

INVITA MINERVA.

THE Bardling came, where, by the river, grew
The pennoned reeds, that in the westwind blue,
Gleamed and sighed plaintively, as if they knew
What music slept enchanted in each stem,
Till Pan should choose some happy one of them,
And, with his wise lips, thrill it through and through.

The Bardling thought,—“A pipe is all I need:
Once I have picked me out a daintier reed,
And shaped it to my fancy, I proceed
To blow such notes as yonder, 'mid the rocks,
That strange youth blows, who tends Admetus' flocks,
And all the maidens will to me pay heed.”

A long June day he searched the rivage round,
And many a reed he marred, but never found
The one wherein the strange youth's tones were bound;
At last his vainly-wearied limbs he laid
Beneath a darksome laurel's flickering shade,
And sleep about his sense her cobwebs wound.

Then shone the Mighty Mother through his dreams,
And said, “The reeds that grow beside these streams
Are mine; and who art thou that layest schemes
To snare the melodies, wherewith my breath
Inspires the double-pipes of Life and Death,
And harmonizes that which discord seems?”

He seeks not me, but I seek oft in vain
For him who shall my voiceful reeds constrain
To free his heart of its melodious pain:
He flies the fatal gift, for well he knows
His life of life must with its overflows,
Flood the unthankful pipe, nor come again.”

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

GREAT THOUGHTS.

GREAT thoughts are like the flash,
Their fame is like the thunder,
And fools would mock the crash
That sages hear with wonder;
And often, like the bolt and clash,
The two are far asunder.

The distance of the bolt from us
We gather from the time
Before the thunder, and 'tis thus
The interval a thought sublime
Endureth without fame,
Denotes how far before his age
Is he from whom it came—
The unacknowledged Sage!

JUSTIN WINSOR.

WINTER NIGHT.

From the German of Vogt.
IN its winding sheet of white
Lies the earth as in a grave,
Through the starry sphere of night,
Shining calmly with its light;
Lo! the moon doth mount and wave,
As 'twere soul earth, dying, gave.

THE CAPTIVE SYLPH.

I.

THE wrinkled lips of a spotted shell,
Which kissed the marge of a Southern shore,
Have caught amid the golden sand,
The fairy spirit of Ocean's roar.
Perhaps the Sprite within its cell,
Has learned to fancy its fairy home,
And stirs the air of its bright abode,
With stolen songs from the salty foam.

II.

Fair sylph—I'm sad—sing for me now
The song you sang one summer day,
While dancing o'er the shining sand,
A good two thousand leagues away.
I'll place these lips of shining pearl
Against my ears—a song of the sea,
The bright and playful summer wave,
Euphona, captive—sing for me!

III.

There comes no sound of the summer sea
Within this muffled monotone,
Which issues from the polished shell—
'Tis but the echo of the moan,
Her sister-sylphs are making, that
Euphona on their happy shore,
Amid the gleaming sand with them,
Shall weave the sea-green silk no more.

IV.

I hear the dirge of the solemn tide,
As mid the gaunt and slimy reeds,
It murmurs on the pensive shore,
Enrobed in sea-born mourning weeds;
Where funeral garlands, dripping tears,
From sea-silk made by siren hands,
In memory of Euphona lost,
Are strewn upon the vacant sands.

V.

And now, in tones of grief profound,
The cadence of a deeper swell
Informs me, that her lover's voice
Has reached, and lingers round the shell.
I hear from out these lips of pearl,
My captive answer sigh for sigh;
Her trembling tones come near to bring,
Unwilling moisture to my eye.

VI.

I have no heart to keep thee here—
I will not cause thy lover pain;
The bright and changing summer wave,
This day, shall have its own again.
I burst the lips of the spotted shell—
The Captive Sylph once more is free—
Euphona's mellow voice is heard
Amid the sound of the laughing sea.

R. G. PERKINS.