

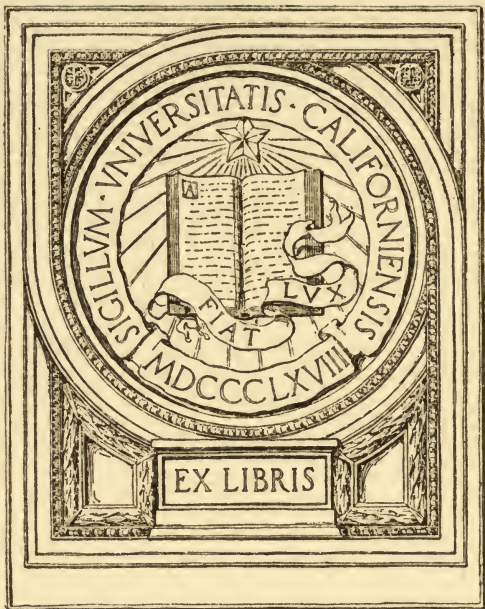
VISIONS OF THE EVENING

BY
JOHN G. FLETCHER

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BY
JOHN G. FLETCHER

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TO THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF
CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

BAUDELAIRE, green flower that sways
Over the morass of misery
Painfully, for days on days,
Till it falls, without a sigh:

Brooding bronze-wrought image that
(Lit by a mineral fire which strains
Upwards from a desert flat)
Stands on hidden, noisome drains:

Laughter, mockery, and woe,
Mingled in a moaning cry
Which bursts out from hell below
To the sacred Throne on high:

Rending veils that keep unseen
God, the Maker of despair,
Proving (lesson of life's scene!)
That the Throne is empty there:

Bidding, in hoarse-whispered tones,
That the great Consoler rise:
Satan, take Thy weary ones
Far from helpless lands and skies,

To that tomb where nothing is,
Where no joys can do us harm,
But the worm's soft gnawing kiss
Keeps us faint and still and warm!

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

Baudelaire, man's utmost sigh
Surging, like a clarion call,
To the Judgment held on high
Over everyone and all :

Summoning everything to death
Since they would not bend the knee
Unto Lucifer, who hath
Power over air and sea :—

Be the loadstar of my song,
On the chilly seas of night :
Where the lurid lamps of wrong
Glimmer to deceive the sight :

Be the beacon of my soul
In the night, as in the day ;—
Let thy vast death-rhythms toll,
Till my sorrow's borne away.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

INVOCATION TO EVENING

O EVENING, steal into the silent city,
And touch with your chill fingers the droop-
ing buds
Of all the street-lamps, touch and make them bloom,
O Evening, make them burst in flower and sway
Fascinated over their long palpitant reflections in
the water ;
Make them stand ranked on the dully smouldering
pavement,
Make them crouch and glimmer in long bare-
branched parks,
Where bowed shapes hurry homewards : make them
gleam
Far-off, unreal, in the haze of sunken streets,
Where the dreamers sit immobile in the doorways
Dreaming they have followed the sun : O make
them flare
And flame within the city madly, while
You shake about them deeper darkness still,
Till night is perfect : but do not think, O Evening,
To light one torch within my shuttered heart.

I have seen the shadowy shapes of five thousand
Evenings
Brusquely or stealthily grapple with the day,
And bear its wasted corpse into the darkness!
I have known that millions of other wasted days
have passed,

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

Like a great stream, into silence ; and, I think,
There will be millions on millions of wasted days to
come.

O Evening, without stars to hint at dawn,
Or fading glow to tell us of dead days :
Grey winter Evening, that comes when toil is dead,
And sleep is not yet born ; brief Evening made
Of dreams and of regrets, scatter your flowers
Over the world and let all else be vain,
But your thin tears and the gesture of dumb despair
Wherewith you strew the city with dim stars,
And slowly bow your dark hair over him.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

INVOCATION TO SOLITUDE

O SOLITUDE, evil Angel, come to me :
The night is cold, dark, sullen : like the
sea.

O Solitude, evil Angel, come to me.

We will speak ancient things : and you may tell
To me of how the blest in Heaven dwell ;
And I to you of sunsets seen in Hell.

O Solitude, evil Angel, let me kiss :
I ask no better happiness than this.
O Solitude, evil Angel, let me kiss.

Around our hearts, as over fires that fade,
Silence, the old grey nurse, shall fold her plaid :
Of faded sorrowful love and hope 'tis made.

O Solitude, evil Angel, let me sleep.
My heart is weary : it can no more weep :
It is a spring of sorrow frozen deep.

We will go hand in hand out towards the gloom
Where death awaits us in his narrow room ;
The night shall strew black poppies on our tomb.

O Solitude, evil Angel, come to me :
My heart is bitter and sullen, like the sea.
O Solitude, evil Angel, come to me.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

INVOCATION TO NIGHT

BE sensual, be mysterious, O my Night :
Let not the day end in a blaze of light,
But overwhelm it in your ashy flood
Slowly, as dying soldier's dripping blood.
Be sensual, be mysterious, O my Night.

Be sensual, be mysterious, O my Night :
Impress me heavily with your flaccid might.
Let there be murmurs, jangled shrieks in the air,
Raving madness, and voluptuous despair !
Be sensual, be mysterious, O my Night.

Be sensual, be mysterious, O my Night :
Crawl over the sky in your vast shell void of light,
Old tortoise, for such maniacs as I,
Who never have learned to live and cannot die.
Be sensual, be mysterious, O my Night.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE LOVER OF SOLITUDE.

THEY falsely speak who say I live alone :
For Solitude goes ever at my side,
Discreet and silent, like a faithful bride.

She is so strange a marvel that no one
To speak or treat with her has ever tried :
Who says he saw her, tell him he has lied.

For only once we two have dared to kiss ;
And when I lifted slowly her grey veil,
'Twas my own shape I saw ; a marvel this.

She is so rare and tremulous and pale,
Soon shall I bear a corpse I cannot hide
Into the sleety stinging winter gale.

Though men may take this black corpse of my
 bride,
And though I never wed another one,
They will speak false who say I sleep alone :

For Solitude sleeps ever at my side.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE VALLEY OF KASHMIR

THERE'S a valley where the sun
Makes brown autumn all the year :
Towards that valley I have gone,
Golden valley of Kashmir. . . .

Down a slippery precipice
Long vines trail, like ropes of gold ;
Far below the valley lies
With a stream's blue scroll unrolled.

Should you seek for me again,
Find me by the orange crags
Where the ruby berries stain
Fields of asters blue as flags :

'Yond the gusty rainy hills,
'Mid the exquisite and sere
Valley which the blue haze fills—
Golden valley of Kashmir. . . .

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE IRONY OF NIGHT ✓

'GAINST the sorrows of to-day,
I have grimly striven to fight,
Waiting for the summons gay
Of the lamplit streets to-night.

Arches festooned over dark
Led me onwards to the light :
'Twas a dull and chilly spark
Closed within a cage of night.

Better was the day but past :
Then I failed but strove in might :
Now I bind my own strength fast
To illusions of the night.

'Tis a mockery to sleep,
And a weariness to fight.
Let the dark days hide me deep
In the all-encompassing night.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

TOWARDS THE IMPOSSIBLE

I HAVE climbed alone
Till the gulf below is black :
There is no turning back,
I must needs go on.

Nor do I care if I
Ever the top attain :
Climbing gives no pain,
At the top I shall die.

If I stare upon the snow
Till I am blinded—Well,
It is better in Hell
To go as blind men go.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

I CONTEMPLATE MY TOIL

I CONTEMPLATE my toil,
Fruit of the dead years done :
A vast unreadable coil,
Heavy as leaden stone.

This sodden lifeless weight
Scrawled over all with black :
To do this was my fate?
Better to serve the rack !

Dreaming to toss my song
Into the roaring skies,
I broke my back with wrong,
And paralysed my eyes.

So now I ask but rest.
The dream of long ago
Is broken : on my breast
Bury my poems, too.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

VISION AFTER MIDNIGHT

EYES that are staring and sunken :
 Faces pallid with sleep :
 Bodies swaying as drunken :
 Feet that wearily creep :
Multitude dim and tremendous,
 Onwards you take your flight :
Towards the last grim suburbs,
 Black wreckage of the night !

Onward then prowl, O marauders :
 Ebony streets unroll :
Gold lamps set in their borders ;
 Vast clocks over them toll !
Onward, you dregs of the revel ;
 To where every revel must cease :
Death or life, God or the Devil,
 Bring to you sorrow or peace !

On till the last one has vanished,
 Seeking some far dawn's red :
Then I, who from slumber am banished,
 Am by Solitude only led.
I stand by the sinister river
 Which glides through the motionless town :
And watch in the pitiless current
 The corpses swirling down.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

FUTILITY

WHEN I waken in the morning,
Life seems an adventure gay :
Ere the night, with eyes of emerald,
Comes, I weary of the day.

In the morning I stand ready :
Golden shines my perfect goal.
Soon the sooty claws of sorrow,
Seize my naked shivering soul :

I am dragged, spent and exhausted,
Towards the rubbish-heap of grey,
Where I wait for night to hide me,
For I weary of the day.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

MY HOURS

SOMETIMES in a sad waltz they beat :
And then in my heart they do repeat
The low rhythm of languorous feet.

Sometimes they walk, processions vast,
Out of a dim and distant past,
Panoplied, with banners massed.

Sometimes they leap and writhe and twirl,
Like the shape of a dancing girl,
Whom passion agitates to a frenzied whirl.

Sometimes they sleep. O dumb and deep
Be your sleep, my hours' sleep !
Never rise and never weep !

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

ANATOMY OF MYSELF ✓

VESTAL withered and unkissed,
Raphael with rheumatic wrist,
Beautiful garment on an ape :
Such is my poor body's shape.

Orator who rants alone,
Sisyphus rolling still his stone,
Sunlight shining on the blind :
Such shall be, through life, my mind.

Titan fighting with a louse,
Cæsar keeping herds of cows,
Runner starting at the goal :
Such as these is still my soul.

Emperor of desert sands,
Don Juan in Boreal lands,
Penniless Iscariot :
Such, at last, must be my lot.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE ALBATROSS

I SET my soul upon nothing,
I counted all things as dross:—
And I am desolate and weary
As a grey albatross.

All land I left to the northward;
And now I keep my flight
Forever, over billows
That change not, day nor night.

At times a reef surf-battered
Affords me scanty stay,
And a derelict, half-sunken,
I once met, in my way.

Now, 'mid a sea uncharted,
Under the Southern Cross,
Towards the last ice-barrier,
I move, an albatross.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE CAGED EAGLE

HE sits upon his perch in the far evening :
Motionless, watching twilight fade away.
His wings he never rustles, he never makes
a sound,
He waits until the night devours the day.

And then he shuts his eyes, still poised deliberate
Upon his perch, nor moves throughout the night,
He dreams, before the morning brings him waking,
That bars have vanished 'twixt him and the light.

He sits upon his perch in the fresh morning :
Interrogating silently the sky.
No eyelid moves, no feather, as I watch him : —
I also know the bars more strong than I !

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

MISFORTUNE

THESE are the vultures of evil hap :
On the day's corpse I see
Them leer, and squeak, and flap
Their wings, uncannily.

These are the vultures of vain hope :
They watch on white-walled tombs. . . .
Towards me now they grope
Grotesque, with tattered plumes.

These are the vultures with bald brows ;
And I am dragged to their nest :
Red, ragged, rent, a morsel whose
Heart yet beats in his breast.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

GOLGOTHA

CHRISt only once trod Golgotha :
Christ only knew one day of woe.
Through life I feel my agony,
And life is slow.

Christ at the end hung on the Cross.
But no such luck as this I have ;
It set some boundary to His loss :
Death will not grant the doom I crave.

Along these desert paving-stones,
Via Dolorosa, I must wend,
Wasting my life and wasting groans,
But never find my journey's end.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE DESCENT INTO HELL

TO suffer and be silent, that is all.
To shut one's teeth and hold one's aching
breath;
To pray, but inwardly,—to pray for death :
That is the latest fate which can befall.

To abandon every hope : and not to think,
For thinking is but dreaming of days gone
Foolishly thought more happy : to have done,
And in the dark pit willingly to sink :—

This, this is wisdom : this is the reward
Of toiling, hoping, suffering to the last.
Time wasted—but what matter? It is past:
I do not think my punishment is hard.

For by-and-by insanity will aid :
Lunacy takes me from the world of men.
One shock more, and my brain has toppled. Then
I crave no more for light, since all is shade.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

MIDNIGHT PRAYER

I AM alone, and my little light
Yearns for the immensity of the night :
Yet though it surrounds me, I cannot attain
To its formless joy, free from change, free from pain ;
To its everlasting linked dust of the stars
Entangling my little fears and cares :
To its deep vanity, of which I, a part,
Am become a symbol of perverse art.

I yearn and I burn and I would not sleep :
But thought holds me ever imprisoned deep,
While I move, restless, and without sight,
'Mid the vague deceits of our mortal night.
O weary of dreams, to the sky I pray :—
May my eyes see that darkness which is day !

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

REMEMBRANCES

(To Maurice Ravel)

NOW all my thoughts in sad array dance,
 slow
 Under the paling sky of ancient years
 And all is cypress and dark weeds of woe
 Faded and stained with long-forgotten tears.
Tears that a mockery must be
Of the griefs that are dead to me.

Now move my ragged hopes like mummers
 Down 'mid the marble tombs of yore,—
Where lies the dust of the ancient summers?
 They beat upon each rusted door,
And with a mocking cry they flee
From those griefs that are dead to me.

Now they are dancing, slow and stately,
 In a far land of evening
And setting sun, where briefly, lately,
 Some wrinkled serenaders sing
Of what has been and may no more be,
And those griefs that are dead to me.

Is all but a dream that is best forgotten
 Like those sad hours of chilly gloom
When autumn comes and the fruit falls rotten
 On joy and woe, both hid in the tomb?
The vain thoughts dance, the moments flee,
And even griefs are dead to me.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE LID

By Charles Baudelaire

(Freely Translated)

WHEREVER he may be, whether on sea
or land,
Beneath a sun of white, under a clime
of flame,
Servant of Jesus Christ, in Cythera's harlot-band,
Croesus glittering in gold, beggarman without
fame :

City or country-dweller, vagabond, sedentary,
Whether his little brain run light or actively,
Man everywhere submits to terror's evil fairy :
And never looks aloft but with a trembling eye.

Above is heaven's cellar-roof that chokes ;
A ceiling lit for comic-opera jokes
Staged where each actor treads on bloody soil :
The fear of libertines : the hermit's hope ;
The sky, that black lid of that pot of soup
Where mankind, vast, infinitesimal, boil !

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

ON A WINDY DAY

MY heart is drunken with an old dance of
swords,
Played by black pipers in innumerable
hordes,
At dawning of a flapping, wringing day,
Where the red rowan flares upon the grey.
My heart is drunken with an old dance of swords.

My heart is maddened with a wild dance of war ;
With keen blades flickering, flickering afar :
And desperate flights heartbreaking, chill, and sore,
Over the treeless, houseless, puddled moor :
In the mist there go click of swords and cries of
war :—

My heart is broken by that old dance of war.

My heart is weary of a black dance of swords :
Far off there skirl the shrieking pipes, the hordes
Of pipers vanish, far off over the snow.
O, I am weary, weary, of dull woe :
I would have done with sorrow and with words.
My heart is weary of a black dance of swords.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

WOMAN

(To J. D. Fergusson)

LIKE a white tower of ivory
 Woman, the splendour of the ages, stands :
Her robes are with gold encrusted,
 And on her frail white hands
Sparkle and glitter priceless pearls : —
While about her the sunlight flickers and whirls.

Behind her, circle on circle,
 Ringed and flowered and starred,
 Run gorgeous tapestries, red-barred,
And embroideries of the East,
Rioting, a luxurious feast
 Of every colour that the sun
 Ever glowed or blazed upon.

In the oval opaline
 Of her face above it all,
 Two deep shadowed eyes enthrall
With an air of mystery,
 And the mouth, a crimson stain,
 Runs like a great blot of pain.

Hieratic idol, goddess of death,
 Stiffly weighted with the store
 Of all earth's riches, all its ore,
I give gladly my last breath
 To that intoxicating glow
 I have set around you so,
To that nothingness I can trace,
In the calm horror of your face.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

FROM THE JAPANESE

I

I ONLY live in the light:
Let there be light for me,
Or let the night come soon!

II

Winter,—
Summer's rainbow-mantle of colour fades
Back, once again, to white.

III

I cry,
Echo answers faintly.
Echo is a poet.

IV

A breeze ruffles the rain-pool.
—Even our griefs cannot find rest,
Aimlessly up and down they are tossed by the wind.

V

Snowflakes rise and fall on the wind:
Even Winter has her white flocks of silent birds.

VI

I gazed through the mist:
Was it a goddess I saw?
—The mist silently lifted and showed me—an open
tomb.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

FROM THE CHINESE

THE lanterns dangle at the end of long wires,
The breeze bobs them to and fro.
My soul is in love with that lazy lantern-dance.
Oh, how the autumn gusts through the dark gardens
Rattle them together, rending their crimson sides!

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE MYSTIC VISION

ALL is night and nothing changes—what to me are grief and gladness?
All of life that is of a moment is all of the infinite universal;
And all of that all is but an outcry, a flicker of passing torches,
A jingle, a step, a rustle, on the bourne of unbounded darkness:
Seen by me the dreamer, as I dreamed of myself in a dream.
For I, too, am but a shade, a phantom that man has created,
I am unreal and real, and man who makes me of his substance,
Owns no purpose but to be made anew by me in my turn.
In the never-ending darkness,
From the emptiness, through the emptiness to the emptiness,
Which life itself creates, through which it goes and returns.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

ADRIFT

THE mist hangs low on the banks
Of the northern sea,
And the mountains in long ranks
Stand silently :
Out of the south to the north
Their shadows cast,
Facing the west, leap forth,
To the waters glassed.

There is nor life nor grave
On the northern sea,
Only the bitter wave
Apart, for me :—
And the long mountain glades
Where, set on high,
A shadowy ruin fades
Into the sky.

The fierce suns of midday
Long have withered my heart ;
My face is wet with the spray,
My hands have forgotten their art.
Now in the evening grave
Which darkens fast,
Grey ghosts seem to slip from each wave
As it shudders past.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

CLOUDS

THESSE are the clouds which receive our
birth and death :

These are the clouds which drink our hope
and despair ;
And for ever, and for ever, long as the earth has
breath,
The clouds shall melt away, leaving the wide sky
bare.

These are the clouds that, when we see them aloft
in the sky,
We no longer fear the sun's fierce monotony,
Nor the bronze deserts of ennui, where sudden
spasms of lust
Melt in the slumbrous starkness, like thin phantoms
of dust :—

God has looked on the earth and has seen but the
earth's grey shrouds,
Whirling or clashing shapes, fiery or frozen clouds.
Clouds we are, and as clouds we are drifted away,
Rising from valleys of night to vanish before the
day.

These are the clouds that, like female desires,
Wrap in their pallid longing the stern red peak :
These are the clouds, that like the male's dumb fires,
The gulf of the void forever and ever seek.
These are the clouds, that are weaving aloft in the
sky

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

Shadow and light, rain, sun and mystery,
Earth's garments of revel, and earth's great shape-
less shrouds :

For out of one cloud, at the last, have come all these
clouds.

God unspeakable, God in whose hands life and death
Are as lightning and thunder wedded, fills them with
breath :

As a Cloud He is, as a Cloud that cannot stay,
A pillar of fire by night, a shadowed shrine through
the day.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE BODY TO THE SOUL

YOU are the soul and I am but the body,
Poor soul, without experience of wayfaring,
Helpless at life's great cross-roads, yet
desiring
The hard, straight upward path, not the low broad-
curved highway.

I, body broken and bruised, hardened 'gainst hope
and failure,
Toiling along forever for the base husks of existence,
For a cloak to shield me, and a bush to hide in,
I say to you, O soul, better slumber and forget it.

Because, O soul, I know that from me you can never
be parted:
We are but starving vagabonds thrown together at
the cross-roads,
Only for tedious quarrels and slumber are we
fashioned,
So it must be, O soul, until life's latest instant.

Then I, body, must die nor follow the further adven-
tures
Of you, held back no longer from that hard upward
pathway.
O soul of mine! how quickly you must forget me:
But I being dead, am of the unforgetting.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

DEAD THOUGHTS

AS flowers smell sweeter, having been wet by
the rain,
So my thoughts pour forth in the damp
still night their song :
And the clean fresh perfume of their inextinguish-
able pain,
Seems to pass from the earth and to suffer no
wrong.

And my thoughts are of mouldering poems, left half-
unexpressed,
Desires which I felt long ago, I know not why :
They are crumbled to dust like flowers a long while
pressed,
Yet they still preserve the faint sweetness of love
gone by.

Green gardens they filled : now they fall one by one,
Upon the dark roads that lead ever outward far :
The flowers of youth, green-white as a frozen star,
The flowers of sorrow, dead ere their spring was
done.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

DAY AND NIGHT

THE half of this world's story is a blank,
For half is hidden in the gulf of night.
No one has written and no one can write
What happened then, how feasted, ate and drank
Men in unechoing and empty halls
Where to they all have wended countless years.
How fared it there where deeds and hopes and fears
Are but forgotten dreams with light footfalls?

We make our history and our heroes' lives
From vast and petty notions of the day :
How in the sunlight each man fails or thrives.
But we forget how night and sleep betray
Sunlight and sorrow, life and birth and death,
To be alike vain and a waste of breath.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

GREATNESS AND LITTLENESS

HOW many million souls, through all these
years
Now well-forgotten, fought their way
through life.

And suffering, poured out sweat and blood and tears,
Hard pressed by fate, in base or noble strife.
All these that ate each day, slept well at night,
Ploughed field, sailed ship, reared many a lofty wall,
Even their graves have vanished now from sight,
To us they might have never lived at all.
So Littleness in mighty stream o'erwhelmed
Their little stream of Might; and even They,
Saints, Poets, Prophets, Warriors mailed and
helmed,
Achieved how much in life during Their day?
Because of them no pulse the faster starts:
They too are failures, aye, and broken hearts.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE EVERLASTING PARADOX

NOTHING is more than all things great.
From the fate of chance comes the chance
of fate :
From the life of song comes the song of life :
From the strife of wrong, the wrong of strife :
From the earth the flower, from flower earth,
From birth the power, from power birth.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

DREAMS

I AM sick of the earth and of life and of days, but
yet
Even in sleep I cannot life forget :
The moment hours of slumber to me come,
Life's slave I am, but dumb ;
The moment hours of slumber from me pass,
I only wish I were that which I was.
Resting at ease all powerless,
While life shapes dreams of pain or bliss.

Bare women then I see : in them sleeps fire,
Their flesh I do desire.
I see drink, meat : and all I cannot taste :
But on in dream I haste.
I see myself asleep, then strangely gleam
On my dream-slumbers, dreams within a dream.

So 'tis with me, and so with all men known,
They too dream beautiful untrue dreams alone,
For sleep has set, to mark her magic power,
One dream within all brains at the same hour.
Although these brains cannot communicate,
They know and feel in each, mankind's dream-fate.
Then, life, to endless sleep me quickly take ;
Blest be that dream, when I dream I cannot wake.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE SONGS OF SILENCE

THESE are the songs of silence my heart keeps
Within the city's tumult-stirring deeps :
In the dark attentive forest the flight of a bird ;
A low sharp flap that seems more felt than heard ;
Or in sunlit slumbering villages the long cry
From a pedlar's creaking cart which drowns by ;
Or the brief rustling of the wind that fills
With a vague movement, the low hollow-flanked
hills ;
Or the sudden amazement of the slithered rain
Tossed idly by a gust upon the pane ;
Or the broken vibrations of twilight in summer long
Upon old streets where no one lifts a song ;
Or anything which passes, melts or fades.
Clouds within which, locked in dim amber shades,
Dark thunder and pale lightning sleep embraced :
Atmosphere's opal sea which is enchased
With sunlight's long thin threads, blue shafts of
rain ;
And the distance which seems to reflect, again and
again,
In a twilight manner, the too-real things near by,
These are the songs of silence from on high
Descending to my soul, deluded one,
And each is an angel bearing a separate sun ;
Which blinds my eyes so that they only see
What is unseen and what can never be :
On solitude's veil the grey embroidery.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

SUMMER SLEEP

WE will sleep in the high-pillared pavilions
of late summer nights,
Watching the mists take vague and altering
reflections
From the crimson lanterns, the towering tripods of
flame,
Set all around the hall, overflowing with golden
lights.

We will slumber, or we will drink while the crimson-
robed, dark-eyed dance-girls
Weave a few wayward paces 'mid the cups and
flowers on the floor :
Perhaps wine, passion, idleness, pass too ; but then,
what matter ?
They may last for a moment, who knows ? We are
young yet, and they are ours.

Forget then the past, 'tis a sorry song soon sung :
Forget too the future that follows, forget that time
moves ever on.
Let us sleep in the high-pillared pavilions of late
summer nights ;
Watching the moon's blue breath on the mirror of
the pond.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

END OF THE REVEL

THE torches sputter out,
Smoke hangs about the street ;
Now, loosely linked, a rout
Sways by with stumbling feet.

They pass, these stragglers lost.—
Suddenly bangs a door ;
A sot, in gutter tossed,
Breathes out a raucous snore.

The swaying cressets bright
Burn through their chains : they fall,
And black pools quench their light :
While darkness shakes her shawl.

Out of a corner she
Catlike begins to creep ;
Afar, the echoes die ;
The shadows crouch and leap.

Griefs in new strength return :
Coldly watching our cares
Like eyes that freeze and burn,
Come back the lofty stars.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

THE SMOKE OF DREAMS

MY soul is as one who climbs a shadowy peak
And sees below, through the half-revealed
 haze of the plains,
The while his thoughts dream to rid themselves of
their dream,
Slim ropes of smoke that sway, 'twixt the earth and
sky.

In the dim Autumn peace quite motionlessly
I watch the smoke of a million of years gone by :
These are dead and forgotten, a dream of yesterday,
An empty rhyme is all the tomb they own.

I know not why or how I wait there alone ;
But numberless and numberless, I see
Only against the vague sky, the vague streams
Of pale, pale, passing smoke, smoke of my dreams.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

MY GRAVE

(June 17, 1910) ✓

BE my grave on the mountain side
Where never a man goes by ;
For of all that have lived and died,
None strove against man as I :
In churchyards trim and well-kept
Sleep the cowardly mob of the mart :
Let me sleep, as in life I slept,
Next Nature's granite heart.

Be my ashes scattered in snow
That has lain for a thousand years ;
Be my flame then at last quenched. No,
No honour for me, nor tears !
The rain will beat through the night,
And the wind will howl in the morn,
Like the rhymes and cries I have torn
From my heart with desperate might.

VISIONS OF THE EVENING

MY MONUMENT

(December 25, 1912)

BUT when I am dead long while,
Be my monument set on the street ;
To flatter with silly smile
The cattle that cringe and repeat
Gossip of genius and style,
Emotion and metrical feet :
Be I left there the sky to defile,
And find that idolatry sweet.

Be my corpse unburied of men :
Be it hawked of the bookseller-tribes :
Be it cause of long sorrow and pain :
Be it rifled by piffling scribes !
The rain may beat in my eyes,
My eyes of brass, set above strife ;
But I shall blink not, nor at flies ;
For I shall have conquered—life.

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