, on and on
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,
Full to the banks, close on the promised good.

2. None like her, none.
Just now the dry-tongued laurel's pattering talk
Seem'd her light foot along the garden walk,
And shook my heart to think she comes once more;
But even then I heard her close the door,
The gates of heaven are closed, and she is gone.

3. There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have deceased.
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon,
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious East,
Sighing for Lebanon,
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here increased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
And looking to the South, and fed
With honey'd rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame;
And over whom thy darkness must have spread
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornyless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from whom she came.

4. Here will I lie, while these long branches sway,
And you fair stars that crown a happy day
Go In and out as if at merry play,
Who am no more so all forlorn,
As when it seem'd far better to be born
To labor and the mattock-harden'd hand,
Than nurs'd at ease and bring'd to understand
A sad astrology, the bondless plan
That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand
His nothingness into man.

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 sulen-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 spalire melts in the seas.

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 deare 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 pass 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 sto'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell
Among the fancies of the golden day.
May nothing there be maiden grace a-fright!
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.
Beat, but for some dark undercurrent woe
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so:
Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

1. His 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 astonement 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 cursed him even to lifeless things)
MAUD.

But I trust that I did not talk, 
Not touch on her father's sin: 
I am sure I did but all speak. 
Of my mother's faded cheek 
When it slowly grew so thin, 
That I felt she was slowly dying 
Vex't with lawyers and harassed 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!

4.
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 mourning over the dead, 
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 each to the other, 
Betrotted 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.

5.
But the true blood split 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 reconciled; 
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 Illy, breathing a prayer 
To be friends, to be reconciled!

6.
But then what a dint is he! 
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome, 
I find whenever she touch'd on me 
Then, what then had I said to her, 
And at last, when each came home, 
He had darken'd into a frown, 
Child 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.

7.
Yet Maud, altho' not blind 
To the faults of his heart and mind, 
I see shor 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.

8.
Kind? but the death-bed desire 
Spare'd by this heir of the law— 
Rough but kind? yet I know 
He has plotted against me in this,

That he plots against me still. 
Kind to Maud? that were not amiss, 
Well, rough but kind; why, let it be so: 
For shall not Maud have her will?

9.
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; 
0 then, what then shall I say?— 
If ever I should forget, 
May God make me more wretched 
Than ever I have been yet!

10.
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.

XX.

1.
Strange, that I felt so gay, 
Strange that I tried to-day 
To begnile 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 due? 
Or her chilling his caresses 
By the coldness of her manners, 
Nay, the plainness 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 nearer and completer; 
For nothing can be sweeter 
Than maiden Maud in either.

2.
But to-morrow, if we live, 
Our ponderous squire will give 
A grand political dinner 
To half the squires and squirelings near; 
And Maud will wear her jewels, 
And the bird of prey will hover, 
And the titmouse hope to win her 
With his chirrup at her ear.

3.
A grand political dinner 
To the men of many acres, 
A gathering of the Tory, 
A dinner and then a dance 
For the maidens and marriage-makers, 
And every eye but mine will glance 
At Maud in all her glory.

4.
For I am not invited, 
But, with the Sultan's pardo, 
I am all as well delighted, 
For I know her own rose-garden,
Our wood, that is deeper than all; From the skie the to the meadow and on to the wood. And thundred up like Heaven, the Chirreels code.
MAUD.

Ever and ever fresh they seemed to grow,
Was it he lay there with a failing eye?
"The fault was mine," he whispered, "fly!"
Then glided out of the joyous wood
The ghastly Wreath 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?
Yea 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 and lust,
The little hearts that know not how to forgive:
Arose, my God, and strike, for we hold Thee just,
Strike deth the whole weak race of venemous worms,
That sting each other here in the dust;
We are not worthy to live.

XXIV.

1.

Sex 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 sphere and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
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 rainbow 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 cataract seas that snap
The three-decker oaken spine
Ablow 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 fitting to and fro,
A disease, a hard mechanick pest
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 Juggler 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 mind, 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 thought
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 wailing; find her asleep,
Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,
And comfort her tho' 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  
Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter  
Than anything on earth.

A shadow flits before me,  
Not thou, but like to thee;  
Ah Christ, that it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might tell us  
What and where they be.

It leads me forth at evening,  
It lightly winds and steals  
In a cold white robe before me,  
When all my spirit reeks  
At the shows, the leagues of lights,  
And the roaring of the wheels.

Half the night I waste in sighs,  
Half in dreams I sorrow after  
The delight of early akies;  
In a wakeful doze I sorrow  
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,  
For the meeting of the morrow,  
The delight of happy laughter,  
The delight of low replies.

'T is a morning pure and sweet,  
And a dewy splendor falls  
On the little flower that clings  
To the turrets and the walls;  
'T is a morning pure and sweet,  
And the light and shadow fleet;  
She is walking in the meadow,  
And the woodland echo rings;  
In a moment we shall meet;  
She is singing in the meadow,  
And the rivulet at her feet  
Hipples on in light and shadow  
To the ballad that she sings.

Do I hear her sing as of old,  
My bird with the shining head,  
My own dove with the tender eye?  
But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry,  
There is some one dying or dead,  
And a sudden thunder is roll'd;  
For a tumult shakes the city,  
And I wake, my dream is fled:  
In the shimmering dawn, behold,  
Without knowledge, without pity,  
By the curtains of my bed  
That abiding phantom cold.

Get thee hence, nor come again,  
Mix not memory with doubts,  
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,  
Pass and cease to move about,  
'T is the blot upon the brain  
That will show itself without.

Then I rise, the evertedrops fall,  
And the yellow vapors choke  
The great city sounding wide;  
The day comes, a dull red ball  
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
On the misty river-tide.
3.
See, 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 wheelde 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 Has 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 creek;
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 manson’s crannies and holes:
Asseen, as seen, sure, would do it,
Except that now we point our babes, 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,
Stiller, 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 flutes:
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,
And I almost fear they are not roses, but blood;
For the keeper was one, so full of pride,
He link'd a dead man there to a spectral bride;
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of brutes,
Would be have that hole in his side?

9.
But what will the old man say?
He laid a cruel sure 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 daffodill dies, and the Chairman
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 seem’d to divide in a dream from a band of the
blest,
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 glow’d like a ruddy shield on the Lion’s
breast.

2.
And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear de-
light
To have look’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 lighten’d my despair
When I thought that a war would arise in defence
of the right.
That an iron tyrann 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 hilltop a languid note,
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,
Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,
And the cobweb woven across the cannon’s throat
Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

3.
And as months ran on and rumor of battle grew,
“It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,” said I
(For I cleaved to a cane that I felt to be pure and
true),

“It is time, O passionate heart and morbid soul,
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 dreary 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
shames,
THE BROOK.

Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told;
And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd!
Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep
For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring claims,
Yet God's Just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar;
And many a darkness into the light shall leap
And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,
And noble thought be freer under the sun,
And the heart of a people beat with one desire:
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and done,
And now by the side of the Black and the Battle deep,
And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames
The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

Let it frame or fade, and the war roll down like a wind;
We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble still,
And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better mind;
It is better to fight for the good, than to rail at the ill;
I have felt with my native land, I am one with my kind,
I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom as-sign'd.

THE BROOK;
AN IDYL.

"Hark, 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;
Nur 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 happy 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 branding summers of Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Nelliberry air,
I panted, seem'd, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose fancies 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 coot and heron,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern,
Toicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, 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 sharpers and trebles,
I babble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
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 drown them all along, and slow
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 lissome 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 cousin 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; cross
By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry—crotch,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push at Philip's garden-gate. The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding 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, wheeling under woodland bowers,
A little flutter'd with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

"What was it? less of sentiment than sense
Had Katie; not illiterate; neither one
Who babbling in the fount of active tears,
And nursed by measly-mouthed philanthropes,
Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

"She told me. She and James had quarrell'd. Why?
What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;
James had no cause: but when I prest 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

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And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
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, sleep,
Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi; sleep in peace: and he,
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:
I scraped the flichen 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 Aylmer, seated on a stile
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing over the brook
A tawnured head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low breath
Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The frowny bindweed-beads and brindled 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 blusht, till he
Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a gripping 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 tenanted 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.

Still on the tower stood the vane,
A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,
I peer'd athwart the chancel pane
And saw the altar cool and bare.
A dogn's head was round my feet,
A band of pain across my brow:
"Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow."

2.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter 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. 
Brav the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bary the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

2. 
Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

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 their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long secession of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

5. 
"Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell
(And women's slander is the worst),
And you, whom once I lov'd so well,
Thro' you, my life will be accurst."
I spoke with heart, and heat and force,
I shook her breast with vague alarms—
Like torrents from a mountain source
We rush'd into each other's arms.

6. 
We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,
And sweet the vapor-braided blue,
Low breezes fan'd the belfry bars,
As homeward by the church I drew.
The very graves appear'd to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadow'd avails;
"Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells."

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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 their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long secession of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

5. 
"Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell
(And women's slander is the worst),
And you, whom once I lov'd so well,
Thro' you, my life will be accurst."
I spoke with heart, and heat and force,
I shook her breast with vague alarms—
Like torrents from a mountain source
We rush'd into each other's arms.

6. 
We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,
And sweet the vapor-braided blue,
Low breezes fan'd the belfry bars,
As homeward by the church I drew.
The very graves appear'd to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadow'd avails;
"Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells."
Ode 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'gave him victory, this he is,  
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,  
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  
Cleaved with his fiery few and won;  
And underneath another sun,  
With wheel on a later round  
Roundaffrighted Lisbon drew  
The treble works, the vast designs  
Of his labor'd rampart-lines,  
Where he greatly stood at bay,  
Whence he issued forth anew,  
And ever great and greater grew,  
Beating from the wasted vales  
Back to France her banded swarms,  
Back to France with countless blows,  
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew  
Past the Pyrenean plains;  
Follow'd up in valley and glen  
With blare of bangle, 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 sabbath shook the spoiler down  
A day of onsets of desperate!  
Dash'd on every rocky square  
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away  
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;  
There'c the long-temerated 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-quake, Water's!  
Mighty seaman, tender and true,  
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,  
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,  
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,  
If aught of things that here befell  
Through 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 civic 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 forgot  
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers;  
Thank Him who led 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 these great men who fought, and kept it ours.  
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control  
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul  
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,  
And save the one true seed of freedom sown  
Betwixt 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 crumbled into dust,  
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,  
Till crowds at length be same and crowns be just.  
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.  
Remember him who led your hosts;  
He bade you guard the sacred cause.  
Your cannon 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, and learns to language rise  
With ruffled maxims bown 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 Duke;  
Whatever record leap to light  
He never shall be shamed.

8.  
Lo, the leader in those 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 aulcent Fortune empil'd 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 desdon  
Love of self, before his journey close,  
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting  
Into glory's purple, 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 gorge to the far light has won  
His path upward, and wealth;  
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled  
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 hearths he saved from shame  
For many and many an age proclaim  
At civic revel and pomp and game,  
And when the long-illumin'd 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 unmoniled tongue  
Far on in summers that we shall not see  
Peace, it is a day of pain.  
For one about whose patriarchal knee  
Late the little children clung:  
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, he has 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 fate:
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 us, 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.
Hush, the Dead March walls in the people's ears:
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;
ashes to ashes, dust to dust:
He is gone who seem'd so great—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Biding here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in state,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
But speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthy fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

1822.

THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O Love, what hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern sun:
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and myrtle vine.

What Roman strength Tarbila 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 campanilla grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hie;
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 a purple 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 loyally drank to him.

Not knew we well what pleased us most,
Not the clipt 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 olive green;
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread;
And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and cold,
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genoese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours;
What drives about the fresh Cascine,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we cross the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain:
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma;
At Lodi, rain, Placenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard plains;
Porch-pillars on the Ron resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chantling 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 stately pinnacles, maste as they.

How faintly-dusky'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanglung there
A thousand shadowy-pencil'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como; shower and storm and blast
Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded: 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-barthen music, kept,
As on the Larlano 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 shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavé 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. 147

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 ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This unselling of another sky
Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by:

And I forgot the clouded Firth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth,
The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolises of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throes 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.

Comes, 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 scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,
And only hear the magpie's gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine:

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumulus a breaker on chalk and sand;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some slip 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 those 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 hugest 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
Tolling 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 soldiers knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Th'irs not to make reply,
Th'irs not to reason why,
Th'irs 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,
Bolt'd they rode, and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.
DEDICATION.—ENID.

4. Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an array, 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
Shattered and stunned.
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 month of Hiel,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

6. When can their glory fade?
To the wild charge they made:
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made:
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

IDIYS OF THE KING.

"Fla REGNUM ARTHURUM."
JOSEPH OF EXETER.

DEDICATION.

These to His Memory—since he held them dear,
Perchance 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 reverenced his conscience as his king;
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd to it;
Who loved one only and 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 accomplished, wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly—
Not swaying to this faction or to 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 littleesses,
In that fierce light which beams upon a throne,
And blackens every blot; for where is he,
Who dares foreshadow for an only son
A loverly life, a more unstartl'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-eighted summoner of War and Waste
To fruitful strife and rivalries of peace—
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
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 all 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

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 sunrise, now at sunset, now by night
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 statelyst 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 world's loud whisper breaking into 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: wherefore going to the king,
He made this pretext, that his prince-dom lay
Close on the borders of a territory,
Wherein were bandit earls, and caitiff knights,
ENID. - 143.

True tears upon his broad and naked breast,
And these awake 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, "Is in spite of all my care,
For all my pains, yea, for all my pains,
She is not faithful to me, and I see her
Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall."
Then tho' he loved and reverenced her too much
To dream she could be guilty of such
Right thro' his manful breast darted the pang
That makes a man in the sweet face of her
Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.
At this he harf'd his huge limbs out of bed,
And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,
"My charger and her bridle, then to her.
I will ride forth into the wilderness;
For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win,
I have not faith so low as some would wish.
And you, put on your worst and meanest dress
And ride with me." And Enid said, "Amazed,
If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault."
But he, "I charge you, ask not, but obey."
Then she betook her of a faded silk,
A faded mantle and a faded veil,
And moving toward a certain castle,
Wherein she kept them folded reverently
With sprigs of summer laid between the folds,
She took them, and array'd herself therein,
Remembering when first he came on her
Drest in that dress, and how she saw 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 Whitsuntide before
Held court at old Caeleon 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 hunt
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 gallop'd up
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 forded Usk, and gallop'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, wreathing 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 sleeve, 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 statily, and with all grace
Of womanhood and queenhood, answer'd him:
"Late, late, Sir Prince," she said, "later than we!"
"Yea, noble Queen," he answer'd, "and so late
That I but come like you to see the hunt,
Not join it." "Therefore wait with me," she said;
"For one or his little knoll, at if anyone
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 chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
King Arthur's hound of deepest mouth, there rode
ENID.

Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf.
Whereof the dwarf legg'd latest, and the knight Had risen up, and the dusty sleeping bear Went sweating underneath a sack of corn.

"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 held victius, old, and irritable.
And doubling all his master's vice of pride,
Made 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;
"Though not worthy ev'n to speak of him;" And when she put her horse toward the knight, Struck at him with his whip, and she return'd judignant to the Queen; at which Gerard exclaimed, "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 spirted upon the scarf, Dyeing it in the insanguinated core hand Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him:
But he, from his exceeding manfulness And pure nobility of temperament, Woth to be wroth at such a worm, 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 at, arms 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 her whom first you love:
But ere you wed with any, bring your bride,
And I, were she the daughter of a king,
Yes, tho' she were a beggar from the hedge,
Will clothe her for her bridal like the sun."

And Prince Gerard, now thinking that he heard The voice that next the hour born,
A little vex't at losing of the hunt,
A little at the vile occasion, rode,
By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy glade
And valley, with swift eye, following the three.
At last they issued from the world of wood,
And climbed upon a fair and even ridge,
And shoid themsev'ls against the sky, and sank.
And thither came Gerard, and underneath Beheld the long street of a little town
In a long valley, on one side of which,
While from the masks the hands, a forest 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 shingly bed
Brawling, or like a clomor of the rocks
At distance, ere they settle for the night.

And onward to the fortress rode the three,
And enter'd, and were lost behind the walls.

So thought Gerard, "I have track'd him to his earth."
And down the long street, riding wearily,
Found every hostel full, and everywhere Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot hiss And clatter of the youth who scord
His master's armor; and of such a one He ask't, "What means the tumult in the town?"

Who told him, scorning still, "The sparrow-hawk!
Then riding close behind an ancient chariot,
Who, smirched by the dusty sloping brow
"Then, riding farther past an armorer's,
Who, with back turnd, and bow'd above his work,
Set riveting a helmet on his knee,
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 Gerard flash'd into sudden spleen:
A thousand pipe eat up your sparrow-hawk!
Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings peck him dead!
Ye think the rustic cackle of your bourg
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, if you be not like the rest, hawk-mad, Where can I get me harborage for the night?
And to your arms, arms to fight my enemy! Speak!"

"At this the armorer turn'd all a smile
And seeing one so gay in purple silks,
Came forward with the helmet yet in hand
And answer'd, "Pardon me, O stranger knight;
We hold a tourney here to-morrow morn,
And there is scanty time for half the arms."

"Arms? truth! I know not: all are wanted here,
Harborage? truth, good truth, I know no, save,
It may be, at Earl Ynol's, o'er the bridge Yonder." He spoke and fell to work again.

Then rode Gerard, a little spleenful yet,
Across the bridge that spann'd the dry ravine.
There musiing at the hoary-headed Earl,
(His dress a suit of fray'd magnificence,
Of which the feats of ceremony) and said:
"Whither, fair son?" to whom Gerard replied,
"O friend, I seek a harborage for the night."
Then Ynol, "Enter therefore and partake
The slender entertainment of a house
Once rich, now poor, but ever open-door'd."
"Thanks, venerable friend," replied Gerard,
"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, "Graver cause that I am alive.
To erase 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 Gerard 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 ruinous.
Here stood a shatter'd archway plunm'd with fern;
And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,
Whole, like a cray that tumbles from the cliff,
And like a cray was gay with wild flowers:
And high above a piece of turret stair,
Worn by the feet that now were silent, wond
Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems
Clasp the gray walls with hairy-dried arms,
And suck'd the jointing of the stones, and look'd
A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,
The fair Enid, Ynol's daughter, sang
Clear thro' the open casement of the Hall,
Singing: and as the sweet voice of a bird,
Heard by the lauder in a lonely ile,
Moves him to think what kind of bird it is
That sings so sweetly on the sky.

So the sweet voice of Enid moved Gerard:
And made him like a man aboard at morn
When first the liquid note beloved of men
Comes flying over many a windy wave.
To Britain, and in April suddeely
Breaks from a coppery germ'nd with green and red,
And he suspends his converse with a friend,
Or it may be the labor of his hands,
To think not or, "there is the nighttime!"
So faried it with Geraint, who thought and said,
"Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me."

It chanted the song that Euld sang was one
Of Fortune and her wheel, and Euld sang:

"'Tis, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud;
Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm, and cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

'Tis, 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.

'Tis, turn thy wheel above the starring 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 Ynoli: "Enter quickly." Entering then,
Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen stones,
The dusty-rather'd many-cobweb'd Hall,
He found an ancient dame in dim brocade;
And near her, like a blossom vermell-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:
"'Euld, 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 flesh 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 Euld past him, said:
To follow, stride a stride, but Ynoli caught
His purple scarf, and held, and said "Forbear! Rest! the good house, thou'rt rush'd, O my Son,
Enid not that her guest should make himself."
And reverencing the custom of the house
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Euld 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 bocn
The means of godly welcome, flesh and wine.
And Euld brought sweet cakes to make them cheer.
And in her vault embossed, manchet bread.
And then, because their hall must also serve
For kitchen, bold'd the flesh, and spread the board.
And stood behind, and waited on the three.
And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
Geraint had longning to him evermore
To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
That cross the trencher as she laid it down:
But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
For now the wise made summer in his veins,
Let his eye rove in following, evermore.
On Euld at her lowly handmaid-work,
Now here, now there, about the dusty 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 me, good faith, I will have it;
For if he 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 maidservant to demand the name,
His dwarf, a vicious under-shaper thing,
Struck at her with his whip, and she return'd
Indignant to the Queen: and then I swore
That I would track this crafty thief to his hold,
And fight and break his pride, and have 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 borg
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,
Avenge this great insult done the Queen."

Then cried Ynoli: "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 maiden; first Limoire,
A creature wholly given to brawls and wine,
Drunk even when he would; and be he dead
I know not, but he passed to the wild laud.
The second was your foe, the sparrow-hawk,
My curse, my nephew,—I will not let his name
Slip from my lips if I can help it,—be
When I that knew him fierce and turbulent
Refused her to him, then his pride awoke:
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,
Bribed with large promises of men who served
About my person, the more easil
Because my means were somewhat broken into
Toro' 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 fouly ousteed me;
Buil that new fort to overawe my friends,
For truly there are those who love me yet;
And keeps me in this wondrous castle here,
Where deathless he would put me soon to death,
That his pride too much despiseth me:
And I myself sometimes despise 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 tournay I may break his pride."

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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 tilt,
Except the lady he loves best be there.
Two forks are set into the meadow ground,
And one of these is laid and lanced down,
And over that is placed the sparrow-hawk,
The prize of beauty for the fairest there.
And this, what knight soever be in field
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
And tilts with my good nephew thereupon,
Who belug apt at arms and bug of bone
Has ever won it for the lady with him,
And topping over all antagonism
Has earnd himself the name of sparrow-lawk.
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' having seen all beauties of our time,
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so fair.
And if I fail her name will yet remain
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 bearing her own name had slip'd away)
But that old dame, to whom full tenderly
And fumbling 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 distrait'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
Commingled one another more on her mind
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red and pale
Across the face of Enid hearing 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 owne unworthiness:
And when the pale and bloodless cast began
To quicken to the sun, arose, and raised
Her mother too, and hand in hand they moved
Down to the meadow where thejonets were held,
And waited there for Yniol and Geraint.

And thither came the twain, and when Geraint
Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,
He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,
Himself beyond the two pushing could move
The chair of Idris. Yniol's rasted 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
Up rode with her crown and circlet in her list.
And there they frit the forks into the ground,
And over these they placed a siluer 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 I these two years past have won it for thee.
The prize of beauty." Loudly spake the Prince,
"For on there is a worthier," and the knight
With some surprise and thence as if a child
Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all his face
Glond like the heart of a great fire at Yule,
So burnt he was with passion, crying out,
"Do battle for it then," no more; and thence
They did become together, and thence they brake their spear.

Each then, disordered and drawing, lash'd at each
So often, and with each 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 blade aloft,
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, grumbling, "Edyrrn, son of Nudd!"
Ahearn am I that I should tell it thee.
My pride is broken: men have seen my fall."

"Then, Edyrrn, son of Nudd," replied 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,
Crape pardion for that insult done the Queen,
And shalt abide her judgment on it; next,
Thou shalt give back her earldom to thy kin.
These two things shalt thou do, or else shalt die."
And Edyrrn 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-more
Made a low splendor in the world, and wings
Moved in her ivy, Eulid, for she lay
With her fair head in the dim-yellow light,
Among the dancing show's of the birds.
Woke and betheought 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 thouk it never yet had look'd so mean.
For as a leaf in mid-November
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 Geraint.
And still she look'd, and still the terror grew
Of that strange bright and dreadful thing; a court,
All speaking in her in her fader still of birds,
And softly to her own sweet heart she said:

"This noble Prince who won our earldom back
So splendidly in his acts and his attire.
Sweet be when I have such arms in my list.
Would he could carry with us here awhile!
But being so beholden to the Prince
It were but little grace in any of us,
But as he seem'd on going this third day,
To seek a second favor at his hands,
Yet he could not tarry a day or two.
Myself would work eye dim, and dunge lame,
Far lesser than so much discredit him.

And Enid fell in longing for a dress
All branch'd and flow'd with gold in costly gift
Of her good mother, given her on the night
Before her birthday, three sad years ago.
That night of fire, when Edyn sack'd their house,
And scatter'd all they had to all the wild:
For while the mother should it, and the two
Weeping sisters, spinning and admiring it, the work
To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry
That Edyn'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 Edyn'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 home,
Then let her fancy sit across the part,
And roam the goodly places that she knew;
And last behought her how she use'd to watch,
Near that old house, a pool of golden carp:
And once was patch'd and blurr'd and lustreless
Among his burns'hd brethren of the pool;
And half asleep she made comparison
Of that and these to her own faded self
And the gay court, and fell asleep again:
And dreamt herself was such a faded form
Among her burns'hd sisters of the pool;
But this was in the garden of a king;
And she then lay dark in the pool she knew
That all was bright; that all about were birds
Of sunny plume 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 one of the lakes in joyful height went
In silver tissue talking things of state;
And children of the king in cloth of gold
Glanced at the doors or gambold'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 gardeners now
To pick the faded creature from the pool,
And cast it on the mixen that it die."
And her maidens were mended and arranged on her,
And Enid started waking, with her heart
All overshadow'd by 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 laid
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 trow:
Look on it, child, and tell me if you know it."

And Enid lock'd it, but all confused at first,
Could scarce divide it from her foolish dream,
That suddenly she kindled and inflamed.
And answer'd, "Yes, I know it; your good gift,
So sadly lost on that unhappy night:
Your own good gift!" "Yes, surely," said the dame,
("And gladly given again this happy morn.
For to my sovereign thankful,
Went Yniol thro' the 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: and robed your merit.
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 you the court 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 failed suit, as you, my child, have yours,
And however patient, Yniol his grace.
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 apparatus to noble maintenance.
Yea, and he brought me to a goodly house:
But since our fortune elipt from an to shade,
And all tho' that young trutior, cruel need
Consider'd us, but a better time has come;
So clothe yourself in this, that better fits
Our mended fortunes and a Prince's pride
For tho' you won the prize of fairest fair,
And tho' I heard him call you fairest fair,
Let never maideu thuk, however fair,
Of that good mother making Enid gay old.
And should some great court-lady say, the Prince
Hath pick'd a ragged-robin from the hedge,
And like a madman brought her to the court,
Then were you shamed, and worse, might shame the Prince
To whom we are beholden; but I know,
When my dear child is set forth at her best,
That neither court nor country, tho' they sought
Thro' 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 glittering star of morn
Parts from a bank of snow, and by and by
Slips in golden close to the maiden's rose;
And left her maiden cloth, 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 Cassevellan,
Flur, for whose love the Roman Caesar first
Invaded Britain, "but we beat him back,
As this great Prince one can invade us, with
Not beat him back, 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 beseech
His princess, or indeed the stately queen,
He answer'd, "Earl, entertain her by my love,
Albeit I give no reason but my wish,
That she ride with me in her faded silk."
Yniol with that hard message went; it fell,
Like flakes in summer laying lusty corn:
For Enid, all abash'd, she knew not why,
Dared not to glance at her good mother's face,
But silently, till obedience,
Her mother silent too, nor helping her,
Laid from her limbs the costly-brother'd gift,
And robed them in her ancient suit again,
And so descended. Never man rejoiced
More than Geraint to protect her heart,
And glancing all at once as keenly as her,
As careful robins eye the delver's till,
Made her cheek burn and every eyelid fall,
But rested with her sweet face satisfied;
Then seeing cloud upon the mother's brow,
Her by both hands he caught, and sweetly said:

"O my new mother, be not wroth or grieved
At your young son, for my petition to her.
When late I left Caerleon, our great Queen,
In words whose echo lasts, they were so sweet,
Made never the market whatever bride I brought,
Herself would clothe her like the sun in Heaven.
Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd hold,
Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
I vow'd that could I gain her, our kind Queen,
No records but hers should make your Enil burst
Sunlike 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 Enil find
A nobler friend? Another thought I had;
I came among you here so suddenly,
That thou'rt gentle presence at the lists
Might well have served for proof that I was loved,
I doubted whether fillial tenderness,
Or easy nature, did not itself in
Be clouded by your wishes for her weal;
Or whether some false sense in her own self
Of my contrasting brightness, overbear
Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall;
And such a sense might make her war for court
And all its gaudy, and by hand-haunted halls,
I thought, that could I somehow prove such force in her
Link'd with such love for me, that at a word
(No reason given her) she could cast aside
A splendour dear to women, now to her,
And therefore desist; 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 and flow,
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 gaudy-day,
When your fair child shall wear your costly gift
Besides your own warm heart, with, on her knees,
Who knows? another gift of the high God,
Which, maybe, shall have learned to liep you thanks."

He spoke: the mother smiled, but half in tears,
Then brought a mantle down and wraip her in it,
And clasp'd and kiss'd her, and they rode away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere had climb'd
The giant tower, from whose high crest they said,
Men saw the godly hills of Somerset,
And white sails flying on the yellow sea;
But not to godly hill nor 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 Prince's dower,
And clothed her for her bridals like the sun;
And all that week was old Caerleon gay,
For by the hands of Dubric, the high saint,
They twaile were wedded with all ceremony.

And it was on the last year's Whitmas tide,
But Enil ever kept the faded silk,
Remembering how first he came on her,
Drest in that dress, and how he lodged her in it,
And how all 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 meanest dress," she found
And took it, and array'd herself therein.

O purblind race of miserable men,
How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves,
By taking true for false, or false for true;
Here, then, the feeble twilitg 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 passing 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:
No, I will not, but here I charge you well before,
Ever a good way on before; and this
I charge you, on your duty as a wife,
Whatever happens, not to speak to me,
No, not a word!" and Enil was aghast;
And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on,
When crying out, "Effeminatc as I am,
I will not fight my way with gilded arms,
All shall be iron;" he loosed a mighty parse,
Hanging at his belt, and hurst it toward the squire.
So the last sight that Enil had of home
Was all the marble threshold flashing, strown
With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the erine
Chafing his shoulder; then he cried again,
"To the wilds!" and Enil leading down the tracks
Thro' which he bade her lead him as they past
The many towers, and by hand-haunted halls,
Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the, horn,
And wildernesses, perilous paths, 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 looked so pale,
That each had suffer'd some excessive wrong.
For he was ever saying to himself,
"O I that wasted time to tend upon her,
To compass her with sweet observances,
To dress her beauitfully 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 while from any wound.
And every word she cast about
For that unnoticed falling in herself,
Which made him look so cloudy and so cold:
Till the great plover's human whistle amazed
Her heart, and glancing round the waste she fear'd
In every reverting brake an ambushade.
Then thought again "If there be such in 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 Enil was aware of three tall knights
On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a rock
In shadow, waiting for them, callit six all;
And heard one crying to his fellow, "Look,
Here comes a laggard hanging down his head,
Who seems no bolder than a beaten hound;
Come, we will elay him, and will have his horse
And armor, and his damsel shall be ours."

Then Enil ponder'd in her heart, and said:
"I will go back a little to my lord,
And I will tell him all their califft talk;
For, be the wrorg worm to yelling brook,
Far lever by his dear hand had I die,
Than that my lord should suffer loss or shame."

Then she went back some paces of return,
Met his full frown timidy full, 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 damsel should be theirs."
ENID.

He made a wrathful answer. "Did I wish you should obey me? or shall I have my command laid upon you, not to speak to me, 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 midstmost charging, Prince Geraint drove the long spear a croulth 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 icicle, swung from his brand a wily buffet out once, twice, to right, to left, and smauled 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 bodys lie, but bound the suits Of armor on their horses, each on each, and tied the bridle-reels 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: mith 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 faint had spoken to her, And cried in words of sudden fierce wrath And smould'er'd wrong that burnt him all within: But evermore it seem'd an easier thing At once without remorse to strike her dead, To cry "Halt," and to her own bright face Acuse her of the least immodesty, and, 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-didled Usk, Before he turn to fall seaward again, Passe'd, did Enid, keeping watch, behold In the first shallow shade of a deep wood, Before a groom of stubborn-shafted oaks, Three other horsemen waiting, wholly arm'd, Whereof one seem'd far larger than her 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." No!" said the second, "it's none of a knight."

The third, "A craven I how he hangs his head." The giant answer'd merrily, "Yes, but one! Wait here, and when he passes fall upon him." And Enid ponders'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 thou' he kill me for it, I save a life dearer to me than mine."

And she abode his coming, and said to him With tim'd firmness, "Have I leave to speak?" He said, "Yon 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 other once should rally out upon me, I swear it would not ruffle me so much 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 dreaded most, bare down upon him. Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd; but Geraint, a little to the late encounter strain'd, Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corselet 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 sapling growing on it, slip From the long shore-cliff a wildly waft to the beach, and there lie still, and yet the sapling grew: So lay the man transfix'd. His craven pair Of comrades, making slowlier 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 hanger fall At distance, were the soldiers wont to hear His voice in battle, and be kindled by it, and foemen scared, like that false pair who turn'd Flying, but, over taken, dide 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 left them on their horses, each on each, and tied the bridle-reels 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 distinge The sharpness of that pain about her heart; and them, themselves, like creatures gently born But into hostile hands fall, and make long By bandits' groom'd, pick't their light ears, and felt Her low firm voice and tender government.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood they pace, And lasting 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 mowing in it: And down a rocky pathway from the place There came a fair-haired youth, that in his hand Bare victual for the mowers: and Geraint Had run again on Enid looking pale: Then, moving downward to the meadow ground, He, when the fair-limb'd youth came by him, said, "Friend, let her eat; the damsel is so faint." "Yes, willingly," replied the youth; "and you, My lord, eat also; the fare is coarse, And only meet for mowers;" then set down His basket, and dismounting on the sward They let the horses graze 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 amaz'd: and "Boy," said he, "I have eaten to but take A horse and arms for guerdon; choose the best." He, reddening in extremity of delight, "My lord, you overpay me fifty fold."
ENID.

"You will be all the wealthier," cried the Prince.
"I take it as free gift, then," said the boy,
"Not guerdon; for myself I can easily,
While your good damsel rests, return, and fetch
Fresh victual for those mowers of our Earl;
For th' Earl is at the fair and 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 cosily than with mowers' fare."

Then said Geraint, "I wish no better fare:
I never ate with anguish appetite
Then when I left your mowers dinnerless.
And into no man's house will I go no more.
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, nod return
With victual for these men, and let us know." 

"Yea, my kind lord," said the glad youth, and went,
Held his head high, and thought himself a knight,
And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,
Leaving the horse, and they were left alone.

But when the Prince had brought his errant eyes
Home from the rock, sideways he let them glance
At Enid, where she dropt: his own false doom,
That shadow of misluster should never cross Betwixt them, came upon him, and he sigh'd;
Then with another humorsous ruth remark'd
The lusty mowers laboring dinnerless,
And watch'd the sun blaze on the turning seythe,
And after nodded sleepily in the heat.
But she, remembering her own rule'd hall,
And all the whindy clamor of the clays
About her hollow turret, pluck'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 apart
By his width, and her amulet and amulet.
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, drave backward to the wall,
And midstmost of a rout of roisterers,
Femininely fair and absolutely pale,
Her snitter in old years before Geraint,
Enter'd, the wild lord of the place, Limours.
He moving up with pliant courtliness,
Greeted Geraint full face, but stetthly,
In the mid-warmth of welcome and grasped 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 feed the sudden guest, and sumptuously
According to his fashion, bade the host,
Call in what men soever 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
Drunk 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 applause.
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,
Croust and came near, lidive 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 turned me wild—
What chance is this? how is it I see you 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 do not keep it back:
Make me a little happier: let me know it—
Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost?
Yes, yea, the whole drear debt of all we are.
And, Enid, you and he, I see it with joy—
You sit apart, you do not speak to him,
You come with no attendance, page or maid,
Serve you—does he love you as of old?
For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know
You two men may bicker 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—itall'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 round: he sits unarm'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 mean is no deeper than a stretch of mine
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 one true lover which you ever had,
I will take like use of all the power I have;
O pardon me! the madness of that hour,
When first I parted from you, moves me yet."

At this the tender sound of his own voice
And sweet self-plaity, or the fancy of it,
Made his eye mist; but Enid fear'd his eyes,
Moist as they were, wine-heated from the feast;
And answer'd with such craft as women use,
Guilt or guiltless, to stave off a chance
That breaks upon them perilously, and said:

"Earl, if you love me as in former years,
And do not practise on me, come with morn,
And snatch me from him as by violence;
Leave me to-night! I am weary to the death."

Low at leave-taking, with his brandish'd plume
Brushing his instep, bow'd the all-amorous Earl,
And the stout Prince bade him a loud good-night
He moving homeward babbled to his men,
How Enid never loved a man but him
Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her lord.

But Enid left alone with Prince Geraint,
Debating his command of silence given,
And that she now perform must violate it, Held commune with herself, and while she held He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart. To wake him, but hung o'er him, wholly pleased To find him yet unwounded after flight, And hear him breathing low and equally, Around the rose, and smoilg lightly haul'd The pieces of his armor in one place, All to be there against a sudden need; Then dazed awhile herself, but overtold'd By that day's grief and travel, evermore Second catching at a restless Thom, and then Went slipping down horrible precipice, And strongly striking out her limbs awoke: Then thought she heard 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 gimmer'd on his armor in the room. And once again she rose to look at it, But touch'd it unawares: jangling, the casque Fell, and he started up and stared at her. Then breaking his command of silence given, She told him all that Earl Limours had said, Except the passage that he loved her not: Not left untold the craft herself had used; But ended with apology so sweet, Low-spoken, and of so few words, and seem'd So justified by that necessity, That tho' he thought "was it for her she went In Dover?" he but gave a wraithful groan, Saying "your sweet faces make good fellows fools And traitors. Call the host and bid him bring Charger and palfrey." So she glided out Among the heavy breathings of the house, And like a household Spirit at the wall, But (till she woke the sleeping dive) turn'd: Then tendering her rough lord, tho' unask'd, In silence, did him service as a squire; Tilt leision 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, Suddenly 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, What thing soever you may hear or see, Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use To charge you), that you speak not but obey." And Enid answer'd, "Yea, 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." "Yea so," said he, "do it: be not too wise: Seeing that you are wedded to a man, Not quite misentend with a yarning worm, 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 deliver's toll; And that within her which a wanton fool, Or haity judger, would have called her guilt, Not with her check burn and either eye fall. And Gerard look'd and was not satisfied. Then forward by a way which, beaten hard, Led from the territory of false Limours To the waste earldom of another earl, Doornm, whom his shaking vassals call'd the Bull, Went Enid with her sudden follower on. Once she look'd back, and when she saw him ride More near by many a road than yestermorn, It wellnigh made her cheerful: till Gerard, 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 Smoote her ear, and turning, turning, turned, Saw Dust, and the points of lancea bicker 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 fingers up, and pointing to the ground. At which the warrior in his obstinacy, Because she kept the letter of his word Was in a manner pleased, and turning, stood. And in the moment after, wild Limours, Boroe on a black horse, like a thunder-cloud Whose skirts are loosen'd by the breaking storm, Half ridden off with by the thing he rode, And all in passion uttering a dry shriek, Dashed on Gerard, 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 blindly rush'd on all the root behind. But at the flash and motion of the man They vanish'd paule-stricken, like a shoal Of darting fish, that on a summer's dawn Adown the crystal dikes at Canoelet. Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand, But if a man who stands upon the brink But lift a shilling hand against the sun, There is not left the twinkle of a thin Betwixt the cressy islets 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'd friendships only made in wine. Then like a stormy smillet smiled Gerard, Who saw the chargers of the two that fell Start from their fallen lords, and wildly fly, Mist with the flyers. "Horse 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 horse has your palfrey heart enough To bear his armor? shall we fast or dine? No?—then do you, being right honest, pray That we may meet the horsemen of Earl Doorn, I too would still be honest." Thus he said: And sadly gazing on her bridile-reliant 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 farred it with Gerard, who being pritch'd In combat with the follower of Limours, Bled underneath his armor secretly, And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife What al'd him, hardly knowing it himself, Till his eye darken'd and his helmet wagg'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 hand false filter, nor blue eye Molested, till she had lightened on his head, And tearing off her veil of faded silk Had bared her forehead to the blistering sun, And swathed the hurt that drain'd her dear lord's life.
ENID.

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 summer 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 whistling and half singing a coarse song,
He drove the dust against her veilless eyes:
Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm
Before whom they brought an arrow, made
The long way smoke beneath him in his fear;
At which her palfrey whinnying lifted heel,
And scound'rd into the coppages and was lost,
While the great charger stood, grieved like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge Earl Doorm,
Broad-faced with under-fringe of russet beard,
Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,
Came riding with a hundred fances up;
But ere he came, like one that hauls a ship,
Cried the crafty Earl, "What, is he dead?"
"No, no, not dead!" she answer'd 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 wait you for him thus? you seem a child.
And be he dead, I count you for a fool:
Your wailing will not quicken him: dead or not,
Your mar a comely face with idiot tears.
Yet, since the face is comely—some of you,
Here, take him up, and bear him to our hall:
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 brawny spearmen, who advanced,
Each growing like a dog, when his good bone
Seems to be pluck'd at by the village boys
With their strong hand, their scarce-faring, and their fears.
To lose his bone, and lay his foot upon it,
Gawling and growing; so the ruffians grew'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 forays 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 naked hall of Doorm,
(His gentle charger following him unled)
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 luckier mates, but growing 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 deaf
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'n'd 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 donning his helm: and then there flitter'd in,
Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes.
A tribe of women, dress'd in many hues,
And mingled with the spearmen: and Earl Doorm
Struck with a knife of haft hard against the board,
And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his spears.
And men brought in whole hogs and quarter beehives.
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 wept;
And out of her there came a power upon him.
And rising on the sudden he said, "Eat!
I never yet beheld a thing so pale.
God's care, 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 me be ruled,
And I will do the thing I have not done,
For you shall share my earldom 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 brawny spearman let his cheek
Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and turning,
Stared;
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 recounted—women they,
Women, or what had been those gracious 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 answered 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, "Yes,
Eat and be glad, for I account you mine."

She answer'd meekly, "How should I be glad
Henceforth 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 sideways on her, suddenly seated on her,
And bare her by main violence to the board,
And thrust the dish before her, crying, "Eat."

"No, no," said Enid, weep, "I will not eat,
Till you shew me man upon the bier arise,
And eat with me." "Drink, then," he answer'd,
"Here!"
(And fill'd a horn with wine and held it to her),
"Lo! I, myself, when flush'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 turned all red and paced his hall,
Now gnaw'd his upper, 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 wait for one,
Who just your beauty to this stout and scorn
By dressing it in rage? Amazed am I,
Beholding how you bat against my wish,
That I forbear you thus: cross me no more.
At least put off to please me this poor gown,
This sullen rag, this beggar-woman's weed:
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 loom,
Where like a shoaling sea the lovely blue
Play'd into green, and thicker down the front
With jewels than the award with drops of dew,
When all night long a cloud clings to the hill,
And with the dawn ascending lets the day
Strike where it clung: so thickly shone the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be moved
Than hardest tyrants in their day of power,
With life-long injuries burning unwavenged,
And now their hour has come; and Enid said:

"In this poor gown my dear lord found me first,
And lov'd me serving in my father's hall:
In this poor gown I rode with him to court,
And there the Queen arm'd me like the sun
In this poor gown he bade me clothe myself,
When how we rode his falcon quest:
Of honor, where no honor can be gai'd with:
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 and let me be:
I never loved, can never love but him:
Yes, 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 russet 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 with ungentle with you:
Take me some, unkindly with flat 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,
And of a wild thing taken in the trap:
Which sees the trapper coming thro' the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his sword,
(If lay beside him in the hollow shield.)
Made but a single bound, and with a sweep of it
Shore thro' the swarty neck, and like a ball
The russet-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, have you worse than that dead man,
Done you more wrong, with both his and undergone
That trouble which has left me three years own:
Henceforward I will rather die than doubt.
And here I lay this penance on myself,
Not, tho' mine own ears heard you yesternight—
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 will henceforward rather die than doubt."

And Enid could not say one tender word,
She felt so blunt and stupid at the heart:
She only pr'y'd him, "Fly, they will return
And slay you; fly, your charger is without,
My pain'ry 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 its limbs in lawful flight,
Neigh'd with all gladness as they came, and stoop'd
With a low whinny toward the pair: and she
Kis'd the white star upon his noble front,
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 kis'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,
Than liv'd thro' her who in that parting hour
Put hand to hand beneath her husband's heart,
And felt him here 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 if to fall upon them.
Then, fearing for his heart and loss of blood,
She, with her mind all full of what had chanc'd,
Shriek'd to the stranger, "Slay not a dead man!"
"The voice of Enid," said the knight: but she,
Rewarding it was Edryn son of Nudd,
Was mov'd so much the more, and shriek'd again,
"O cousin, slay not him who gave you life."
And Edryn 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
Wherewherewith 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 threw me 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 below and to the left of the two) to
Disband himself, and scatter all his powers
Submit, and hear the judgment of the King."

"He hears the judgment of the King of Kings,"
Cried the bandit Prince, "and to the lives of Doorm
Are scatter'd,", and he pointed to the field
Where, huddled here and there on mound and knoll,
Were men and women standing and aghast,
While some yet fled; and then he plainlier told

"The King to the bandit Prince, from the King of Kings."
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 head, and halted in reply,
Fearing the mild face of the blameless King,
And after madness asked question ask'd:
Till Edyn crying, "If you will not go
To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you."
"Enough," he said, "I follow," and they went.
Bat Enid in their going had two fears,
One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,
And one from Edyn. Every now and then,
When Edyn rein'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 Ymlof and yourself, I schemed and wrought
Until I overthrew 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,
Beheld 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
Speaks of a service done him) overthrow.
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; 
Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating the life 
He gave me, meaning to be rid of it. 
And all the passion 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 
Instead of secret love, the purest scorn. 
Such fine reserve and noble reticence, 
Manners so kind, yet stately, such a grace 
Of tenderest courtesy, that I began 
To glance behind me at my former life, 
And find that it had been the world's indeed: 
And oft I talked with Dubrie, the high saltur, 
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 Enid easily believed, 
Like simple noble natures, credulous 
Of what they long for, good in friend or foe, 
There most in those who most have done them ill. 
And when they reach'd the camp the king himself 
Advanced to get them, and beholding her 
Th' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a word, 
But went apart with Edyrn, whom he held 
In converse for a little, and return'd, 
And, gravely smiling, lift'd her from horse, 
And kisst her with a passion tender-like, 
And show'd an empty tent allotted her. 
And glancing for a minute, till he saw her 
Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and said: 
"Prince, when of late you pray'd me for my leave 
To move to your own land, and there defend 
Your marches, I was pricked with some reproof, 
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, 
Nor was I so far in the way to be 
To cleanse this common sewer of all my realm, 
With Edyrn and with others: have you look'd 
At Edyrn? 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 doth a man repeat, 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. 
Edyrn 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 rashly, but have approved him in my way 
One of our noblest, our most valorous, 
Sanest and most obedient: and indeed 
This work of Edyrn wrought upon himself 
After a life of violence, seems to me 
A thousand-fold more great and wonderful 
Than if one chance the Queen laid upon me, 
Cleansing 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 bow'd the Prince, and felt 
His work was neither great nor wonderful, 
And past to Enid's tent; and thither came 
The King's own leech to look into his hurt: 

And Enid tended on him there; and there 
Her constant motion round him, and the breath 
Of her sweet tendance hovering over him, 
Fills all the genial courses of his blood 
With deeper and with ever deeper love, 
As the south-west that blowing late lake 
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 whose fasts, the 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 rooted out the slothful office 
Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at wrong, 
And in their chains set up a stronger race 
With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men 
To till the waster, and mov'g everywhere 
Clear'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 Caerleon upon Usk. 
There the great Queen once more embraced her friend, 
And clothed her in apparel like the Queen. 
And tho' Geraint could never take again 
That comfort from their converse which he took 
Before the Queen's fair name was breathed upon 
He rested well content that all was well. 
There was no longer 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 keep the justice of the King 
So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts 
Appeal'd, and the rightful 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 Enid, whom her ladies loved to call 
Enid the Fair, a grateful people named 
Enid the Good; and in their halls arose 
The cry of children, Enids and Geraints, 
Of times to be; nor did he doubt her more 
But rested in her fealty, till he crown'd 
A happy life with a fair death, and fell 
Against the heathen of the Northern Sea. 
In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

VIVIEN.

A storm was coming, but the winds were still, 
And in the wild woods of Brocelande, 
Before an oak, so hollow huge and old 
It look'd a tower of ruin'd masowork, 
At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay. 

The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's court: 
She hated all the knights, and heartily thought 
Their lavish comment when her name was named. 
For once, when Arthur walking all alone, 
Next at a morn rife about the Queen, 
Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair, 
Would fain have wrought upon him cloudy mood 
With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken voice, 
And butter'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 blandly and charge: 
But one had watch'd, and had not held 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 those times,
Merlin, who knew the range of all their arts,
Had built the King his havens, ships, and halls,
Was also Bard, and knew the starry heavens;
The people called him Wizard; whom at first
She spake, I pleaded with my lady talk,
And viv'd smiles, and faculty-vom'd points
Of slander, glancing here and grasping there;
And yielding to his kindlier moods, the Seer
Would watch her at her pastime, and play,
E'en would unweave them, when they met
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,
Began to break her sports with graver fits,
Turn off the red or pain, or whether
Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him.
With such a first devotion, that the old man,
Theo' doub'tful, 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,
Felt in her will, and so the seasons went.
Then fell upon him a great melancholy;
And leaving Arthur's court he gait'd the beach;
There found a little boat, and step't into it; And
And brought him both a lover and a bards
She took the helm and he the sail; the boat
Drave with a sudden wind across the deeps,
And touching Breton sands they disembark'd.
And then she follow'd Merlin all the way,
Ever in the wild woods at that oddittendance.
For Merlin once had told her of a charm,
The which if any wroug't on any one
With woven paces and with waving arms,
The man so wroug't on ever seem'd to lie
Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower,
From which was no escape forevemore;
And none could find that man, forevermore,
Nor could he see but him who 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 love.
A twist of gold was round her hair; a robe
Of samite without price, that more exprest
Than hid her, clung about her lisseome limbs,
In cloth of gold and silver-shining plate.
On sallows in the windy gleams of March:
And while she kiss'd them, crying, "Trample me,
Dear feet, that I have follow'd th' world, and
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 lisseome Vivien, holding by his heel,
When work'd, the same, and slid'd up the bay and eat,
Behind his ankle twined her hollow feet
Together, curv'd 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
That wave of such as you might put out
Had left in ashes: then he spoke and said,
Not looking at her, "Who are wise in love
Love most, say least," and Vivien answer'd quick,
"I saw the little elf-godd eyeless once
In Arthur's arras 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 no kis's; then adding all at once,
"And if I can but have my wish what would
The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard
Across her neck and bosom to her kuce,
And call'd herself a gilded summer fly
Caught in a great old tyrant spider's web,
Who would not eat her in that heart's tough
Without one word. So Vivien call'd herself,
But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star
Vell'd in dark vapor; till he softly smiled:
"To what request for what strange boon," he said,
"Ah yes, those your pretty tricks and fooletries,
O Vivien, the preamble I yet my thanks
For these have broken up my melancholy."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily,
"What, O my Master, have you found my 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 lady palms I call'd the spring
That gather'd trickling dropwise from the cleft,
And made a pretty cannell with both my hands
And offer'd you it kneeling: then you drank
And knew no more, nor gave me one poor word;
O no more thanks than might a goats have given
With no more sign of reverence than a beard.
And we were haled at that oddittendance.
And I was faint to swooning, and you lay
Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of those
Deep meadows we had traversed, did you know
That Vivien bashed your feet before her own?
And yet no thanks: and all this wild wood
And all this morning when I fondled you:
Boon, yes, there was a boon, one not so strange—
How had I wrong'd you? 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 curd white of the coming wave
Glas'd in the slippery sand before it breaks?
Er's such a wave, but not so pleasant,
Dark in the glass of some pressageful mood,
Had I for three days seen, ready to fall.
And then I rose and fled from Arthur's court
To break the mood. You follow'd me mask'd:
And when I look'd, and saw you looking still,
My heart was presag'd you the nearest that.
In that mind-mist: for shall I tell you truth?
You seem'd that wave about to break upon me
And sweep me from my hold upon the world,
My use and name and fame. Your pardon, child.
Your pretty sports have brighten'd all again.
And ask your boon, for boon I owe thee thine,
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,
Not 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 expand themselves.
Take Vivien for expander, she shall tell
That mood of such as you might put out
Had left in ashes: then he spoke and said,
Not looking at her, "Who are wise in love
Love most, say least," and Vivien answer'd quick,
"I saw the little elf-godd eyeless once
In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot:
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 pages and of waving hands,
As proof of trust. O Merlin, tend me.
The charm so taught will charm us both to rest.
For, grant me some slight power upon your fate,
I, feeling that you felt me worthy 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 deviously!
O, if you think this wickedness in me,
That I should prove it on you unawares,
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 unceasing wandering wisps of mine,
Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,
Have tript 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-tattered wish,
The great proof of your love: because I think,
However wise, you hardly know me yet."

And Merlin loosed his hand from her and said:
"I never was less wise, however wise,
Too curious Vivien, 'thou' 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 tried this vice in you which name'd man
Tho' woman the first hour; for howsoever
In children a great curioseness be well,
V no 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 grant,
That settles, beaten back, and beaten 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?
Yes, by God's rood, I trusted you too much."

And Vivien, like the tenderest-hearted maid
That ever bled at tryst at village stile,
Made answer, either eyeld wet with tears.
"Nay, master, be not wrathful with your maid;
Caress 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 be Love, if Love be ours,
Faith and infidelity can ne'er be equal powers:
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.'

'It is the little rift within the love,
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 spreck in garner'd fruit,
That rotting toward slowly moulder 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 answered half indignant:

"Far other was the song that once I heard
By this huge oak, snug 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 harl 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 into such a song, such fire for fame,
Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming down
To such a stern and iron-chilling close,
That when he stoop'd we long'd to hurl together,
And have done it: but the besnentest beast
Scared by the noise upsetted at our feet,
And like a silver shadow slipt 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 pinn and nails, and cry,
'Laugh little well,' but touch it with a sword,
It buzzes wildly round the polut; 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 chid away forevermore.
And all thro' following you to this wild wood,
Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.
Lo now, what hearts have men! they never mount
As high as woman in her selfless mood.
And touching fame, howe'er you scorn my song
Take one verse more—the lady speaks it—this:

'My name, once mine, now thine, is closeller 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 nubbin of the Queen,
That burst in dancing, and the pearls were split;
Some lost, some stolen, some as relics kept.
But moreover the same two sister pearls
Ran down the silken thread to kis each other
On her white neck—so is it with this rhyme;
It lives dispersed 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-disfame,
And counterchanged with darkness? you yourself
VIVIEN.

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 tock'd his hand in hers and said, "I once was looking for a magic weed, And found a fair young equire who sat alone, Had carv'd himself a knightly shield of wood, And then was painting on it fancied arms, Asking in Eagle rising, on the Sun. In dexter chief; the sword! I follow fame." And speaking not, but leaning over him, I took his brush and blotter out the bird, And made a Gardener putting in a graft, With this for motto, 'Father use than fame.' You should have seen him blush and afterwards He made a stalwart 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 herself, Not ever be too curious for a boon, Too prurient for a proof against the grain Of him you say you love: but Fame with men, Being but a means to serve mankind, Should have some rest or pleasure in herself, But not as vast as the largest oak That dwarfs the petty love of one to one. Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame again increasing gave me use. Lo, there my boon! What other? for men sought to prove me vile, Because I was denied them greater minds; And then did Envy call me Devil's son; The sick weak beast seeking to help herself By striking at her better, miss'd, 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. Might well know I that Fame is half-defame, 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 gazed upon it but I dreamt Of some vast change concluded in that star To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if I fear, Giving you power upon me thro' this charm, That you might play me falsely, having power, However well you think you love me now (As sons of kings loving in papilege Have turn'd to tyrants when the time to power) I rather dread the loss of me than fame; If you—and not so much from wickedness, As some wild turn of anger, or a mood Of overstraint affection, it may be, To keep me all to your own self, or else A sudden sport or woman's jealousy, Should try this charm on whom you say you love."

And Vivien answer'd, smiling as in wrath: "Have I not sworn? I am not trusted. Good Well, hildi, hildi; I shall find it out; And being found take heed of Vivien. A woman and not trusted, doublous I Might feel some sudden turn of anger born Of your misfate; and your fine epithef Is scarce too, for this full love of mine Without the full heart back may merit well Your term of overstraint. So used as I, My daily wonder is, I love at all. And as to woman's jealousy, O why not? O the light end, except a jealous one, And one to make me jealous if I love, Was this fair charm invented by yourself? I well believe that all about this world You care a buzzom captive here and there, Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower From which is no escape for evermore."

Then the great Master merrily answer'd her: "Full well a love in loving youth was mine, I needed then no charm to keep the mine But youth and love; and that full heart of yours Whereof you prattle, may now assure you mine: So live unchang'd. For those who wrought it first, The rose is parted from the hand that waved, The feet amortised from their ankly boases. 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 elder, for my blood Ithth earnest in it of fur springs to be. A sawny pirate anchor'd in his port, Whose bark had plunder'd twenty nameless isles: And passing out 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-shott; A mail so smooth, so white, so wonderful, They say a light came from her when she moved: And since the pirate would not yield her up, The King impaled him for his piracy. Then made her Queen: but those isle-natural'd eye. Waging an hatred to the successful warr For all the youth, they sicken'd; councils thim'd, And armies wan'd, for magnet-like she drew The rustiest iron of old fighters' hearts: And beats themselves would worship; cameals kneel Unbended, and the brutes of mosty backs That carried kings in castles, bow'd black knees Of homage, ringling with their serpent hands, To make her smile, her golden sukte-bells. What wonder, being jealous, that he sent His horn of proclamation out thro' all The hundred under-fingers that he say'd To find a wizard which might teach the King Some charm, which being wrought upon the Queen Might keep her all his own: to such a one He promised more than ever king has given, A league of mountain 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 Pronounced a dismal sentence, meaning by it To have the last look of love and yesterday 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 brow bleesh'd on the walls: And many weeks a troop of carious crows Hang 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 when she there neither dame nor dams'd them 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 pinch a murderous dust into her drink, Or make her paler with a poisond rose? Well, those were not our days: but did they find A wizard? Tell me, was he like thee?"

She ceased, and made her little 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.
And pulling his black craft among them all,
He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought her off,
With loss of half his people arrow-slain."

He answer'd laughing, "Nay, not like to me.
At last they found—his forgers for charms—
A little glassy-headed hairless man,
Who lived alone in a great wild on grass;
Read but one book, and ever reading grew
So grated down and fled away with thought,
And since he kept his mind on one sole aim,
Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted flesh,
Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the wall
That sunder'd 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, sunn'd
The world to peace again; here was the man.
And so by force they dragg'd 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 princely, that old man
Went back to his old wild, and lived on grass.
And vanish'd, and his book came down to roe."

And Vivien answer'd, smiling sanctly:
"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,
VIVIEN.

I yet should strike upon a sudden means
To dig, pick, open, 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, unashamed,
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 encloses the midst
A square of text that looks a little blot,
The text no larger than the limbs of fies;
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 cram'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 it to the yarm 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 bubble of you."

And Vivien, frowning in true anger, said:
"What dare the full-fed larks say of me?
They were abroad refreshing bulbous bags?
They sit with knife in meat and wine in 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 explain'd 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 Valencia, him
Whose kinsman left him watch'er of 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 reckling, one
But one hour old! What said the happy sire?
A seven months' babe had been a truer gift.
Those twelve sweet moons confused his fatherhood."

Then answer'd Merlin: "Nay, I know the tale.
Sir Valentine wedded with an outland dame
Some cause had kept him sonder'd from his wife:
One child they had: it liv'd with her: she died:
His kinsman travelling on his own affair
Was charged by Valencia to bring home the child.
He brought, not found it therefore: take the truth."

"O ay," said Vivien, "overtime a tale:
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagamore,
That ardent man! to pluck the flower in season;
So says the song, 'Twill trow it is no treason.'
O Master, shall we call him overquick
To crop his own sweet rose before the hour?"

And Merlin answer'd: "Overquick are you
To catch a lofty plume 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 seemed round it made it seem his own;
And wearied out made for the couch and slept.
A stainless man beside a stainless maid;
And either slept, or knew of other there;
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 pure."

"O ay," said Vivien, "that were likely too.
What say ye then to fair Sir Percival
And of the horrid founcness that he wrought,
The salutly yonth, the spotless lamb of Christ,
Or some black wether of St. Satan's fold.
When in the precepture of the chapel-yard
Among the knightly brasses of the graves,
And by the cold Ille Jacets of the dead?"

And Merlin answer'd, careless of her charge:
"A sober man is Percival and pure;
But once in Ille 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 sin'd, is not believable;
For, look upon his face—but if he sin'd,
The sin that practice burns into the blood,
And not the one dark hour which brings remorse,
Will brand us, after, of whose fold we be;
Or else were he, the holy king, whose hymns
Are chant'd in the minster, worse than all.
But is your spleen froth'd out, or have ye more?"

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet in wrath:
"O ay; what say ye to Sir Lancelot, friend?
Traitor or true? that commerce with the Queen,
I ask you, is it clamor'd by the child,
Or whisper'd in the corner? do you know it?"

To which he answer'd sadly: "Yea, I know it.
Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,
To fetch her, and she took him for the King;
So f'xt 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 all this blindness what they work themselves?
Could call him (were it not for womenhood)
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 fall
Have all men true and lead, all women pure:
How, in the months of base interpreters,
From over-learnness not intelligible
To things with every sense as false and foul
As the poached fist that floods the middle street,
Is thy white blamelessness accounted blame?"
VIVIEN.

But Vivien deeming Merlin overborne
By instance, recommended, and let her tongue
Rage like a fire among the noblest names,
Polluting, and imputing her whole self,
Defaming and defacing, till she left
Not even Lancebro brave, nor Galahad clean.

Her words had issue other than she will'd.
He drag'd from his eyebrow bushes down, and made
A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes,
And mutter'd in himself, "Tell her the charm
So that she has it, we will be a rail of fire.
To share the next, and if she have it not,
So will she rail. What did the wanton say?
'Not mount as high; we scarce can sink as low:
For men at most differ as Heaven and earth,
But women, worst and best, as Heaven and Hell.
I know the Table Round, my friends of old;
All brave, and many generous, and some chaste.
I think she cloaks the wounds of loss with lies;
I do believe she tempted them and sold,
She is so bitter: for fine plots may fall,
Tho' harlots paint their talk as well as face
With colors of the heart that are not theirs.
I will not let her know: nine tithes of times
Face-flatterers and backbiters are the same.
And they, sweet soul, that most impute a crime
Are nearest to it, and impute themselves,
Wanting the mental rage; or low desire
Not to feel lowest makes them level all:
Yes, they would pore the mountain to the plain,
To lose an equal bassness; and in this
Are harlots like the crowd, that, if they find
Some stain or blemish in a name of note,
Not grieving that their greatest are so small,
Infinite themselves with some insane delight,
And judge all nature from her feet of clay,
Without the will to judge their own or see
Her godlike head crown'd with spiritual fire,
And touching other worlds. I am weary of her."

He spoke in words part heard, in whispers part,
Half-subject'd in the hourly fall
And many-winter'd fleece of throat and chin.
But Vivien, gathering somewhat of his mood,
And hearing "harlot?" mutter'd twice or thrice,
Left her on her session on his lap, and stood
Stark, a viper cross-banded to her belt,
How from the rosy lips of love and life,
Flash'd the bare-grinning skeleton of death!
White was her check; sharp breaths of anger puff'd
Her fairy nostril out; her hand half-clench'd
Within the curl of happy thoughts to turn,
And feeling; had she found a dagger there
(For in a wink the false love turns to hate)
She would have stabb'd him; but she found it not:
His eye was calm, and suddenly she took
To bitter weeping like a beaten child,
A long, long weeping, not consolable.
Then her false voice made way broken with sobs.

"O cruel man; was ever told in tale,
Or sung in song? O vainly lavished love!
O cruel, there was nothing wild or rage,
Or seeming shameful, for what shame in love,
So love be true, and not as ours is—nothing
Poor Vivien had not done to win his trust
Who call'd her what he call'd her—all her crime,
All—all the wish to prove him wholly hers."

She sneez'd a little, and then clap'd her hands
Together with a wailing shriek, and said:
"Stab'd through the heart's affections to the heart!
Seemed like the child, her own mother's ruling:
Kidn'd with a word worse than a life of blows!
I thought that he was gentle, being great:
O God, that I had loved a smaller man!
I should have found in him a greater heart.

O, that flattering my true passion, saw
The knight, the court, the king, deposing in your light,
Who loved to make men darker than they are,
Because of that high pleasure which I had
To seat you sole upon my pedestal
Of worship—I am answer'd, and henceforward
The course of life that seemed so fair to me,
With you for guide and master, only you,
Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken short,
And ending in a ruin—nothing left,
But into some low cave to crawl, and there,
If the wave should dash my life away,
Kild with inutterable nucillidads."

She paused, she turn'd away, she hung her head,
The snake of gold slid from her hair, the braid
Slip't 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 case 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
Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or shame;
Then thrice essay'd by tender-cast-touching terms
To seek her ruffled peace of mind and pain.
At last she let herself be conquer'd by him,
And as the cagelike newly flown returns,
The seeming-injured simple-hearted thing
Came to her old perch back, and settled there.
There while she sat, half-fainting from her 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 sheltering arm.
But she did not with herself at once and rose,
Her arm's upon her breast across, and stood
A virginal gentlewoman deeply wrong'd,
Upright and flash'd before him: then she said:

"There must be now no passages of love
Betwixt us twin bane of forward evermore.
Since, if I be what I am grossly call'd,
What should be granted which your own heart would
Reckon worth the taking? I will go.
In truth, but one thing now—better have died
Than how to have bro'd concourse—could make me stay—
That proof of trust—so often asked in vala!
How justly, after that vile term of yours,
I find with grief! I might believe you then,
Who knows? once more. O, what was once to me
More matter of tidings now heav'n to us grown
The vast necessity of heart and life.
Farewell: think kindly of me, for I fear
My fate or fault, omitting gayer youth
For one so old, must he to love you still.
But ere I leave you let me swear once more
That if I schemed against your peace in this,
May you just heaven, that darkens o'er me, send
One flash, that, missing all things else, may make
My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie."

Scarce had she ceased, when out of heaven a bolt
(For now the storm was close above them) struck,
Furnrowing a giant oak, and javellining
With darted spikes and splinters of the wood
The dark earth round. He raised his eyes and saw
The tree on whose white leaf was the black gloom.
But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard her oath,
And dazzled by the livid-flickering fork,
And desfan'd with the hammering cracks and claps
That follow'd, flying back and crying out,
"O Merlin, thou'st no love do not love, save,
Yet save me!" clung to him and begg'd him close:
And call'd him dear protector in her fright,
Nor yet forgot her practice in her fright,
But wrought upon his mood and begg'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 morrow’s earliest ray Might strike it, and awake her with the gleam: Then fearing rust or sollure, fashion’d for it A case of silk, and braided thereupon All the devices blazon’d on the shield In their own tint, and added, of her wit, A border fantasy of branch and flower, And yellow-throated nestling in the nest. Nor rested such content, but day by day Leaving her household and good father elmb’d That eastern tower, and entering barr’d her door, She found the case, and read the hidden shield, Now guess’d a hidden meaning in his arms, Now made a pretty history to herself Of every dipt 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 des’t him at Caerlyle; 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 brake the strong lance, and roll’d his enemy down, And saved him: so she lived in fantasy.

How came the lily maid by that good shield Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev’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, Roving the trackless realms of Lyonesse, Had found a glen, 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 fought together: but their names were lost. And each had slain his brother at a blow, And down they fell and made the glen abhor’d.

And there they lay till all their houses were bleached, And lichen’d in color with the crags: 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 mossy mantle, unacquainted Had trodden that crown’d skeleton, and the skull Brake from the nape, and from the skull the crown Roll’d into light, and turning on its rims Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn: And down the shingly scarr he plung’d 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 manner; till we drive The Heretics, who, same say, shall reign 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 meaning all at once To spoil our royal fancy with a base 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 highest, let proclaim a joust At Camelot, and when the time drew nigh Spake (for she had been sick) to Guenevere, “Are you so sick, my Queen, you cannot move To these fair jousts?” “’Yen, lord,” she said, “you know it.” “Then will you wise,” he answer’d “the great deeds Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the lists, A sight 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 precious stones, and marks of honor, and Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen (However much he yearn’d 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’s gone. “Then Lancelot, next at having lay 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 myrrh cricket of the meadow When its own voice clings to each blade of grass, And every voice is nothing. As to knights, Then surely can I silence with all ease. But now my loyal worship is allow’d Of all men: many a bard, without offence, Has set our names together in a lay: Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guinevere, The pearl of beauty: and our knights at feast Have pledged us in this union, while the King Would listen smiling. How then is there more?
Has Arthur spoken aught? or would you yourself,
Now weary of my service and devotitory
Henceforth be truer to your faithless lord?

She broke into a little scornful laugh.
"Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faithless King,
That passionate perfection, my good lord—
Will then all your present, O my known?
He never speak word of reproach to me,
He never had a glimpse of nulce untruth,
He cares not for me: only here to-day
There glean'd a vague suspicion in his eyes:
Some unknown rogue is 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 band,
And therefore hear my words: go to the Junesta:
The tiny-trumpeting gnats can break our dream
When sweetest; and the vcrmin voices here
May buzz so loud—-we scorn them, but they sting.

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights,
"And with what face, after my pretext 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 I must find you wit: we hear is fair,
That men go down before your spear at a touch
But knowing you are Lancelot; your great name,
This conquers: hide it therefore; go unknown:
Win! by this kies you will: and our true king
Will then allow your pretext, O my knight,
As all for glory; for to speak him true,
You know right well, how meek so other seem,
No keener 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 ruder foot,
And there among the mazes of the dale,
Full often lost in fancy, lost his way;
Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track,
That all in loops and links among the dales
Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw
Fired from the west, far on a bill, the towers.
Thither he made and wound the gateway horn,
Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man:
Who let him into lodging, and dismiss'd.
And Lancelot marv'ld at the worthless man:
And leaning found the Lord of Astolat.
With two strong sons, Sir Torro and Sir Lavaine,
Moving to meet him in the castle court;
And close behind them stept the silly 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
Liveest between the lips? for thy state
And people that I might guess the nature of those,
After the king, who eat in 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,
"Known am I, and of Arthur's hall, and known,
What I by mere mischance have brought, my shield,
But since I go to Junesta as one unknown

At Camelot for the diamond, ask me noth,
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 Torro's:
Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir Torro.
And, so God wot, his heart is sound enough,
His you can have." Then added plain Sir Torro,
"Yes since I cannot use it, you may have it."
Here laugh'd the father, saying, "Fie, Sir Charl,
Is that an answer for a noble knight?"
Allow him: but Lavaine, my younger here,
He is so full of fastidious, he will win
Jonest for it, and win, and bring it in an hour
And set it in this damsel's golden hair,
To make her thrice as willful 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 Torro;
He seem'd so sullen, next 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 slpt and fell into some pool or stream.
The castle-well, belike: and then I said
That & I went and I fought and won it
(But all the jest and joke among ourselves)
Then must she keep it fastelier.
All was jest,
But father give me leave, as I 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 would 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 Torro,
"Such be for Queens and not for simple maidens.
Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,
Elaine, and heard her name so touch'd,
Flush'd slightly at the slight disapprobation
Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,
Full courteously, yet not falsely, thus return'd:
"If what is fair is fair for what it doth,
And only Queens are to be count'd so,
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: theilly 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 marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere his time.
Another sinning on such heights with one,
The flower of all the west and all the world,
Had been the sleeker for it: but in him
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
And drove him into wastes and solitudes
For agony, who was yet a living soul.
Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man,
That ever among ladies ate in Hall,
And noblest, when he lifted up his eyes.
However marr'd, of more than twice her years,
Seam'd with an ancient swordcut on the cheek,
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:
Whom they with meats and vintage of their best
And talk and minstrel melody entertain'd.
And much they ask'd of court and Table Round,
And ever well and readily answer'd he:
He, as Leyland, when there Blanford bade them never,
Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,
Heard from 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 house, and him they caught and malt him out;
But I my sons and little daughter fled
From bonds or death, and dwelt among the woods,
By the great river in a boatman'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," and Lancelot spoke
And answer'd him at full, as having been
With Arthur in the fight which all day long
Iltang by the white mouth of the violent Glen;
And in the four wild battles by the shore
Of Dunsea, that on Bassae, then to the war
That thunder'd in and out the golden skies
Of Caedmon the forest; and again
By castle Garnyon where the glorious King
Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head,
Carved of one emerald, centred in a sun
Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he breathed;
And at Caerleon he had help'd his lord,
When the strong neblings of the wild white Horse
Set every gilded parapet shuddering;
And in Agued Cathregonlon too.
And down the waste sand-shores of Treth Treforc,
Where many a heathen fell; "and on the mount
Of Badon I myself beheld the King
Charg'd 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 slain, from spar to plume
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,
Five times he had charg'd at host and host.
For triumph in our mimic wars, the jouest—
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 illy maid,
"Save your great self, fair lord;" and when he fell
From talk of war to traits of pleasantry—
Being mirthful he beth in a kindyt kind—
She still took note that when the living smile
Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
Of melancholy sorrow, from which again,
Whenever in her hovering to and fro
The illy 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,
And his hand white, as a painter, painting on
Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man
Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
The shape and color of a mind and life,
Lives for his children, ever at its best
And fairest; so the face before her lived,
Dazzling, speaking in the silence, full
Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.
Till rathre she rose, half-chastened in the thought
She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.
First as in fear, step after step, she stole,
Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:
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 the maiden standing in the dewy towers,
He had not dreamed 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 flamed on her a wild desire,
That he should wear her favor at the till.
She braved a riotous heart in asking for it;
"Fair lord, whose name I know not—one 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 likelihood, noble lord,
That none 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
Broder'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 black
Sprang to the face, and fill'd her with delight;
But left her all the pavier, 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
To empty, let me bring your chosen deck;
Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed;"
So kiss'd her, 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 blowing about the serious face
Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss—
Panted in the gateway, standing by the shield
In silence, while she watch'd her arms far off
Sparkle, until they dip below the downs.
Then to her tower she climb'd, and took the shield,
There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the new companions past away.
Far o'er the long backs of the breachless downs,
To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived a knight
Not far from Camelot, now for forty years
A hermit, who had pray'd, laboured and pray'd
And ever laboring had scoop'd himself
In the white rock a chapel and a hall
On massive columns, like a shorecliff cave,
And folding chambers: all were fair and dry;
The green light from the meadows underneath
Struck up and lived along the milkv roofs;
And in the meadows treemulose aspen-trees
And poplars made a noise of falling showers,
And thither wending there that might 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 says, "Hear, but hold my name
Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the Lake,"

Ah, God! and Lavalne, whose lineage is
Dearer to true young hearts than their own praise,
But left him leave to stammer, "Is it trueed?"

And after muttering "'tis the great Lancelot."

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 stricken blind That minute, I might say that I had seen."

So spake Lavalne, and when they reach'd the lists
By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes
Run thro' the peopled gallery which half round Lay like a rainbow fully upon the grass,
Until they found the clear-faced King, who 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, sleping down to make Arms for his chair, while all the rest of them Thro' knots and loops and folds innumerable Fleed ever thro' the woodwork, till they found The new design wherein they lost themselves, Yet was all ease, so tender was the work:
And, in the costly canopy over him set, Blazed the last diamond of the nameless king.

The Lancelot answer'd young Lavalne and said, "Me you call great: mine is the greatest,
The truer lance: but there is many a youth
Now crescent, who will come to all I am
And overcome it: and in me there dwells No greatness, save it be some far-off touch Of greatness to know well I am not great:
There is the man." And Lavalne gaped upon him
As on a thing miraculous, and anon
The trumpets blew: and then did either side,
They that assailed, and they that held the lists,
Set lance in rest, strike spear, suddenly move,
Meet in the midst, and there so finstently Shock, that a man far-off might well perceive,
If any man that day were left afield,
The hard earth shake, and a low thunder of arms.
And Lancelot bore a little, till he saw
Which were the weaker: then he hurled 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 veracity 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 fiery zeal'd on them,
A fiery family passion for the name
Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.
They coucht their spears and pricked their steeds
and thus,
Their proud steed's wing 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 Its stormy crests that amate against the skis,
Dashed in a bark, and fell over their work,
And him that helms it, so they overbore
Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a spear
Down-glancing lamed the charger, and a spear
Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and the head
Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt, and remain'd.

Then Sir Lancelne did well and worshipfully:
He bore a knight of old repute to the earth,
And brought his horse to Lancelot where he lay.
He up the side, weating with agony, got,
But sigh'd to do while he might be endured,
And being lustily holpen by the rest.
His party,—th'o' it seemed half-miracle
To those he fought with—drave his kith and kin,
And all the Table Round that held the lists,
Be to the banner: forth the herald's call Proclaiming his the prize, who wore the sleeve Of scarlet, and the pearls: and all the knights His party, ered "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 your prize is death!
Hence will I and I charge you, follow me not.

He spoke, and vanished suddeely from the field
With young Lavalne into the poplar grove.
There from his charger down he slid, and sat,
Gasping to Sir Lancelot, "Draw the lance-head:"
"Ah, my sweet lord, Sir Lancelot," said Lavalne, "I drew not, if I did, you will die.
But be, "I die already with it: draw—
Draw,"—and Lavalne drew, and that other gave A marvellous great shrick and ghostly groan,
And half his blood burst forth, and down he sank For the pure gains, and wholly swooned away.
Then came the hermit out and bare him in,
There stanch't his wound; and there, in daily don't
Whether to live or die, for many a week
Hid from the wide world's rumor by the grove
Of poplars with their shade of falling showers,
And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he lay.

But on that day when Lancelot flid the lists,
His party, knights of utmost North and West,
Lords of waste marches, kings of desolate lands,
Came round their great Pendragon, saying to him, "Lo, Sire, our kight thro' 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—
Yes, twenty times I thought him Lancelot—
He must not pass uncared for. Gauwine, 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 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
At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose,
With smiling face and frowning heart, a Prince
In the midst bright and florish of his steeds, Gauwine, surram'd The Courteous, fair and strong,
And after Lancelot, Tristan, and Geralite
And Lamorack, a good knight, but therewithal Sir Modred's brother, of a crafty home,
Nor often loyal to his word, and now
Wrote that the king's command to sally forth
In quest of whom he knew not, made him leave
The banquet, and concourse of knights and kings.
Elaine.

So in wrath he got to horse and went:
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in mood,
Past, thinking, "Is it Lancelot who has come
Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain
Of glory, and has added wound to wound,
And ridd'nu away to die!?" So fear'd the King,
And affectation of his ladies well was seen.
Then when he saw the Queen, embracing, nek'd,
"Love, are you yet so sick?" "Nay, lord," she said.
"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 when 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
Conqu'er'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 joist unknown of all, and learn
If his old prowess were in truth 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:
"For lorelire in our Lancelot had it been,
In lull of idly dallying, with the time
To have trusted me as he has trusted you.
Surely his king and most familiar friend
Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed,
Albeit I know my knights fantastical,
So fine a face in our large 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 he had been hated through the land.
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, brodeled with great pearls,
Some gentle maiden's gift.

"Tea, lord," she said,
"Your hopes are mine," and saying that she chocked,
And sharply turned'ud about to hide her face,
Moved to her chamber, and there flung herself
Down on the great King's couch, and writhed upon
And clenched her fingers till they hit the palm,
And shrick'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, wearied 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 mild
Glanced at, and cried "What news from Canelot,
lord?"

What of the knight with the red sleeve?" "He gone."

"I knew it," she said, "But parted from the jouste
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 swooned:
And while he gazed wonderingly at her, came
The lord of Astolat out, to whom the Prince
Rode who he was, and on one 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,
Nay, but one like him, the noblest truth!"
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,
Courtsey with a touch of traitor in it,
And stand; and cast his eyes on fair Elaine:
Where could be found face dauntless? then her shape
From forehead down to foot perfect—again
From foot to forehead dauntless!—In this:
"Well—if I bide, lo! 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 the graces of the court, as leaves,
Signs, and slow smiles, and golden eloquence
And amorous adulation, till the maid
Rebell'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 sooner than our falcon yesterday,
Whor lost the hem we split him at, and went
To all the winds?" "Nay, by mine head," said he,
"I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven,
0 damsel, 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 gold,
Hump 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.
"And if I dream'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 it was oft the fairest knight I lov'd.
Wish'd it had been my mother, for they talk'd,
Messe'm, of, what they knew not; 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.
"Yes, by God's desh," 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 he pursued her calling, "Stay a little;
One peradventure's grace: he wore our 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 thu, far be it from me
To cross our mighty Lancelot in his love!
And, Methinks, 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 he 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 wearied of the quest
Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he went
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past; there told the King
What the King knew, "Sir Lancelot is the knight.
And added, "Sir, my liege, so much I learnt:
But not a word of this tho' I rode about
The region: but I lighted on the maid,
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him; and to her,
Deeming our courtesy is the truest law,
I gave the diamond; she will render it:
For by mine hand she knows his hiding-place."

The sly-drawed 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 spoke 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, stride off, and bust'd abroad
About the maid of Astorel, and her love.
All ears were prick'd at once, all tongues were loosed:
"The maid of Astorel loves Sir Lancelot,
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astorel."
Some read the King's face, some the Queen's, and all
Had marvel what the maid might be, but most
Predisposed her 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,
Marv'n'd her friend's point with pale tranquillity,
So ran the tale like fire about the court,
Pire 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 Pleading Lancelot, and the Queen was said
Smiled at each other, while the Queen who sat
With lips severely plac'd felt the knot
Climb in her throat, and with her feet unseen
Crash'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 the maid in Astorel,
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept
The never-seen Sir Lancelot in her heart,
Crept to her father, and the house mason alone,
Sate on his knee, stroked his gray face and said,
"Father, you call me wilful, 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, "sarily."
"Wherefore let me hence;"
She answered, "and find out our dear Laveline."
"You will not lose your wits for dear Laveline.
Bide," answer'd he: "we needs must hear anon
Of him, and of that other."
"Ay," she said, "and that other surely.
I needs must hence, and find that other, wondrous ever be he,
And with mine own hand give his diamond to him,
Least I be found as faithless in the quest
As you proud Prince who left the quest to me.
Sweet father, I behold him in my dreams,
Gan't as it were the skeleton of himself,
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's aid.
The gentle-born the maiden, the more bound,
My father, to be sweet and serviceable
To noble knights in sickness, as you know,
When these have worn their tokens: let me hence
I pray you." Then her father nodded saying,
"Ay, ay, the diamond: wilt you well, my child,
Right frail were I to learn this knight were whole,
Being our greatest: ye and you must give it—
And sure I think this fruit is hung too high.
For any month to gape for save a Queen's—
Nay, I mean nothing; so then, get you gone,
Being so very wilful you must go."

Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slippt away,
And while she made her ready for her ride,
Her father's latest word humm'd in her ear,
"Being so very wilful you must go,"
And changed itself and echoed in her heart,
"Being very wild you must go."
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
Rode o'er the long backs of the bloodless downs
To Camelot, and before the city-gates.
Came on her brother with a happy face
Making a roan horse caper and cavert.
For pleasure all about a field of flowers:
Whom when she saw, "Laveline," she cried, "Laveline,
How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?" He answer'd,
"Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir Lancelot!
How know you my lord's name is Lancelot?"
But when the maid had told him all her tale,
Then took Sir Torre, and being in his moods
Left them, and under the strange-stained 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 Laveline across the poplar grove
Led to the caves: there first she saw the casque
Of Lancelot on the wall; her scarlet sleeve,
Tho' carv'd and cut, and half the pearls away,
Stream'd from it still; and in her heart she laugh'd,
Because he had not los'd it from his helm,
But meant once more perchance to turney in it.
And when they gain'd the cell in which he slept,
His battle-written arms and mighty hands
Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a dream
Of dragging down his enemy made him move.
Then she that saw him lying unsleek, unsborn,
Gan't 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 roll'd his eyes
Yet blink from sleep, she started to him, saying,
"Your prize the diamond sent you by the King;"
His eyes glitter'd: she fanc'd "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 kusht
Fall 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 kisht her face.
At once she slippt like water to the floor.
"Alas," he said, "your ride has wearyd you.
Rest must you have." "No rest for me," she said:
"Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest."
What night she might by that? her large black eyes,
Yet larger, had him by his leant deed, disease,
Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself
In the heart's colors on her simple face:
And Lancelot look'd and was perplext in mind,
And being weak in body said no more:
But did not love the colors: was my love,
Save one, he not regarded, and so turn'd
Sighing, and fell't a sleep until he slept.

Then rose Elaine and gild'd 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 past Down thro' the dim rich city to the fields,
Thence to the cave: so day by day she past
In either twilight ghost-like to and fro
Gilding, and every one that tended him high.
And likewise many a night: and Lancelot
Would, tho' he call'd his wound a little hurt
Whereof he should be quickly whole, at times
Brain-feverous in his heat and agony, seem
Unconscious, even he: but the mere mad said
Sweaty forbore him ever, being to him
Meeker than any child to a rough nurse,
Milder than any mother to a sick child,
And never woman yet, since man's first fall,
Did bind unto man: but her dead said
Upbre: she till the hermit, skul'd 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 loved her with all love except the love
Of a woman when they love their best
Closest and sweetest, and had died the death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had he seen her first
She might have made this and that other world
Another world with the sick man; but now
The shackles of an old love straiten'd him,
His honor rooted in dishonor stood,
And faith unequal kept him falsely true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-sickness made
Full many a nobly vow and pure resolve.
These, as but born of sickness, could not live:
For when the blood ran lustier 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 gloomy grace
Beard'd on his fancy, spoke, he answer'd not,
Or short and coldly, and she knew right well
What the rough sickness meant, but what this meant
She was not ignorant, and the sorrow
And dread of 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: how then must I die?"
Then as a little helpless innocent bird
That has but one plain page of few notes,
Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er
For all an April morning, till the ear
Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
Went half the night repeating, "Must I die?"
And not to right she turn'd, and down she fell,
And found no ease in turning or in rest;
And "him or death" she mutter'd, "death or him,"
Again and like a burthen, "him or death."

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt was whole,
To Astalot returning rode the three.
There morn by morn, arraying her sweet self
In that wherein she deem'd she look'd her best,
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she thought
"If not, the victim's flowers before he fall.
And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid
That she should ask some goodly gift of him
For her own self or hers: "and do not shun
The wish the wish must near to the 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."
"Speak: that I live to hear," he said, "is yours."
Then suddenly and passionately she spoke:
"I have gone mad. I love you, and I 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 chose to wed,
I had been wedded earlier, see mine:
But now there never will be wife of mine."
"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 then should I quit 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: yes, 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 sweet
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 damsel, for your sake,
And more than this I cannot."

While he spoke
She neither blush'd nor shook, but deathly pale
Stood grasping what was nearest she could reach,
"Of all this will I nothing:" and so fell,
And thus they bore her sorrowing to her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those black walls of yore
Their talk had pierc'd, her father, "Ay, a flash,
I fear me, that will strike my blossom dead.
Too courteous 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 remain'd, and toward even
Sent for his shield: full meekly rose the maid,
Strip'd 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 clynking 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 sadly rode away.
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 she left her to herself again
Death, like a friend's voice from a distant field
Approaching thro' the darkness, called: the owl
Walling had power upon her, and she mix't
Her fancies with the sallow-ridged 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 sweet, let me die.
"Sweet Love, that seems not made to fade away,
Sweet death, that seems to make us loveless clay,
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I."

"I sail 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 blue 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 her, and lo! the blood-red light of dawn
Flared on her face, she shriilling "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 Elainé?" till back the maiden fell,
That have a languid hand to each, and lay,
Speaking a still good-morrow with her eyes.
At last she said, "Sweet brothers, yesterday
I seem'd a curious little maid again.
As happy as when we dwelt among the woods,
And when you used to make me leap the flood
Up to a great river in the boatman's boat.
Only you would not pass beyond the cape
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.
There will I enter in among them all,
And no man there will dare to mock at me;
But there the fine Gawain will wonder at me,
And there the great Sir Lancelot muse at me;
Gawain, 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 scorner us all?"

Then the rough Terre began to heave and move,
And bluster into stormy soke and say,
"I never loved him: an 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 be 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 "high-
est."
(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,
He 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 slanders: never yet
Was noble man but made ignoble talk.
He makes no friend who never made a foe.
But now it is my glory to have loved
One peerless, without stain: so let me pass,
My father, howsoe'er I seem to you,
Not at unhappy, having hured God's best
And greatest, this my love had no return.
Yet, seeing you desire your child to live,
Thanks, but you work against your own 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 strive me clean, and die."

So when the ghostly man had come and gone,
She with a face, bright as for sin forgiven,
Besought Lavalne to write as she devised
A letter, word for word; and when he ask'd
"Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear lord?
Then will I bear it gladly," she replied,
"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 folded, "O sweet father, tender and 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 be 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 riches, and me also like the Queen.
In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
And let there be prepared a chariot-bier
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 promis'd: whereupon
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 under-ground,
Then, those two brethren slowly with bent brows
Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier
Past like a shadow thro' the field, that phone
Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge,
Pall'd all its length in bluest 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 deck rode in her bed,
Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hungrily,
The alken case with braided blazonings,
And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying to her,
"Sister, farewell forever," and again,
"Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in tears.
Then rode the dumb old servitor, and the dead
Steer'd by the dumb went upward with the flood—
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter—all her bright hair streaming down—
ELAINE.

And all the covering 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 bruise and blow,
With deaths of others, and almost his own,
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds: for he saw
One of her house, and sent him to the Queen
Bearing his wish, whereeto the Queen agreed
With such and so unmoved a majesty
She might have seem'd her statute, but that he,
Low-drooping till he well-hugged kis'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 count'ry 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, my liege, in whom I have my joy,
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 tawlier than her cygnet's: these are 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 bear of rumors flying thro' your court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and wife,
Should have in it an absolute 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 spoke, half turned away, the Queen
Brake from the vast oriel-embowering vine
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast them off,
Till all the place whereon she stood was green;
Then, when he ceased, in one cold passive hand
Repos'd at once and side to side and arms
There on a table near her, and replied:

"It may be, I am quicke'r 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, whatsoe'er 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 thrice 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. O my friend
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. And end to this!
A strange one! yet I take it with Amen.
So pray you, add my diamonds to her pears;
Deck her with these; tell her, she shines me down:
An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's
Is hallowed; or a new fast to her breast.
O as much falher—as a faith 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,
Plung'd them, and down they flash'd, and smote the sky.
Then from the smitten surface flash'd as it were,
Diamonds to meet them, and they past away.
Then while Sir Lancelot lean'd, in half disgust
At love, life, all things, on the window ledge,
Close underneath his eyes, and right across
Where these had fallen, slowly past the barge
Whereon the illy maid of Astolat
Lay smilest, like a star in blackest night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst away
To weep and walk in secret; and the barges
Out 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 mouths that gaped, and eyes that ask'd
"What is it?" but that one'sman's haggard face,
As hard and still as is the face that men
Shape to their fancies' eye from broken rocks
On some cliff-side, appall'd them, and they said,
"He is enchanted, cannot speak—and she,
Look how she sleeps—the Fairy Queen, so fair!
Yes, look, how pale! why are they pale 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 babblecl of the King, the King
Came gift with knights: then turn'd the tongueless man
From the half-face to the full eye, and rose
And pointed to the damsel, and the doors.
So Arthur was to the meek Sir Perceval
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid;
And reverently they bore her into hall.
Then came the fine Gawaine and wonder'd at her,
And Lancelot later came and massed at her,
At last the Queen herself and plied her:
But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
Stoop't, 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 my leave.
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 hers which lay so silent, and at times,
So touch'd were they, half-thinking that her lips,
Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them all:
"My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that hear,
Know that for this most gentle maiden's death
Right heavy am I; for good she was and true,
But loved me with a love beyond all love
In which nor stranger nor kinsman 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 discourtesy
Against my nature: what I could, I did.

I left her and I bade her no farewell.

Tho' had I dreamt the damsel would have died,
I might have put my wits to some rough use,
And help'd her from herself.

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 thro' the world, she ask'd;
It could not be. I told her that her love
With such a match, would darken down
Towards one more worthy of her—then would I,
More specially were he, she wedded, poor,
Estate them with large land and territory
In which is reason to be, the lower seas,
To keep them in all joyance: more than this
I could not: this she would not, and she died."

He passing, 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 burled worshipfully."

So toward that shrine which then in all the realm
Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went
The marshall'd order of their Table Round,
And Lancelot said beyond his went, to see
The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous assembles,
And mass, and rolling music, like a Queen.

And when the knights had laid her comely head
Low in the dust of half-for gotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them, "Let her tomb
Be beauty, and her image thereafter;
And let the shield of Lancelot 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 wrong.
Thereafter; but when now the lords and dames
And people, from the high door streaming, brake
disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he moved apart,
Dreading, 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, forgiven."
But Arthur who beheld his cloudy brows
Approach'd him, and with full affection sung
One arm about his neck, and spake and said:

"Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in whom I have
Most joy and most allience, 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 unskil'd go by
To win his honor and to make his name,
And loved thy courtesies and in passing, 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 marvellous fair,
Who might have brought thee, now a lonely man
Wireless and heirless, noble issue, son
Born to the glory of thy name and fame,
My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of the Lake."

Then answer'd Lancelot. "Fair she was, my King,
Pure, as you ever wish your knights to be.
To doubt her fairness were to want an eye,
To doubt her pureness were to want a heart,—
Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
Could blind him, but free love will not be bound."

"Free love, so bound, were freest," 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 loveliness? yet thee
She fell'd to bind, tho' being, as I think,
Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I know."

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but he went,
And at the running of a little brook
Sat by the river in a cove and watched
The high reed wave, and lifted up his eyes
And saw the barge that brought her moving down,
Far-off, a blot 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 heir, jealous pride?
Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of love,
May not your descent stand 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,
Lancelot, whom the Lady of the lake
Stole from his mother—as the story ran—
She chant'd snatches of mysterious song
Heard on the winding waters, eve 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 pacing 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: no 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 sling me deep in that forgotten main,
Among the tumbled fragments of the hill."

So gown'd Sir Lancelot in remorseful pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man.

GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court, and sat
There in the holy house at Almesbury
Weeping, none with her saw a little maid,
A novice: one low light betwixt them burn'd
Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all abroad,
Beneath a moon unseen aloft at far
The white mist, like a face-cloth to the face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land was still.

For all had she fled, her case of flight
Sir Modred; he be the nearest to the King,
His nephew, ever like a subtle beast
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the throne,
Ready to spring, waiting a chance: for this,
He chill'd the popular praises of the King,
With silent smiles of slow disparagement;
GUINEVERE.

And tamper'd with the Lords of the White Horse, Henthen, the brood by Hengist left; and sought
To make disruption in the Table Round
Of Arthur, and to splinter it into fenda
Sealings, and traitors; and he did his alms
Were sharped by strong hate for Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when all the court,
Green-suited, but with plumes that mock'd the May,
Had been, their wont, soft-sounding, and retire'd,
That Modred still in green, all ear 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
Enid, and, with little Vanion, of her court,
The willest and the worst; and more than this
He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by
Spied where he couched, and as the gardener's hand
Picks from the colia wit a green caterpillar,
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 excuse as he might, and these
Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled, and went:
But, ever after, the small violence done
Heard in him; and ruffled all his heart,
As the sharp wind that ruffles 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 dusky fall,
Theu shudder'd, as the village wife who cries
"I shudder, some one steps across my grave;"
Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for indeed
She half-foresew that he, the subtle beast,
Would track her guilt until he found, and be
Would be forevermore a name of scorn.
Henceforward rarely could she front in Hall,
Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy face,
Heart-hiding smile, and gray persistent eye:
He had مدى the Powers that rule 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 for hours,
Beside the placid breathings of the King,
In the dead night, grim faces came and went
Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—
Like to some fateful noise of creaking doors,
Heard by the watcher in a haunted house,
That keeps the rust of murder on the walls—
Held her awake; or it she slept, she dream'd
An awful dream for then she shone and stood
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, swallowed all the land, and in it
Far cities burn'd, and with a cry she woke.
And all this trouble did not pass but grew:
Till ev'n the clear face of the guiltless King,
And trustful courtiers of the house who became
Her bane; and at the last she said,
"O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine own land,
For if thou tarry we shall meet again,
And if we meet again some evil chance
Will make the embowling scandal break and blaze
Before the people, and our lord the King."
And Lancelot ever promised, but remai'n'd,
And still they met and met. Again she said,
"O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee hence,"
And then they were agreed upon
(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
Stambling and wandering; it was about his last hour,
A madness of farewell's. And Modred brought
His creatures to the basement of the tower
For testimony; and crying with full voice,
"Traitor, come out, ye are trait at last," arouse
Lancelot, who rushing outward like some
Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong, and he fell
Stun'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 is 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's.
Wouldst thou, that thou couldst hide me from my
self!
 Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou
Unwedded: yet rise now, and let us fly,
For I will draw me into 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 kiss'd, and parted weeping; for he past,
Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,
Back to his land; but she to Amesbury
Fled all night long by glittering waste and weald,
And heard the Spirits of the waste and weald
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 forermus the morn,
A blot in heaven, the Haven, flying high,
Croak'd, and she thought, "He spied a field of death;
For now the heathen of the Northern Sea,
Lared by the crimes and frailties of the court,
Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land."

And when she came to Amesbury she spake
There to the nun's, and said, "Mine enemies
Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,
Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask
Her to whom she yield is the time and the time
To tell you;" and her beauty, grace, and power
Wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared
To ask it.

So the states of Queen abode
For many a week, unknown, among the nun's;
Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name, nor sought,
Warp in her grief, for honest or for shift,
But communed only with the little maid,
Who pleased her with a babbling heedlessness
Which often lure'd her from herself; but now,
This night, a rumor wildly blown about
Came, that Sir Modred had usur'd the realm,
And leagued him with the heathen, while the King
Was waging war on Lancelot: then she thought,
What with 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 when she drew
No answer, by and by began to hum,
An as the name had caught her, "Late so late!" when
Which when she heard, the Queen look'd up, and said,
"O maiden, if indeed you list to sing,
Sing, and unbend my heart that I may weep,"
Whereat fall willingly sang the little maid.
GUINEVERE.

"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 bridgroom 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 bridgroom is so sweet?
O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now."

So sang the novice, while, full passionately,
Her head upon her hands, remembering
Her thought when first she came, wesp 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 penance given—
Comfort your sorrow: for they do not flow
From evil done: right sure am I of that,
Who see your tender grace and stateliness.
But weigh your sorrows: for they do not flow
Against the Lord the King's, and weighing them lest,
For gone is he to war grim war against St. Leo 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,
May needs be thrice as great as ours.
For me, I thank the saints I am not great.
For if there 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 were 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 mutter'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?"

"Yes," 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 nunnerly walls,
What canst thou know of Kings and Tables Round,
On what of signs and wonders, and the signs
And simple miracles of thy nunner?"

To whom the little novice garrulously:

"Yes, 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 Lyonesse, and he said
That as he rode, an hour or may be twain
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 mermaids swam;
And strong man-breasted things stood from the sea,
And sent a deep sea-voice thru all the land,
To which the little elves of chasms and cleft
Made answer, sounding like a distant horn.
So said my father—yes and furthermore,
Next morning, while he past the dim-ill woods,
Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy
Come dashing down on a tall wavey flower,
That shook beneath them, as the thistle shakes
When three gray linens 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 Camelot,
A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand
Swung 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
Whence ever he must be long'd for served
By hands unseen; and even as he said
Down in the cellara merry blotted 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:

"Yes, one, a bard: of whom my father said,
Full many a noble war-song had he sang,
Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's feet,
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 glorius wars, and sang the King
As wellingh more than man, and ral'd at those
Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois:
For these 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-Duondalig by the Cornish sea;
And that was Arthur; and they foster'd him
Till he by miracle was approved king:
And that his grave should be a mystery
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 even in the middle of his song
He falter'd, and his hand fell from the harp,
And pale he turn'd and reel'd, and would have fall'n,
But that they stay'd him up; nor would he tell
His vision; but what doubt that he foresaw
This evil work of Lancelot and the Queen?"

Then thought the Queen, "Lo! they have set her on
Our simple-seeming Abbess and her nuns,
To play upon me," and bow'd her head nor spoke.
Whereat the novice crying, with clasped hands,
Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,
Said the good mans would check her gadding tongue
Full often, "And, sweet lady, if I seem
To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,
Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales
Which my good father told me, check me too:
Nor let me shame my father's memory, one
Of noblest manners, tho' himself would say
Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he died,
Kild in a tilt, come next, five summers back,
And left me; but of others who remain,
And of the two first-famed for courtesy—
And pray you check me if I ask amiss—
But pray you, which had noblest, while you moved
Among them, Lancelot or our Lord the King?"

Then the pale Queen look'd up and answer'd her,
"Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,
Was gracious to all laddes, and the same
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore his own advantage, and the King
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forebore his own advantage, and these two
Were the most nobly-mannered men of all;
For manners are not idle, but the fruit
Of loyal nature, and of noble mind."

"Yea," said the maid, "be manners such fair fruit?
Then Lancelot's needs must be a thousandfold
Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,
The most disloyal friend in all the world."

To which a mournful answer made the Queen,
"O closed about by narrowing nunnery-walls,
What knowest thou of the world, and all its lights
And shadows, all the wealth and all the woe?"
If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight, Were for one hour less noble than himself, I pray for him that he escape the danger, And weep for her who drew him to his doom."

"Yeas," said the little novice, "I pray for both; But I should all as soon believe that his, She says, that is so noble as thine King."

As I could think, sweet lady, yours would be Such as they are, were you the sinful Queen."

So she, like many another babber, bnt Whom she would soothe, and harried where she would heal;
For here a sudden flush of wrathful heat Fired all the pale face of the Queen, who cried, "Such as thou art be never maldeum more Forever! thou their tool, set on to plague And play upon, and harry me, pretty spy And traitress." When that storm of anger brake From Guenever, aghast the maldeum rose, White as her veil, and stood before the Queen: As tremulously as fawn upon the beech, Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly, And when the Queen had added "Get thee hence!" Fled frightened. Then that other left alone Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again, Saying in behalf, "The simple, fearful child Meant nothing, but my own too-feareful guilt Simpler than any child, betrays itself."
But help me me, for surely I repent. For what is true repentance but in thought— Not one 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 to all the golden days In which she saw him first, when Lancelot came, Reputed the best knight and goodliest man, Ambassador, to lead her to his lord Arthur, and led her forth, and far ahead Of his and her retinue moving, they, Rapt in sweet thought, or lively, all on love And sport and tilted pleasure, (for the time Was maytime, and as yet no sin was dream'd,) Rode under groves that look'd a paradise Of bliss and joy, glittering, ardent, That seem'd the heavens upbreaking thro' the earth, And on from hill to hill, and every day Beheld at noon in some delicious dale The silk pavilions of King Arthur raised For brief repast or afternoon repose By couriers 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 for so long, that he should have no more aimed him cold, High, self-contain'd, and passionless, not like him, "Not like my Lancelot!"—while she brooded thus And grew half-guilty in her thoughts again, There rode an armed warrior to the doors. A murmuring whisper thro' the dusty ran, Then on a sudden a cry, "The King." She sat Stiff-stricken, listening; but when armed feet Thro' the long gallery from the outer doors Hang coming, prone from off her seat she fell, And bore till she had drawn him up by the hair. There with her milk-white arms and shadowy hair She made her face a darkness from the King: And in the darkness heared his armed feet

Pass by her; then came silence, then a voice, Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's Denouncing judgment, but tho' changed the King's.

"Llest thou here so low, the child of one I honord, happy, dead before thy shame? Well is it that no child is born of thee. The child of birth were as all thy wrongs are fire, Red rain, and the breaking up of laws, The craft of kindred and the Godless hosts Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern Sea. Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my right arm, The mightiest of my knights this night shall be, 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 be, 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 their 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, Lest 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 err'd not, that I march to meet my doom. Thou hast not made my life so sweet to me, That I the King should greatly care to live; For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my life. And time for the last time word I show, Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou hast am'd."

"For when the Roman left us, and their law Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways Were fill'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 under me, their Head, In that fair order of my Table Round, A glorious company, the flower drawn, To serve as model for the mighty world, And be the fair beginning of a time. I made them lay their hands in mine 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, To lead sweet lives in purest chastity, To love one maiden only, clave to her, And worship her by years of nobble deeds, Until they won her: for indeed I knew Of no more subtle 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 throne until I wedded thee! Believing "to mine helpmate, one to feel My purpose and rejoicing in my life," Then came thy shamefull sin with Lancelot; Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolt; Then others, following these my mightiest knights, And drawing foul ensample from fair names, And striking thus against the light of this house: Of all my heart had destitute did obtain, And all thro' thee! so that this life of mine I guard as God's high gift from scathe and wrong.
GUINEVERE.

Not greatly care to lose; but rather think
How sad it were for Arthur, should he live,
To sit once more within his lonely hall,
And miss the wonted number of my knights,
And miss to hear th' high talk of noble deeds
As in the golden days before thy: day.
For which of us, who might be left, could speak
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at thee?
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Uruk
Thy shadow still would glide from room to room,
And I should everywhere be vex'd with thee.
In hanging robe or vacant ornament,
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.
For think not, tho' thou wouldst not love thy lord,
Thy lord has wholly lost his love for thee.
I am not made of so slight elements.
Yet must I leave thee, woman, to 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 belog thro' his cowardice allow'd
Her station, taken everywhere for pure,
She like a new disease, unknown to men,
Creeps, no precaution used, among the crowd,
Most vast, most wildly lightnings of her eyes, and saps
The faculty of all our friends, and steals our pulse
With devil's lep's, and poisons half the young.
Worst of the worst were that man he that reigns:
Better the King's waste heath and aching heart
Than thou reseated in thy place of light,
The mockery of my people, and their base.

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 wailing 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 vast pity 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 doom of treason and the flaming death
(When first I learnt thee hidden here), is past.
The pang—which while I weight'd thy heart with one
Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
Made my tears burn—'is also past; in part.
And all is past, the sin is stern'd; and I,
Let me face thee, Eis Theifernal Good:
Forgive: 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 I the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and mine own flesh,
Here looking down on thine polluted cries
'I loathe thee; yet not less, O Guinevere,
For I was ever 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 son,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
With my warmest fire, high God, and thou.
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine, 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
	Once mine, and strike him dead, and meet myself
Death, or I know not what mysterious doom.
And thou remaining here wilt learn the event;
But hither shall I never come again,
Never by thy side, see thee no more.
Farewell!"

And while she grov'ld 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: "Paradventure," 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 forevermore.
And while he spake to these his voice was lower'd,
To which for cress the great dragon clung
Of Britain; so she did not see the face,
Which then was as an angel's, but she saw,
Wet with the mists and smitten by the lights,
The Dragon of the great Pendragonship
Blaze, making all the night a stream 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 spouting from a cliff
Falls 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 cleaves to me.
And me one pollution: be 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: but is that 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 wast, as is the conscience of a saint.
Among his winding ways, to the heights—
To whom my false voluptuous pride, that trust
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—
In the wilderness, among the rocks and crags of the great mountains, there lived a hermit named Enoch. He was a wise man and a great poet, and he spent his days in the company of birds and beasts.

Enoch had a beautiful garden, where he grew all manner of flowers and herbs, and where he tended his flock of sheep. He was kind to all living things, and he often spoke to them as if they were his friends.

One day, as he was walking in his garden, he heard a voice crying out to him. It was the voice of a maiden, whose name was Annie. She was beautiful beyond compare, and she asked Enoch to come with her to her father's house, where she lived.

Enoch was hesitant at first, for he was a solitary man, and he had never been near a city before. But Annie was persuasive, and she promised to take him on her journey.

So, Enoch and Annie set out on their journey, and they traveled far and wide, through the forests and mountains, until they came to a city called Arden.

Enoch was amazed by the beauty of the city, and he was impressed by the kindness of the people. He knew that he had come to a special place, and he was determined to stay there.

Enoch and Annie settled in the city, and they lived a simple life. Annie took care of Enoch, and Enoch taught her to read and write.

One day, as they were walking in the garden, Enoch looked up at the sky and saw a beautiful sight. He saw a rainbow forming, and he knew that it was a sign of God's love.

Enoch was filled with gratitude, and he thanked God for giving him such a beautiful gift. He knew that he had found his place in the world, and he was content with his lot.

Enoch and Annie lived in Arden for many years, and they were happy and content. They were grateful for each other, and they were grateful for the beauty of the world around them.

And so, Enoch and Annie lived a life of peace and tranquility, until the day when they passed away, leaving behind a legacy of love and beauty.
So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells, And merrily ran the years, seven happy years, Seven happy years of health and competence, And mutual love and honorable toil; With children, and 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 he had been, or hers; a wish renew'd, With children; for two years after came a boy to be The rosy idol of her solitude.

While Enoch was abroad on warthful seas, Or often journeying landward; for in truth Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-spoil In ocean-smelling oyster, and his forlorn rough-redden'd with a thousand winter-gales, Not only to the market-cross were known, But in the leafy lanes behind the down, Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp, And peacock-wreath 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 slipped 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, Altho' a grave and said God-fearing man, Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and gloom. His children; first a daughter. In the night, To see his children leading evermore Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth, And her, he loved, a beggar: then he pray'd, "Save them from this, whatever comes to me." And while he pray'd, the master of that ship Enoch had served in, hearing his mischance, Came, for he knew the man and valued him, Reporting of his vessel China-bound, And wanting yet a botswain. 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 assent to it, Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance appear'd No greater than as when some little cloud Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun, And isles a light in the offing: yet the wife— When he was gone—the children—what to do? Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his plans; To sell the boat—and yet he loved her well— How many a rough sea had he weather'd in her! He knew her, as a horseman knows his horse— And yet to sell her—then with what she brought Buy goods and stores—set Anne forth in trade With all that seamen needed or their wives. So might she keep the house while he was gone. Should he not trade himself out yonder? go This voyage more than once? yea twice or thrice— As oft as needed—last, returning rich, Become the master of a larger craft, With fuller profits lead an easier life, Have all his pretty young ones educated, And pass his days in peace among his own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined all: Then moving homeward came on Anne pale, Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born. Forward she started with a happy cry, And laid the feeble infant in his arms; When Enoch took, and handled all his limbs, Arasalised his weight, and fondled fatherlike, But had no heart to break his purposes To Anne, till the morrow, when he spoke.

Then first she saw Enoch's golden ring had girt Her ducal Annie fought against the will: Yet not with brawling opposition she, But manifold entreaties, many a tear, Many a sad kiss by day by night renew'd (Sure that all evil would come out of it) Beseeching him, suppliant, if he cared For her or his dear children, not to go. He not for his own self caring but her, Her and her children, let her plead in vain; So grieving held his will, and bore it thro'.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-friend, Bought Anne宜 goods and stores, and set his hand To fit their little streetward sitting-room With shelf and corner for the goods and stores. So all day long till Enoch's last at home, Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer and axe, Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to hear Her own death-scaffold rising, shrill'd and rang, Till this was ended, and his careful hand,— The space was narrow,—having order'd all Almost as men and close as Nature packs Her blossom or her seedling, pass'd and be; and he, Who needs would work for Annie to the last, Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of farewell Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's fears, Save as his Annie's, were a laughter to him. Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man Bow'd himself down, and in that mystery Where God-in-man is one with man-in-God, Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and babes Whatever came to him: and then he said, "Annie, this voyage by the grace of God Will bring fair weather yet to all of us. Keep a clear heart and a clear fire for me, For I'll be back, my girl, before you know it." Then lightly rocking baby's cradle, "and be, This pretty, puny, weakly little one,— Nay—for I love him all the better for it— God bless him, he shall sit upon my knees And I will tell him tales of foreign parts, And make him merry when I come again. Come Annie, come, cheer up before I go." Him running on thus hopefully she heard, And almost hoped herself; but when he turn'd The current of his talk to graver things In sad, rich fashion wroughtly sermonising On providence and trust In Heaven, she heard, Heard and not heard him; as the village girl, Who sets her pitcher underneath the spring, Musing on him that need to fill it for, Heards 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 passe here. (He named the day): get you a seaman's glass, 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 the babes, and till I come again, Keep everything shiphepe, 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 those unknown Parts of the morning? if I die 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 kisst her wonder-stricken little ones;
But, for a third, he waited not to sleep.

After a night of soothing wakefulness,
When Annie would have raised him Enoch said,
"Wake him not; let him sleep; how should the child
Remember this?" and kisst him in his cot,
But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt
A tiny curl, and gave it: 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, but all 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 threw 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 forbearing "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 sudden'd knowing it; and thus,
Expectant of that news which never came,
Gain'd for her own a scanty estleness,
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),
Smote him, as having kept aloof so long.
"Surely," said Philip, "I may see her now,
May be some little comfort;" therefore went,
Past thro' the solitary room in front,
Paused for a moment at an inner door,
Then struck it thrice, and, no one opening,
Enter'd: 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 Philip standing up said falteringly,
"Annie, I came to ask a favor of you."

He spoke; the passion in her moan'd reply,
"Favor from one so sad and so forlorn
As I am!" half abash'd him; yet unash'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 do this weary way,
And leave you lonely? not to see the world—
For pleasure?—nay, 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 thought again, it will be to be
To find the precious morning hours were lost.
And it would vex him even in his grave,
If he could know his babes were running wild
Like coils 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 now I 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 fast her swimming eyes upon him,
And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,
Then calling down a blessing on his head
Caught at his hand and wrung it passionately,
And past into the little garth beyond.
So lift'd 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 gospel of the port,
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
And sold his cross at a low threshold, yet she kept
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs and fruit,
The late and early roses from his wall,
Or conies from the down, and now and then,
With some pretext 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,
Out of full heart and boundless gratitude
Light on 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,
Pain 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 hearth and native land,
Fled forward, and no news of Enoch came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children long'd
To go with others, muttering to the wood,
And Annie would go with them; then they begg'd
For Father Philip (as they him call'd) too:
Him, like the working-bee in blossom-dust,
Blanch’d with his mili, they found; and saying to him,
"Come with us, Father Philip," he denied;
But when the children pleading to him to go, He laughed, and yielded readily to their wish, For was not Annie with them? and they went.

But after scaling half the weary down, Just where the prone edge of the wood began To feather toward the hollow, all her force Fails’er; and sighing, "Let me rest," she said: So Philip rested with her well-content;
While all the younger ones with jubilant cries Broke from their elders, and tumultuously Down thro’ the whiteness hazel made a plunge To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent or broke The little 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 remembered one dark hour Here in this wood, when like a wounded life He crept into the shadow: as last he said, Lifting his honest forehead, "Listen, Annie, How merry they are down yonder in the wood." "Pray, Annie," said, 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 Philip coming somewhat closer spoke, "Annie, there is a thing upon my mind, And it has been upon my mind so long, That thou—I know not when it first came there, I know that it will out 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 for you my wife. I fain would grove A father to your children: I do think They love me as a father: I am sure That I love them as if they were mine own; And I believe, if you were fast my wife, They would take all these sad and uncertain life. 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 burthen, 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 yourself! Can one love twice? can you be ever loved As Enoch was? is it 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 softly 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 barrow overhead; Then fearing night and chill for Annie rose, And sent a voice beneath him through the wood. Up came the children laden with their spoil; Then all descended to the port, and there At Annie’s door he paced 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 much to look to—such a change—a month— 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 delaying With many a scare-believing excuse, Trying his truth and his long-sufferance, Till half-another year had slip away.

By this the lazy goodies of the port, Abhorrent of a calculation crot, Began to chafe as at a personal wrong. Some thought that Philip did but trifl with her; Some that she but held off to draw him on; And others laughed at her and Philip too. As simple folk that knew not their own minds; And one, in whom all evil fancies clung 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 press upon her To wed the man so dear to all of them And lift the household out of poverty; And Philip’s rosy face contracting grew Careworn and wan; and all these thing 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 shines The Sun of Righteousness, and these be palms Whereof the happy people strowing 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 souls, 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 bent Annie's heart.
A footstep seemed to fall beside her path,
She knew 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 she entered, often
How she lost her heart, and dwelt henceforth,
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 unaverted
She slpt across the summer of the world,
Then after a long rumble about the Cape
And frequent interchange of soul and fair,
She passing thro' the summer world again,
The breath of Heaven came continually
And sent her sweetly by the golden isles,
Till silent in her orient haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and bought
Quaint multis monsters for the market of those times,
A gilded dragon, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage: at first indeed
Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by day,
Scarce-rocking, her full-basted figure-head
Stared o'er the ripple festering from her bows:
Then follow'd calms, and then winds variable,
Then basting, a long course of them; and last
Storm, such as drove her under disobedient 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,
Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken spars,
These drifted, standing on an isle at morn
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sustenance,
Soft frutage, mighty nuts and nourishing roots;
Nor care for poultry; nor for fish
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 pleasantness,
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,
The two remaining found a fallen stem;
And Enoch's comrade, careless of himself,
Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion, fell
Sun-striken, and that other died 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 lightning flash of what a bird and the bud,
The lustre of the long convolvules
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 saw he saw; but Men of the sea
He could not see, the kindly human face,
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
The myriad shrill 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 south, or the sweep
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 sail from day to day, but every day
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
Among the palms and fruited 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 globed themselves in
Heaven,
The hollower-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 him, or he himself
Moved haunting people, things and places, known
Far in a darker isle beyond the line
The babes, their babbie, Annie, the small house,
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,
The peacock-yewtree and the lonely Hall,
The bower the dove, the boat he sold; the chill
November dawns and dewy-glowing down's,
The gentle shooer, the smell of dying leaves,
And the low moon of leaden-colour'd seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears,
Tho' faintly, merrily—far and far away—
He heard the pealing of his pariah bells;
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started up
Shuddering, and when the beauteous hateful isle
Returned'd upon him, had not his poor heart
Spoken with Truth. The lies, the falsehoods everywhere
Lies none, who speaks with Him, seem all alone,
Surely 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 perch'd, when his lonely doom
Came suddenly to an end. Another ship
She wanted water; blown by bad 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 silent water slipping from the hills,
They sent a crew that landing burst away
In search of stream or fount, and fill'd the shores
With clamor. Downward from his mountain gorge
Sank the long-haired long-bearded solitary,
Brown, looking hardly human, strangely clad,
Muttering and mumbling, idiot-like it seem'd,
With inarticulate rage, and making signs
They knew not what: and yet he led the way
To where the rivulets of sweet water ran;
And ever as he mingled with the crowd,
And heard them talking, his long-bonnard tongue
Was weener'd, till he made them understand;
Whom, when their casks were fill'd they took aboard
And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,
Scarce credite'd at first but more and more,
Amazed and melted all who listen'd to it:
And clothes 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, aught of what he cared to know.
And dull the voyage was with long delays,
The vessel scarce seaworthy; but evermore
His fancy fled before the lazy wind
Returning, till beneath a clouded moon.
He like a lover down thro' all his blood
Drew in the dewy meadowy morning-breath
Of England, blown across her ghostly wall:
And that same morning officers and men
Leaped a kindly tax upon themselves:
Plying the lonely man, and gave him it:
Then moving up the coast they landed him,
Ev'n in that harbor whence he sail'd before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any one,
But homeward,—home,—what home? had he a home?
His home he walk'd:—Bright was that afternoon,
Sunny but chill; till drawn thro' either chasm,
Where either heaven open'd on the deeps,
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world in gray:
Cut off the length of highway ever before,
And left but narrow breadth to left and right
Of wither'd holt or till or pasturage.

On the nigh-naked tree the Robin piped
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping haze
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore it down:
Tilcker the drizzle grew, deeper the gloom;
Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted light
Fired on him, and he came upon the place.

Then down the long street having slowly stolen,
His heart forshadowsing all calamities:
His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd 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 hill of safe glean'd thro' the drizzle) crept
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-crost antiquity,
So quaint, worm-eaten, ruthlessly old.
He thought it must have gone; but he was gone
Who kept it: and his widow, Miriam Lane,
With daily-dwilling profits held the house;
A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now
Stillen, with yet a bed for wandering men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and garnous,
Nor let him be, but often breakin 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 life,
His baby's death, her growing poverty,
How Philip put her little ones to school,
And keep'd them in it, his long wooling her,
Her slow consent, and marriage, and the birth
Of Philip's child: and o'er his countenance
No shadow past, nor motion; any one,
Regarding, well had deem'd 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 muttering "Cast away and lost!"
Again in deeper inward whispers "Lost!"

But Enoch yearn'd 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 harass'd him, and drove him forth
At evening when the dull November day
Was growing darker twilight, to the hill.
There he sat down gazing on all below:
There did a thousand memories roll upon him,
Unspeaking for sadness. By and by
The ruddy square of comfortable light,
Far-blazing 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 handward; but behind,
With one small gate that open'd on the waste,
Flourish'd a little garden square and wall'd:
And in it throw'd an ancient evergreen.
A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk
Of shingle, and a walk divided it:
But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and stole
Up by the wall, behind the yew; and thence
That which he might have seen, if griefs
Like his have worse or worse, Enoch saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd board
Sparkled and shone; so genial was the hearth; And on the right hand of the hearth he saw
Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,
Stony, rosy, with his bace across his knees;
And o'er her second father sprookt a girl,
A later but a hotter 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 crassisy arms,
Cought at and ever missed 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 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,—
Then he, the Miriam Lane 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,
Lest the harsh shingle should grate underfoot,
And feeling all along the garden-wall,
Left he should swoon and tumble and be found,
Crest 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 dug
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 to let her know.
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 fail'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 burnish of a son:
"Not to tell her, never to let her know."

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
Uphore 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,  
Kept him a living soul. "This Miller's 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 snow!  
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,  
Scoring an alias, to work whereby to live.  
Almost to all things could he turn his hand,  
Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought  
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or help'd  
At lading and unloading the tall barks,  
That brought the elisted commerce of those days:  
Thus earn'd a scanty 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 gladlter 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 despa'r'd of, than he saw  
Death dawling on him, and the close of all.  

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindler 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," clamon'd the good woman, "hear him talk!  
I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round,"  
And on the book, half-frighted, 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 his head high, and cared for no man, he."  
Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her;  
"Ills 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-incredulous, 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 yon 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 gazing in on Annie, his resolve,  
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,  
Past flow'd the current of her easy tears,  
While in her heart the yearn'd incessantly  
To rush abroad all round the little haven,  
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes;  
But awed and promise-burdened she forbore,  
Saying only, "See your hair's 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 latest 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 blest 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 blis: 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 be."  

He ceased; and Miriam Lane  
Made such a violent 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.
A Y L M E R ' S  F I E L D .

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,
Slpt 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 midriiff of a prostrate king—
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd the spire,
Stood from his walls and wing'd his entry-gates
And swang 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 helress and not hirret regrettfully?
But "he that marries her marries her name"—
This flat somewhat soothed himself and wife,
His wife a faded beauty of the Bath,
Inspld 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, that is all 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-sheltered 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 pricked to death.

"Not proven," Averill said, or laughingly,
"Some other race of Averills"—prov'n or no,
What cared he what, if other or the same?
He leant not on his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft
With Averill, and a year or two before
Could'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 leset in the chestnut-bloom
Flamed in his cheek; and eager eyes, that still
Took joyful note of all things joyful, beam'd
Beneath a maneslike 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: bounteously made,
And yet so finely, that a troublesome touch
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in a day,
A joyous to dilate, as toward the light.

And these had been together from the first.
Leolin's first nurse was, five years after, hers:
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 toss'd his ball and flown his kite, and roll'd
His hoop to pleasant 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,
Showd her the fairy footlings 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 aimed
All one mark, all amid sifting: imake-believes
For Edith and himself: or else be forged,
But that was later, boyish histories
Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon, wreak,
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and true love
Crown'd after trist; 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-esten terms, a couple, fair
As ever painter painted, poet sang,
Or Heav'n in lavish bounty moulded, grew.
And more and more, the maiden woman-grown,
He wasted hours with Averill; there, when first
The teuted winter-field was broken up
Into that phalanx of the summer spears
That soon should wear the garland; there again
When burr and bine 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 laid
No bar 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 Aylmerism,
Would care no more for Leolin's walking with her
Than for his old Newfoundland's, when they ran
To lose us at the relics, for the mere
Twofooted at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make a third: and how should Love,
Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-met eyes
Flash into fiery life from nothing,
Follow such dear familiarities of dawn?
Seldon, 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 bitter yew or ivy round
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
Wander'd at will, but oft accompanied
By Averill: bis, 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 blossoms that redbloom'd, and drank
The magic cup that fill'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 frequent haunt of Edith, on low knolls
That dimpling died in each of them.
At ram's 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 parcel-bearded with the traveller'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 rosetree, and another wore
A close-set robe of Jasmine sown with stars:
This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers
About it: this a milk-way on earth,
Like visions in the Northern dreamer's heavens,
A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;
One, almost to the marlith-bunned 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—so lovely-loving and so loving,
Queenly responsive when the loyal hand
Rocked her, or the clay lay broken in the past,
Not sawing hedgerow texts and passing by,
Nor dealing kindly 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
Covered as theirs, but kildiner than themselves
To alling wife or waifling 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 childish 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 plink five-beaded baby-sokle,
Heard the good mother softly whisper, "Bless,
God bless 'em; marriages are made in Heaven."

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to her.
My Lady's Indian kinsman unannounced
With half a score of swarthy faces came.
His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly,
Sear'd by the close eclipse, was not fair;
Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the hour,
That seeming hostess so when first he dash'd into the chronicle of a deedful day,

Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
Of patron "Good! my lady's kinsman! good!"
My lady with her fingers interlock'd,
And rotary thumbs on elbow known,
Cald'd she her vital spirits into each ear,
To listen: unawares they flitted off,
Buzzying 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 minuten 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.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
He flow'd and ebb'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-flakes on January pages
Made by a breath. I know not whence at first,
Nor of what race, the work: but as he told
The story, storming a hill-fort of Scythia
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 beetling crag to which he chum
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 Sabib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,
Tost over all her presents petulantly:
And when she show'd the worthy scabbard, 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 graciose gift to give a lady, this!
"But would it be more gracioso," ask'd the girl,
"Were I to give this gift of his to one
That is no lady?" "Gracioso! No," said he.
"Me—but I care not for it. O pardon me,
I seem to be ungracious myself,
"Take it," she add'd sweetly, "to 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 brush,
My Peter, first."
And did Sir Aylmer know
That great poch-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 he must—the land was ringing of it—
This blues and 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 nearing chair and lower'd accent) think—
Nor people talk'd—that it was worthy wise
To let a hindsome fellow Averill walk
So freely with his daughter? people talk'd—
AYLMER'S FIELD.

The boy might get a notion into him; The girl might be entangled ere she knew.
Sir Aylmer slowly stiffening his glance. "'The girl and boy, Sir, know their differences!" "Good," said his friend, "but watch!" and he "enough,

More than enough, Sir! I can guard my own." They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer watch'd.

Paled, for on her the thunders of the house Had fallen first, was Edith that same night: Pale as the Jephthah's daughter, a rough piece Of boy rigid cool, under which Withdrawing by the counter door to that Which Leolin open'd, she cast back upon him A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He, as one Caught in a burst of unexpected storm, And pelted with outrageous epithets, Torn by the Powers of the House On either side the hearth, indignant: he, Cooling her false check with a feather-fan, Him glaring, by his own state devil spurr'd, And, like a beast hard-ridden, breathing hard. "Ingrateful, dishonourable, base,

Presumptuous! trusted as he was with her, 

The sole successor to their wealth, their lands, The last remaining pillar of their house, The one transmitter of their ancient name, Their child, their "Our child!" their "Our heiress!" "Ours for still,

Like echoes from beyond a hollow, came Her sicklier iteration. Last he said "Boy, mark me! for your fortunes are to make. I swear you shall not make them out of mine. Now inasmuch as you have practised on her, Perplexed her, made her half forget herself, Swerve from her duty to herself and us— Things in an Aylmer deem'd impossible, Far as we track ourselves—I say this:— Else I withdraw favor and countenance 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, And after look'd into yourself, you find That you meant nothing—as indeed you know That you meant nothing. Such a match as this! Impossible, prodigious!" These were words, As met by his measure of himself, Aught from the bounds of reverence: so much, 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-lower hangs in balance, paused Sir Aylmer, slowly reddening from the storm within, Then broke all bounds 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 excretion drove The footstool from before him, and arose; So, stammering "secondrel" out of teeth that ground As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin still Retreated half-afghast, the fercle old man Follow'd, and under his own lintel stood Storming with lifted hands, a hoary face Meet for the reverence stiffening spoker that now, Beneath a pale and impassioned'd moon, Vest with unworthy madness, and deform'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful eye That watch'd him, till he heard the ponderous door Close, crashing with long echoes thro' the land, Went Leolin; then, his passions all in flood And masters of his motion, furiously Down thro' the bright lawns to his brother's ran, And thence found him quarter at Averill's ear: Whom Averill solaced as he might, amazed: The man was hie, 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 Caucasians let themselves be sold. 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 may— What is their pretty saying? jilted, is it? Jilted I was: I say it for your peace. Palm'd, and, as bearing in myself the shame The woman should have borne, humiliated, I lived in my appointed sunless life; Till after our good parents past away.

Watching your growth, I seem'd again to 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, brainless, 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 for best ones bless him, and himself Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He believed This filthy marriage-binding 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 might be proud; 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 pheasant-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 noble? fools, With such a vantage-ground for nobleness! He had known a man, a quassexence 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 He'd aim from that: but he had powers, he knew it: Back would go to his studies, make his name. Name, fortune too: the world should ring of him To shame these mondy Aylmers in their graves: Chancellor, or what is greatest would he be— O brother, I am grieved to learn your grief— Give me my flag, and let me say my say."

At which, like one that sees his own excess, And easily forgives it as his own, He laugh'd: and then was mute: but presently Went like a storm: and honest Averill seeing How low his brother's mood had fallen, fetch'd His richest beaswring from a bin reserved For banquetts, praised the waning red, and told The vintage—when this Aylmer came of age— Then forth 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 kindller glow Faded with morning, but his purpose held.

Yet once by night again the lovers met, A perilous meeting under the tall pinnaces That dark'en all the northward of her Hall. Him, to her meek and modest bosom preest In age, she sent him out: no wonder no. Persuasion, no, nor death could alter her: He, passionately hopfuler, 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 love their child
They hate me: there is war between us, dear,
Which froth the bond between us; that rice 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 careless rain of heaven, mist
Upon their faces, as they kisst each other
In darkness, and above them ran the pine.

So Leolin went; and as we task ourselves
To learn a language known but staggeringly
In phrases here and there at random, toll'd
Mastering the flawless science of our law,
That codeless myriad of precedent,
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—
Wasting motion, lest some one was,
"To make disproof of scorn, and strong in hopes,
And provoking all brain-labor he,
Charter of sleep, and wine and exercise,
Except when for a breathing-while at eve
Some peculiar fraction of an hour he ran
Beside the river-bank: and then indeed
Hardier the times were, and the hands of power
Were bloodier, and the according hearts of men
Seem'd harder too; but the soft rain-breeze,
Which breathes all boughs but once; the real rose
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
His former talks with Edith, on him breathed
Far purer in his rushings to and fro,
After his books, to flash his blood with air,
Then to his books again. My lady's cousin,
Halfadenlenk of his pensioned afternoon,
Drove in upon the the student once or twice,
Has a Malaym muck against the times,
Had golden hopes for France and all mankind,
Answer'd all queries touching those at home
With a high wall smiling, knab'd itself at last
"Screw not the cord too sharply lest it snap."
Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger forth
Franking his frown'd heart to keep it warm,
Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
And wrinkled boughs often talk'd of him
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise:
For heart, I think, help'd head: her letters too,
Th'o' far between, and coming fitfully
Like broken music, written as she found
Or made occasion, being strictly watch'd,
Charmed him thro' every laythrin till he saw
An end, a hope, a flight breaking upon him.

But they that cast her spirit into flesh,
Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued themselves
To sell her, those good parents, for her good.
Whatever eldest-born of rank or wealth
 Might lie within their compass, him they lured
Into their net made by the baits
Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
So month by month the noise about their doors,
And distant blaze of those dull banquets, made
The nightly wiper of their innocent hair
Faintly before he turned; All in vain was
Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd
Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit
So often, that the fully taking wings
Slipt o'er those hay limits down the wind
With rumor, and became in other fields
A mockery to the yeomen over seas,
And laughter to their lords: but those at home,
As hunters round a hunted creature draw
The cordon close and closer toward the death,
Nor, thoughen her went out and came in;
Forbade her first the house of Averill,
Then closed her access to the wealthier farms,
Last from her own home-circle of the poor
They baird her: yet she bore it: yet her cheek
Kept the color wonder! A mystery
What amnitt drew her down to that old oak,
So old, that twenty years before, a part
Failing had let appear the brand of John—
Once grovelife, each hinge arm a tree, but now
The broken base of a black tower, a cave
Ofouchwood, with a single nourishing spray.
There the manorial lord too curiously
Baking in that millenian touchwood-dust
Found 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 scar'd with threats of jail and halter gave
To him that fluster'd his poor parish wits
The letters which he brought, and more besides
To play their go-between as heretofore
Nor let them know themselves betray'd, and then,
Semi-stricken at their kindness to him, went
Hitting his own lean heart and miserable.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot dream
Panting he woke, and oft as early as dawn
Awrouse'd the black republic on his elms,
Sweeping the frothry from the fesene, brash'd
Thro' the dim meadow toward his treasure-trove,
Seized it, took home, and to my lady, who made
A downward crescent of her mission month,
Listless in all despondence, read: and tore,
As if the living passion symbol'd there
Were living nerves to feel the rent; and burnt,
Now chafing at his own great self defied,
Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks of scorn
In babylisms, and dear diminitives
Seatter'd all over the vocabulary
Of such a love as like a childen babet
After much vail shomg, knab'd itself at last
Hopeless of answer: then tho' Averill wrote
And bade him with good heart sustain himself—
All would be well—the lover heeded not,
But passionately restless came and went,
And rustling once at night he shot at peace.
There by a keeper shot at, slightly hurt,
Raging return'd: nor was it well for her
Kept to the garden now, and grove of pines,
Watch'd even there: and one was set to watch
The watchter, and Sir Aylmer watch'd them all,
Yet bitter from his readings: once indeed,
Warm'd with his wine, or taking pride in her,
She look'd so sweet, he kisst her tenderly,
Not knowing what possessed him: that one kiss
Was Leolin's one strong rival upon earth,
Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,
Seatten'd hope's returning rose: and then ensued
A Martin's summer of his faded love,
Or ordeal by kindness; after this
He seldom crost his child without a sneer:
The mother's bow in shallower aquitectures:
Never one kindly smile, one kindly word:
So that the gentle creature shriat from all
Her charitable use, and face to face
With twenty months of silence, almost lost
Nor greatly cared for her, nor hold on life.
Last, some low fever ranging round to spy
The weakness of a people or a house,
Like files that haunt a wond'r, or deerd, or men,
Or almost all that is, burlting 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 as at once? or why
That night, that moment, when she heard his name,
Did the electron shriek, "Yes love, yes Edith, yes."
Shriil, till the comrade 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 idolized
By the rough similitude of the other, sunk
As into sleep again. The second day,
My lady's Indian kinman rushing in,
A breaker of the bliter news from home,
Found a dead man, a letter edged with death
Beside him, and the dagger which himself
Gave Edith, redden'd with no bandily's blood
"From Edith" was engraven on the blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon his death.
And when he came again, his flock believed—
Beholding how the years which are not Time's
Had blasted him—that many years
wereclip by horror from his term of life.
Yet, the sad mother, for the second death
Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness of the first,
And being used to find her pastor texts,
Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying him
To speak before the people of his child.
And so 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 barion of lowfolded heavens
Stifled and chill'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 widely murmur'd left
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced tabernacle,
To hear him: all in mourning there was that
With blots of it about them, ribbon, glove
Or kerchief: while the church,—one night, except
For greenish glimmerings thro' the lancets,—made
Still pater the pale head of him, who tower'd
Above them, with his hopes in either grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd Averill,
His face magnetic to the hand from which
Livid hepluck'd it forth, and labor'd thro'
His brief prayer-prelude: gave the verse "Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate"
But lapse'd into being a pause again
As half amazed, half frighted all his flock:
Then from his height and loneliness of grief
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his angry heart
Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became one sea,
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the proud,
And all but those who knew the living God—
Eights that were left to make a purer world—
When since had flood, fire, earthquake, thunder,
Died wrought
Such waste and havoc as the idolatries,
Which from the low light of mortality
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven of Heavens,
And worship 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 Lord shall lead the lion. Suddenly
The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.
Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine own Insti—
No coarse and blockish God of acreage
Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel to—
Why God is far diffused in noble heralds.
And princely halls, and farms, and sprawling lawns,
And heaps of living gold that daily grow,
And title-scrolls and gorgeous heraldries.
In such a shape dost thou behold thy God.
Tongue when not grasp thy flesh for blood: for thine
Faces 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."
Then therefore with His light about thy feet,
With His message ringing in thine ear,
Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord from Heaven,
Born of a village girl, carpenter's
Wife—Prince of peace, the Mighty God,
Count the more base idolater of the two;
Crusader: as not passing thro' the fire.
Bodies, but souls—thy children's—thou the smoke,
The blight of low desires—darkening thine own
To thy 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 course to sorrow for her—
Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
Palmer rather than Russell among the fields of corn,
Fair as the Angel that said "hail!" she seem'd.
Who entering fill'd the house with sudden light.
For so mine own was brighten'd: where indeed
The roof so lovely but that beam of Heaven
Dwelt sometimes thro' the doorway? whose 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 cared for, leapt
To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,
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
Brook'd to nature's music when they saw her.
Low was her voice, but won mysterious way
Thro' the seal'd ear, to which a louder one
Was all but silence—free of alma 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 his feverous pillow smooth!
Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?
One burthen and she would not lighten it?
One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?
Or in some heat of difference sparkled gut
How sweetly would she glide between your wraths,
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 Galilee?
And when 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 till the last.
Friends, this small back of ours, who delicately tried,
May make 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 gliebe, with other frowns than those That knit themselves for summer shadow, swell'd At their great tardy. He, when it seem'd he saw No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but fork'd Of the near storm, and aiming at his head, Sat anger-charmed from sorrow, soldier-like, Kept, but when the preservers came down! Soften'd 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 heart Can take her place—if echoing me you cry! 'Our house is left unto us desolate.'
But then, 'O thou that killest, hast thou known, O thou that stoutest, hast 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 'Repeal!' Is not our own child on the narrow way, Who down to those that saunter in the broad Cries 'Come up hither,' as a prophet to us? Is there no solemn save with flint and rock? Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—
No to desolation but by sword and bone.
Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself
Am loneller, darker, earthlier for my loss.
Give me your prayers, for he is past your prayers, Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.
But what I thought myself long-suffering, meek, Exceeding 'poor in spirit'—how the words Have twirled back upon themselves and mean
Vileness, we are grown so proud—I wish'd my voice A rashing tempest of the wrath of God
To blow these sacrifice thro' the world—
Sect like the two-stemmed fiddle concaving,
To inflame the tribes; but there—out 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 ghostly 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 it a time to mark the tyrant's grace?
Was this a time for these to flaunt 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: Began our one, unhoped, the nation's fate; I 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 hank'd their race with times to
come—

Who wove coarse webs to shackle 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
When that false earth, a Margaret three years old:
Would she weep, for the slanders that she bore?
Their own traditions God, and slew the Lord,
And left their memories a world's cares—'Behold, Your house is left unto you desolate!'"
All sand and cliff and deep-lurking cave,
At close of day; slept, woke, and went the next,
The Sabbath, plans varier from the church,
To chapel; where a heaved pirlpiper,
Not preaching simple, Christ to simple men,
Announced the coming doom, and fulminated
Against the scarlet noon and her cloud:
For sideways up he swung his arms, and shriek'd,
"Thou, thus with violence," ev'n as he told
The Apocalyptic millstone, and himself
Were that great Angel; "thus with violence
Shall thy battle be cast into the sea;
Then comes the close." The gentle-hearted wife
Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;
He at his own: but when the wordy storm
Had ended, forth they came and paced the shore,
Ran in and out the long sea-framing caves
Drank the large air, and saw, but scarce believed
(The scootflake of so many a summer still
Cling to their fancies) that they saw, the sea.
So now on sand they walk'd, and now on cliff,
Lingerling about the thorny promontories,
Till their feet were blotted and hearken'd in the west,
And rose'd in the east: then homeward and to bed:
Where she, who kept a tender Christian hope
Haunted a holy text, and still to that
Harkning, as the bird returns, at night,
"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,"
Said, "Love, forgive him!" but he did not speak;
And silenced by that silence lay the wife,
Remembering her dear Lord who died for all,
And musing on the little lives of men,
And how they mar this little by their deeds.

But while the two were sleeping, a full tide
Rose with ground-swell, which, on the foremost rocks
Touching, upjetted in spirits of wild sea-smoke,
And sealed in sheets of wasteful foam, and fell
In vawers and waves and the west,
Dead claps of thunder from within the cliffs
Heard thro' the living roar. At this the babe,
Their Margaret cried near them, wall'd and woke
The mother, and the father suddenly cried,
"A wreck, a wreck!" then turn'd, and groaning said
"Forgive! How many will say 'forgive,' and find
A sort of absolution in the sound
To hate a little longer! No; the sin
That neither God nor man can well forgive,
Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once;
Is it so true that second thoughts are best?
Not first, and third, which are a ripper first?
Too ripe, too late! they come too late for use.
Ah love, there surely lives in man and beast
Something divine to warn them of their foes;
And such a sense, when first I fronted him,
Said, 'Trust him not,' but after, when I came
To know him more, I lost it, knew him less;
Fought with what seem'd my own inucharity.
Sat at his table; drank his costly wines;
Made more and more allowance for his talk;
Went farther, fool! and trusted him with all,
All my poor scrapings from a dozen years
Of dust and deskwork; there is no such mine,
None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing gold,
Not making. Rule'd! rule'd! the sea roars
Rule: a fearful night!

"Not fearful; fair," said the good wife,
"If every star in heaven
Can make it fair: you do but bear the life.
Had you ill dreams?"

"O yes," he said, "I dream'd
Of such a tide sweeping to the land,
And I from out the boundless ocean
Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd one
Of those dark caves that run beneath the cliffs.
I thought the motion of the boundless deep
Bore through the cave, and I was heaved upon it
In darkness: then I saw one lovely star
Larger and larger. 'What a world, I thought,'
'To live in!' but in moving on I found
Only the landward exit of the cave.
Original of the dream I sung on the step beyond:
And near the light a giant woman sat.
All over earthy, like a piece of earth,
A pickaxe in her hand: then out I slpt
Into a land all sun and blossom, trees,
As high as heaven, and every bird that sings.
And here the night-light flickering in my eyes
Awoke me."

"That was then your dream," she said,
"Not sad, but sweet."

"So sweet, I lay," said he,
"And mused upon it, drifting up the stream
In fancy, till I slept again, and pleased
The broken vision; for I dream'd that still
The motion of the great deep bore me on,
And that the woman walk'd upon the brink:
I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd her of it:
'It came,' she said, 'by working in the mines.'
"Then to ask her of my shares, I thought:
And Ludd'en longed to go his own way;
She shook her head. And then the motion of the current ceased,
And there was rolling thunder; and we reach'd
A mountain, like a wall of bars and thorns;
But she with her strong feet up the steep Hill
Trod out a path: I followed; and at top
She poluted seaward: there a fleet of glass,
That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,
Sailing along before a gloomy cloud
That not one moment ceased to thunders, past
In sunshine; right across its track there lay,
Down in the water, a long reef of gold,
Or what seem'd gold: and I was glad at first
To think that in our often-ramuscled world
Still so much gold was left; and then I fear'd
Leat the gay navy there should splinter on it,
And fearing waved my arm to warn them off;
An idle signal, for the brittle fleet
(I thought I could have died to save it) near'd,
Touch'd, click'd, and crush'd, and vanished, and I woke.
I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see
My dream was Life: the woman honest, Work;
And my poor venture but a fleet of glass,
Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold."

"Nay," said the kindly wife to comfort him,
"You raised your arm, you tumbled down and broke
The glass with little Margaret's medicine in it;
And, breaking that, you made and broke your dream:
A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks."

"No trifle," groan'd the husband; "yesterday
I met him suddenly in the street, and ask'd
That which I ask'd the woman in my dream."
Like her, he shook his head. "Show me the books!"
He dodged me with a long and loose account
"The books, the books!" but he, he could not wait,
Bound on a matter he of life and death:
When the great Books (see Daniel seven and ten)
Were open'd, I should find he meant me well:
And then began to boast himself and ooz.
All over with the fat affectious smile
That makes the widow lean. 'My dearest friend,
Have faith, have faith! We live by faith,' said he;
"And all things work together for the good.
Of this God makes me sick to quit him—last
Grip't my hand hard, and with God-bless-you went.
I stood like one that had received a blow:
I found a hard 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 to the hill; and far away,
Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And ecoundrel in the supple-rolling 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
Wronges himself worse, and ever bears about
A silent court of justice in his breast,
Himself the judge and jury, and himself
The prisoner at the bar, ever condemnd:
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 counselled 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:
Whom else but himself, when his heart was dry,
Made wet the crafty crosefoot round his eye:
Who, never naming God except for gain,
So never took that useful name in vain;
Made him his cat'spaw and the Cross his tool,
And Christ the bait to trap his dape and fool:
Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he forgave,
And snakelike slimed his victim ere he gorged;
And often at Bible meetings, o'er the rest
Arising, did his holy offly best,
Dropping the too rough H 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 brokener 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 satyr, 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 fall'n!'
And still they strove and wrangled: and she grew
In her strange dream, she knew not why, to find
Their wildest wallings never out of tune
With that sweet note: and ever as their 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 passionete looks, and swept away
The men of flesh and blood, and men of stone,
To the waste deeps together.

"Then I fixt
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 minister-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 awoke 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 Bonaerges, with his threats of doom,
And loud-ling'd Antiochianism.
(Alto! 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 far too like
The discords dear to the muselan. No—
One shrieck 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 town, but later by an hour
Here than ourselves, spoke with me on the shore:
While you were running down the sands, and made
The dimpled foaming of the sea-furfelow flat,
Good man, to please the child. She brought strange
news.
Why were you silent when I spoke to-might?
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
(Yon 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 'birdie.'"

Saying this,
The woman half turn'd round from him she loved,
Left him one hand, and reaching thro' the night
Her other, fond (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, awak'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.
So she rests a little longer,  
Then she flies away.  

What does little baby say,  
In her bed at peep of day?  
Baby says, like little birdie,  
Let me rise and fly away.  
Baby, sleep a little longer,  
Till the little limbs be stronger.  
If she sleeps a little longer,  
Baby too shall fly away.  

"She sleeps: let us too, let all evil, sleep.  
He also sleeps—another sleep than ours.  
He can do no more wrong: forgive him, dear,  
And I shall sleep the sounder!"

Then the man,  
"His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to come.  
Yet let your sleep for this one night be sound:  
I do forgive him!"

"Thanks, my love," she said,  
"Your own will be the sweeter," and they slept.

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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,  
Had n't a head to manage, and drank himself into his grave.  
Pretty enough, very pretty! but I was against it for one.  
Eh!—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 fling 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 be 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 railing 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 chirrpt the nightingale.
THE GRANDMOTHER.

XL.
All of a sudden he stopt: there pass 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 pain 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 five-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 nigh three-score 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 oftener 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 let 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 next?

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 passed away.
But stay with the old woman now: you cannot have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.
OLD STYLE.

I.
Where 'asta beän saw long and mel liggin' 'ere aloän?
Noore? thoort nowt o' a noore: whoy, doctor 's abeän an' agoän:
Says that I moûnt 'a naw moor yailä: but I beânt a fool:
Gît ma yailä, for I beil a-gooln' to break my rule.

II.
Doctors, they knaws nowl, for a says what 's nawways true:
Naw soort o' koind o' nee to saîly the things that a do.
I 've 'ed my point o' yail iyry wenth slip 'a beän 'ere,
An' I 've 'ed my quart iyry market-nought for forty year.

III.
Parson 's a beän lolkewilec, an' a slitthi 'ere o' my bed.
"The amolghti 's a taîkin o' you to 'issen, my friend," is said,
An' a towd ma my slas, an' a tolthe were due, an' I gled it in hond;
I done my duty by un, as I 'a done by the lond.

IV.
Larm'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot as mooch to larn.
But a cost oop, thoat a did, 'boot Bessy Marri's barn.
Thof a knaws I hallus voited wi' Squire an' choorch an staîle,
An' l' the woost o' tolmes I war niver agin the raîte.

V.
An' I hallus comet to 'a choorch afoor my Sally war deâld,
An' 'eed un a bummin' awayl like a buzzard-cloek* ower my yeild,
An' I niver knaw'd what a mein'd but I thowt a 'ad summot to saîy,
An' I thowt a said what a owt to 'a said an' I comet awayl.

VI.
Bessy Marri's barn! tha knaws she laîlid it to meal.
Mowt 'a beän, mayhap, for she war a bad un, sheä.
'Siver, I kep un, I kep un, my lass, tha muns understand;
I done my duty by un as I 's done by the lond.

VII.
But Parson a comes an' a goos, an' a says it éasy an' freeä
"The amolghty 's a taîkin o' you to 'issen, my friend," says 'eä.
I weant éasy men be holars, thof summun said it in 'asäte:
But a reûd woon earmin a week, an' I 'a stubb'd Tornaby waîtä.

VIII.
D' ya moind the waîtä, my lass? naw, naw, tha was not born then
Theer war a boggie in it, I offen 'eed un myseän;
Molst lolke a better-bump,‡ for I 'eed un unsho a shoot,
But I stubb'd un oop wi' the lot, and raived an' rembled un oot.

* Cockchafer.
‡ Bittern.
IX.
Keilper’s it war: so they fan un thee a said on ‘is faice.
Doom! the world ‘enemies’ afoir I com to the plaice.
Noaks or Thimbly—tomer ‘ud shot an as dead as a naill.
Noaks war ‘ang’d for it cup at ‘noise—but gil ma my yaile.

X.
Dubbots lookt at the waâste: thee war n’t not faid for a cow;
Nowt at all but branchen an’ fass, an’ lookt at it now—
War n’t worth nowt a halcre, an’ now thee’s lots o’ feald,
Fourscore yows upon it an’ aome on it doon in seald.

XI.
Nobbots a bit on it ‘a left, an’ I mean’d to ‘a stubb’d it at fall,
Done it ta-year I mean’d, an’ run’d plow thruff it an’ all,
If godamolghy an’ parson ‘il nobbut let ma eoln,
Meil, wi’ haîte oonderd halcre o’ Squoire’s an’ told o’ my oân.

XII.
Do godamolghy knaw what a ‘s doing a-tâiklin’ o’ meil?
I beant woun as saws ‘ere a bein au’ youder a peal;
An’ Squoire ‘il be as maal an’ all—‘a dear a ‘dear!
And I ‘a moughted for Squoire come Michaelmas thirty year.

XIII.
A move ‘t a tâiken Joines, as ‘ant a ‘spoth o’ sense,
Or a move ‘t a tâiken Roblus—a niver needed a fence:
But godamolghy a modest tâike meil an’ tâike me now
Wi’ auf the cows to cauve an’ Thornaby holms to plow!

XIV.
Lookk ‘ow quoloty amoiles when they sees me a passin’ by,
Says to thesen new doot “what a mon a be sewer-l’!
For they knawe what I bein to Squoire elu fast a comed to the ‘All;
I done my duty by Squoire an’ I done my duty by all.

XV.
Squoire ‘s in Lunnun, an’ summun I reckons ‘ull ‘a to wrolte,
For who ‘s to howd the lord ater meil that muddles ma quolt;
Sartin-sewer I beil, that a weant niver give it to Joines,
Nothber a moaist to Roblus—a niver rembles the etoâns.

XVI.
But summun ‘ull come ater meil mayhap wi’ ‘is kittle o’ steim
Huzzn’ an’ mazzn’ the blessed feilsids wi’ the Divil’s oân team
Gin I mun day I mun day, au’ loife they says is sweet,
But gin I mun day I mun day, for I couldn aeciar to see it.

XVII.
What atta stannin’ thee for, an’ doesen bring ma the yaile?
Doctor ‘a a tellter, lass, and a ‘s hallis I’ the owd tâik;
I weant brake rules for Doctor, a knaves new moor nor a day:
Gilt ma my yaile I tell thà, an’ gin I mun day I mun day.

TITTHONUS.

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapors weep their bursheen to the ground,
Man comes and fills 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 white-hair’d shadow roaming like a dream
The ever silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming 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 did’st 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 mysterious glimmer steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure,
THE VOYAGE.

I.
The waves ran high and steep-
A tempest raged on the deep-
And I was tossed about the seas-
While my poor ship was moored to the breeze.

II.
There was no quiet in the night,
A hundred tempests in the light,
And through the rigging, as it blew,
We saw the lightning, by the window's key.

III.
And thus we turned the land we loved,
And bid farewell to the friends we served.
And I was left alone, to wander on,
With the stars above and the moon below.

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 heaving field,
Or flying shone, the silver boss
Of her own halo's dusky shield.

V.
The peaky islet shifted shapes,
Dark 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 east we drove,
Where those long swells of break'd sweep
The tempest rocks and isles of clove.

VI.
By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
Gloom'd the low coast and quivering brine
With ashy rains, that spreading made
Fantastic plume or sable plume;
By sands and steaming flats, and floods
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.
O hundred shores of happy elim,
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark!
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
With waves of fire we toore the dark;
At times a carven craft would shoot
From heavens hld in fairy bowers,
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
But we nor pass'd for fruits nor flowers.

VIII.
For one fair Vision ever sere
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 fixt upon the far sea-line;
But each man murrmard, "O my Queen,
I follow till I make thee mine."

IX.
And now we lost her, now she glem'd
Like Fancy made of golden air,
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
Now high on waves that ldy 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 drenched
"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 furled,
Nor anchor dropt at eve 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 wildwind's heart of peace,
And to and thro' the counter-gale?
IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.—THE RINGLET.

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
For still we follow'd where she led:
Now mate is blind and captain tame,
And half the crew are sick or dead.
But blind or lame or sick or sound,
We follow that which dies before;
We know the merry world is round,
And we may call forevermore.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

All along the valley, stream that flashes 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.
Uphere came a flower,
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
Thro' my garden-bower,
And muttering 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 singer said
On the day that follow'd the day she was wed:
"Whither, O whither, love, shall we go?"
And the singer shaking his curlv head
Tarn'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 Erosian apple-check'd,
In a shallow of crystal ivory-beak'd,
With a satin sail of a ruby glow.
To a sweet little Eden on earth that I know,
A mountain islet pointed and peak'd;
Waves on a diamond shingle dash,
Cataract brooks to the ocean run,
Fairly-delicate palaces shine
Mixt with myrtle and elaid with vine,
And overstream'd and silver-streak'd
Withmany 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 blackmails 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 hatchet 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.

His 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 mermaidem 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 scrapel 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.

"Turn ringlets, your ringlets,
That looks so golden-gay.
If you will give me one, but one,
To kiss it nigt and day,
Then never chilling touch of Time
Will turn it silver-gray:
And then shall I know it is all true gold
To flame and sparkle and stream as of old,
Till all the comets in heaven are cold,
And all the stars decay.
"Then take it, love, and put it by;
This cannot change, nor yet can I."

2.
"My ringlet, my ringlet,
That art so golden-gray,
Now never chilling touch of Time
Can turn thee silver-gray;
And a lad may wink, and a girl may hint,
And a fool may say his say;
For my doubts and fears were all anise,
And I swear beneath this and this,
That a doubt will only come for a kiss,
And a fear to be kiss’d away."
"Then kiss it, love, and put it by:
If this can change, why so can I."

3.
O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I kiss’d thee night and day,
And Ringlet, O Ringlet,
You still are golden-gray,
Ringlet, O Ringlet,
* You should be silver-gray:
For what is this which now I’m told,
I that took you for true gold,
She that gave you’s bought and sold,
Sold, sold.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
She blush’d a rosy red,
When Ringlet, O Ringlet,
She clipt you from her head,
And Ringlet, O Ringlet,
She gave you me, and said,
"Come, kiss it, love, and put it by:
If this can change, why so can I."
O be, you golden nothing, say,
You golden lie.

4.
O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I count you much to blame,
For Ringlet, O Ringlet,
You put me much to shame,
Su Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I doom you to the flame.
For what is this which now I learn,
Has given all my faith a turn?
Burn, you glossy heretic, burn,
Burn, burn.

A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,
Alexandra!
Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra!
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-huddled bowers!
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!
Uter your jubilee, steeple and spire!
Clash, ye bells, in the merry March air!
Flash, ye clides, 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 comes to the land,
And welcome her, welcome the land's desire,
The sea-kings' daughter as happy as fair,
Blessful bride of a blessful 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,
Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra!

ODE SUNG 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 outpour’d
Their myriad borns of plenty at our feet.

O silent father of our Kings to be
Mourn’d in this golden hour of justice,
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 engi'nery,
Secrets of the sullen mine,
Steel and gold, and corn and wine,
Fabric rough, or Fairy fine,
Sanny toques of the Linie,
Polar marvels, and a feast
Of wonder out of West and East,
And shapes and lines of Art divine!
All of beauty, all of use,
Those fair planets which 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, near and true—no truer Time himself
Can prove you, tho’ he make you evermore
Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
Shouts to the fall—take this, and pray that he,
THE CAPTAIN.—THREE SONNETS TO A COQUETTE.—ON A MOURNER.

Who wrote it, honoring your sweet faith in him, May trust himself; and spite of praise and scorn, As one who feels the immeasurable world, Attain the wise indifference of the wise; And after Autumn past—if left to pass His autumn into summer, These days— Toward the long frost and longest night, Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the fruit Which in our winter woodland looks a flower.*

THE CAPTAIN.
A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

He that only rules by terror Doeth grievous 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, Sailors 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 Seen'd the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smother'd fire Burst in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name Of his vessel great in story, Wheresoe'er he came.
So they pass by capes and islands, Many a weary mouth,
Sailing 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 heighten'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 fear'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 foeman's thunder Roaring out their doom;
All the air was torn in sunder, Crashing went the boom,
Spar's were splinter'd, decks were shatter'd:
Bullets fell like rain;
Over mast and deck were scatter'd Blood and brains of men.
Spar's were splinter'd: decks were broken:
Every mother's son—
Down they dropt—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 defance Sold him unto shame.
Shame and wrath his heart confounded, Pale he turn'd and red.

Till himself was deadly wounded Failing on the dead.
Dismal error! fearful slaughter! Years have wander'd by,
Side by side beneath the water Crew and Captain lie:
There the smallt ocean tosses O'er them moulder,
And the lonely seabird crosses With one waft of the wind.

THREE SONNETS TO A COQUETTE.

Caresse's or chidren by the dainty hand, And singing airy tristes 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 pow'r hand, And chased away the still-recurring gust, And woke her with a lay from fairy land. But now they live with Beauty less and less, For Hope is other Hope and wander's far, Nor cares to liep 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 gayly drest, And win all eyes with all accomplishment: Yet in the waltizing-circle as we went, My fancy made me for a moment blest To find my heart so near the beauteous breast That once had power to sub It of content. A moment came the tenderness of tears, The phantom of a wish that once could move, A ghost of passion that no smiles restore. For ah! the slight coquett, she cannot love, And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand years, She still would take the praise, and care no more.

3.

Wen Sculptor, weepst thou to take the cast Of those dead lineaments that near thee lie? O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the past, In painting some dead friend from memory? Weep on: beyond his object Love can last: His object lives: moro came 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 deaths forever, in the pits Which some green Christmas crans with weary bones.

ON A MOURNER.

Nature, so far as in her lies, Imitates God, and turns her face To the land beneath the skies, Counts nothing that she meets with base, But lives and loves in every place;

2.

Fills out the homely quick-set screening, And makes the purple lilac ripe, Steps from her airy hill, and greens The swamp, where hums the dropping snipe, With moss and braided marsh-pipe,
SONGS.—BOADICEA.

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 heath and time
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 foot have trod,
And Virtue, like a household god,

7. Promising empire: such as these
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 Crete.

— 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,
Chap thy little babes about thy knee:
Now their warrior father meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

— SONG.

Homs 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,
Beat upon his father's shield—
"O hush, my joy, my sorrow."

EXPERIMENTS.

BOADICEA.

While about the shore of Mona those Neronian legionaries
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 Camulodunum.
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy.

"They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's barbarous populaces,
Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating?
Shall I heed them in their anguish? shall I brook to be supplanted?
Hear Iceniun, Catleuchianian, hear Coritantian, Trinobant!
Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak and talon annihilate us?
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 keestrel, wolf and wolfkin, from the wilderness, wallow in it,
Till the face of Bel be bright'en'd, Taraula be propitiated.
Lo their colony half-defended! to their colony, Camulodunum!
There the horde of Roman robbers moak at a barbarous adversary.
There the live of Roman ilars worship a glutinous emperor-idol.
Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear it, Spirit of Cæsáriánum!

"Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard it, O Iceniun, O Coritantian!
Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd, Catleuchianian, Trinobant.
These have told us all their anger in miraculous utterances,
Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a murmur heard aerially,
Phantom sound of blows descending, moan of an enemy massacred,
Phantom wall of women and children, multitudinous soughes.
Bloodily flow'd the Tamesis rolling phantom bodies of horses and men:
Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on the refiuent estuary:
Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly giddily tottering—
There was one who watch'd and told me—down their statute of Victory tell.
Lo their precious Roman bantling, to the colony Camulodunum.
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 Iceniun, Catleuchianian, hear Coritantian, Trinobant!
While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating,
There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystical ceremony,
Loudly robed in dying raiment, sang the terrible prophetesses.
'Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets!
'Thou' the Roman eagle shadow thee, thou' 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 chanting: how shall Britain light upon angriest happier?
So they chanting in the darkness, and there cometh a victory now.

"Hear Icenian, Catechumenian, hear Cortanian, Trinobant! 
Me the wife of rich Praemagnus, me the lover of liberty,
Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Me the sport of ruffian Veterans, mine of ruffian victors!
See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy!
Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated.
Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony Cynnioldoné!
There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory,
Thither at their will they halted the yellow-rigleted Britons—
Bloodily, bloodily fell the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable,
Shout Icenian, Catechumenian, shout Cortanian, Trinobant,
Till the victim hear within and yearn to hurry precipitously
Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the smoke in a hurricane whirl'd.
Lo the colony, there they rioted in the city of Coloseiä:
There they drank in cups of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay,
Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effeminacy.
There they dwell and there they rioted; there—there—they dwell no more.
Burst the gates, and burn the palaces, break the works of the statuary,
Then 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 Boddiceä, standing loftily charioted,
Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances honesty-like,
Yelled and shrieked between her daughters in her fierce volubility,
Till her people all around the royal chariot agitated,
Madd'ly dash'd the darts together, whirling barbarous lineaments,
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 clamping of her enemy fainted away.
Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny burns.
Rode the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous groans.
Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valorous legionary.
Fell the colony, city and citadel, London, Verulam, Cynnioldoné.

IN QUANTITY.

MILTON.

Alacks. 

O mighty-moimed inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages,
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Stars'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armatures,
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 blook peacocks and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refugent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich amphibal ocean isle,
And crimson-lined the stately palmwoods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Hendecasyllables.

O you chorus of Indolent reviewers,
Irresponsible, Indolent reviewers,
Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
All composed in a metre of Catullus,
All in quantity, careful of my motion,
Like the skater on ice that hardly hears him,
Least I fall unawares before the people,
Waking laughter in Indolent reviewers.
Should I flounder awhile without a tumble
Through this metrification 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 stumble,
So fantastical is the dainty metre.
Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor believe me
Too presumptuous, Indolent reviewers.
O blunt Magazine, regard me rather—
Since I blush to belaud myself a moment—
As some rare little rose, a piece of Inmost
Hortenius's art, or half coquette-like
Maiden, not to be greeted unbenignly.
THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

Leonogran, the King of Camelard,
Had one fair daughter, and none other child;
And she was fairest of all flesh on earth,
Guinevere; and in her 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
Swarmed over this land, and harried all:
For 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 neither faileth to make the king новый
And after these King Arthur for a space,
And thro' the puissance of his Table Round,
Drew all their petty princes to him under
Their kingly head, and made a realm, and reign'd.

And thus the land of Camelard was waste,
Thick with wet woods, and many a beast therein,
And none or few to scare or chase the beast;
So that wild dog and wolf and bear 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,
He on his paws bested, or dead, lent her fierce tent
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, straightened, they grew up to wolf-like men,
Worse than the wolves: and King Leodogran
Groom'd for the Roman legions here again,
And Caesar's eagle: then his brother king,
Hience, assail'd him: fast a heathen horde
Reddening the sun with smoke and earth with blood,
And on the spike that splits the mother's heart
Splitting the child, brake on him, till amazed,
He knew not whither he should turn for aid.

But— for he heard of Arthur newly crown'd,
Theo' 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 then:
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 he neither wore on helm or shield
The golden symbol of his kingship,
But rode a simple knight among his knights,
And many of these in richer arms than he,
She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she saw,
One among many, and his face was bare:
But Arthur, looking downward as he past,
Felt the light of her eyes into his life
Smile on the sudden, yet rode on, and pitch'd

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 Xanthius 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."
Who taught him magic; but the scholar ran
Ran over the mast, and there that day
Laid magic by, and set him down, and wrote
All things and whatsoever Merlin did.
In one great annal-book, where after years
Will learn the secret of our Arthur's birth.

To whom the king Leodrogan replied,
"O friend, had I been houen 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
Ulfin, and Brastas, 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,
Held ye this Arthur for King Uther's son?"

And Ulfin and Brastas 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 was he,
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 dropt from heaven: but my belief
In all this matter—so ye may 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, Ygerne:
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 Uther overthrew was by his son.
Then Uther In his wrath and heat beseeched
Ygerne within Tintagil, where her men,
Seeing the mighty swarm about their walls,
Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd in,
And Arthur was there to be his helmsman.
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
Doubted at a secret council.
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
Nursed the young prince, and rear'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, in King Uther, Merlin has aid come
Brought Arthur forth, and set him in the hall,
Proclaiming, 'Here is Uther's heir, your king,'
A hundred voices cried, 'Away with him:
No kig of ours: a son of Gorlois he:
Or else the child of Anton, and no base son,
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 was truth in anything
Said by those three, there came to Camelford,
With Gawain and young Modred, her two sons,
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bellicent;
Whom as he could, not as he would, the king
Made feast 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 new to beat 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 day, 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 vow to his own self,
That when they rose, knighted from kneltill, some
Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
Some flash'd, and others dazed, as one who wakes
Half-blindled at 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—I beheld
From eye to eye thro' all their Order flash
A momentary likeness of the king;
And ere it left its face it turned a cross
And those around it and the crucified,
Down from the casement over Arthur, emote
Flame-color, vert, and azure, in three rays,
One falling upon each of three fair queens,
Who stood in silence near his royal friends
Of Arthur, gazin 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 toiling for their liege.

'And near him stood the Lady of the lake,—
Who knows a snabler magic than his own,—
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful
She gave the king his huge cross-sword, a sword
Whereby to drive the beathen out: a mist
Of incense court'd about her, and her face
Welligh 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, while the surface rolls,
Hath power to walk the waters like our Lord.

'There likewise I beheld Excalibur
Before him at his crowning borne, the sword
That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
And Arthur row'd across and took it,—rich
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hill,
Bewildering heart and eye,—the blade so bright
That men are blinded by it,—on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
'Take me,' but turn the blade and you shall see,
And written in the speech ye speak yourself,
'Cast away!' and watch'd to cut the 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 heat his foe among.

Thereat Leodogran rejoiced, but thought
To sift his doubtsings to the last, and ask'd,
Fixing full eyes of question on her face,
"The swallow 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 signd'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
Han like a cort, and leapt at all he saw:
But Modred laid his ear beside the doors,
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 hear
A cry from out the dawning of my life,
A mother weeping, and I hear her say,
"Oh ye that 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 hang myself down on a bank of heath,
And yelling as I made this fair world and all therein,
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 I saw not, 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 seem'd, 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 Bleys, 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.
Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the mage,
And there I told me that myself
And Merlin ever served about the king,
Uther, before he died, and on the night
When Uther in Tintagil past away
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the two
Left the wild king, and passing forth to breathe,
Then from the castle gateway by a flame
Descending thro' the dismal night—a night
In which the bounds of heaven and earth were lost—
Beheld, 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 gone as soon as seen: and then the two
Drooping, the cover and weal'd the 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 heat his foe among.

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 strayt and dreadful pass of death,
Not ever to be question'd any more
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 sea,—
He laugh'd as is his wont, and answer'd me
In riddling triplets of old time, and said:

'Rain, rain, and sun! 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 by 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 thou
Fear not to give this king thine only child,
Guinevere: so great harts of him will slug
Hereafter, and dark sayings from of old
Rangring and ringing thro' the minds of men,
And echo'd by old folks beside their fires
For comfort after their wage-work is done,
Speak of the king; and Merlin in our time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn,
Tho' men may wound him, that he will not die,
But pass, again to come; and then or now
Uttierly smile the heathen underlings.
Till these and all men hail him for their king.

She spake and King Leodogran rejoiced,
But musing "Shall I answer yea or nay?"
Doubted and drowed, nodded and slept, and saw,
Dreaming, a slope of land that ever 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 blind fell, the herd was driven,
Fire glimpse'd; and all the land from roof and rick
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
Stood in the cloud's poulteries toward the west,
The rest slewn 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 the king and the king stood out in heaven,
Crownd'; and Leodogran awoke, and sent
Ulfus, and Brastias, and Bedivere
Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.
Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved
And honored 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 latter April) and return'd
Among the flowers, in May, with the Queen.
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 stainless white,
The fair beginning, and rejoicing in his joy.
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,
"Reign 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 your king."

Then at the marriage feast came in from Rome,
The slowly-fading 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 heaven 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 princedoms under him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm and reign'd.

THE HOLY GRAIL.
From noblest arms, and acts of prowess done
In tourney or tilting, Sir Percival,
Whom Arthur and his knighthood call'd The Pure,
Had pass'd into the silent life of prayer,
Praise, fast, and alms; 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 long and slow, to reign in the world
To answer that which came: and as they sat
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 Percival:

"O brother, I have seen this yew-tree smoke,
Spring after spring, for half a hundred years:
For never have I, Sir Lancelot, to wit,
Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale: but thee,
When first thou cam'st,—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 cease,
Some true, some light, but everyone of ye,
Stamp'd with the image of the king; and now
Tell me, what drove thee from the Table Round,
My brother? was it earthy passion crost?"

"Nay," said the knight; "for no such passion
Mine. But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail
Drove me from all vainglories, rivalries,
And earthly heats that spring and spark out
Among us in the hosts, while women watch
Who wins, who falls; and waste the spiritual
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 I mean,—
Yet one of your own knights, a guest of ours,
Told us of this in our refectory,
But spake with such a seriousness 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 Percival.
"The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord
Drank at the last and supper with his own.
This, from the blessed land of Aromat—
After the day of darkness, when the dead
Went wandering o'er Moriah, the good saint,
Arminathus Joseph, Journeying brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord.
And there awhile it bode; and if a man
Could touch or see it, he was heal'd at once,
By faith, of all his ills; but then the times
Grew to such evil that the Grail cup
Was caught away to Heaven and disappeared."

To whom the monk: "From our old books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arturus,
Gave him an isle of marvel whereon to build;
And there he built with wattles from the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, these books of ours, but seem
Mute of this miracle, far as I have read.
But who first saw the holy thing to-day?"

"A woman," answer'd Percival, "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 show'd,
But that was in her earlier maidenhood,
With such a fervent flame of human love,
Which burning rudely blunted and 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 adulterous 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 sins, or what
Her all but utter whiteness held for sin,
A man welling in a hundred winters old,
Spake often with her of the Holy Grail,
A legend handed down thro' five or six,
And each of these a hundred winters old,
From our Lord's time: and when King 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! asked 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
The moon, and with such bliss, 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, beheld her eyes

In his own chair, and so was lost; but he, Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom, cried, '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 smote along the hall A beam of light seven times more clear than day:
And down the long beam stole the Holy Graal All of 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 starting each at other like dumb men
Stood, till I found a voice and avowed a vow.

"I am to bare a vow before them all, that I Because I had not seen the Graal, 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 avow the vow.
And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's confidant, swore,
And Lancelot avow, and many among the knights,
And Gawain avow, and louder than the rest.

Then spake the monk Ambrosius, asking him,
"What said the king? Did Arthur take the vow?"

"Nay, for, my lord, (said Percival,) the king Was not in Hall; for early that same day, 'Scep'ted thro' a cavern from a bandit bold,
An untraged maiden sprang into the hall
Crying on help; for all her shining hair
Was smeared with earth, and either milky arm
Red-riest with hooes of bramble, and all she wore
Torn as a sail, that leaves the rope, is torn
In tempest: so the king arose and went
To smoke the scandalous hive of those wild bees
That made such houey 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, calling aloud, 'Lo there! the roofs
Of our great Hall are rolled in thunder-smoke!
Pray Heaven they be not emi'ten 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 statute under heaven.

"O brother, bad you known our mighty hall
Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago!
For all the sacred Mount 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 betwixt
With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall;
And in the lowest slayers are slaying men,
And in the second 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 I saw Sir Bors in his place, 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, bad 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
Shines through the twelve great battles of our king.
Nay, one there is, and at the eastern end,
Wealthy with wandering lines of mount and mere,
Where Arthur finds the blade Excalibur.
And also one to the west, and counter to it,
And blank: and who shall blazon it? when and how?
O then, perchance, when all our wars are done,
The blade Excalibur will be cast away.

"So to this hall full quickly rode the king,
In honour last the work by Merlin thought.
Dreamlike, should on the sudden vanish, wrapt
In unrememberful 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 hurst the hold, their arms
Black'd, and their foreheads grin'd with smoke, and sear'd,
Follow'd, and in among bright faces, ours
Full of the vision, prest: and then the King
Spake 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 month to month once,
When some brave deed seem'd to be done in vain,
Darkest: 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 k ing, 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 vse 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,
Shrilling along the hall to Arthur, call'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 such As thon 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 maim this Order which I made.
But yon, that follow, but the leader's bell,'
(Brother, the king was hard upon his knights,)'
'Talisian is our fullest throng of song,
And one hath sung and all the dumb will sing.
Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath overborne
Five knights at once, and every younger knight,
Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,
Till, overborne by one, he learns,—and ye,
What are ye? Galahads,—no, nor Percivales'
(For thus it pleased the king to range me close
After Sir Galahad.) 'Nay,' said he, 'men,
With strength and will to right the wrong'd, of power
To lay the sudden heads of 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 world will see.
Go, and on the waving, and will believe me,—
Yet, for ye know the cries of all my realm
Pass thro' this hall, bow often, O my knights,
Your places being vacant at my side,
The chance of noble deeds will come and go,
I am not challenged, nor through wandering fires
Lost in the quagmire: many of you, yes must,
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 glorious combat, that once more the King,
Before ye leave him for this quest, may count
The yet unbroken strength of all his kingdoms,
Rejoicing in that Order which he made.'

"So when the sun broke next from underground
All the great table of our Arthur closed,
And clas'd in such a tourney as 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, overhove
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 under-
ground,—
O brother, had you known our Camelot,
Built by old kings, age after age, so old
The king himself had fears that it would fall,
Gray, and dry, and deep, and dim; for where the roofs
That were of stone, Roger'd toward each other in the sky
Met foreheads 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 pass; and men and boys astride
On wayworn, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,
At all the corners, named us 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 shrieke'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 rendered mystically,
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, and 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 creeping 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 behold a woman at a door,
Slighting, and fair the house whereby she sat;
And kind the woman's eyes and innocent,
And in her bearing graceful was the rose.
Opening her arms to meet me, as who should say,
'Rest here,' but when I touched her, lo! she too
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 flashed 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 pall,
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 jewell'd everywhere;
And on the splendor came, flashing me blind;
And he beheld me to 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 wearied 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 stir'd a crowd: and these
Cried to me, coming, '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 ramous city, and I saw
That man had once dwelt there: but there I found
Only one man of an exceeding age,
'Where is that goodly company,' said I,
'That so cried upon me?' and he had
Struck me blind with wonder, and yet, gasp'd
'Whence 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 dropped into a lowly vale,
Low as the hill was high, and where the vale
Was lowest found a chapel, and thereby
A holy hermit in a hermitage,
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 form shone forth with sudden light
So that the angels were amazed, and she
Follow'd him down, and like a flying star
Pierced the grey-heir'd skies, and left it so fast;
But her than hast not known: for what is this
Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy sins?
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 chanted 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 Grail, descend upon the shrine:
I saw the fiery face as of a child
That came into the brea, and went,
And hither am I come; and never yet
Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,
This holy thing, fail'd from my side, nor come
Cover'd, but moving with me night and day,
Painter 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 customs everywhere,
And past thro' Pagans realms, and made them mine,
And clash'd with Pagan horses, 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
For the spiritual city, and one 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
When then the day began to wane we went.

"Then rose a hill that none but man could climb,
Scafell'd with a hundred wintry watercourses,—
Storm at the top, and, when we gal'd it, storm
Hound 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,
Yea, rotten with a hundred years of death,
Sprang into fire at the base, and was found
On either hand, as far as eye could see,—
A great black swamp and of an evil smell,
Part black, part whiten 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 every bridge as quickly as he cross'd
Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I yearn'd
To follow; and thrice above him all the heavens
Shut out and blazed with thunder; and I seem'd
Shoutings of all the sons of God: and tint,
At once I saw him far on the great 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 rap the boat,
If boat it were,—I saw not whence it came.
And when the heavens open'd and blazing 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 blazing again
Opening, I saw the least of little stars
Down on the waste, and straight beyond the star
I saw the spiritual city and all her spires
And gateways in a glory like one pearl,
No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints,
Sulking from the sea and grey-heir'd front of city, and there shot
Once ashore, and sent itself to the city, and there
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,
Which never eyes on earth again shall see.
Then fell the floods of heaven drowning the deep
And how our feet recross'd the deathful ridge
No memory in me was: but that I too
The chapel-doors at dawn, I knew: and thence
Taking my war-horse from the holy man,  
Glad that no phantom vex me more, return'd  
To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's wars.  

"O brother," ask'd Ambrosius, "in south  
These ancient books—and they would win thee—  

Only I find not there this Holy Grail,  
With miracles and marvels like to these,  
Not all unlike; which oftentimes I read,  
Who read but on my breviary with ease,  
Till my head swam: and then go form and pass  
Down to the little thorp that lies so close,  
And almost plaster'd like a martin's nest  
To these old walls,—and mingle with our folk;  
And knowing every honest face of theirs,  
As well as ever shepherd knew his sheep,  
And ever homely secret in their hearts,  
Delight myself with gossip and old wives,  
And tills and aches, and teethings, lyings-in,  
And mirthful sayings, children of the place,  
That have no meaning half a league away:  
Or tales of old, when squabbles were as nice,  
Chaffering and chattering at the market-cross,  
Ridjoice, small man, in this small world of mine,  
Yes, even in their heads and in their eggs:  
O brother, saving this Sir Galahad  
Came ye on none but phantoms in your quest,  
No man, no woman?"

Then Sir Percivale:  
"All men to one so bound by such a vow  
And women as were phantoms. O my brother,  
Why wilt thou shame me to confess to thee  
How far I fauter'd from my quest and vow?  
For after I had lain so many nights  
A bedmate of the small and eft and snake,  
In grass and burdock, I was changed to wan  
And meagre, and the vision had not come.  
And then I chanced upon a goodly town  
With one great dwelling in the middle of it;  
Whither I made, and there was I disarmed  
By maidens each as fair as any flower:  
But when they led me into hall, behold  
The Princess of that castle was the one,  
Brother, and that one only, who had ever  
Made my heart leap; for when I moved old  
A slender page about her father's hall,  
And she a slender maiden, all my heart  
Went after her with longing: yet we twain  
Had never kiss'd a kiss, or vow'd a vow.  
And now I came upon her once again,  
And one had wedded her, and he was dead,  
And all his land and wealth and state were hers.  
And while I tarried, every day she set  
A banquet richer than the day before  
By me; for all her longing and her will  
Was toward me as of old; till one fair morn,  
I walking to and fro beside a stream  
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 herself and all her wealth to me.  
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.  
'We have heard of thee: thou art our greatest knight:  
Our Lady says it, and we well believe:  
Wed thee our Lady, and rule over us.  
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our land.'  
O me, my brother! but one night my vow  
Burnt me within, so that I rose and fled,  
But waf'd and wept, and hated mine own self,  
And even the Holy Quest, and all but her.  
Then after I was join'd with Galahad  
Cared not for her, nor any thing upon earth."

Then said the monk, "Poor men, when yule is cold,  
Must be content to sit by little fires.  
And this I do, so that I care for me.  
Ever so little: yea, and blust 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 see the first love once mine,—to hold,  
Hold her a wealthy bride within thine joys,  
Or all but hold, and then—cast her aside,  
Forfeuling all her sweetliness, like a weed.  
For we that want the warmth of double life,  
We that are weary of dreams of something sweet  
Beyond all sweetleness 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 penances. Saw ye none beside,  
None of your knights?"

"Yea so," said Percivale,  
"One night my pathway swerving cast, 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 he me;  
And each made joy of either; then he ask'd,  
'Where is he? fast thou seen him—Lancelot? Once,'  
Said good Sir Bors, 'he dash'd across me—mad,  
And maddening what he rode; and when I cried,  
'Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest  
So holy?' Lancelot shout'd, "Stay me not!  
I have been the slippard, and I ride space,  
For now the lion 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, I think,  
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  
Payniam amid their circles, and the stones  
They pitch up straight to heaven; and their wise men  
Were strong in that old magic which can trace  
The wandering of the stars, and scoff'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,  
Whereby the blood beats, and the blossom blows,  
And the sea rolls, and all the world is warm'd?'  
And when his answer chafed them, the rough crowd,  
Hearing he had a difference with their priests  
Seiz'd him, and bound and plunged him into a cell  
Of great piled stones; and lying bound there  
In darkness thro' innumerable hours  
He heard the hollow-ringine heavens sweep  
O'er him, till his body—what else?—  
Heavy as it was, a great stone slept and fell,  
Such as no wind could move: and thro' the gap  
Glimmer'd the streaming scind: then came a night  
Still as the day was loud; and thro' the gap  
The seven bright stars of Arthur's Table Round,—  
For, brother, so one night, because they roll  
Thro' such a round in heaven, we named the stars,
THE HOLY GRAIL.

Rejoicing in ourselves and in our king,—And these like bright eyes of familiar friends In on him, and smiled on me," said Sir Bors, "beyond all hopes of mine, Who scarce had prayed or asked it for myself,—Across the seven clear stars,—Oh 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 pleased A sharp quick thander: afterwards a maid Who kept our holy faith among her kin In secret, entering, loosed 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 on-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, ye saw all your knights return'd, Or was there sooth in Arthur's prophecy! Tell me, and what said each, and what the king."

Then answered Percivale, "And that can I, Brother, and truly; since the living words Of these great men as Lancelot and Sir Bors: 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 rain, hornless unicorns, Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd caracrices, 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 up on the Queen— 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 hall, Saying, 'A welfare in thine eye reproves Our fear of some disastrous chance for thee On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding 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 statues Merlin moulded for us His half-burnish'd golden wing: the work of the quest, This vision—last 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 first resolve To pass away into the quiet life, He answer'd not, but, sharply turning, ask'd Of Gawain, 'Gawain, was this quest for thee?"

"'Nay, lord,' said Gawain, 'not for such as I. Therefore I communed with a salutary man, Who made me sure the quest was not for me. For I was much afeard of the quest. But found a silk pavilion in a fold; And merry maidens in it: and this gale Tore my pavilion from the tenting-plu, And blew my merry maidens all about With all discomfort; yes, and but for this My twelvemonth 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 A thargh the throng to Lancelot, caught his hand, Drove all hidden breast, and so did, Until the king epeled him, saying to him, 'Hail, Bors! if ever loyal man and true Could see it, then 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 Calydon in H-wood, 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?"

"'O mightiest,' answer'd Lancelot, with a groan, 'O king!' and when he paused, methought I spied A dyng fire of madness in his eyes, 'O king, my friend, if friend of thine I be, Happier are those that walter in their shell, Swine in the mud, that cannot see for slime, Lime and the ditch;—but in me lived a sin So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure Noble, and knighthly in me twined and clung Round that one sin, until the wholesome flower And polished stones grew together, such as each, Not to be pluck'd or rend, and whom thy knights Sware, I aware with them only in the hope That could I touch or see the Holy Grail They might be pluck'd and arder: then I spake To one most holy saint, who wept and said That they could not be pluck'd and arder 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 yearne'd and strove To tear the twain asunder in my heart, My madness came upon me as a dream: 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 enou 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 grew, But such a blast, my kung, began to blow, So loud a blast along the shore and sea, Ye could not hear the waters for the blast, Thou' hast 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-toam way'd a boat Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a chain; And my madness came upon me as 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 dreary deep, And with me drove the moon and stars of the ships; And I wind fell, and on the seventh night I heard the shingle grinding in the sarge, And felt the boat shook earth, and looking up Behold the enchanted towers of Carbonke. A castle like a rock upon a rock, With chasm-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 still. Then from the boat I leapt, and up the stairs. There I drew my sword, as the king had said Those two great beasts rose upright like a man, Each gript a shoulder, and I stood between, And, when I would have smitten them, heard a voice, 'Doubt not, go forward: if thou doubt, the beasts Will tear thee piecemeal!' then with violence The sword was dash'd off from out my hand and fell, And up into the sounding hall I past But nothing in the sounding hall I saw, No beam nor table, painting on the wall, Or shield of knighth: only the rested moon Thro' tall ope and behind 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 climb'd 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 crannies, and I heard
'Glory and joy and honor to our Lord
And to the Holy Vessel of the earth.'
Then in my madness I essay'd the door.
It gave, and thro' a stormy glare, a heat
As from a seven-times-heatened furnace, I,
Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I was,
With such a fierceness 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 but 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 vell'd
And cover'd; and this quest was not for me.'

'So speaking, and here ceasing, Lancelot left
The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain—nay,
Brother, I need not tell thee foolish words,—
A reckless and irreverent knight was he,
Now bolden'd by the silence of his king—
Well, I will tell thee: 'O king, my Rege,' he said,
'Bath Gawain fall'd in any qual of thine?
When have I stim't stroke in fang'd field?
But as for thine, my good friend, Percival,
Thy holy nun and thou have driven men mad,
Yes, made our mightiest warrior out of us.
But if they drive the blind men under all eyes
Will be deader than the blue-eyed cat,
And thrice as blind as any noonday owl,
To holy virgins in their ecasties,
Henceforward.'

"Dearer," said the blameless King,
'Gawain, and blind unto holy things
Hope not to make thyself by idle vows,
Icing too blind to have desire to see.
But if indeed there came a sign from heaven,
Blessed are Hors, Lancelot, and Percival,
For these have seen according to their sight.
For every fiery prophet in old times,
And all the sacred madness of the bard,
When God made music thro' them, could but speak
His music by the framework and the chord,
And as ye saw it ye have spokeu truth.

"Nay—but thou errst, Lancelot: never yet
Could all of true and noble in knight and man
Twine round one sin, whatever it might be,
With such a deadness, but apart there grew
Save that he were the awne thou speakest of,
Some root of knighthood and pure nobleness;
Whereto shew thou, that it may bear its flower.

"And spake I not too truly, O my knights?
Was I too dark a prophet when I said
To those who went upon the Holy Quest
That most of them would follow wandering fires,
Lost in the quagmire,—lost to me and gone,
And left me gazing at a barren board;
And a lean order—scarcely return'd a tithe—
And out of those to whom the vision came
My greatest hardly will believe he saw;
Another hath beheld it afar off,
And leaving human wrongs to right themselves,
Cares but to pass into the silent life.
And one hath had the vision face to face,
And now his chair desires him here in vain,
However they may crown him otherwhere.

"And some among you held that if the king
Had seen the sight he would have sworn the vow:
Not easily, seeing that the king must guard
That which he rules, and is but as the blind
To whom a space of land is given to plough,
Who may not wander from the allotted field.
Before his work be done; but, being done,
Let visions of the night or of the day
Come, as they will; and many a time they come,
Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
This air that smites his forehead is not air.
But vision—yes, his very hand and foot—
In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision to himself,
Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
Who rose again: ye have seen what ye have seen.'

"So spake the king: I knew not all he meant.

PELLEAS AND ETARRE.

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 snder'd, and thro' these a youth,
Pelleas, came: in the dawn of all the day
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 tourney—the prize
A golden circlet and a knightly sword,
Full fine 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—
Hiding at noon, a day or twain before,
Across the forest call'd of Dean, to find
Caerleon and the king, had felt the sun
Beat like a strong knight on his helm, and reel'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 holies 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 that showed itself, 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 o'er it crest the dimness of a cloud
Floating, and once the shadow of a bird
Flying, and then a faun; and his eyes closed.
And since he loved all maidens, but no maid
In special, half awake he whisper'd, 'Where?
O where? I love thee, tho' I know then 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 wak'n 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 Pelles rose,
And loosed his horse, and led him to the light.
There she that seem'd the chief among them, said,
"In happy time behold our pilot-star.
Youth, we are damsel-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 Pelles gazing thought,
"Is Guinevere herself so beautiful?"
For large her violet eyes look'd, and her bloom
And her fine teeth, and her dawn kindled in stain, and gossens,
And round her limbs, mature in womanhood,
And slender was her hand and small her shape,
And 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 abashed 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 Pelless lend
All the young beauty of his own soul to hers,
Believing her; and when she spake to him,
Stammer'd, and could not make her a reply.
For out of the waste islands bad he come,
Where saving his own sisters he had known
Scarcely any but the women of his isle,
Rough wives, that laugh'd and scream'd against the gulls,
Makers of nets, 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 face,
The circle widens till it lift the marge,
Spread the slow smile thro' all her company.
Three knights were there among; and they too smiled,
Scorning him; for the lady was Eiatar,
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 damsel," answer'd he,
"I woke from dreams; and coming out of gloom
Was dizzled by the sudden light, and crave
Pardon: but will ye to Caerleon? I
Go likewise: shall I lead you to the King?"
"Lead then," she said; and thro' the woods they went,
And while they rode, the meaning in his eyes,
His tenderness of manner, and chaste awe,
His broken utterances and bashfulness,
Were all a burden to her, and in her heart
She mutter'd, "I have lighted on a fool,
Raw, yet so stately!
But since her mind was bent
Ou hearing, after trumpet blown, her name
And title, "Queen of Beauty," in the lists
Cried—and beholding him so strong, she thought
That peradventure he will fight for me,
And win the circle: therefore flatter'd him,
Being so gracious, that he well might deem'd
His wish by hers was echoed; 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! but will thou fight for me,
And win me this fine circle, Pelles,
That I may love thee?"

Then his helpless heart
Leapt, and he cried, "Ay! will thou if I win?"
"Ay, that will I," she answer'd, and she laugh'd,
And straitly nipt the hand, and flung it from her;
Then glanced askew at those three knights of hers,
Till all her ladies laugh'd all along with her.

"O happy world," thought Pelles, "all, meekness,
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 being on the morrow knighted, sware
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
Kindled 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 sat,
Tho' served with choice from air, land, stream, and sea.

And as in mid-banquet measuring with his eyes
His neighbour's make and might: and Pelles look'd
Noble among the noble, for he dream'd
His lady loved him, and he knew himself
Loved 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 call'd "The Tourament of Youth."
For Arthur, loving his young knight, withheld
His older and his mightier from the lists,
That Pelles 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 fill'd with eyes
Up to the summit, and the trumpets blew
There all day long Sir Pelles kept the field
With honor: so by that strong hand of his
The sword and golden circle were achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady lov'd: the heat
Of pride and glory fired her face: her eye
Sparkled: she caught the circle for the blance,
And as 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, clouder on her knight—
Linger'd Eiatar: and seeing Pelles droop,
Said Guinevere, "We marvel at thee much,
O damsel, wearing this unanny face
To him who won thee glory!" And she said,
"Had ye not held your Lancelot 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 Pelles follow'd. She that saw him cried,
"Damsels—and yet I should be ashamed to say it—
I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him back
Among yourselves. Would rather that we had
Some rough old knight who knew the worldly way,
And gallant rather than a bear, to ride
And jest with: take him to you, keep him off,
And pamper him with papemest, if ye will,
Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep,
Such as the wholesome mothers tell their boys.
Nay, should ye try him with a masterly one
To find his mettle, good: and if he fly we,
Small matter! let him." This her damsel heard, And mindful of her small and cruel hand, They, chusing round him thro' the journey home, Acted her best, and always from her side. Herstraid'd him with all manner of device, So that he could not come to speech with her. And when she gain'd her castle, upspring'd the bridge, Down rang the grate of iron thro' the grove, And he was left alone in open field.

"These be the ways of ladies," Pellæas thought, "To those who love them, trials of our faith. Yea, let her prove me to the uttermost, For loyal to the uttermost am I." So made his mean; and, darkness falling, sought A priory not far off, there lodged, but rose With morning every day, and, moist or dry, Full-ar'm'd upon his charger all day long Sat by the walls, and no one op'nd to him.

And this persistence turn'd her scorn to wrath. Then calling her three knights, she charged them, "Out! And drive him from the walls." And out they came, But Pellæas overthrew them all, and again Against him one by one; and these return'd, But still he kept 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 pointed downward, "Look, He haunts me—我可以 breathe—beseeches me; Down! strike him! put my hate into your strokes, And drive him from my walls." And down they went, And Pellæas overthrew them one by one; And from the tower above him cried Ettarre, "Bind him, and bring him in."

She then heard her voice; Then let the strong hand, which had overthrown Her minion-knights, by those he overthrew Be bound, 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 bold than 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 am I that she see thee 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 straid'd And slipt to 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 damsel, he was stricken mute; But when she mock'd his vows and the great King, Lighted 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 midst-marrow of his bone, He will return no more." And thou, her three, Laugh'd, and unbonded, and thrust him from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again She call'd them, saying, "There he dashes yet, There like a dog before his master's door! Kick'd, he returns: 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 fail, 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 coach'd their spears, Three against one: and Gawain pass'd by, Bound upon solstitial adventure, saw Low down beneath the shadow 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 califfs!" "Nay," said Pellæas, "but forbear; He needs no aid who doth his lady's will."

So Gawain, looking at the villany done, Forbore, but in his heat and eagerness Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog, withheld A moment from the vermin that he sees Before him, shivers, ere he springs and kills.

And Pellæas overthrew them, one to three; And they rose up, and bound, and brought him in. Then first her anger, leaving Pellæas, burn'd Full on her knights in many an evil lane. Of craven, weakening, and three-beaten bond: "Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit to touch, Far less to bind. your victor, and thrust him out, And let who will release him from his bands, And if he comes again—there she brake short; And Pellæas answer'd, "Lady, for indeed I loved you and I deem'd you beautiful, I cannot brock to see your beauty mar'm'd Thro' evil spirit: and if ye love me not, I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn: I had lief ye were worthy of my love, But 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 gaz'd upon the man Of princelly bearing, tho' in bonds, and thought, "Why have I push'd him from me? this man loves, If love there be: yet him I love not. Why? I deem'd him fool? yea, so? or that in him A something—was it nobler than myself?— Seen'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 flung them o'er the walls; and afterward, Shaking his hands, as from a hazar's rag, "Faith of my body," he said, "and art thou not— Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur made Knight of his table; yea and he that won The circlet: wherefore hast thou so defamed Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest, As let these califfs on thee work their will?"

And Pellæas answer'd, "O, their wills are here For whom I won the circlet: and mine, hers, Thus to be bonnden, so to see her face, Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mockery now, Other than when I found her in the woods; And tho' she hath me bonnden but in spite, And all to flout me, when they bring me in, Let me bonnden, I shall see her face; Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness."

And Gawain answer'd kindly tho' 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 thrall These fighting hands of mine—Chast kill me then But I will strike him handlely by the wrist,
Then Pellias 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 he whom men call light-of-love?"

"Ay," said Gawain, "for women be so light."
Then bounded forward to the castle walls, and raised a bale hanging from his neck, and handed it, and that so mustered that all the old echoes hidden in the wall rang out like hollow woods at hunting time.

Up ran a score of damsels to the tower; "Awant," 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 Pellias 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! Pellias 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 asked. "Ay, ay," said he, "and oft in dying cried upon your name."
"Pity on him," she answered, "a good knight, but never let me bide one hour at peace."
"Ay," thought Gawain, "and ye be fair enough: But I to your dead man have given my oath, That them ye loathe him will I make ye love."

So those three days, aimless about the land, lost in a doubt, Pellias wandering;
Waithed, 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 Ever nighttime to her walls, and bound his horse hard by the gates. Wide open were the gates, and no watch kept; and in thro' these he past, and heard but his own steps, and his own heart Beating, for nothing moved but his own self, And his own shadow. Then he crost the court, and saw the poster mortel also were Yawling; 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, Sawd from a thorn a stone of white.

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 bush, and thence came one, Red after reed, dropt her lurdan knights Slumbering, and their three squares across their feet:
In one, their malice on the placid lip
Froz'nu by sweet sleep, four of her damlens lay:
And in the third, the circlet of the jonest
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 shinks from what he fears
To copy her a traitor proven, or hound
Bested, did Pellias in an utter silence
Creep with his shadow thro' the court again,
Fingering at his sword-handle until he stood
There on the castle-bridge once more, and thought,
"I will go back, and slay them where they lie."

And so went back and seeing them yet in sleep
"Ye, that so dishallow 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 circlet of the tornney round her brows,
And the sword of the tornney across her throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on his horse
Starred at her towers that, larger than themselves In their own darkness, throng'd into the moon. Then crush'd the saddle with his thighs, and clenched His hands, and madd'en'd with himself and mood:

"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 gaze
The crack of earthquake shivering to your base
Split you, and Hell burst up your harlot roofs
Bellowing, and err'd you thro' and thro' within,
Black as the harlot's heart—hollow as a skull! Let the fierce east stream thro' your syllest-kyles, And whirl the dust of harlots round and in Dung and nettles I 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 Pellias whom she call'd her fool! Fool, beast—he, she, or I myself most fool;
Beast too, as lacking human wit—disgraced, Dishonor'd all for trial of true love— Love?—we all alike: only the king Hath made us fools and liars. O noble vows! O great and same and simple race of brutes That own no last because they have no love! For why should I have loved her to my shame? I loathe her, as I loved her to my shame. I never loved her, I but lusted for her— Away!—"

He dash'd the rowel into his horse,
And bounded forth and vanished thro' the night.

Then she, there on the cold bench on her throat,
Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd herself
To Gawain: "Liar, for thou hast not slain
This Pellias! 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 Pellias the true knight avowed, 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 Perceval was cowld, Glanced from the rosy forehead of the dawn For so the sword were flashed in his heart. He knew not whence or wherefore: "O sweet star, Pure on the virgin forehead of the dawn." And there he would have wept, but felt his eyes Harder and drier than a fountain he met In a more 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 Scein'd: but so weary were their limbs, that he, Gasping, "Of Arthur's hall am I, but here, Here let me rest and die," cast himself down, And gulf'd his griefs in lamont sleep; so lay, Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain fired The hall of Merlin, and the morning star. Reel'd in the smoke; brake into flame, and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some one high, Sent hands upon him, as to tear him, crying, "False! and I held these pure as Guinevere."

But Perceval stood near him and replied, "And bat false as Guinevere is our Art thou mixed with dreams? or being one Of our free-spoken Table hast not heard That Lancelot—there he check'd himself and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelles as with one Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword That made it plungeth troo the wound again, And prick's him deeper; and he shrank and wail'd, "Is she my Queen false?" and Perceval, he said, "Have any of our Round Table held their vows?" And Perceval made answer not a word. "Is the king true?" "The king!" said Perceval. "Why then let men couple at once with owls. What! art thou mad?"

But Pelles, leaping up, Ran thro' the doors and vanit on his horse And fled: small pity upon his horse he had, Or on himself, or any, and when he met A cripple, one that held a hand for alms— Hunca'd as he was, and like an old dwarf-elm That turns its back on the salt blasts, the boy Paus'd not but overrode him, shouting, "False, And bat false is Gawain!" and so left him limbed And batter'd, and fled on, and hill and wood Went ever streaming by him till the gloom, That follows on the turning of the world, Darken'd the common path: he twitch'd the reins, And made his beast that better knew it, sverve Now off it and now on; but when he saw High up in heaven the hall that Merlin built, Blackening against the dead-green stripes of even, "Black nest of rats," he ground'd, "ye build too high.

Not long thereafter from the city gates Issed Sir Lancelot riding arly, Warm with a gracious parting from the Queen, For so the sword were flashed in his heart And marvelling what it was: on whom the boy, Across the silent meaned meadow-grass Borne, clash'd: and Lancelot, saying, "What name hast thou That ridest here so blindly and so hard?" "I have no name," he shouted, "a scourge am I, To lash the treasons of the Table Round." "Yes, but thy name?" "I have many names," he cried:

"I am wrath and shame and hate and evil fame, And like a poisonous wind I pass to blast, And blaze the crime of Lancelot and the Queen."

"First over me," said Lancelot, "shall thou pass," "Fight therefore," yell'd the other, and either knight Drew bow and space, and when they closed, at once The weary steed of Sir Pelles founcth in the heart His rider, who called out from the dark field, "Thou art false as Hell: slay me; I have no sword." Then Lancelot, "Yes, between thy lips—and sharp; But here till I disedge it by thy death."

"Slay then," he shrille'd, "my will is to be slain."

And Lancelot, with his heel upon the fall'n, Rolling his eyes, a moment stood, then spoke: "Rise, weapon; I am Lancelot; say thy say."

And Lancelot slowly rode his war-horse back To Camelot, and Sir Pelles in brief while Caught his unbroken limbs from the dark field, And follow'd to the city. It chanced that both Brake into hall together, worn and pale. There with her knights and dames was Guinevere. Full wonderingly she gazed on Lancelot So soon return'd, and then on Pelles, him Who had not greeted her, but cast himself Down on a bench, hard-breathning. "Have ye furnished?" She ask'd of Lancelot. "Ay, my Queen," he said. "And thou hast overthrow'd him?" "Ay, my Queen."

Then she, turning to Pelles, "O young knight, Hath the great heart of knighthood in thee fail'd? So far thou canst not bide, unfowardly. A fall from him?" Then, for he answer'd not, "Or hast thou other griefs? If I, the Queen, May help them, loose thy tongue, and let me know." But Pelles lift up an eye so far as she, She quail'd; and he, blesting, "I have no sword," Sprang from the door into the dark. The Queen Look'd hard upon her lover, he on her; And each foresaw the dolorous day to be: And all talk died, as in a grove all song Beneath the shadow of some bird of prey, Then a long silence came upon the hall, And Modred thought, "The time is hard at hand."

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

THAT moon which the bold Sir Bedivere First mead, and latest left of all the knights, Told, when the man was no more than a voice In the white winter of his age, to those With whom he dwelt, new faces, other minds.

Before that last weird battle in the West There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain kill'd In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain blown Along a wandering wind, and past his ear Went shuffling, '"Hollow, hollow all delight! Hall, king! I to-morrow thou shalt be away. Farewell! there is an isle of rest for thee. And I am blown along a wandering wind, And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight.' And fainter onward, like wild birds that change Their season in the night and wall their way From cloud to cloud, during the wakening dream Shri'll'd; but in going mingled with dim cries Far in the moonlit haze among the hills As of some lonely city sack'd by, night, When all is lost, and wife and child with wall Pass to new beds; and as 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 Mourne, 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 stead thy name and glory cling
To the high places decked with fountains blue.
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 heard the steps of Modred in the West,
And with him many of thy people, and knights
Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but grosser grown
Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.
Nill light in well they know thee for the king.
Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
"Far other is this battle in the West
Whereunto 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 fight as we are able.
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 bound of Lyonnesse,—
A land of old upheaven from the abyss.
By fire, to shuk into the abyss again;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
And the long mountain ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a moaning 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.
And in the mist steep over shore and sea,
Whereof the chill, to him who breathed 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 fought,
For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,
And friend and friend knew not 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 and strength 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 clash
Of battle-axes on satter'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, Insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,
Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboured of the lungs
In that close mist, and crying for the light,
Moans 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,
Thou art some where whelve of the long seas,
A dead hide fell; but when the dolorous day
Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came
A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
Rose, 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 wan wave
Blow'd and sank all golden decks, to see no more.

Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,
And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,
And rolling far along the gloomy shores
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.

"Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,
And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,
And beats upon the faces of the dead,
My dead, as the they had not died for me?—
O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fallen
Confusion, till I know not what I am,
Nor whence 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 stands,
Modred, unhallow'd, the traitor of thine house."

Then spake the King, "My house hath been my doom.
But ill may he that this traitor of my house
Who hatest but dwelt beneath one roof with me,
My house are rather they who sware my vows,
Yea, even while they brake them, own'd me king.
And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
When all the parry of my throne hath fall'd,
That quick or dead thou holdest me for king.
King am I, whate'er be their cry:
And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see
Yet ere I pass." And, uttering this, the king
Made at the man: then Modred smote his hege
Hard on the 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 battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonnesse about their lord.
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field.
A broken chancel 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 unsolds 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 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,—
Thou dost, and after me. Thou dost, and after me
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,
The PASSING OF ARTHUR

Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how In those days of old, my men use to arm Horse up from fast the bosom of the lake, Cloth'd in white samite, mystic, wonderful, Holding the sword—and how I row'd across And took it, and have worn it, like a king: And, whereas oft I am sung: In after-time, this also shall be known: But now delay not: take Excalibur, And slay 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. Address, alone, and smitten thr'd the helm. A little thing may harm a wounded man. Yet I thy best will all perform and full Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word." 

So saying, from the mind's shrine he stepped 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 sung, Shriil, 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 hill: For all the haft twinkled with diamond eparks, Myriads of topazslights, and jacinth-work Of sublimest jewelry. He gazed so long That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood, This way and that dividing the swift wind, In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd Bedivere to leave Excalibur concealed There in the many-knotted water-fags, That whistled stir 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 mere, 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 an honour conceived! Thy faith, sir, like a noble kniht: For surer sign had follow'd, either hand, Or voice, or else a motion of the mere. This is a shameful work for men to lie. 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, as he thought: But when he saw the wonder 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 thud 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, Seen up to be done, if a king demand An act unprofitable, against himself? The king is sick, and knows not what he does."

What record, or what role 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 feast of arms, Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur, Wrought by the busy hands 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 spoke 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, Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me! Authority forgets a dying king, Laid wroudt 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 all, Thou wouldest betray me for the precious hill: 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 if thou spare to sling 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 clutched 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 dip 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, lest 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 wonder hilt. Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him; But when I lock'd again, beheld an arm, Clothed 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 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
Item coming thereto his knees,
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 rising bore him thereto the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed:
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Item coming thereto his knees,
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 rising bore him thereto the place of tombs.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dene with stately forms
Black-stoiled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them
Rose
'A cry that shriv'led 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 murmur'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 calld 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
Smoke by the fresh beam of the hanging east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous caris—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust:
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the king:
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spar to plume a star of tournaments,
Shall throw the lists at Camelot, and charge
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 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 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 new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge.
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfills 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 then,
If thou wouldst clothe 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 island-valley of Avalon;
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, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Fed with her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swartby webe. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hnal
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

At length he grownd, and turning slowly clomb
The last hard footstep of that iron crag;
Thence mark'd the black bull 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 shrick'd and wail'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,
Sounds, 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 he could climb, and saw,
Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,
Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the king,
Down that 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 sun rose bringing the new year.
MISCELLANEOUS.

THE NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.
Dons't thou 'ear my 'arse's legs, as they canters away?  
Propatty, propatty, propatty—that's what I 'ears 'em say.  
Propatty, propatty, propatty—Sam, thou's an ass for thy psalms.  
Theer's moor sense 1 'one o' 'is legs nor in all thy braulne.

II.
Woa—theer's a Draws to pluck w'tha, Sam: yon's parson's ounce.  
Dons't thou know that a man mun be either a man or a mouse?  
Time to think on it then: for thou'll be twenty to weelk.*  
Propatty, propatty—woa then woa—let ma 'ear mys'n speak.

III.
Me an' thy mother, Sammy, 'as been a-talkin' o' thee;  
Thou 's been talkin' to muther, an' she been a tellin' it me.  
Thou 'll not marry for munny—thou's sweet upo' parson's lass—  
Noi—thou 'll marry for luvv—an' we boith on us thinks tha an ass.

IV.
Seal'd her todayy goa by—Saalnt's-daal—thay was ringing the bells.  
She's a beauty. thou thinks—an' soa is scoors o' gels,  
Them as 'as munny an' all—wot 's a beauty? —the flower as blaws.  
But propatty, propatty sticks, an' propatty, propatty graws.

V.
Do'ant be stunts;† taske time: I knaws what makes tha as mad.  
Warrn't I craazed fur the lasses mys'n when I war a lad?  
But I know'd a Quaker feller as often 'as towd ma this:  
"Doant thou marry for munny, but goa wheer munny is?"

VI.
An' I went wheer munny war: an' thy mother coom to 'and,  
W'l lots o' munny laid by, an' a nicelitsh bit o' land.  
Maybe she warnt a beauty: —I niver giv it a thowt—  
But warnt she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt?

VII.
Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weant 'a nowt when 'e 's dead,  
Man be a guiness, lad, or sammun, and addic her brest:  
Why I far 'e 's nobbyt a cutrate, an' weant nivir git naw 'igher:  
An' e made the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e coom'd to the shire.

VIII.
And thin 'e coom'd to the parsh w'th' lots o' 'Varlty debt,  
Stook to his taaln they did, an' 'e 'ant got shunt on 'em yet.  
An' 'e ligs on 'is back 't the grip, w'th noan to lend 'im a shove,  
Woorse nor a far-weller'di yowe: fur, Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

IX.
Luvv! what 's luvv! thou can luvv thy lass an' 'er munny too,  
Maskin' 'em goa together as they 've good right to do.  
Couldn I luvv thy mother by cause o' 'er mummy laid by?  
Nasty—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it: reason why.

* This week. † Obsolete. § Kern. ¶ Or saw-wettered—said of a sheep-lying on its back in the furrow.
THE VICTIM.

1.

A Plague upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low.
Then thorpè 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 about 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 foeman 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 furrow 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."

X.

Ay, an' thy mother says thou wants to marry the lass,
Coom a gentleman burn: an' we beith on us thinks th' an ass.
Wou then, propety, whitha?—an ass as near as may's nowt—^
Wou then, whitha? dangtha!—the bees is as fell as owt.

XI.

Break me a bit o' the ash for his 'ead, lad, out o' the fence!
Gentleman burn! what 's gentleman burn? is it abijus an' pace?
Propety, propety 's ivrithyng 'ere, an', Sammy, I'm blest
If it is n't the same oop yonder, fur them as 'as it 's the best.

XII.

The'n them as 'as munny as breaks into 'ouses an' steals,
Them as 'as costs to their hacks an' taikess their regular meals.
Nou, but it 's them as niver knaws wheer a meal 's to be 'ad.
Take my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad.

XIII.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun 'a bean a lazy lot,
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whiliver munny was got.
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leasways 'is munny wid 'id.
But 'e tued an' moid 'bein dead, an' 'e died a good un, 'e did.

XIV.

Look thou ther wheer Wrigglesby beck comes out by the 'ill! Feyerth 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 'a my notitious, Sammy, wheerby I means to stick;
But if thou marries a bad un, I 'll leave the land to Dick.—
Coom oop, propety, propety — that 's what I 'ears 'm sày —
Propety, propety, propety — canter an' canter away.

* Makes nothing.
† The flies are as fierce as anything.
WAGES.—THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.—LUCRETIUS.

The King was shaken with holy fear:
"The God," 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 was:
"We have his dearest,
His only son!"

6.
The rites prepared, the victim bared.
The knife uplifted 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,
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—
Glory of Virtue, to sigh, to struggle, to right the wrong—
Nay, but she amid 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 be 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 bask in a summer sky:
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

The 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 weight of 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 fulfilledst thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him thon 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.

LEUCILLA, wedded to Lucrætius, found
Her master cold; for when the morning flush
Of passion and the first embracè had died
Between them, tho' he loved her none the less,
Yet often when the woman heard his foot
Return from paces in the field, and ran
To greet him with a kis, the master took
Small notice, or anesthely, for—his mind
Half buried in some weightier argument,
Or fancy-born perhaps upon the rise
And long roll of the Hexameter—he past
To turn and ponder those three hundred rolls
Left by the Teacher whom he held divine.
She brook'd it not; but wasteful, 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 rain
Rushling; and once the flash of a thunderbolt—
Methought I never saw so fierce a fork—
Struck out the streaming mountain-side, and show'd
A riotous confinement of watercourses
Blanching and billowing in a hollow of it,
Where all but yester-ere was dusty-dry.

"Storm, and what dreams, ye holy Gods, what dreams!
For thrice I waken'd after dreams. Perchance
We do but recollect the dreams that came
Just ere the waking: terrible! for it seem'd
A void was made in Nature; all her bonds
Crack'd; and I saw the flaming atom-streams
And torrents of her myriad universes,
Rumbling along the illimitable lave,
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 pikes
His function of the woodland: but the next!
I thought that all the blood by Sylla shed
Came to dwell rattle like 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, curions in their art,
Hired animals, vile as those who made
The mulberry-faced Dictator’s orgies worse
Than aught they fable of the quiet Gods.
And hands they mixt, and yel’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, andhoveringly a sword
Now o’er and now under, now direct,
Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down shamed
At all that beauty; and as I stared, a fire,
The fire that left a rooless Ilios,
Shot out of them, and scorched 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 offered to thee then,
Forgetful how my rich procreation
 Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
In lays that will outlast thy Deity?

"Deity? say, thy worshippers. My tongue
Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of these
Angers thee most, or angers thee at all?
Not if thou be’st of those who far aloof
From envy, hate and pity, and spit and scorn,
Live the great life which all our greatest fain
Would follow, centred in eternal calm.

"Nay, if thou castst, 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 ne’er-herds were abroad:
Nor was that o’er her wounds wounder yet!
Her Deity false in human-amorous tears;
Nor whom her beardless apple-appirer
Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
Foot-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 lumpa and lumps are glad
Noosing the mother’s udder and the bird
Makes his heart voce amid the blaze of flowers
Which things appear the work of mighty Gods.

"The Gods! and if I go my work is left
Unfinished—’tis I go. The Gods, who bant
The incid interspace 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 moans,
Nor earth all such as sorrow me that to war
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 presst my footsteps into his, and meant
My Mentor in a sudden grasp of peace.
Of dower 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, Delfis, or of older use
All-seeing Hyperion—what wilt thou will—
Has mounted yonder: since he never sware,
Except his wrath were wrenched on wretched man,
That he would only shine among the dead
Hereafter: takest! for never yet on earth
Could dead flesh creepe, or bits of roasting ox
Moan round the spit—nor knows he what he sees:
King of the East altho’ he seem, and girt
With song and flame and fragrance, slowly walks
His golden feet on those emperured stairs
That climb into the windy halls of heaven:
And here he glances on an eye newborn,
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 means a friend in vain,
Not thankful that his troubles are no more.
And me, altho’ his fire is on my face
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell
Whether I mean this day to end myself,
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,
That men like soldiers may not quit the post
Allotted by the Gods: but he that holds
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 earthquake—ay, and gout and stone, that break
Body toward death, and pale, death-in-life,
And wretched age—and worst disease of all,
Those prodigies of myrid nakednesses,
And twisted shapes of last, unspeakable,
Abominable, strangers at my heart?
Not welcome, harpies miring every dish,
The phantom husks of something foully done,
And fleeting through the boundless universe,
And blasting the long quiet of my breast
With animal heat and dire insan
ty.

"How should the mind, except it loved them, clasp
These Idols to herself? or do they fall
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the flakes
In a fall of snow, and so press in, perforce
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,
And the Least, far into that council-hall
Where sit the best and stateliest of the land?

"Can I not fling this horror off me again,
Seeing with how great ease Nature can smile,
Balmier and nobler from her bath of storm,
At random ravage? 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 snared
Pia and Fannus, raster Gods? a tale
To laugh at—more a laugh at myself—
For look! what is it? there! yon arbutus
Totters: a noiseless riot underneath
Strikes through the wood, sets all the tops quiver-
In—
The mountain quickens into Nymph and Faun;
And here an Oread—how the sun delights
To glance and shift about her slippery sides,
And the red knaps and lops round her heel,
And bud'd boom-peak—who this way runs before the rest—
A satyr, a satyr, see—
Follows; 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 butted his rough brother-brothe.
For lusty, or lusty blood or provender:
I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and she
Leaves him as well as a juvenile heel,
Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-wing,
With neighs to me: will she fling herself,
Shameless upon me? Catch her, goat-foot: nay,
Hide, hide them, million-myrtilled wildness,
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 chilblain wont and ancient use I call—
I thought I lived securly as your bishop's heel,
No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-spite,
No madness of ambition, avarice, none,
No larger feast that under pian or plane
With neighbors laid along the grass, to take
Our mealy cups and shake us friendly turn,
Affirming each his own philosophy—
Nothing to mar the sober majesties
Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.
But now it seems some unseen monster lays
His vast and filthy hands upon
Wrenching it backward into; and spoils
My bliss in being; and it was not great:
For save when shutting reasons up in rhythm,
Or Heliconian honey in living words,
To make a truth less harsh, I often grew
Tired of so much within our little life,
Of so little in our little life—
Poor little life that toddles half an hour
Crow'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 to do it? And what man,
What Roman would be dragged in triumph thus?
Not I; not he, who bears one name with her.
When first I saw the dateless horde of kings,
When brooking not the Targule in her veins,
She made her blood in sight of Collatine
And all his peers, flushing the glistening air,
Spout from the mailed fountain in her heart.
And from it spring 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 mending far apart
Those blind beginnings that have made me man,
Dush them anew 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
Shatter'd into one earthquake in one day
Cracks all to pieces,—and that hour perhaps
Is not so far when momentary man
Shall seem no more a something to himself,
But be, his horses and homes and fames,
And even his bones long laid 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 lxionian wheel,
And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake, and plucks
The mortal soul from out immortal hell,

Shall stand: ay, surely: then it falls at last,
And perish's as I must; for O Thou,
Passionate bride, divine Tranquillity
Yielded after by the wisest of the wise,
Who fail to find thee, being as thou art
Without one pleasure and without one pain,
Howbeit I know then surely must be mine
Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
I woo thee roughly, for thou canst not
How roughly men may woo thee so they win—
Thus—thus: the soul flies out and dies in the air."

With that he drove the knife into his side:
She heard him raging; heard him fall; ran in,
Best broke her hands and hair, cried out upon herself
As having fallen in duty to him, shriek'd
That she but meant to win him back, fell on him,
Clasp'd him, kiss'd him, wail'd: he answer'd, "Care not
What matters? All is over: Fare thee well!"

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

(The poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio.)

A young lover, Julian, whose cousin and foster-dater, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the struggle against it. He speaks of having been haunted in dreams by visions and the sound of bells, sometimes tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the knees, and a witness to it completes the tale.)

He files the event: he leaves the event to me:
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the bells,
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and heart—
But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,
As who should say "Continue." Well, he had
One golden hour—of triumph shall I say?
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour of his!
He moved thro' all of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—but now—

Whether they were his lady's marriage-bells,
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl,
Were wedded, and our Julian came again
Home, to his beloved house, to his mother's house among the pines.
But there, their gloom, the Mountains and the Bay,
The whole land weigh'd him down as Ætna does
The Giant of Mythology: he would go,
Would leave the land forever, and had gone
Surely, but for a whisper "Go not yet."
Some warning, and divinely as it seems'd
By that which follow'd—but of this I deem
As of the visions that he told—the event
Glimpse back upon them in his after life,
And partly made them—tho' he knew it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look at her—
No, not for months: but, when the eleventh moon
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and said,
Would you could toll me out of life, but found—
All softly as his mother broke it to him—
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady dead—
Dead, and had lain three days without a pulse:
All that look'd on her had pronounced her dead.
And so they bore her (for in Julian's land
They never nail a dumb head up in elm),
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of heaven,
And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then? not die: he is here and hale—
Not plunge head foremost from the mountain there,
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:
Oh no, 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 lips. She is his 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 it 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 moonlight on her face;
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
Drowned 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
Peal'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 living hearts,
He knelt that had beat with such a love as mine—
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as her—
He softly put his arm about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till helpless death
And silence made him bold—nay, but I wrong him,
He reverenced his dear lady even in death;
But, placing his true hand upon her heart,
"O, you warm heart," he moan'd, "not even death
Can chill you all at once:" then starting, thought
His dreams had come again. "Do I wake or sleep?
Or am I made immortal, or my love
Mortal 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 feebler motion underneath his hand.
But when at last his doubts were satisfy'd
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 he bear'd 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 rais'd 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 wait;
"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 casts me out," she wept, "and goes—" a wall
That seeming something, yet was nothing, born
Not from believing mind, but shatter'd nerve,
Yet haunt'ing Julian, as her own reproof
At some precipitance in her herial.
Then, when her own true spirit had return'd,
"O yeids, 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 one and revel with me for an hour, 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 offering of you
To him you love." And faintly she reply'd,
"And I will do your will, and some shall know."
Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,
And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I never
Sat at a coster; for all round his hall
From column on to column, as in a wood,
Not such as here—an equatorial one,
Great garlands swung and blossomed; and beneath,
Heathenism, and ancient miracles of Art,
Chalices 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 purest rubies—cups
Where nymph and god ran ever round in gold—
Others of glass as costly—some with gems
Moveable and resettable 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 old was, had in it rare or fine
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 seemed
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,
And that resolved self-exile from a land
He never would revisit, such a feast
So rich, so strange, and stranger even than rich,
But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
Two great funereal curtains, looping down,
Parted a little ere they met the floor,
And showed a picture of the dead.
Some years before, and falling hid the frame.
And just above the parting was a lamp:
So the sweet figure folded round with might
Seemed stepping out of darkness with a smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate and drank
And might—the wines being 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
Arsing, show'd he drank 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
Will honor those who feast with him, he brings
And shows them whatsoever he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom—"

Pacing 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 bear me to the close.
This custom steps yet further when the guest
Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.
For after he has shown him gems or gold,
He brings and sets before him in rich guise
That which he is as beautiful as the which was leaved.
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 I propose to-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 leave him in the public way to die.
I knew another, not so long ago,

Who found the dying servant, took him home,
And fed, and cherished, till he saved his life.
I ask you now, should this first master claim
His service, whom does it belong to? him
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 same 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 begining languidly—his loss
Weight'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 saver—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 seemed no more than gilded air,
Flying by such fine ear on Eastern grace,
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 roses, 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—float'd 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-beating, and her eyes upon her feet,
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
But he she carried, him nor lights nor feast
Dazzed or amazed, nor eyes of men; who cared
Only to see his own, and staring wide
And hungering for the gift and jewel'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 I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,
And heard him muttering, "So like, so like;
She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin 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 but 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 fell 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,
Lest 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 claspt 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.
TIMBUCTOO.*

"Deep in that lost-haunted inland lies
A mystic city, goal of high engrossers."—CHAPMAN.

I stood upon the Mountain which o'erslopes
The narrow seas, whose rapids interval
Parta Afric from green Europe, when the Sun
Had fall'n below th' Atlantic, and above
The silent heavens were blem'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 infax'd
The limits of his prowess, pillars high
Long time erazed from earth; even as the Sea
When weary of wild toread buildeth up
Huge mounds whereby to stay his yeasty waves.
And much I mused on legends qnant and old
Which whilome won the hearts of all on earth
Toward their brightness, ev'n as 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 Atlantica, 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 for' th' Battalion'ean voice,
Among the inner columns far retired
At midnight, in the lone Acropolis,
Before the awful genius of the place
Knocks the pale face of the deep faith, the white
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,
Thrones of the Western wave, fair Islands green?
Where are your moonlight halls, your cedarn 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, seraph-trod,
Wound through your great Elysian solitude,
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 coronas and glorites, such as gird
The un fading foreheads of the Saints in Heaven?
For nothing visible, they say, had birth
In that bleak ground, but it was played about
With its peculiar glory.
Then I raised
My voice and cried, "Wide Afric, doth thy Sun
Lighten, thy hills unfold a city as fair

As those which starred the night of the elder world?
Or is the rumor of thy Timbuctoo
A dream as full as those of ancient time?"
A curve of whitening, flashing, ebbing light:
A rustling 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 spots as dance athwart the eyes
Of those that gaze upon the noonday Sun.
Girt with a zone of flashing gold beneath
His breast, and compassed round about his brow
With triple arch of everchanging bows,
And circled with the glory of living light
And alternation of all hues, he stood.
"O child of man, why muse thou here alone
Upon the Mountain, on the dreams of old
Which filled the earth with passing loneliness,
Which flung strange musick on the howling whide,
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 excitation 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 thrillingly distinct and keen.
I saw
The smallest grain that daunted the dark earth.
The indistinctest atom in deep air,
The Moon's white cities, and the opal width
Of her small glowing lakes, her silver heights
Unvisited with dew of vajrant cloud,
And the unsounded, unseconced 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 unimagined depth
And harmony of planet-girdled suns
And moon-encircled planets, wheel in wheel,
Arched the wan 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 ausieux ear.
A maze of piercing, trackless, thrilling thoughts,
Involving and embracing each with each,
Rapid as fire, inextricably linked,
Expanding momentarily with every slight
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 lape
Disjointed, crumbling from their parent 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

ADDITIONAL POEMS.
PRINTED EXCLUSIVELY IN THIS EDITION.

A Poem which obtained the Chancellor's Medal at the Cambridge Commencement, MDPCCXXIX. BY A. TENNSON, of Trinity Coll.
Than its precursor, till the eye in vain
Amid the wild unrest 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 simulacra
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 delectation. Where is he, that borne
Adown the slupeg of an arrowy stream,
Could link his shaloip to the fleeting edge,
And muse midway with philosophic calm
Upon the wondrous laws which regulate
The ferences 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 aloft
Wunow the purple, bearing on both sides
Double display of star-like wings, which burn
Fun-like and fluted 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 undated 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'ercaanoped. Beyond
In diamond light up spring the dazzling peaks
Of Pyramids, as far surpassing earth's
As heaven than earth is fairer. Each aloft
Upon his narrowed eminence bore globes
Of wheeling suns, or stars, or semblances
Of either, showering circular abyss
Of radiance. But the glory of the place
Stood out a pilled front of barished gold,
Interminably high, if gold it were
Or metal more ethereal, and beneath
Two doors of blinding 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 skirting of a garment hung,
And glimpse of multitude of multitudes
That ministered around — 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 swolin 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 Summer'stide,
And in red Autumn when the winds are wild
With gambols, and when full-voiced Winter roofs
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 classes 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 thou with ravished sense
Listenest the lordly music flowing from
The illimitable years. I am the Spirit,
The permeating life which courseth through
All th' intricate and labyrinthine veins
Of the great vine of Fable, 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 men's hopes and fears take refuge in
The fragrance of its complicated glooms,
And coolimplaeched twilights. Child of man,
Seest thou thy river, whose transcendent wave,
Forth issuing from the darkness, windeth through
The argent streets o' the city, imaging
The soft inversion of her tremendous domes,
Her gardens frequent with the stately palm,
Her pagodas hung with music of sweet belle,
Her obelisks of ranged chrysolite,
Minarets and towers? Lo! how he passeth by,
And gulpeth himself in sands, as not enduring
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 time
To keen Discovery; soon ye 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, mud-walled, barbarian settlements.
How changed from this fair citv?"

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."
ELEGIACS.—THE "HOW" AND THE "WHY."

POEMS PUBLISHED IN THE EDITION OF 1830, AND OMITTED IN LATER EDITIONS.

LOWFLOWING breezes are roaming the broad valley
Drummed in the glooming;
Thro' the blackstemmed pines only the far river
Shines.
Creeping through blossomy rushes and bowers of
Roseblooming bushes,
Drowned by the popular tall rivulets babble and fall.
Barketh the shepherd-dog cheerly; the grasshopper
Caroloth clearly;
Deeply the turtle coots; shrilly the owlet haloes;
Winds creep; dews fall chillly; in her first sleep
Earth breathes stilly;
Over the pools in the burn watergnats murmur and
Mourn.
Sadly the far kine loweth: the glimmering water
Outfloweth;
Twin peaks shadowed with pine slope to the dark
Byline.
Lowthroned Hepper is stayed between the two
Peaks; but the Nalad
Throbeth in wild unrest holds him beneath in her
Breast.
The ancient poetess sungeth that Hepperus 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 Hepper, unkind, where is my sweet Ros-
Salind?

THE "HOW" AND THE "WHY."

I am any man's suitor,
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 future,
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 its 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 groans, and the white willows
Sigh?
Why deep is not high, and high is not deep? Whether we wake, or whether we sleep? Whether we sleep, or whether we die? How you are you? why I 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 them 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 L

The little bird pipeth—"why? why?"
In the summer woodes when the sun falls low,
And the great bird sits on the opposite bough,
And stares in his face, and shouns "how? how?"
And the black owl scowls 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 steepile 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-HATE SENSITIVE MIND NOT IN
UNITY WITH ITSELF.

On God! my God! have mercy now.
I faint, 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 extreme misery
Of ignorance, I should require
A sign l 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 saintlike glances
Like these 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, whene'er Earth goes to earth, with grief, not fear,
With hopeful grief, were passing sweet: A grief not unafraid, 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 breasts and men,
And all the Norland whirlwind showers
From open vaults, and all the sea
O'erwashes with sharp salts, again
Shall fleet together all, and be
Induced 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,
They light his little life alway;
He hath no thought of coming woes;
He hath no care of life or death,
Scarcely outward signs of joy arise,
Because the Spirit of happiness
And perfect rest so inward is;
And lovest so his innocent heart,
Her temple and her place of birth,
Where she would ever wish to dwell,
Life of the fountain there, beneath
Its gallent springs, and far apart,
Hating to wander out on earth,
Or breathe into the hollow air,
Whose chilliness would make visible
Her subtil, warm, and golden breath,
Which mixing with the infant's blood,
Fulfillis him with beatitude.
Oh, I knew it was a special care
Of God, to fortify from doubt,
To arm in proof, and guard 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 outpoured in holiest prayer—
For me unworthy!—and beheld
Thy mild deep eyes upraised, that knew
The truth of faith, and
And the clear spirit shining through.
Oh! wherefore do we grow awry
From roots which strike so deep? why dare
Paths in the desert? Comid not I
Brow myself down, thereby the last knelt,
To th'earth—until the ice would melt
Here, and I feel as thou hast felt?
What Devil had the heart to scathe
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
Prevalled not thy pure prayers? Why pray
To one who needs and can save
But will not? Great in faith, and strong
Against the grief of circumstance
Wert thou, and yet unheard? What if
Thou pleasted still, and seest me drive
Through utter dark a full-sailed ship,
Unplotted! I the echoing dance
Of roaring whirlwinds, stowing low
Unto the death, not sunk! I know
At matins and at evensong,
That thou, if thou wert yet alive,
In deep and daily prayer, wouldst strive
To reconcile me with thy God.
Albeit, my hope is gray, and cold
At heart, thou wouldest murmur still—
"Bring this lamb back into thy fold,
My Lord, if so 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 blitherto I had denied
And had rejected God—that Grace
Would drop from his obtruding 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. Alius!
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 frailty there, where man
Hath moored and rested? Ask the sea
At midnight, when the crisp slope waves
After a tempest, rib and fret
The broadlimbáséd beach, why he
Simmers not like a mountain torn?
Wherefore his ridges are not curbs
And ripples of an inland meer?
Wherefore he moaneth thus, nor can
Draw down into his vexéd pools
All that blue heaven which hues and paves
The other? I am too forlorne,
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 unenmized 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 firm 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 herbs, and sleeps, or lies
The horned valleys all about,
And hollows of the fringed hills
In summerheats, with piacid lows
Unfearing, till his own blood flows
About his hoof. And last 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-pains
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,
Plaets from his heels and thin limbs,
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 laws
Of life and death, and things that seem,
And things that be, and analyze
Our double nature, and compare
All creeds till we have found the one,
If one there be? I fear
All may not doubt, but every where
Some must clasp Idols. Yet, my God,
Whom call I Idol? Let thy dove
Shadow me over, and my sins
THE BURIAL OF LOVE.—TO ---------—SONGS.

I.

Death standeth by;
She will not die;
With glazed eye
She looks at her grave: she cannot sleep:
Ever alone
She maketh her moan:
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.

II.

SONG.

I. 

Tut linskwhite and the thrice-cock
Have voices sweet and clear;
All in the bloomed May,
They from the blousy brest
Call to the fleeting year,
If that he would them hear
And stay.
Alas! that one so beautiful
Should have so dull a car.

II. 

Fair year, fair year, thy children call,
But thou art deaf as death;
All in the bloomed May:
Whom thy light perished
That from thee issueth,
Our life evanescth:
Oh! stay.
Alas! that lips so cruel-dumb
Should have so sweet a breath!

III. 

Fair year, with brows of royal love
Thou comest, as a king;
All in the bloomed May.
Thy golden largess slung,
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 prithee pass not on;
If thou dost leave the sun,
Delight is with thee gone.
Oh! stay.
Thou art the fairest of thy fere,
We prithee pass not on.

TO ---------.

SAINTED Juliet! dearest name!
If to love be life alone,
Divinest Juliet,
I love thee, and live; and yet
Love unreturned 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 glomming light
Of middle night
So cold and white,
Worn Sorrow sits by the moaning wave,
Beside her are laid
Her mastsick and spade,
For she hath half delved her own deep grave.
Alone she is there:
The white clouds drizzle: her hair falls looser;
Her shoulders are bare;
Her tears are mixed with the beaded dews.

* "His bright hair is shining wondrous."—Chaucer, Knight's Tale.
II.
When we laugh, and our mirth
Apes the happy vein,
We’re so kin to earth,
Pleasance fathers pain—
Ah! wealway!

Madness laugheth loud:
Laughter bringeth tears:
Eyes are worn away
Till the end of fears
Cometh in the shroud,
Ah! wealway!

III.
All is change, woe or weal:
Joy is Sorrow’s brother;
Grief and gladness steal
Symbols of each other;
Ah! wealway!

Larks in heaven’s cope
Sing: the culvers mourn
All the livelong day.
Be not all forlorn:
Let us weep in hope—
Ah! wealway!

—Nothing Will Die—

When will the stream be awear of flowing
Under my eye?
When will the wind be awear of blowing
Over the sky?
When will the clouds be awear of fleeting
When will the heart be awear of beating?
And nature die?
Never, oh! never, nothing will die;
The stream flows,
The wind blows,
The cloud flees,
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 too long ago.
Earth is dry to the centre,
But spring a new comer—
A spring rich and strange,
Shall make the winds 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 morn
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 south winds are blowing
Over the sky.
One after another the white clouds are fleeting;
Every heart this Maymorning 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 flee;
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 merrymaking.
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 check paling.
The strong limbs falling;
Ice with the warm blood mixing;
The eyeballs 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 morn
Ye will never see
Through eternity.
All things were born.
Ye will come never more,
For all things must die.

—Hero to Leander—

On 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 kiss should 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 hisses,
And the loud sea roars below.

Thy heart beats through thy rosy limbs,
So gladly doth it Steele;
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 brine
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 moring sand.
And when thou art dead, Leader,
My soul must follow thee!
Oh go not yet, my love,
Thy voice is sweet and low;
The deep salt wave breaks in above
Those marble steps below.
The turrettars are wet
That lead into the sea.
Leader! go not yet.
The pleasant stars 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 varvycolored circumstance
The imperishable presences serene,
Colossal, without form, or sense, or sound,
Blind shadows but unwavining presences
Fourfaced to four corners of the sky:
And yet again, three shapes, fronting one,
One forward, one respectful, three but one:
And yet again, again and evermore,
For the first two were not, but only seemed,
One shadow in the midst of a great light,
One reflex from eternity on time,
One mighty countenance of perfect calm.
Awful with most invariable eyes.
For him the silent congregated hours,
Daughters of time, divinely tall, beneath
Severe and yonfhful brows, with shining eyes
Smiling a godlike smile (the lucent light)
Of earliest youth pierced through and through with all
Keen knowledges of low-embowced old
Upheld, and ever bold aloft the cloud
Which droops lawking 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
Remaining 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 welligh reached
The last, which with a region of white flame,
Pure without heat, into a larger air
Uprising, and an ether of black blue,
Inveesteth and ligirds all other lives.

But an insect little and strong,
Rowing the seeded summer flowers.
Prove their falsehood and thy quarrel,
Vanating on thine airy feet.
Clap thy shielded sides and carol,
Carol clearly, churrup sweet.
Thou art a mailed warrior in youth and strength complete:
 Armed cap-àpie
Pall fair to see;
Unknowing fear,
Undefeating loss.
A gallant cavalier,
Sans peser 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 breedeth then 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 blushly,
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,
Died wax 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 foundalpregnant 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 wondrous 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 might,
The herald lightning's stary bound,
The vocal spring of bursting bloom,
The naked summer's glowing birth,
The troublesome autumn's sallow gloom,
The hoarsehead winter-paving earth
With sheeny white, are full of strange
Astonishment and boundless change.

Each sun which from the centre slings
Grand muses and redundant fire
The burning helms, the mighty rings,
The marm'rous planets' rolling choir,
The globesfilled arch that, cleaving air,
Lost in its own effulgence sleeps,
The lawless comets as its grace,
And thunder through the sapphire 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 white 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 sprout
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.

Unroof the shrines of clearest vision,
In honor of the silver-decked morn;
Long hath the white wave of the virgin light
Driven back the billow of the dreamful dark.
Thou all unwittingly prolongest night,
Though long ago listening the polied dark,
With eyes dropt downward through the blue serene,
Over heaven's parapet the angels lean.

SONNET.
Could I outwear my present state of woe
With one brief winter, and indulge 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 bowers,
Moving his crest to all sweet plots of flowers
And watered valleys where the young birds sing;
Could I then hope in 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 woolug;
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 arroways of the bridged pearl,
And portals of pure silver, walks the moon.
Walk on, my soul, nor crouch to agony,
Turn cloud to light, and bitterness to joy,
And draw to gold with glorious alchemy,
Beating the 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 vengeant glooms of truth;
So shall the blessing of the meek be on thee;
So in thine hour of dawn, the body's youth,
An honourable old shall come upon thee.

SONNET.
Shall the hag Evil die with child of Good,
Or propagate again her loathed kind,
Thronging the cells of the diseased mind,
Hateful with hanging checks, a withered brood,
Though hourly passtred on the salient blood! Oh! that the wind which bloweth cold or heat
Would shatter and o'erbear 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 thrones, and slake
With points of blastborne hall their heated eyne;
So their wan limbs no more might come between
The moon and the moon's reflex in the night,
Nor blot with floating shades the solar light.

SONNET.
The pallid thunderstricken sigh for gain,
Down an ideal stream they ever float,
And sailing on Pactolus in a boat,
Drown soul and sense, while wistfully they strain
Weak eyes upon the glistening sands that rove
The understream. The wise, could he behold
Cathedral caverns of thickribbid gold
And branching silvers of the central globe,
Would marvel from so beautiful a sight

TO A LADY SLEEPING.
O thou whose fringed lids I gaze upon,
Through whose dim brain the wingèd dreams are borne,
LOVE.—THE KRAKEN.—ENGLISH WAR-SONG.—NATIONAL SONG.

How scorn and ruin, pain and hate could flow:
But hatred in a gold cave else to blow;
Pleased with her hair, in flail of argent light
Silt into gold, a snake her forehead white,
And skims the colour from her trembling lips.

LOVE.

I.

Tor, from the first, unborn, undying love,
Albeit we gaze not on thy glories near,
Before the face of God didst breathe and move,
Though light and pain and ruin and death reign here.
Thou foldest, like a golden atmosphere,
The very throne of the eternal God:
Passing through thee the edicts of his fear
Are swallowed into music, borne abroad
By the loud winds, though they unspread the sea,
Even from its central deeps: thine empery
Is over all: thou wilt not break the eclipse;
Thou dost and returnest to His lips
Like lightning: thou dost ever breath 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
Atheart 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 majesty
Hollowed in awful chasms of wheeling gloom,
Making their day dim, so we gaze on thee.
Come, thou of many crowns, white-robed love,
Oh! rend the veil in twain: all men adore thee:
Heaven crieth after thee; earth wisth 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 gaze upon thee now,
As on a serpent in his agouile.
Awestricken Indians: what time laid low
And crashing the thick fragrant reeds he lies,
When the new year warmbreathed on the Earth,
Waiting to light him with her purple skies,
Calls to him by the fountain to unprise.
Already with the pangs of a new birth
Strain the hot spheres of his convulsed eyes,
And in his withlings awful hues begin
To wander down his sable-sheen side,
Like light on troubled waters: from within
Anon he rusheth forth with merry din,
And in him light and joy and strength abide:
And from his brows a crown of living light
Looks through the thickstemmed woods by day and night.

THE KRAKEN.

Below the thunders of the upper deep;
Far, far beneath in the abyssal sea,
His mael, dreamless, marble head,
The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sunlight lie
About his shadowy sides: above him dwell
Huge sponges of millennial growth and height;
And far away into the sickly light,
From many a wondrous root and secret cell
Unnumbered and enormous polypi
Winnow with giant fins the slumbering there.
Then hath he lain for ages and will lie
Battening upon huge seaworms in his sleep,
Until the latter shall heat the deep;
Then once by man and angels to be seen,
In roaring lie 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?
In like thing what he fears, and none shall grieve
For the man who fears to die:
But the withering scorn of the many shall cleave
To the man who fears to die.

CHORUS.—Shout for England! etc.

Hark! hark! shuteth—the ancient enemy
On the side of the hill his banner rise;
They stream like fire in the skies:
Hold up the Lion of England on high
Till it dazzle and blind his eyes.

CHORUS.—Shout for England! etc.

Come along! we alone of the earth are free;
The child in our cradles is bolder 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.

CHORUS.—Shout for England! etc.

There standeth our ancient enemy;
Will he dare to battle with the foe?
Spur along! spur amain! charge to the light:
Charge! charge to the light!
Hold up the Lion of England on high
Shout for God and our right!

CHORUS.—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 shrieve 'em,
For the devil a whit we heed 'em:
As for the French, God speed 'em
Unto their hearts desire,
And the merry devil drive 'em
Through the water and the fire.

FULL Chor—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 maid's like English maid's,
So beautiful as they be.

CHORUS.—For the French, etc.
DUALISMS.—WE ARE FREE.—Oi ἐπώνυμη.

DUALISMS.
Two bees within a crystal flowerbell rocked,
Hum a loveplay 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, lilygarlands ever stringing:
Both in blooming white silk are frocked:
Like, unlike, they roam together
Under a summervault of golden weather:
Like, unlike, they sing together
Side by side.
Mid-May's darling golden lock'd,
Summer's tawny diamond eyed.

WE ARE FREE.
Tun winds, as at their hour of birth,
Leasing upon the wing'd sea,
Breathed low around the rolling earth
With mellow preludes, "We are free."
The streams through many a filled row
Down carolling to the crispèd sea,
Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow
Atween the blossoms, "We are free."

Oi ἐπώνυμη.
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.

OCCASIONAL POEMS.

THE SKIPPING-ROPE.*
Sure never yet was Antelope
Could skip so lightly by.
Stand off, or else my skipping-robe
Will hit you in the eye.
How lightly whirrs the skipping-robe!
How fairy-like you fly!
Go, get you gone, you mose and mope—
I hate that silly 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.
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, you, that made a noise,
And ehook a mane in papillotes.
And once you tried the Muses too:
You failed, Sir: therefore now you turn,

* Omitted from the edition of 1842.
† Published in Poem, Feb. 28, 1849, signed ArtiBlades.
AFTER-THOUGHT.*

Ah, God! the petty fools of rhyme,
That shriek and sweat in piggy war
Before the stony face of Time,
And bide 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 spine;—

And strive to make an inch of room
For their sweet selves, and can not hear
The silent Letho rolling down
On them and theirs, and all things here:—

When one small torch of Charity
Could lift them nearer Godlike State,
Than if the crowded Orb should cry
Like those that cried DIANA great.

And I too talk, and lose the torch
I talk of. Surely, after all,
The noblest answer unto such
Is kindly silence when they bawl.

SONNET

TO WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY.†

FAREWELL, Macready, since to-night we part.
Full-handed thunders often have confest
Thy power, well-need 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 purer thro' their art.

Thine is it, that our Drama did not die,
Nor flicker down to brainless pantomime,
And those glit gauds men-children swarm to see.
Farewell, Macready; moral, grave, sublime.

Our Shakespeare's bland and universal eye
Dwell'd pleased, thro' twice a hundred years, on thee.

BRITONS, GUARD YOUR OWN;‡

Rise, Britons, rise, if manhood be not dead;
The world's last tempest deaths overheard:
The Pope has bless'd him;
The Church care'st him;
He triumphs; may we be shall stand alone.
Britons, guard your own.

His ruthless host is bought with plander'd gold,
By lying priests the peasants' votes control'd.
All freedom vanish'd,
The true men banish'd,
He triumphs; may we be 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 true cry:
God save the Nation,
The Toleration,
And the free speech that makes a Briton known.
Britons, guard your own.

Rome's nearest daughter now is captive France,
The Jesuit laughs, and reckoning on his chance,
Would unreleas'd,
Kill all dissenting,
Till we were left to fight for truth alone.
Britons, guard your own.

Call home your ships across Ilascayan tide,
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, yeomen,
Like those bowmen,
Till your bails 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 bridle
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!
Although 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 censure went too far;
That our free press should cease to bawl,
Not stingle the fiery Frenchman into war.
It was an ancient privilege, my lords,
To sling what' 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, 'en by silence, sanction lies.
It might safe 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 Envie 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 save a tyrant o'er.
HANDS ALL ROUND.—THE WAR.—1865-1866.

Better the waste Atlantic roll'd
On her and us and ours forevermore.
What I 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.
Pray for our first Charles by force we wrung our claim.
Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,
And flung the burren of the second James.
I say we never fear'd and as for these,
We broke them on the land, we drove them on the seas.

And you, my lords, you make the people muse,
In doubt if you be of our Baron's 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 coasts!
They knew the precious things they had to guard:
For us, we will not spare the tyrant one hard word.

Though niggard throns of Manchester may bawl,
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 Thermopyle shall stand,
And hold against the world the honor of the land.

HANDS ALL ROUND.

Fraser 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 lope the monderled 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 Poorio's nelsons den,
From trodden limbs and tortured nales!
We curse the crimes of southern kings,
The Ruselian 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 marital progress only charms?
Yet tell her—better to be free
Than vanish all the world in arms.
Her frantic city's flashing lights
But for, 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 tyrant powers
To fight thy mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with ours.

God the tyrant's cause confound!
To our dear kinsmen 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!
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 foemen are her foes,
She comprehends the race she rules.

Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To our dear kinsmen in the West, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

THE WAR.*

There 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.

Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, ready to meet the storm!

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?

Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!
Let your Reforms for a moment go,
Look to your butts and take good aims.

Better a rotten borough or so,
Than a rotten fleet or a city in flames!

Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

Form, be ready to do or die!

Form in Freedom's name and the Queen's!
True, that we have a faithful ally,
But only the Devil knows what he means.

Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

T.

1865-1866.†

I swoon on a tower in the wet,
And New Year and Old Year met,
And winds were roaring and blowing;
And I said, "O years that meet in tears,
Have ye aught that is worth the knowing?
Science enough and exploring,
Wanderers coming and going,
Matter enough for deploring,
But aught that is worth the knowing?"

* London Times, May 9, 1889.
† "Good Words," March, 1886.
Seas at my feet were flowing,
Waves on the shingle pouring,
Old Year roaring and blowing,
And New Year blowing and roaring.

ON A SPITEFUL LETTER.*

Here, 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.

O foolish bard, is your lot so hard,
If men neglect your pages?
I think not much of yours or of mine:
I hear the roll of the ages.

—

This fallen leaf, isn't fame as brief?
My rhymes may have been the stronger.
Yet hate me not, but abide your lot;
I last but a moment longer.

O faded leaf, isn't fame as brief?
What moon is here for a luster?
Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,
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!

O summer leaf, isn't life as brief?
But this is the time of hollies.
And my heart, my heart is an evergreen:
I hate the spites and the follies.

* "Once a Week," January 4, 1865.

THE END.